

## ***Investigating EFL Teachers' Perspectives Towards Problems Facing them in Teaching Grammar in High Schools at Qaser Ben Ghashir***

### ***A Research Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Lecturer Degree in English Language Teaching***

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to investigate problems facing Libyan EFL teachers in teaching grammar at secondary schools in Qaser Ben Ghashir from their perspectives. In order to achieve this aim, a descriptive quantitative approach has been chosen in which a close-ended questionnaire composed of 26 items on the likert scale has been used to elicit teachers' perceptions concerning four essential areas including: language teachers, students, secondary English textbooks, and classroom environment. The questionnaire was administered to 20 EFL teachers in four secondary schools, but only 16 teachers participated. The data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics using SPSS program. The findings obtained from the research asserted that there are many problems facing Libyan EFL teachers in teaching grammar in the secondary stage. The majority of these problems were related to teachers themselves and English textbooks in use. However, this does not mean that there are not problems related to students and classroom environment. But they are less than the previous ones. Based on the findings, a set of recommendations have been suggested to solve these problems.

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#### **1.1 Background of the study**

The leading role of English as the language of communication, science, technology and instruction all over the globe has made it subject for many researches and studies in which the primary focus has been and continues to be improving language teaching and learning. Teaching English as a foreign language in general and grammar in particular seems not to be an easy task. In any living language exists on the earth, grammar is the most significant and difficult aspect for foreign learners to master. It is the backbone of a language that any produced text, whether spoken or written, is stood upon. People cannot communicate effectively without making right decisions concerning when and why they have to use a specific grammatical structure rather than another. This grammar knowledge is an

essential part of communicative competence. Unlike the native speakers of English who internalize the grammatical structures of language intuitively as they acquire it in natural settings, foreign learners find it hard to achieve grammatical proficiency without formal instruction. This grammatical proficiency is necessary for students to produce accurate grammar that can appropriately convey meaning (Celce-Murcia, 2002).

Traditionally, grammar instruction was based on " a formal notion of competence". This notion restricted the knowledge of language to syntax and morphology and considered meaning as " totally different linguistic level". The theoretical foundations of this approach are grounded both on structuralism and generativism. The

structuralism view of language was based on the analysis of form over meaning. On the other hand, generativism viewed that language should be centered on the development of a system of innate and mental rules which would account for the structural possibilities of a language (Rama & Agullo, 2012, p.180).

These views ignored the meaning of language and how it functions in a specific context. As a reaction to this neglect, the communicative language teaching approach has emerged and become predominant in EFL field. Libya is not an exception in this changeable movement. Since 2000 a new English curriculum has been adopted in the Libyan basic and secondary education. The principal aim of this curriculum is to develop students' communicative skills besides other important study skills through using clear grammatical and functional syllabuses. Unlike the traditional grammar instruction that involves memorization of grammatical rules and practice exercise drills, grammar is taught as a means toward communication in CLT. In other words, grammar is not an end in itself, but it is a mean to an end- to improve learners' proficiency in the four language skills (Mansouri, 2017, n. p). But it seems that there are many problems facing teachers in teaching grammar in the existing communicative functional syllabuses. As researchers we have noticed that most of the graduated students of higher schools are not able to communicate or express themselves effectively and accurately in English. Furthermore, they lack the essential knowledge of grammar. This is what motivated the researcher to conduct this study that investigates the problems faced by secondary school English language teachers in teaching grammar in terms of students' levels and attitudes, teachers' linguistic and pedagogical knowledge, textbooks in use, and

some other factors related to any teaching or learning process.

## 1.2 Objectives of the study

This study aims to investigate problems that teachers face in teaching grammar at some secondary schools in Qaser Ben Ghashir. This investigation covers a number of difficulties which are related to students, teachers and teaching methods, textbooks and classroom environment.

## 1.3 Research questions

This research seeks to provide an answer to the following overall question:

**Q1:** What are the problems faced by EFL teachers in teaching grammar in high schools at Qaser Ben Ghashir from teachers' perspectives?

Under this broad question, a number of narrow sub-questions are explored as follows:

1. What are the problems faced by EFL teachers in teaching grammar from teachers' perspectives related to students?
2. What are the problems faced by EFL teachers in teaching grammar from teachers' perceptions related to teachers themselves?
3. What are the problems faced EFL teachers in teaching grammar from teachers' perceptions related to English Secondary textbooks and syllabuses?
4. What are the problems faced by EFL teachers in teaching grammar from teachers' perspectives related to classroom environment?

## 1.4 Purposes of the study

This study has two-fold purposes. The first one is to help teachers overcome their difficulties in teaching English grammar. The second purpose is to confirm the significance

of improving grammar learning to students and making it applicable in their real life tasks.

### 1.5 Significance of the study

This research is expected to provide crucial information and knowledge for teachers as well as for policy makers and curriculum designers about the difficulties that face grammar teaching in secondary schools. The research findings will help teachers know if their teaching methods are in line with the syllabus objectives and the different needs of students and their learning styles or not so they can adjust them to improve the efficiency of language learning process. The study will also enable the policy makers in the Ministry of Education to deal seriously with the essential factors that prevent meeting the general aim and learning objectives of teaching English grammar in the communicative curriculum in terms of time, teachers' academic and professional preparation, how grammar lessons are presented in the textbooks and classroom equipments. The research will suggest some recommendations and tips about teaching grammar in order to eliminate the contradiction between the philosophy of English for Libya secondary curriculum and its methodological application.

### 1.6 Scope of the study

This study focuses only on the problems faced in teaching grammar by eliciting the perceptions of EFL teachers in four secondary schools (Attahreer School, Qaser Ben-Ghashir School, Omran Ben Rabeha School, Almustqbal School ) at Qaser Ben Ghashir area . It took place during the academic year 2022/2023.

### 1.7 Organization of the study

This study consists of the following five chapters:

**Chapter One:** This chapter introduces background of the study, objectives of the study, the questions that this research attempts to answer, purposes of the study, significance of the study, and scope of the study.

**Chapter Two:** This chapter deals with the review of literature. It is composed of three parts. The first part gives a theoretical background about: what is grammar, significance of grammar in ELT, the importance of grammar in the communication skills' development, types of grammar instruction, approaches and methods to teaching grammar, difficulties in teaching grammar. The second part spots light on the current status of grammar teaching in the Libyan secondary schools. The final part presents some previous studies that are related to the study.

**Chapter Three:** This chapter reveals the research approach chosen to collect and analyze data and the rationale for using it. It also gives a brief description to the setting of study, the target sample, and the data collection instrument and procedures applied in the study.

**Chapter Four:** It presents the analysis of research data and discusses the findings obtained by questionnaires.

**Chapter Five:** It includes the conclusion drawn from the study, recommendations, and limitations of the study.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

### 2.0 Overview

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section presents a theoretical background of the study including the definitions of grammar, significance of grammar in ELT, Importance of grammar in communication skills' development, Types of grammar instruction, approaches and methods to teaching grammar, and difficulties in

teaching grammar. The second section describes the status of grammar in terms of how it is presented and taught in the Libyan secondary curricula. The last section surveys a number of researches and studies related to the scope of the study.

## 2.1 What is grammar?

It seems difficult to find a specific and comprehensive answer to what grammar is and how it plays an essential role in any language. Grammar is important and it is everywhere in communication, it is the stuff with which we communicate (Mohammed, 2016, p. 27). In other words, learning grammar is a vital prerequisite for communicative competence. The learner should have a good knowledge of grammar in order to be able to use the language efficiently. Therefore, the concept of grammar has been defined differently by a number of scholars and researchers.

Macmillan (2017, n. p) defines grammar as *"a set of rules that dictates how a language works, making it easy to comprehend"*. He indicates that these rules clarify when and how a specific language pattern should be used in order to gain understanding. For Macmillan, grammar is not just about *"learning how to use words correctly"*, but it is also about *"understanding the patterns in languages worldwide"*.

In the same vein, Brinton (2000, p. 8) sees grammar as *"a set of rules or principles of the working of a language, its system or structure"*. This systematic nature of grammar is also asserted by the definition of Encyclopaedia Britannica that considers grammar as *"the systematic description of the features of a language. These features are the phonology (sound), morphology (system of word formation), syntax (patterns of word arrangement), and semantics (meaning)"*. This implies the fact that grammar as the

underlying system of language is not only restricted to morphology and syntax, but it also involves phonology and semantics.

This view is also shared by Mohammed (2016, p. 27) who mentions grammar as *"a field of linguistics that involves all of the various things that make up the rules of language. Subfields of linguistics that are considered a part of grammar include syntax, phonetics, morphology, and semantics"*.

Similarly, Eunson (2020, p.8) states that grammar *"is a system of rules ..and exceptions to those rules.. that reveals and structures meaning in language, and is made up of two things, syntax and morphology. Syntax is concerned with the pattern or sequence of words in sentences, while, morphology, as the name suggests, is concerned with the shape or nature of words"*.

According to Richard and Schmidt (2010, cited in Alhanjoury, 2017, p.12 ), grammar is *"a description of the structure of a language and how language units, words, and phrases are formed into sentences"*. This process of sentences formation is more clarified by Yule (2006, p. 74) who says that grammar is *"the process of describing the structure of phrases and sentences by considering its order in a language"*.

Unlike the above mentioned definitions, Weaver (1996, p.1-2) divides grammar into two meanings. First, grammar is a description of the syntax of a language, and the second is a set of rules or prescription of how to use language.

Grammar is... *Descriptive Grammar* when it refers to the collection of underlying rules governing the way speakers actually use English (e.g. word order, clause construction, pluralization, etc.). These rules are often learned subconsciously. Native English

speakers are always masters of these rules (rules will vary between varieties of English). Correctness is determined socially and evolves as society change. Whereas, grammar is... **Prescriptive Grammar** when it means the collection of cosmetic rules placed upon language use which separate those of social, academic, and linguistic “class”. These rules must be taught, and the master of these rules comes from exposure (usually in school). Correctness is determined by socially constructed institutions of social, political, and/or academic power.

Generally, the definitions of grammar mentioned above seem to agree with the following four meanings given by Weaver (1996):

1. grammar as a description of syntactic structure;
2. grammar as prescriptions for how to use structures and words;
3. grammar as rhetorically effective use of syntactic structures;
4. grammar as the functional command of sentence structure that enables us to comprehend and produce language” (cited in Freeman & Freeman, 2004, p. 216).

## 2.2 Significance of grammar in ELT

Language plays a vital role in communication and grammar is the backbone of any language. Without grammar, we cannot imagine a sentence. Therefore, grammar is needed for all languages in order to frame correct sentences. When grammar is proper, the sentences of the language make sense. This significance of grammar as the structure and sound of a language makes everyone concentrate mainly on it. Even the native speakers of English have also recognized the importance of grammar and are therefore in a position to speak their language, i.e. English,

grammatically correct sentences. Also, grammar helps the learners understand what makes sentences, paragraphs and even long essays, short stories precise, clear and interesting. However, at the present time and in the most of schools and colleges, grammar is taught as a separate entity in which the learners of the English language learn it just by mugging up the rules of the language. Furthermore, it is taught in a prescriptive way rather than a descriptive way. As a result, the language learners are not in a position to showcase their talent in either their speech or writing. Therefore, English language teachers should understand the situation and try to find the right solution for learners to master the language by helping them apply the rules of the grammar that they have learnt in the English classrooms. Furthermore, teachers should understand the real situation of the learners and try to take the appropriate steps for the development of their English language learning skills using various methods, approaches and techniques in which the central prominence is given to grammar (Rao, 2019, p. 240).

### 2.2.1 The importance of grammar in communication skills’ development

Communication is an integral human activity. No human can live in isolation and to live in a society we need to interact. For interaction between two persons, we need to communicate. Oxford dictionary defines communication as an activity or process used for expressing ideas and feelings or used by people for giving information. Hence it can be said that communication involves sharing of ideas and information between one person and another person. According to Foppoli (n.d, cited in Norris, 2016, p. 2), grammar provides the necessary structure to organize one’s message in order to share ideas. This



grammatical competence is a part of communicative competence (Lock, 1996, cited in Shakir & Jabbar, 2021, p.1).

Grammar is an important language component for forming words and constructing English sentences (MacMillan, 2017, cited in Shakir & Jabbar, 2021, p.1). In other words, grammar provides the rules for the common use of both spoken and written language so we can more easily understand each other. Knowing grammar will help language users avoid errors while they are speaking that make their English sound strange to native speakers. And as it is mentioned in Englishclub.com (2019) That with grammar you can learn a language more quickly and more efficiently. And it is important to think of grammar as something that can help you, like a friend, not something difficult that you can't control. Understanding the grammar of a language help you understand many things by yourself, without having to ask a teacher or look in a book. As Admin, B. (2017, cited in Shakir & Jabbar, 2021, p.1) states, grammar "lays the groundwork for effective communication and grammar is very important because it helps to enhance accuracy".

Grammar is thought to furnish the basis for a set of language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In listening and speaking, grammar plays a crucial part in grasping and expressing spoken language (e.g. expressions) since learning the grammar of a language is considered necessary to acquire the capability of producing grammatically acceptable utterances in the language (Corder, 1988; Widodo, 2004). In reading, grammar enables learners to comprehend sentence interrelationship in a paragraph, a passage and a text. In the context of writing, grammar allows the learners to put their ideas into intelligible sentences so that they can successfully communicate in a written form. Lastly, in the

case of vocabulary, grammar provides a pathway to learners how some lexical items should be combined into a good sentence so that meaningful and communicative statements or expressions can be formed. In other words, Doff (2000) says that by learning grammar students can express meanings in the form of phrases, clauses and sentences. Long and Richards (1987) add that it cannot be ignored that grammar plays a central role in the four language skills and vocabulary to establish communicative tasks (cited in Widodo, 2006, p. 122).

## 2.3 Types of grammar instruction

Grammar teaching is defined as any instructional technique that draws learners' attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it meta-linguistically and/ or process it in comprehension and/ or production so that they can internalize it (Ellis, 2006, p.84). Grammar instruction can be complicated as it involves some language aspects such as morphology and syntax. In general, there are two major ways to address the grammatical aspects of language: explicit and implicit grammar instruction.

### 2.3.1 Explicit grammar teaching

Explicit grammar teaching refers to the teaching methods making form as the center, it emphasizes to learn the grammatical rules purposeful, so as to efficiently and accurately use language ingredient. This method, which is also called "express method", is known as the main thinking method of deduction. Explicit grammar teaching is a main method in the traditional grammar teaching, represented by grammar - translation method. Explicit grammar teaching, which achieves the objective of mastering grammar by studying grammar rules, emphasizes the awareness purpose and controllability in the process of

learning grammar. Explicit grammar teaching can make students more profoundly understand the grammatical items.

Explicit instruction is a type of teaching methodology in which the instructor directly teaches the students. When using explicit instruction, teachers do not assume that students will acquire skills and information on their own. Rather, they use purposeful methods of instruction and delivery that clearly outline the learning objective. Teachers plan for instruction to be highly organized and sequential, focusing on step-by-step participation and precisely explaining the what, when, why, and how of their teaching strategies.

One subject with which explicit instruction is often associated is second language acquisition. Explicit grammar instruction is particularly important in second language learning because while one's first language is generally acquired through environmental input, his ability to acquire language naturally declines with cognitive maturation. Thus, learning a second language requires more of a direct approach. Grammar instruction includes **morphology**, which refers to word construction, and **syntax**, which is the arrangement of words into phrases, clauses, and sentences. When giving explicit instruction on syntax, the teacher will provide precise steps for creating simple, compound, and complex sentences. Explicit methods are also known to work well with literacy instruction, which incorporates the following reading skills/phonics, fluency, oral reading, vocabulary, and reading comprehension (Delvalley & pose, 2022, n.p ).

### 2.3.2 Implicit grammar teaching

Implicit grammar teaching is also known as suggestive method, mainly adopting the inductive thinking method, and inducing the

grammar rules through communicative use of the language. Learners contact with English mainly through scenes. This teaching method makes communicative teaching method as representation, emphasizing the unconsciousness, abstractness, and automaticity of grammar study. Explicit grammar teaching, which makes teachers as the center in classroom teaching, is too fancy language and forms the teaching mode whose center is grammar activity. With this teaching method, most of the students can make grammatical and correct sentences, but cannot use English for simple daily communication. For this, teachers are required to combine the language form with language meaning and language function organically. Implicit grammar teaching can let learners gain a better understanding of the relationship between the semantics and function and context by incorporating the discourse into the context. (ZHENG Ling, 2015, p. 557)

## 2.4 Approaches and Methods to teaching grammar

The main difference between approach and method is that approach is the route that you are going to reach a project whereas the method is the process or steps that you use to complete the project. There are two main approaches to teach grammar: deductive and inductive approach.

### 2.4.1 Deductive approach

Deductive teaching is a traditional approach in which information about target language and rule are driven at the beginning of the class and continued with example. The principles of this approach are generally used in the classes where the main target is to teach grammar structures. For instance, these principles are convenient for the classes that grammar translation method is applied. According to Thornbury 's three basic

principles, a deductive lesson firstly starts with presentation of the rule by the teacher. Secondly, the teacher gives examples by highlighting the grammar structures. Then, students make practice with the rules and produce their own examples at the end of the lesson (1999, cited in Risnah, 2018, p. 10-11).

### 2.4.2 Inductive approach

There are some arguments about the meaning of inductive approach. According to Thornbury (1999), in an inductive approach, without having met the rule, the learner studies examples and from these examples drives an understanding of the rule. The one who is generalizing the formula or the rules is the students without the teacher help. His argument shows that students are expected to increase their autonomy. As Allen and valette clarify (1977, cited in Risnah, 2018, p. 8), after giving the examples at the first presentation, students practice the form in sentences and they are guided to generalize the grammatical point in structure that teacher had given.

Both approaches can offer certain advantages. The deductive approach derives from deductive reasoning where the concept goes from general to specific. Rules, patterns, principles are presented first, and then moves to the examples. Deductive approach which is also known as rule-driven teaching enjoys the following advantages: 1. The deductive approach goes straightforwardly to the point and can, therefore, be time-saving. 2. A number of rule aspects (for example, form) can be more simply and clearly explained than elicited from examples 3. A number of direct practice/application examples are immediately given. 4. The deductive approach respects the intelligence and maturity of many adult learners in particular and acknowledges the role of cognitive processes in language acquisition. 5. It confirms many learners'

expectations about classroom learning particularly for those who have an analytical style.

On the other hand, an inductive approach starts with some examples from which a rule is inferred. In grammar teaching, teachers present the examples at the beginning then generalizing rules from the given samples. Inductive grammar learning commonly happens for native speakers of English, where they can produce a grammatically correct utterance but they do not know the rules underlie it. Inductive approach is often considered to have the following merits: 1. Learners are trained to be familiar with the rule discovery; this could enhance learning autonomy and self-reliance. 2. Learners' greater degree of cognitive depth is "exploited". 3. The learners are more active in the learning process, rather than being simply passive recipients. In this activity, they will be motivated. 4. The approach involves learners' pattern- recognition and problem solving abilities in which particular learners are interested in this challenge. 5. If the problem-solving activity is done collaboratively, learners get an opportunity for extra language practice (Silvia, 2006, cited in Mahjoob, 2015, p.165 ).

### 2.5 Difficulties of teaching grammar

Teaching grammar is serious and incorporates a lot of challenges that teachers face. The challenges of teaching grammar categorize into six different challenges;

1. Students
2. Experience
3. Facilities
4. Perceptions
5. Expectations
6. Lessons



## Students

Some English language teachers pointed at some issues related to the students, for example :

- Some English language teachers did not know their students' needs as they had never asked them. They measure the wishes of their students only by observing how students respond to the activities conducted in class.
- Correcting the mistakes is also a challenge. For example, their reluctant about the time they should correct their errors, especially in speaking class.
- Having students with low proficiency or weak students is a challenge in teaching grammar.
- Students had negative attitudes towards grammar. Generally, it is a norm to have weak students in class, but English language teachers should not feel anxious or easily given up on this situation. There are a lot of activities which can be done to attract them or in other words to make the lessons more meaningful. Also, games are helpful when it comes to learning grammar. When the teacher implements games, he can kill two birds with one stone. Games not only make the lesson fun and interesting, but they also make the students learn the lessons meaningfully.

## Experience

Several teachers claimed that they lack experience. They do not expose to teach English grammar by strategies, so it becomes difficult to teach grammar besides teaching grammar through trial and error processes. They did not coach on ways of teaching grammar. So their teaching process is based on observation and experiences that they had gained so far.

## Facilities

Not all schools provide their classes with sufficient equipment. Most teachers stated that even though they have enough facilities, most of them are not working well. Suitable facilities are crucial to aid in making grammar lessons more meaningful. In addition to that, enough exposure to the target language helps learners learn a language better.

## Expectations of the English teachers

Some English teachers had high expectations of their students in learning grammar as they believed the students had learned a lot when they were in school. Based on their perceptions, they had expectations on the condition of the classroom to be comfortable for cozy students to learn. In terms of the grammar lesson, Some teachers claimed that it was a challenge for them to create lessons that can cater to various kinds of needs of the students.

## Lessons

Pointing to grammar instruction, it was more difficult than some people thought. The lessons should balance between fulfilling the needs and achieving the objectives. The teaching of grammar is very challenging because teachers need to prepare grammar lessons that can interest the students and at the same time encourage them. To achieve that, teachers must emerge new approaches and new activities. These approaches and practices are depending on student's level and their locality. Another point in the lesson is that teaching grammar consumes time as it is not easy to make students grasp the input in an hour or two.

## Perceptions

Instructor perceptions play a significant role and can be a great challenge to English teachers. A negative perception of teachers

about language teaching may demotivate the English teachers and the students accordingly.

According to some researchers (Dekeyser and Soklaski, 1996; Ellis, 1997; Ellis et al. 2009; Nassaji and Fotos, 2011; Spada and Lightbown, 2008, Larsen-Freeman, 2003 Nassaji and Fotos, 2011; Burgees and Etherington, 2002), there are some other difficulties facing grammar teaching involve the followings:

1. Comprehension and Production: some grammar structures are easy to comprehend but difficult to produce, some others are easy to produce, but difficult to comprehend. For example, comparative and superlative forms of one-syllable adjectives exemplify the former case, while the use of some prepositions exemplifies the latter.
2. Complexity of the grammatical feature: Some researchers (Dekeyser, 1995;) consider some linguistics forms, such as English articles, structurally simple but functionally very complex as they perform a number of different functions, relating to type of the noun they determine, the situational context, and the discourse context. In such cases, the complex feature will require a complex explanation, using even technical meta language (as generic/specific/reference or countable/uncountable nouns). A grammar feature can be easy relating to one aspect, but difficult to another. For example, the form of English passive is easy to learn, but its use is more difficult.
3. Implicit/ explicit knowledge: Ellis (2006) distinguishes two senses of grammatical learning difficulty: the difficulty learners have in understanding a grammatical feature and the difficulty learners have in internalizing a grammatical feature so that they are able to use it accurately in

communication. The grammatical feature may be difficult to learn as explicit knowledge, but easy as implicit knowledge and vice versa (Ellis et al. 2009, cited in Alhanjoury, 2017, p. 16).

4. Grammatical difficulties also include complexity of rules, salience of a grammar form in the input, communicative force of a grammar form, learner's developmental stage, mother tongue transfer, and individual differences in language aptitude (cited in Alhanjoury, 2017, p. 15-16).

The quality of English grammar teaching can also be hindered by many factors such as the following: (Nguyen, Warren & Fehling, 2014, n p)

1. Uninteresting teaching style: this refers to monotone teaching styles like lecturing all the time instead of varying their styles and activities through the use of games, songs and intriguing questions.
2. Insufficient time for communicative activities: this refers to lack of time for practice on the use of the target language. The free communication stage prompts the teacher and the students to have ample time to use the target language for grammatical practice without the rules and corrections of each one.
3. Unreasonable time-management: this results to teacher's lack of skill in time management. If the teacher does not know how to deliver the topic in such a time, then it may result to failure of attaining the lesson objective. Also, if the teacher teaches the grammatical points in bulk instead of chunking it up, then the results may not be so favorable to the student.

4. Grammar-driven teaching: this refers to teacher focusing only on the structure of the target language without teaching its significance and purpose.
5. Large class sizes. In a classroom in general, and in a language classroom in particular, a small class size is believed to enhance educational quality. In a small class, it would be easier for the teacher to manage the activities and the teacher can focus on each of the students for skill development for s/he can deal with them one by one unlike with the class size of over 40 in which the teacher may handle the class in genre.

## 2.6 Grammar in the existing secondary English language textbooks

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century English for Libya Secondary textbooks are modern courses designed to provide students with the general English language skills besides the skills of 21<sup>st</sup> century such as study skills, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving.

The emphasis in these courses is on English as an international language of communication and on the students' long term as well as short term goals. The package of English for Libya consists of three essential components: Course book, Work book, and Teacher's book. These textbooks are classified into two sections in the second and third year of secondary stage, scientific section and literary section. However, they are the same in the first year.

In these courses, grammar is presented as an integral part of all language skills. Each unit within the course book includes some functional grammar boxes in which only given example sentences are introduced without stating how the structure is formed or when and how it can be used. Under these sentences,

students are asked to do some related exercises. At the end of each box, students are provided with the number of page/s that contain more details about the form and use of each grammatical item in Grammar and Functions section at the back of the course book. The number of grammatical items differs from one unit to another. It is not more than seven not less than two. The used examples in these boxes are related to the topics discussed.

## 2.7 Related studies

A number of studies have been conducted in different parts of the world on the difficulties facing English grammar teaching or learning English grammar at different educational stages. However, only studies that are relevant to the problem under investigation will be surveyed.

Boroujeni (August 2012) conducted a study about Investigating Controversies in Teaching Grammar: A Case for the Iranian High School Students in Iran. The study was designed on a qualitative-quantitative survey basis using a semi-structured interview and questionnaire on the effectiveness of different approaches in teaching grammar which was administered to 128 students and 5 EFL instructors in four high schools in Isfahan province, the city of Falavarjan. The results of the study revealed that the students and instructors preferred 'focus on form (FonF)' instructional method. The results also demonstrated that some of the participants favored a teacher fronted classroom with an emphasis on explicit grammar instruction. The results of the study are in line with the related literature in grammar teaching approaches that 'focus on form' (FonF) acts as a middle-way between the two extremes of 'focus on forms' (FonFs) and 'focus on meaning (FonM)'. Moreover, the role of L1 in the grammar instruction cannot be stigmatized as unworthy

of consideration without providing enough empirical evidence.

In his study about teaching Grammar in EFL Classrooms in Swedish Upper-Secondary School, Hasselqvist (Autumn 2013) examined two different approaches to teaching English grammar at the Swedish upper-secondary school level. Experiments were conducted in four different groups of students (a total of 64 informants were used), all from the same upper-secondary school in a medium-sized Swedish city. The experiments were based on teaching the genitive construction to the informants during a 75-minute class. The results were analyzed mainly quantitatively with the help of test results from the 64 informants; the aspect of gender differences in the results was also analyzed. According to the study, one of the approaches seemed to be slightly superior to the other. There were also factors (other than the test results) which may speak in favour of one approach rather than the other.

A study made by Hassabo (2015) about investigating problems by teachers in teaching English grammar in Secondary schools in Sudan showed that teachers faced problems which were intrinsic to them like their motivation and some that were extrinsic such as insufficient training and working load. In addition to that, teachers expressed that most of the methods and techniques are outdated and do not match the new trends in teaching grammar. The study adopted the descriptive methodology which combined both qualitative and quantitative analyses. Two instruments were used for data collection; a questionnaire for the teachers and a test for the students. The samples were drawn exclusively from the teachers of Umbada Locality (100 teachers) and the students of the secondary schools (200 students). The schools included governmental and model schools. The data obtained from the

sample of teachers provided answer to the research questions concerning the problems that face teachers of English in teaching grammar and the problems related to method and techniques. The data from the test provided data for students who need to be trained vague.

Alhanjoury (July 2017) also conducted a study about the Difficulties Facing Secondary-School English Language Teachers in Teaching Grammar in the Gaza Strip from Teachers' Perspectives. The population of the study consisted of (665) English language teachers in secondary schools in the Gaza Strip in the first term of the scholastic year (2016/2017). The study sample included (240) English language teachers who were randomly selected from secondary schools in the Gaza Strip. The researcher applied a questionnaire which consisted of (30) items covering the difficulties related to textbook, students, and teachers. The data of the study were analyzed by using (SPSS) Statistical Package for Social Science. The study indicated that there were no significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the difficulties facing secondary-school English language teachers in teaching grammar in the Gaza Strip from teachers' perceptions due to gender, age, years of experience or academic qualification. The study revealed that there are difficulties in teaching grammar from teachers' perceptions such as teachers' weakness in the use of modern teaching methods and techniques, students' preference to memorizing more than understanding, and some other problems. Based on these findings, the study recommended the necessity of solving the problems and defeating the difficulties facing teachers in teaching English grammar. The researcher suggested that further researches should be conducted on the difficulties in teaching and learning English grammar.

Another study was made by Iqbal and et al. (January 2017) concerning Problems in Teaching Grammar to English Learners at Secondary Level. The study highlighted the problems in teaching English grammar to the secondary school learners. The researchers used the quantitative research method for the study and the study was descriptive in nature. All the secondary school English teachers in public schools were the population of the study in district Vehari. The researchers visited the sample personally and administered the questionnaire to the sample of the study as much as 150 secondary school teachers. Findings of the study concluded that teachers who teach English to the secondary school students are not fully satisfied with their teaching of English grammar that's because they have no specialization in English language. On the other way, teachers are not trained to teach English grammar at secondary level.

In his explanatory study about Teachers' strategies on teaching grammar: Facts and expectations of senior high school teachers at Ambon, Souisa & Yanuarius (December 2020) adopted a mixed approach involving 63

### **Chapter Three: METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Overview**

This chapter discusses the practical methods by which the research and analyses were conducted, the overall structure of this chapter takes the form of four sections, the first section is concerned with the research design, the second section deals with the sources of the study which include both the sitting and the sample of the study, the third section clarifies the methods used for collecting and analyzing data , and finally the forth section which presents the procedures of the study.

teachers as the sample population in collecting quantitative data, and five selected teachers as participants for collecting the qualitative data. The findings showed that teachers' perceptions of grammar teaching are based on their conceptual knowledge as they have experienced it and it is based on grammar theories. Although the teachers applied various grammar approaches and strategies, they were still facing challenges in teaching grammar such as students' learning styles and less of teaching references.

#### **Summary**

This chapter presented the literature review related to the area of the study. The first section included a theoretical background including the definitions of grammar, the significance of grammar in English language teaching and communication skills' development, types of grammar instruction, the approaches applied to teach grammar, and the difficulties of teaching grammar. The second section introduced a brief description for the status of grammar in the secondary English language textbooks. The third section involved some related previous studies.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

In this study, a quantitative research approach has been adopted to get objective data and provide a descriptive survey study for the difficulties that teachers face when teaching grammar.

##### **3.1.1 Quantitative research**

Quantitative research involves the process of objectively collecting and analyzing numerical data to describe, predict, or control variables of interest. As the goals of quantitative research are to measure variables using a numerical system and analyze these measurements with a variety of statistical models in order to report relationships and



associations among these studied variables, it was chosen in this study to compute and compare the different variables. The use of quantitative research provides the following advantages:

1. Replication: Because of defined data collecting methods and clear descriptions of abstract concepts, the study is possible.
2. Direct comparisons of results: The study can be reproduced in other cultural settings, times or with different groups of participants. Results can be compared statistically.
3. Large samples: Data from large samples can be processed and analyzed using reliable and consistent procedures through quantitative data analysis.
4. Hypothesis testing: Using formalized and established hypothesis testing procedures means that you have to carefully consider and report your research variables, predictions, data collection and testing methods before coming to a conclusion

Always, with advantages come disadvantages. These are some disadvantages of quantitative research:

1. Superficiality: Using precise and restrictive operational definitions may inadequately represent complex concepts.
2. Narrow focus: Pre-determined variables and measurement procedures can mean that you ignore other relevant observations.
3. Structural bias: Despite standardized procedures, structural biases can still affect quantitative research. Missing data, imprecise measurements or inappropriate sampling methods are biases that can lead to the wrong conclusions.
4. Lack of context: Quantitative research often uses unnatural settings like laboratories or fails to consider historical and cultural contexts that may affect data

collection and results (Bhandari, 2020, n.p )

### 3.2 Setting and Sample of the Study

The study was conducted during December of the academic year 2022-2023 in four secondary schools at the center of Qaser Ben Ghasheer area. These schools were At-tahreer, Omran Bin Rabha, Qaser Ben Ghashir and Al-mustaqbal. The sample of the study involved 20 Libyan English language teachers, but out of 20 only 16 participants completed and returned the questionnaires while 4 individuals refused to respond. All the participants except one were females. Their ages were between 26 and 53.

### 3.3 Data collection method

The Data were collected using closed-ended questionnaire (questions that have predetermined answers for respondents to choose from). Close-ended questions are frequently employed in surveys because they make it possible for authors of surveys to gather quantifiable data that can subsequently be added up to scores, percentages, or statistics.

#### 3.3.1 The Questionnaire

To assess the difficulties that face teachers in teaching English grammar, a closed-ended questionnaire of 26 degree questions was used. The first page contained a brief description of the questionnaire and empty spaces to fill the participants' personal information such as sex, age, academic qualifications and their teaching experience years. The second and the third page included 26 degree questions rated on a 5-point Likert-scale (Strongly disagree, Disagree, Undecided, Agree and Strongly agree).

### 3.4 Procedure of the Study

The questionnaire was designed based on some previous studies related and the research

objectives. It involved two main sections. The first section was personal information while the second one included 26 Items designed on the five- likert scale. These items covered four main aspects: teacher, learners, textbook, and classroom environment. These aspects were presented together without separation in the questionnaire's construction. But in the analysis process, they were separated. The questionnaire was written in English as it targeted English language teachers. Before the questionnaire was being distributed, an approval was taken from the English language department, Qaser Bin Ghashir to allow the researcher enter the target schools in the study at Qaser Bin Ghashir area. Then, the data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed by SPSS program.

### **summary**

#### **1.4 Factors Affecting the Teaching of Grammar**

- Thi Nguyen, Warren and Fehring (2014) stated that many factors hinder the quality of

English teaching and learning. These are the following:

Uninteresting teaching style. This refers to monotone teaching styles like lecturing all the time instead of varying their styles and activities through the use of games, songs and intriguing questions.

Insufficient time for communicative activities. This refers to lack of time for practice on the

use of the target language. The free communication stage prompts the teacher and the students to have ample

time for grammatical practice without the rules and corrections of each one.

However, one class session is limited to one hour and 30 minutes in which the teacher cannot make use of the time to let students practice the target skill.

Grammar-driven teaching. This refers to teacher focusing only on the structure of the target language without teaching its significance and purpose.

Unreasonable time-management. This results to teacher's lack of skill in time management. If the teacher does not know how to deliver the topic in such a time, then it may result to failure of attaining the lesson objective. Also, if the teacher teaches the grammatical points in bulk instead of chunking it up, then the results may not be so favorable to the students.

Unclear instructions. If teacher does not give clear instructions then the result may be chaotic for the grammar class. If instructions are not easy for students to understand, then the consequence of this is that the students misunderstand and could not complete the tasks required of them.

Large class sizes. In a classroom in general, and in a language classroom in particular, a small class size is believed to enhance educational quality. In a small class, it would be easier for the teacher to manage the activities and the teacher can focus on each of

the students for skill development for s/he can deal with them one by one unlike with the class size of over 40 in which the teacher may handle the class in general.

This chapter discussed the type of research adopted in the study design, the advantages and disadvantages of quantitative research. It also presented the setting and sample participated in the study, the methods used for collecting and analyzing the data, and the procedure employed in the study. The following chapter will deal with the analysis of data and discussion.

## Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Discussion

### 4.0 Overview

**Table 4.1.1 English language teachers' ages**

Ages	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
26	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
27	1	6.3	6.3	12.5
29	1	6.3	6.3	18.8
30	1	6.3	6.3	25.0
35	1	6.3	6.3	31.3
37	1	6.3	6.3	37.5
41	1	6.3	6.3	43.8
42	1	6.3	6.3	50.0
43	4	25.0	25.0	75.0
44	1	6.3	6.3	81.3
46	1	6.3	6.3	87.5
48	1	6.3	6.3	93.8
58	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
Total	16	100.0	100.0	

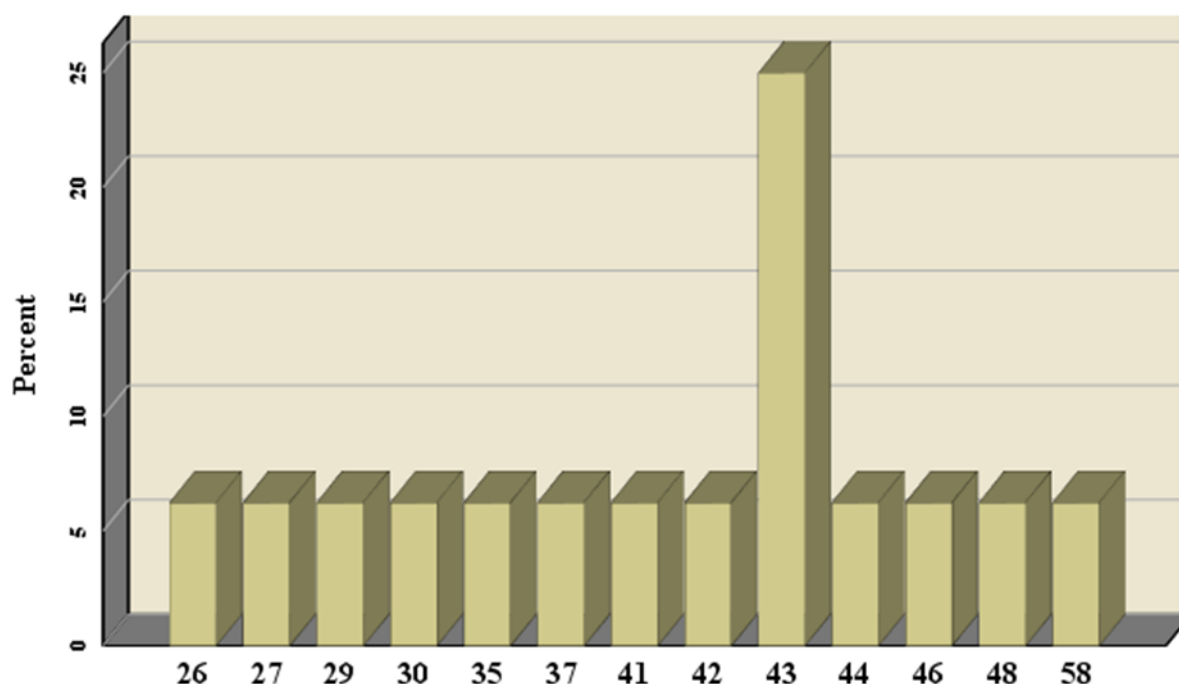
This chapter indicates the analysis of data elicited by the questionnaires using the SPSS program and discusses the results obtained in relation to the reviewed studies.

### 4.1 Characteristics of the study sample

This section of the questionnaire's analysis presents the personal information related to participants in terms of age, gender, academic qualification, years of experience, and place of work.

#### 4.1.1 Age

The table(4.1.1) below shows the distribution of the study sample according to age. (6.3%) of the study sample, their ages are from 26 to 42 years while (25.0%) of the study sample their ages are (43) years, and (6.3%) their ages are from 44 to 58 years.

**Figure 4.1.1 English language teachers' ages**

#### 4. 1.2 Gender

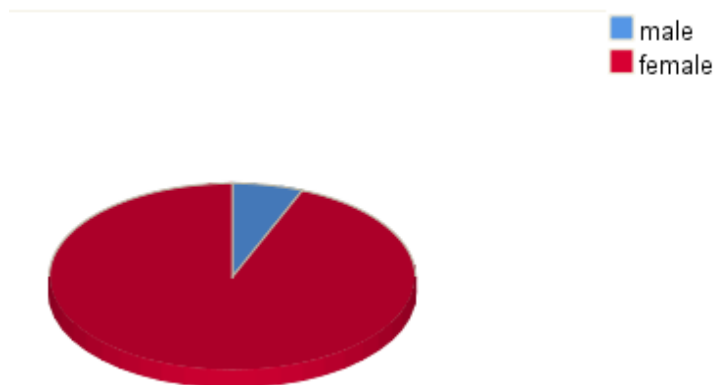
The table (4.1.2) below shows the distribution of the study sample according to

**Table 4.1.2 Teachers' gender**

gender, only one teacher with percentage of (6.3%) of the study sample is male and the other language teachers (93.8%) are females.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Male	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
Valid	Female	15	93.8	93.8	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

**Figure 4.1.2 Teachers' gender**



#### 4.1.3 Academic Qualification

All the teachers in this research have bachelors's degree in Art.

#### 4.1.4 Years of teaching experience

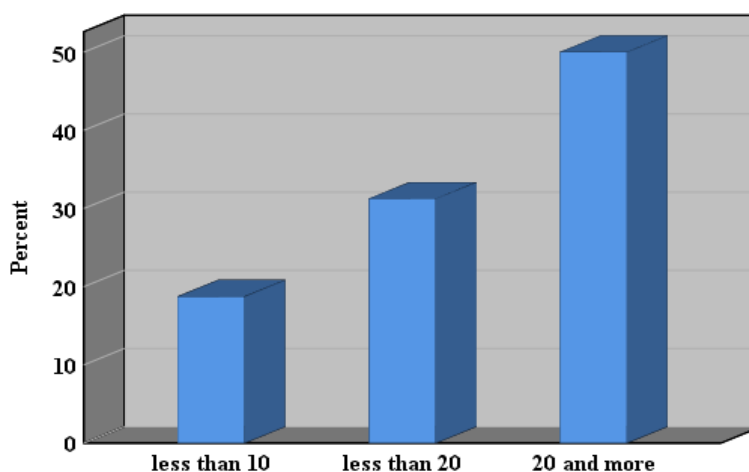
The table (4.1.4) below shows the distribution of the study sample according to

years of teaching experience. Half of study participants, their teaching experience is more than 20 years, while (31.3%) of them have less than 20 years of experience, and just (18.8%) of the study sample is less than 10.

**Table 4.1.4 Teachers' teaching experience years**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	less than 10	3	18.8	18.8	18.8
	less than 20	5	31.3	31.3	50.0
	20 and more	8	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

**Figure 4.1.4 The number of teachers' teaching experience years**





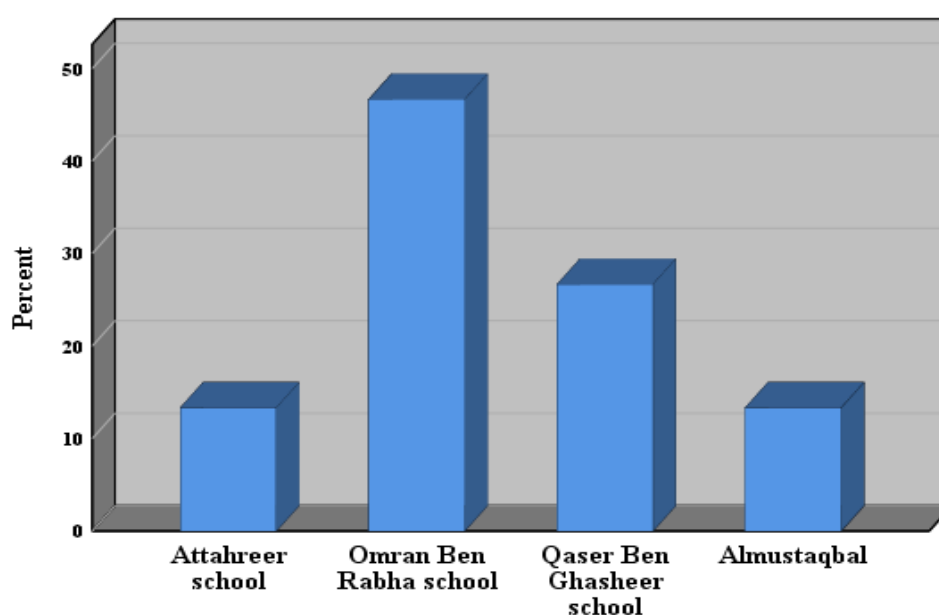
#### 4.1.5 The participants' workplace

The population of the study involved English language teachers in four secondary schools in Qaser Ben Ghashir for the first semester of the scholastic year (2022/2023). The whole population was 20 English language teachers, but only 16 participants responded to the questionnaire.

The table 4.1.5 below shows the distribution of the study sample according to place of work. (12.5%) of the study sample works in Attahreer school whereas nearly half of teachers (43.8) are in Omran Ben Rabha school and a quarter of them (25.0) work in Qaser Ben Ghasheer school while out of the three remaining teachers, two language teachers (12.5) teach at Almustaqbal school and only one answer is missing.

**Table 4.1.5 Teachers' workplace**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Attahreer school	2	12.5	13.3	13.3
	Omran Ben Rabha school	7	43.8	46.7	60.0
	Qaser Ben Ghasheer school	4	25.0	26.7	86.7
	Almustaqbal	2	12.5	13.3	100.0
	Total	15	93.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	6.3		
Total		16	100.0		



**Figure 4.1.5 Teachers' Workplace**

## 4.2 Grammar teaching difficulties in the four essential areas according to teachers' responses

**Table 4.2 Ranks of grammar teaching difficulties in the target domains**

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>				
	NO. Responses	Rank	Mean	Std. Deviation
T	16	1	3.6231	.43476
ES	16	2	3.5490	.59240
SD	16	3	3.4107	.35493
C	16	4	3.2917	.80623
Valid N (listwise)	16			

By computing and comparing the four variables (T-teachers, ES-English language syllabuses, S-students, and C-classroom environment) it can be noticed from the teachers' responses that the problems related to language teachers represented the highest rate of difficulties in teaching grammar and came in the first rank with a mean (3.62) and std. deviation (.43476). Then, in the second rank, it placed the English language syllabuses used in the secondary stage with a mean (3.54) and std. deviation (.59240) whereas difficulties related

to students and classroom environment were ranked respectfully in the third and fourth ranks based on the teachers' perceptions. The teacher's perceptions indicated that the problems in teaching grammar related to classroom environment represent the lowest rate of difficulties by a mean (3.2917) and std. deviation (.80623). The ranks has been determined according to the five levels of agreement based on likert scale as shown in the table below:

**Table 4.2.1 Level of Agreement about items according to mean value**

Level of agreement	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high
Mean	1- 1.80	1.80- 2.60	2.61- 3.40	3.41- 4.20	4.21- 5
Relative importance index	20%- 36%	36%- 52%	52%- 68%	68%- 84%	84%- 100%

The table (4.2) provided a partial answer to the overall research question. However, In order to get a comprehensive and holistic answer, it was necessary to analyze the items included in each domain (variable) separately as in the following tables.

### 4.3 Teachers' Perceptions of the Difficulties Related to Students in Teaching Grammar

**Table (4.3)** shows all the means and std. Deviations for the items of difficulties related to students and provides an answer to the first sub-question. Ranged between std- deviation (1.000)and (3.75), the results revealed that teachers agree that students prefer memorizing grammatical rules rather than understanding them and see this as one of the difficulties they face in teaching grammar. The data also indicated that teachers agree with a mean

(3.60) and std. deviation (.910) that students tend to have negative attitudes toward grammar learning as they consider it as a matter of wasting time. However, teachers did

not see students' weakness in their native language grammar as one of the problems that affects their ability to grasp English grammar.

**Table 4.3 Analysis of Results for Problems Related to Students**

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>				
	NO. Responses	Rank	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students prefer memorizing rather than understanding	16	1	3.75	1.000
Students consider grammar learning as a worthless issue that consumes their time and energy	15	2	3.60	.910
Students show a keen interest in the learning of English grammar	16	3	3.56	.964
Students are unaware of the essential rules and structural patterns they have learned at the lower level	15	4	3.53	.990
Students show negative attitudes toward grammar	16	5	3.44	1.094
Students find grammar lesson difficult and bored	16	6	3.38	1.088
Students find it hard to handle grammar presented within authentic texts	16	7	3.00	.966
Students weakness in their native language grammar affects their ability to grasp english grammar	16	8	3.00	1.366
Valid N (listwise)	14			

#### **4.4 Teachers' Perceptions of Problems Related to Teachers in Teaching Grammar**

The data shown in the **table (4.4)** present an answer to the second sub-question concerning with the problems related to language teachers in teaching grammar. According to the results, the most difficult problem faced by teachers in teaching grammar is the lack of well training in the latest methods and pedagogies for teaching grammar. This item came in the first rank with mean (4.19) and std. deviation (1.167). The

findings also clarified that teachers agree on the importance of grammar knowledge to the success of learning English. The items related to the teachers' use of inductive approach instead of deductive approach and assigning the task of teaching grammar to qualified teachers also reflected the high level of teachers' agreement. Besides the lack of well training programs, teachers also found overcrowding another problem facing them in teaching grammar because of its negative impact.

**Table 4.4 Analysis of Results for Problems Related to Teachers**

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>				
	NO. Responses	Rank	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teachers lack well_training in the latest methods and pedagogies for teaching grammar	16	1	4.19	.911
Grammar knowledge is the most important to the success of learning English	16	2	4.19	1.167
Teachers should provide examples to illustrate the target grammar point, then let students work out the rule rather than explain it	16	3	4.00	1.155
Teaching grammar requires high qualified teachers	16	4	3.88	1.025
As a teacher I think overcrowding affects grammar instruction negatively	14	5	3.86	1.231
Choosing interesting and useful grammar activities seems to be challengeable for many teachers	16	6	3.31	1.195
The difference in the structures of language poses a challenge for learners as well as teachers	15	7	3.27	1.033
Some teachers explain grammar rules in english only without taking into account the poor standard of students	16	8	3.06	1.289
Some grammatical structures are ambiguous and difficult to teach	16	9	2.88	1.544
Valid N (listwise)	14			

#### 4.5 Teachers' Perceptions of the Problems Related to Textbooks in Teaching Grammar

It seemed clear from the analysis of results presented in the **table (4.5)** below that teachers face some problems related to the used textbooks when they teach English grammar at the secondary stage. Came in the first rank with mean (3.93) and std. deviation, the participants agreed that Secondary English textbooks do

not cover functional grammar presented with sufficient real life examples. The results also indicated that there is a high level of agreement among the teachers' responses concerning the irrelevance of grammatical items order given in the textbooks to the needs and levels of students with mean (3.80) and std. deviation (.676) and the ambiguity of grammar teaching objectives in the existing syllabus.

**Table 4.5 Analysis of Results for Problems Related to Text-books**

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>				
	NO. Responses	Rank	Mean	Std. Deviation
The textbooks do not cover grammar with sufficient real life examples	15	1	3.93	1.033
The order of grammatical items in the textbooks is not relevant to students needs and levels	15	2	3.80	.676
The objectives of teaching are not clear in syllabus	16	3	3.56	1.031
There is no compatibility between the designed communicative textbooks and the teaching methods used	16	4	3.44	1.413
The objectives of teaching grammar are not met properly in the existing communicative english syllabuses by teachers	16	5	3.38	.719
Separate treatment of grammar fails to produce language knowledge which students can use in natural communication	14	6	3.21	1.051
Valid N (listwise)	13			

#### 4.6 Teachers' Perceptions of the Problems Related to Classroom Environment in Teaching Grammar

As shown in the **table (4.6)** below, a high level of agreement ranged between mean (3.88) and std. deviation (1.408) was given to

the lack of audio-visual aids in classrooms and put it in the first rank in terms of difficulty that teachers face when teaching grammar. However, the results also revealed that teachers did not consider the impractical whiteboards in some classes as one of the difficulties they encounter.

**Table 4.6 Analysis of Results for Problems Related to classroom environment**

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>				
	NO. Responses	Rank	Mean	Std. Deviation
Classrooms are not equipped with AV aids	16	1	3.88	1.408
Time allocated to teach english lessons as whole and grammar in particular does not enable students to improve their grammatical accuracy through frequent practice of structures	16	2	3.38	1.147
White boards in some classes are not practical	16	3	2.63	1.088
Valid N (listwise)	16			



## 4.7 Discussion of the Results

Teachers' perceptions indicate that the problems related to teachers represent the greatest rate of difficulty among the four domains due to the lack of well-training programs in the modern methods and pedagogies for teaching grammar and the negative impact of overcrowding classes on the teachers' use and choice for these methods. The results also point out that problems related to textbooks in terms of the insufficient number of real life examples given, the irrelevance of grammatical items order to students needs and levels, and the ambiguity of grammar teaching objectives in the secondary English syllabuses impose another weight of difficulty on the teachers and come in the next rank. Teachers' perceptions of difficulties related to students highlight two significant points including the negative attitude students have toward grammar learning and their preference for memorizing grammatical rules and structures rather than to understanding them what make grammar teaching undesirable difficult task for teachers.

## Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

### 5.0 Overview

This chapter summarizes the major findings obtained from the study, followed by a set of recommendations to overcome these problems faced in teaching grammar. It also presents the unexpected limitations that researchers encountered during the study.

### 5.1 Conclusion

Teaching English grammar is not an easy task as language teachers must agree on many types of characteristics with changes in cognitive and core abilities. Since the aim of this study was to identify the problems facing language teachers in teaching grammar in

Teachers' responses of difficulties related to classroom environment place it in the last rank comparing to the other domains in which the lack of audio-visual aids is considered a problem facing teaching functional grammar in the current communicative syllabuses. These results agree with the results of some previous studies in the second chapter, such as those results reached by Alhanjoury (2017) in that students prefer memorizing rather than understanding, and textbooks do not cover grammar with sufficient real-life examples. This study also goes in line with the findings obtained by Hassabo (2015) in terms of the insufficient training provided to language teachers in the new trends and methods used for teaching grammar.

### Summary

This chapter dealt with the analysis of data using SPSS program and descriptive statistics and discussed the obtained results in relation to the previous studies. The following chapter will present the conclusion drawn from the study, the recommendation suggested, and the limitations of the study.

secondary schools at Qaser Ben Ghashir area, it was necessary to investigate the main domains involved in this process. This investigation covered the teacher's style, the textbook, the student, and the classroom environment. A quantitative approach has been used to obtain accurate and objective data about these areas. After analyzing the quantitative data, we were able to provide answers to our research questions concerning the four mentioned domains. We came to a conclusion that: there is a number of problems facing secondary English language teachers in teaching grammar in the whole target areas. According to the findings, problems related to teachers represent the highest rate of difficulty due to the lack of well-training programs

presented for teachers in the modern teaching methods and techniques employed in grammar instruction and the negative impact of overcrowding classes on the teachers' use for these methods. However, the findings also showed that there is a great emphasis on the significance of grammar knowledge in English language learning among teachers.

Teachers' perceptions of the problems related to textbooks , students, and classroom environment revealed the followings: 1. The insufficient number of realistic examples used to teach grammar in the textbooks, 2. The irrelevance of grammatical items order to students' needs and levels, 3. The ambiguity of grammar teaching objectives in the syllabus, 4. Students' preference for memorizing grammatical structures and rules rather than understanding it, 5. The negative attitude students have toward grammar learning, and 6. The lack of audio-visual aids in classes .

## **5.2 Recommendations**

In light of the results reached in this study, the following set of recommendations have been emerged:

1. Holding training courses for high school teachers, both male and female, to familiarize them with modern trends in teaching English language in general and teaching grammar in particular.
2. Students' problems, needs and levels should be determined in advance of each English language course by conducting pre-tests and questionnaires.
3. Teachers should encourage students to use English grammar in real-life situations and to write real-life examples that help them understand grammar better.

Based on the results, the researcher recommends the Ministry of Education the

following recommendations to meet teachers' teaching needs:

1. Classes should be equipped with audio-visual aids as they are a major obstacle to teaching grammar.
2. Providing language teachers with training courses to enhance the implementation of grammar teaching strategies in their classrooms.
3. Reducing the number of students so that it does not exceed 25 students in each class.
4. Assigning English language courses for teachers in the secondary stage based on their experience and professional competence.
5. Supplying the secondary English textbooks with extra real-life examples to clarify the functional grammar boxes.
6. Conducting a field study on the difficulties of teaching grammar in the secondary stage from the students' point of view.

## **5.3 Limitations of the study**

There were a number of limitations to this study which should be highlighted to avoid any overgeneralizations or misunderstanding of the results. First, due to the limited period of time, the study was only restricted to four secondary schools in Qaser Ben Ghashir area and only one quantitative method was used to collect data. Second, the findings of this study might not be representative to all language teachers in the whole Qaser Ben Ghashir area. They just reflect the perceptions of those teachers who took part in the study. Third, the size of sample was not large enough to be generalized. Finally, all the participants involved in the study except one were females. Therefore, it was not available to make a comparison about the problems facing language teachers in terms of gender.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### THE UNIVERSITY OF TRIPOLI THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION-QASER BEN GHASHEER DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/2023**

**AUTUMN TERM**

### Teacher's Questionnaire

*Dear teacher*

The aim of this questionnaire is to elicit your perceptions about the problems that face secondary school English language teachers in teaching grammar. You are required to state your level of agreement or disagreement on likert scale by putting the number written next to each item within the questionnaire in the following way:

1. Strongly disagree   2. Disagree   3. Undecided   4. Agree   5. Strongly agree

Please, feel free in responding to all the items carefully. Your cooperation is very crucial for the researchers' BA study and your participation will be highly appreciated.

This questionnaire will be only used for academic purpose.

**Personal information**

Age: ..... years old

Sex: .....

Academic Qualification: .....

Teaching experience years: .....year/s

Place of work: .....

**Difficulties related to teaching grammar in EFL Secondary classes**

NO	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	undecided	agree	Strongly agree
1	Grammar knowledge is the most important to the success of learning English					
2	Students show a keen interest in the learning of English grammar					
3	Students' weakness in their native language grammar affects their ability to grasp English grammar					
4	Students find grammar lessons difficult and bored					
5	Students consider grammar learning as a worthless issue that consumes their time and energy					
6	Students prefer memorizing rather than understanding					
7	Teaching grammar requires high qualified teachers					
8	As a teacher I think overcrowding affects grammar instruction negatively					
9	Classrooms are not equipped with AV aids					
10	Teachers should provide examples to illustrate the target grammar point, then let students work out the rule rather than explain it					
11	Teachers lack well-training in the latest methods and pedagogies for teaching grammar					



NO	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	undecided	agree	Strongly agree
12	The difference in the structures of languages poses a challenge for learners as well as teachers					
13	Students are unaware of the essential rules and structural patterns they have learned at the lower level					
14	The textbooks don't cover grammar with sufficient real life examples					
15	Time allocated to teach English lessons as whole and grammar in particular doesn't enable students to improve their grammatical accuracy through frequent practice of structures					
16	Some teachers explain grammar rules in English only without taking into account the poor standard of students					
17	White boards in some classes are not practical					
18	Students show negative attitudes toward grammar					
19	Some grammatical structures are ambiguous and difficult to teach					
20	Choosing interesting and useful grammar activities seems to be challengeable for many teachers					
21	Separate treatment of grammar fails to produce language knowledge which students can use in natural communication					
22	The objectives of teaching grammar are not met properly in the existing communicative English syllabuses by teachers					
23	Students find it hard to handle grammar presented within authentic texts					

NO	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	undecided	agree	Strongly agree
24	The order of grammatical items in the textbooks is not relevant to students' needs and levels					
25	There is no compatibility between the designed communicative textbooks and the teaching methods used					
26	The objectives of teaching grammar are not clear in the syllabus					

***Thank you for your cooperation***