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Implementation of CIPP Model for Quality Evaluation at Zawia University

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ABSTRACT

The limited English language skills among Libyan learners threatens their ability to interact with the international environment. Therefore, improvement in the provision of foreign language programmes is imperative, and can be carried out using different methods such as evaluation to critically examine a programme in order to improve its effectiveness. This study aims to evaluate the current English language teaching (ELT) provision provided by the English department in the faculties of education at Zawia University in Libya. It seeks to establish whether the current English language programme has ever been validated or updated. Moreover, this study will design a framework that will enhance the quality of the English language provision at Zawia University by indicating the strengths and weaknesses of the current English language programme. This study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect the data, which were gathered through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The evaluation of the current English as a foreign language programme at Zawia University revealed a number of inadequacies in terms of programme delivery, teaching resources, the balance of language skills taught and students work assessment.

Key words: Language Skills, Programme Evaluation, Teaching

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation has different meanings to different scholars. Some researchers hold the opinion that evaluation is related to measurement and assessment; whereas others argue that, it is fundamentally the process of gathering and affording information to support decision-makers to function effectively. According to Darussalam (2010:58), "*Programme Evaluation from the perspective of education means an assessment of a teaching programme whether it is effective or vice versa*". Therefore, programme evaluation refers to the collection of relevant information on which judgment can be made surrounding the worth and the effectiveness of a particular programme, its future, whether to retain the programme as it stands, to improve or to cancel it (Al-Jardani, 2012). The English language was introduced to the Libyan education system in the 1950s, but, in 1986 the language was prohibited from school and university curricula due to the development of political tensions between the Libyan government and the UK in particular, and Western countries in general (Sawani, 2009). The regime's decision to prohibit the English language from education curricula continued about eight years. The negative consequences of this policy become evident, is that university graduates had a very limited grasp of English (Orafi and Borg, 2009; Alkhaldy, 2012; Jha, 2015; Aloreibi and Carey, 2017). Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the current English language teaching (ELT) provision provided by the English department in the faculties of education at Zawia University in Libya. It seeks to establish whether the current English language programme has ever been validated or updated, and to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the current ELT provision.

STUFFLEBEAM'S CIPP MODEL

The CIPP model is one of most popular evaluation models. It was developed by Guba, and further extended by Stufflebeam in 1965 (Stufflebeam and Zhang, 2017). It essentially provides a highly systematic means of examining many different aspects of a programme due to its evaluation of four domains—context, input, process and product. It is also designed to provide definitive and valid information for decision makers and quality assurance (Wang, 2008).

This model was introduced to confront the weaknesses of traditional evaluation approaches and has been improved many times to allow social and educational programmes to be examined in a comprehensive and systematic manner. As pointed out by Zhang et al. (2011:63), *"the model can help guide needs assessment and planning, monitor the process of implementation, and provide feedback and judgment of the programme's effectiveness for continuous improvement"*.

In Stufflebeam's model, four types of evaluation are identified by the acronym CIPP, which represents an entity's 'context', 'input', 'process' and 'product', as indicated in Figure 1 below. The CIPP components of evaluation play an

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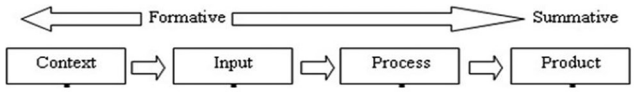

Figure 1. Components of the CIPP model of evaluation

important and essential role in the planning, implementation, and assessment of a programme. The four evaluation types will be detailed in the following section.

Context Evaluation

Context evaluation is used to define the programme's goals and priorities, and to verify that the goals are directed to address needs and problems. In the last part of the evaluation process the evaluator must give up-to-date, contextualised and evaluative information to assist in judging the preceding goals and priorities of the programme and to understand the consequence of the programme outcomes in consideration of both the targeted beneficiaries' evaluated needs and circumstances in the programme's environment (Stufflebeam and Zhang, 2017).

Input Evaluation

Input evaluation is considered as a means of establishing support systems, solution strategies and procedural designs for the future implementation of the programme, assisting in the determination of the required changes for a programme to perform successfully (Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, 2007).

Process Evaluation

According to Stufflebeam and Zhang (2017), process evaluation is employed to assess the implementation of a programme and to provide feedback on the extent to which the programme was deployed as expected and desired, as well as examining whether the programme's conceivably deficient outcomes were due to weak strategy or the insufficient implementation of the strategy. In addition, this component of evaluation focuses on the obstacles that may prevent the programme's success (Wang, 2008).

Product Evaluation

Product evaluation measures the achievement of a programme and assesses its outcomes, in addition to providing feedback on the extent to which the programme's goals are being achieved and the target needs of the beneficiaries are being met. Moreover, product evaluation can be divided into impact, effectiveness, sustainability and transportability evaluation in order to gain more concise information regarding the long-term effects of the programme (Wang, 2008).

A variety of models are utilised to evaluate education programmes, with each offering advantages and drawbacks. The main advantage of the CIPP model is that it was not intended to evaluate a particular type of programme. It is flexible and can be utilised in different settings as a "*comprehensive framework for guiding formative and summative evaluations of projects, programs, personnel, products, institutions, and systems*" (Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, 2007:325). Another advantage of the CIPP model is that it enables validation to take place from the preparation to the result stages of evaluation. The proactive use of the model can facilitate decision-making and quality assurance because it offers the opportunity to obtain evidence-based information, which enables clear understanding of the problems facing learning programmes (Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, 2007).

On the other hand, the CIPP model has been criticised for following a top-down approach that in practice prevents the evaluation process from proceed in a straightforward manner. In addition, the mixture of the four areas of evaluation—context, input, process and product—is difficult since the evaluators have to deal with the problems and drawbacks linked to the aforementioned areas of evaluation. Furthermore, evaluators have a considerable impact upon the decision-making process (Crabb and Leroy, 2012).

The CIPP model is different from other approaches and models as it is grounded in the core concept of *"not to prove, but to improve"* (Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, 2007:331), and the assumption that *"the society and its agents cannot make their programmes unless they learn where they are weak or strong"* (Stufflebeam, 2005:62). In this study, Stufflebeam's CIPP evaluation model is implemented because it is appropriate to evaluate foreign language programmes and has been used over the last few years to evaluate language programmes in many parts of the world including Turkey and China. In addition, the model evaluates a programme from different perspectives, which enhances the information and knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of a programme's components and the potential to radically improve it, unlike the traditional models that are focused on one facet of a programme. The English language programme in the faculties of education at Zawia University occurs in a setting that offered to students with a desire of meeting the programme goals and learners' demands. Staff who support the programme follow a certain process to deliver it and the programme has an end product. Therefore, the CIPP model and its different types of evaluation appear to be the most appropriate model to be utilised in this study, while the evaluation results can support the decision makers to further develop their English programmes.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The English language education in Libya prohibited from schools and university curricula for eight years due to the development of political tensions between the Libyan government and the UK in particular, and Western countries in general (Sawani, 2009). The exclusion of the English language from education in Libya has had a long-term impact on higher education because it affects students, graduates and teachers alike. As stated by Otman and Karlberg (2007:110), the prohibition of English in Libya '*proved to be a fundamental and disastrous mistake it has set back Libya, in terms of educational quality, by two generations*'. In addition, A few studies have been conducted to evaluate

the English language programme at Zawia University since 1988; the focus was primarily targeted the improvement of teaching methods (Attuwaybi, 2017). Therefore, evaluating the English language programme at Zawia University is vital in order to improve the quality of the English language programme through the focus on evaluation from different perspectives.

THE AIM OF RESEARCH

This study aims to evaluate the current English language teaching (ELT) provision provided by the English department in the faculties of education at Zawia University in Libya. It seeks to establish whether the current English language programme has ever been validated or updated. Moreover, this study will design a framework that will enhance the quality of the English language provision at Zawia University by indicating the strengths and weaknesses of the current English language programme.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Educators employ two distinct processes to support students in developing lifelong learning skills which are assessment and evaluation. Assessment provides feedback on knowledge, skills, attitudes, and work products for the purpose of elevating future performance and learning outcomes, while evaluation determines the level of quality of a performance or outcome and enables decision-making based on the level of quality demonstrated. Therefore, these two processes are both complementary and necessary in education (Baehr, 2005). Astin (2012:3) pointed out that *assessment can be referred to two different activities: (a) the mere gathering of information (measurement) and (b) the use of that information for institutional and individual improvement (evaluation)* (Table 1).

To sum up, assessment and evaluation are two parts of the same process. Assessment is the process of collecting evidence in terms of what the learners are able to complete, while evaluation is the process that follows the gathering of data, including the data analysis and those decisions based on this analysis.

Categories of Evaluation

The literature indicates a number of different types of evaluation, where identification of these types varies depending on certain goals, criteria and timing. Evaluation can offer benefit by enhancing the quality and quantity of education, which was classified as formative and summative during the 1960s (Chen, 2005). On the other hand, Houser (2014) highlighted three main types of evaluation: need, formative and summative evaluation. Each evaluation type has its own characteristics and means of implementation (Frechtling, 2002. For an enhanced understanding of the main types of evaluation, the next section will cover those types in detail.

Formative vs. summative evaluation

As mentioned earlier, there are two main types of evaluation—formative and summative—in addition to other secondary evaluation types that have been designed to support those key types. According to Flagg (2013), formative evaluation is related to the process of collecting information to guide the design, production, and implementation decisions of a programme, whereas summative evaluation is employed to assess the value of a programme. The evaluation type can be determined by the purpose for using data as opposed to the nature of collecting the data (Bigg, 2011). Therefore, formative evaluations emphasise issues related to programme development and improvement, while summative evaluations focus on the overall programme success (Grinnell et al., 2012). Consequently, formative evaluation results are commonly offered to those who are implementing a programme, whereas summative evaluation results are provided to decision makers (Houser, 2014). The evaluation of a language programme is the best approach to ensure that it remains valid and up to date, with Peacock (2009) reporting that the *"evaluation of English programmes is the starting point on the way towards professionalization of the field of ELT, therefore systematic evaluation should be placed at the very heart of a programme"*. Formative and summative evaluation can both be used to evaluate a language programme for the purposes of obtaining in-depth information to support its improvement and reform (Richards, 2001).

The present research can be described as a formative evaluative study as it is carried out while the programme is being taught at Zawia University. This study aims to identify the strengths and the weaknesses of the current English language programme at Zawia University with the intention of ensuring a high standard of education for EFL students at the institution.

Table 1. Differences between the processes of assessment and evaluation (Adopted from Baehr, 2005:8)

	Assessment	**Evaluation**
What is the purpose?	To improve the quality of future performances	To determine the quality of present performance
Who sets the criteria?	Assessor	Client (possible consultation with evaluator)
Who uses the information?	Assessee (in future performances)	Client (to make decisions)
On what is feedback based?	Observations; and the strongest and weakest points	Level of quality based on a set standard
What is included in the report?	What made the quality of the performance strong, and how might one improve future performances	The quality of the performance, often compared to set standards
For what is the report used?	To improve performance	To make judgments

Product vs. process evaluation

The literature defines another evaluation type, which is the evaluation of the product and process of the programme. Product evaluation emphasises awareness of whether the programme has achieved its goals, whereas process evaluation is aimed at accelerating the programme's implementation, assessing its functionality and how that leads to the achievement of the programme goals, in addition to examining the relationships that exist between the programme's exposure and implementation (Vedung, 2017).

According to Chen (2005), product evaluation is conducted to assess the qualities of a product and to determine the range of meeting the requirements of recipients. For that reason, researchers evaluate production to determine whether there is merit in continuing the programme or whether modification or improvement is required (Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, 2007). Bennett (2003) criticised product evaluation for focusing solely on the programme outcomes, while neglecting the other facets of the programme.

As mentioned earlier, process evaluation assesses the extent to which a programme is functioning as anticipated by measuring the on-going programme tasks and responsibilities. Unlike product evaluation, process evaluation offers an opportunity to explore all aspects of a programme and allows researchers the ability to explore how the programme is delivered, besides assessing the reasons for its success or failure in terms of performance (Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew, 2008). A further aspect is that product evaluation is related to summative evaluation, while process evaluation is linked to informative evaluation.

In the present study, process and product evaluation are followed because they are part of the model of evaluation that is utilised by this study, namely the CIPP model that is concerned with the evaluation of context, input, process and product.

Evaluation of language programme research in Arab and Non-Arab settings

This section provides information regarding those programme evaluation studies conducted in international educational institutions. Language programme evaluation studies appear to differ in terms of their purpose, focus and methodology. Some focused on the evaluation of the quality and the effectiveness of the language programmes and curricula (Mappiasse and Sihes, 2014; Karimnia and Kay, 2015), while others attempted to determine whether the language programme was sufficient for the learners' needs (Soruc, 2012). Several studies suggested changes and solutions to improve the quality of the programmes in order to better meet the learners' needs and demands (Fareh, 2010). The requirement for programme evaluation is increasing. The reasons behind conducting evaluation, as stated by Norris (2016:169), are to *judging effectiveness and to provide a heuristic for generating new knowledge; raising awareness; and transforming the educational, social, and economic circumstances of individuals and communities.* In other words, language programme evaluation normally aims to investigate whether the language programme is offering qualified language education by concentrating on its strong points and areas for improvement.

Non-Arab settings

There are a number of studies conducted in Turkey that investigated and evaluated the existing language teaching programmes. For example, Yavuz and Zehir Topkaya (2013) conducted research that explored the effectiveness of the changes made to the English Language Teacher Education programme by the Turkish Higher Education Council in 2006. The data were collected by questionnaire, with the findings revealing that certain changes were beneficial to the programme such as introducing new courses, while other modifications were less beneficial such as altering how the courses were run. Karim et al (2019) investigated pre-service teacher education programs TEFL, TESOL, and ELT in some universities in Bangladesh. It was intended to find out what student teachers think about their teacher education programs using Peacock evaluation model. The data were collected through questionnaire and interviews, with the results showing that student believed that current TEFL or TESOL or ELT programs considerably equipped them with pedagogic and linguistic competence. In addition, the practice in English classroom is generally student-oriented; the data suggests that participants lack adaptability with regard to foreign language teaching materials.

Karakas's (2012) study was broader than the two aforementioned ones, and included an evaluative review of the current English Education Programme in Turkey in general. This research employed the strengths and weaknesses documented through the analysis of the programme based on the related theories, models, empirical research and a comparison of the present programme with the previous English language programme. The findings reported that the programme had more weak outcomes than strengths. In addition, the results stated that the programme was out-dated, less practically oriented, and featured a lack of culture-specific courses. Therefore, the researcher suggested conducting a systematic evaluation of the English education programme in Turkey in order to ensure highly qualified English language teachers and successful foreign language education.

In the same vein, Dollar et al. (2014) conducted a study in Turkey to evaluate the Graduate Programme of English Language Teacher Education at a foundation university. The focus was on the strengths and weaknesses of the programme and how much it satisfied the needs of the graduate students in tending to work as teacher trainers. The data were collected through a survey, interviews, and document analysis of the curriculum, course syllabi and materials. The findings suggested that the programme should yield to regular evaluation in order to more effectively meet the learners' needs.

As a different example, Coskun and Daloglu's (2010) study was conducted to draw attention to the importance of programme evaluation, and not only evaluating the language programme as per the previously cited studies. The data were collected by means of questionnaires and interviews, and revealed that the programme was not effective in

increasing the students' and teachers' linguistic competence; in addition, the pedagogic facet of the programme required further development.

A case study conducted by Irambona and Kumaidi (2015) in Indonesia to evaluate the effectiveness of the English programme in a high school in Yogyakarta used the CIPP model. The data were gathered using mixed methods, with the evaluation result of the four components of the CIPP model showing that the context of the programme, including the programme objectives, classroom environment, students' needs and obstacles, were effective. Nevertheless, the input evaluation highlighted that the teachers were highly skilled and qualified, whereas the learners' textbooks and course designs were not appropriate. The process element revealed that the teaching and assessments were effective, while the evaluation of product section showed that the English grades, students' needs and barriers were effective. However, the teaching materials were not found to be relevant.

Aliakbari and Ghoreyshi (2013) carried out research into the effectiveness of teaching the EFL programme at Ilam University in Iran using the CIPP model of evaluation, where the data were collected through a questionnaire. The findings showed that the majority of the alumni believed that the English language programme was not as effective as expected and that the learners' needs were to some extent disregarded. Therefore, the researchers hypothesised that more practical courses should be applied and that the educational objectives of the programme should be reviewed. This study has been beneficial for the decision makers in Iran since it created a foundation for future reform of the English language programme at the undergraduate level by highlighting the learner's needs.

Another study in the Philippines was conducted by Salimi and Farsi (2016) to evaluate an English language proficiency programme for foreign students in the University of the East. The study targeted three groups who were registered on master's and doctorate courses that they had to pass before enrolling in the graduate school. The results revealed that the three groups had significant positive changes in their academic performance due to their training on the programme. Therefore, the evaluation findings revealed that the English programme was satisfactory.

Programme evaluation studies are widespread, and Karimnia and Kay (2015) carried out a study to assess the quality of a teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) programme at the undergraduate level at Islamic Azad University in Iran using Stufflebeam's (2005) CIPP model. The data were gathered through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, with the results revealing that the teaching materials and learning strategies had to be reviewed. In addition, considerable reform was required to the TEFL curriculum design, while the findings also stated that the pedagogical approaches needed to be updated.

In Nigeria, Babatunde (2012) conducted a study to evaluate an ESL programme using the CIPP model. The findings showed that the programme lacked the required sense of direction, which was the primary reason for the low level of competence of the programme product. Therefore, the researcher proposed an urgent review of the ESL programme, and particularly the process of designing the English language curriculum.

Arab settings

As stated above, there is a paucity of studies carried out in the Arab world regarding language programme evaluation. The only study conducted on Zawia University was by Attuwaybi (2017), which was based on the students' and instructors' subjective judgment regarding the English language programme setting at the university's faculties of education. The findings highlighted that the students required additional teaching practice and language proficiency development, and moreover that the programme should pay greater attention to training the students and instructors to use information and communication technology for pedagogical purposes in the classroom.

In Saudi Arabia, Alfehaid and Alamri (2016) attempted to identify to what extent the current programme of English language of the preparatory year at Dammam University supported the learners to increase their proficiency in English language in order to pass their academic studies. This study essentially aimed to assess the students' achievement, the assessment techniques, the pedagogy, the teachers and the quality assurance. The data for the study were collected using a mixed methods approach, with the findings reporting that the English language programme did not appropriately prepare the students for the subsequent year. In addition, the courses lacked quality assurance. Therefore, the researchers recommended increased support for the programme in order to enhance its effectiveness.

By the same token, Fareh (2010) investigated the challenges encountered in teaching English in Arab countries including Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, the West Bank and Yemen. The data were collected using surveys and classroom observation. The overall findings of the study revealed that the inadequate preparation of teachers and unsatisfactory assessment techniques were among the major issues that rendered EFL programmes unable to deliver as expected. This is one of the motivations behind the current study.

A similar study was conducted by Taqi and Shuqair (2014) to examine the usefulness of the English language programme at the College of Basic Education in Kuwait. The study was grounded in the grades of students in the replacement test and a replica test conducted four years later. Then, the change in language proficiency was assessed. The findings highlighted a slight improvement in the language proficiency of the students between the two test periods. Therefore, the researchers proposed a number of recommendations for the programme to be more progressive: i) conducting regular evaluation of the programme; ii) that further research be carried out on the curriculum and the plan of courses of the English programme; and iii) conducting a standardised test for the graduates to identify their English proficiency.

Another study by Al-Seghayer (2014) pertained to the current major and persistent constraints facing English

education in Saudi Arabia. The findings are based on analysing the Saudi EFL curriculum, with the results showing that a timely reform of the EFL curriculum must be carried out and that improvement of the teachers' quality should be achieved in order to obtain positive results that relate to the students' proficiency levels.

As Table 2 and the previous section indicate, the majority of the studies were carried out in Asia and Europe. However, the above studies do share similar objectives, which are the evaluation of the usefulness of the English language curriculum and introducing solutions to address the challenges that affect ELT. In addition, the researchers attempted to address issues related to the lack of teacher training, the absence of regular evaluation of the English curriculum, and inadequate assessment techniques. However, the literature still requires further practical evidence, and particularly studies from Arabic countries such as Libya.

In this respect, the current research would be an important step to reducing the gap in knowledge in the field of ELT programme evaluation in Libya. According to Norris (2016:184): *the real contribution of program evaluation in applied linguistics and what we can learn from mainstream evaluation practice may be that it helps us to both understand our theories and ideas as they are applied in action, and to facilitate their application by real individuals and groups in ways that are meaningful, practical, and useful.*

METHODS

The current research was designed as a mixed method case study using sequential explanatory design in collecting the data. It is felt that the mixed method case study offers the ideal conditions to evaluate the English language provision offered by the English language department in the faculties of education at Zawia University through collecting data for the purpose of acquiring an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

In order to evaluate the current English language provision in the study context, it is necessary to gather a range of different data sources to ensure in-depth information is collected. Therefore, this study uses mixed methods because of its strengths and the researcher's aspiration to benefit from the advantages of each research method to collect a broad variety of data while achieving a deep understanding of the research phenomenon. In summary, the first method involved a questionnaire aimed at identifying the teachers' perceptions regarding the provision of the current English language programme at Zawia University. The second method entailed carrying out semi-structured interviews with the lecturers and alumni to allow for further understanding.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

In order to ascertain deep information, the data of the study were collected through questionnaire and interviews. The quantitative data was analysed using SPSS and the qualitative data analysed using content analysis. The study found that no validation of the English language programme occurs at the university. In addition, the findings revealed that the English language programme at Zawia University has more inadequacies than strengths that will be summarised in the following table under four themes (programme delivery, teaching resources, language skills and assessment of students work) and the table summarises strengths and weaknesses of each theme (Table 3):

Table 2. Summary of previous studies evaluating language programmes

Researcher (s) name and year of publication	Country	Data collection instrument (s)	Participants
Coskun and Daloglu (2010)	Turkey	Questionnaire and interview	Students and teachers
Fareh (2010)	Arab world including Jordan, the West Bank, Syria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates	Questionnaire and classroom observation	Teachers
Aliakbari and Ghoreyshi (2013)	Iran	Questionnaire	Graduates
Yavuz and Zehir Topkaya (2013)	Turkey	Emailed questionnaire	Teachers
Al-Seghayer (2014)	Saudi Arabia	Document analysis (curriculum)	No participants
Dollar et al. (2014)	Turkey	Survey, interviews, and document analysis	Students, professors, administrators, and graduates
Taqi and Shuqair (2014)	Kuwait	Tests	Students
Mappiasse and Sihes (2014)	Indonesia	Document review (historical records)	No participants
Karimnia and Kay (2015)	Iran	Questionnaire and interview	Students
Alfehaid and Alamri (2016)	Saudi Arabia	Questionnaire, interviews, observations and document analysis	Students
Salimi and Farsi (2016)	Philippines	Questionnaire and interview	Students
Attuwaybi (2017)	Libya	Questionnaire	Instructors and students
Karim et al (2019)	Bangladesh	Questionnaire and interview	Students

Table 3. Summary of the findings

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses
Programme Delivery	Some well-qualified lecturers. Different teaching methods are used.	The classroom talk time is teacher-based. The dominant is grammar translation method. Only basic activities such as vocabulary games are employed. Classes are crowded.
Teaching resources		Out-dated sources and no internet access. There is a lack of technology-enhanced learning.
Language skills	Good focus on reading and writing skills	Speaking and listening skills are ignored.
Assessment of students work		Exam-based. Generic criteria employed in assessing students work.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of the study are discussed according to the four themes indicated in the above table.

Programme Delivery

The findings of the study revealed that traditional teaching style employed in Libya, which does not encourage language use inside the classroom, as the tutor talks for the majority of the contact time and the students are reduced to being passive listeners. According to Shebani (2016), excessive teacher talk time within the EFL classroom has been criticised as a reason for decreasing the students' L2 practice time. Furthermore, communication within overcrowded classroom is problematic and difficult to achieve successfully (Brown, 2000; Epri, 2016). This finding is in agreement with Diaab's (2016) research. The present study found that students are neither given sufficient opportunities to speak English nor to engage in speaking activities. For successful communication to manifest in the classroom, the tutor should play a secondary role and facilitate interaction between all participants within the learning–teaching group (Patel, 2008; Richards and Rodgers, 2014).

Surprisingly, the findings reveal the presence of a number of well-qualified lecturers, in contrast to many studies in this context which state that English language Libyan lecturers tend to be unqualified (Harathi, 2012; Suwaed and Rahouma, 2015; Aloreibi and Carey, 2017).

Despite many studies highlighting that the grammar translation method is dominant in teaching the English language in Libya (see for example Mohamed, 2014; Abukhattala, 2016), the findings of this study highlight that the lecturers also employ a few alternative teaching methods such as the direct method and the communicative approach, despite these proving difficult to implement effectively due to the overcrowded classes. With this finding echoing Marais's (2016:2) study, which found that due to overcrowded classrooms teachers cannot implement diverse teaching methods, and thus they are restricted to the "chalk and talk" instructional method of teaching.

The study results highlight that the lecturers have utilised certain activities such as vocabulary games, spelling and pronunciation exercises in order to help the students practise their language skills, although these activities are still limited to some extent. This finding is in line with Ulum (2015), who reported that activities need to be included in the teaching materials to ensure learners achieve a higher proficiency of speaking skills. According to Al-Subahi (2001), the main difference between the language curriculum and other curricula is that the former must involve a range of activities in order to enable the learners to activate the language inside the classroom (Al-Subahi, 2001). Therefore, the activities in language classrooms should not be limited.

Teaching Resources

The study found that, there is absence of technology enhanced learning aids such as labs is another factor". This result is consistent with Al-Mahrooqi and Troudi (2014), who found that without the integration of technology, the education institution will not be able to fulfil the knowledge needs of its learners. In addition, Alttuwaybi (2017) reported similar findings, where her study found that more attention should be paid to training students and instructors in the use of information and communication technology for pedagogical purposes in the classroom. Ultimately, the use of technology is a requirement for twenty-first century learning (Griffin and Care, 2014). The findings revealed that, there is no Internet access for teachers and students and library resources is limited and outdated. This finding confirms the Tempus UNIGOV (2016) report, which found that the lack of basic technology is considered to be the greatest challenge that affects the quality of teaching and learning EFL.

Language Skills

The study findings reveal that reading and writing skills are enhanced to a greater extent than the oral skills. This in agreement with Orafi and Brog (2009) found that since many lecturers believe that listening and speaking skills will be achieved automatically through the learning of other skills, they ignore these aural and oral skills, particularly in overcrowded classrooms. The lack of focus on oral communication skills in the institution may be due to the excessive teacher talk time, in addition to the lack of teaching equipment such as projectors as well as the paucity of visual teaching materials employed in the classroom. In addition, the dominant use of grammar translation method of teaching allows marginal attention to be placed on oral skills in the classroom (Brown, 2000), and this imbalanced focus on the teaching of the four language skills can have a negative

impact on the learner's language ability. As emphasised by Hinkel (2010), the teaching of language skills cannot be carried out in isolation. Consequently, the acquisition and accuracy of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills will be a gradual process that supports the notion of raising learners' proficiency levels and advancing language learning (Palmer, 2014; Harmer, 2015).

Assessment of Students Work

This study identified that the assessment approach is examination based, which is exactly the case of the broader Libyan context, as reported by Zagood (2015), who found that the assessment for all educational levels is carried out through examination in Libya. The English language examination papers primarily focus on the reading and writing skills, while ignoring oral communication skills, which results in students finding it challenging to effectively respond to spoken English questions (Albukbak, 2008). Another finding regarding the assessment procedure is that the teachers assess the students' oral and written work holistically, using criteria such as: the correct spelling, proper use of word meaning, correct grammar. Holistic scoring is an efficient method that can benefit those lecturers who teach large cohorts of students; however, it has been criticised and described as impressionistic or intuitive (Alderson, 2005; Joughin, 2009). Therefore, it is surprising to find such assessment criteria employed at the university level. As pointed out by Biggs (2011), besides language skills the twenty-first century requires competencies such as critical thinking, independent problem solving, creativity and teamwork. Based on the findings of this study has design a framework that will enhance the quality of the English language provision at Zawia University by indicating the strengths and weaknesses of the current English language programme. The framework is presented below in Figure 2:

In conclusion, it can be seen that the majority of language programme evaluation studies were carried out in Asia and Europe. However, the literature still requires further practical evidence, and particularly studies from Arabic countries such as Libya.

The present study makes a number of noteworthy contributions to knowledge. Firstly, it fills a gap in the literature regarding language programme evaluation in the Libyan context. In addition, it extends the existing literature on English language programme evaluation, to the benefit of future researchers. Furthermore, this research benefits Zawia University's authorities in terms of understanding the origins of the deficiencies of the current English programme by identifying the weaknesses that need to be addressed.

Moreover, the study facilitates the decision makers of Zawia University through formulating the changes necessary to the English language programme in order for it to become a competitive and efficient programme that meets international standards.

The present study suggested that no validation of the English language programme occurs at the university. In addition, the findings revealed that the English language programme at Zawia University has more inadequacies than

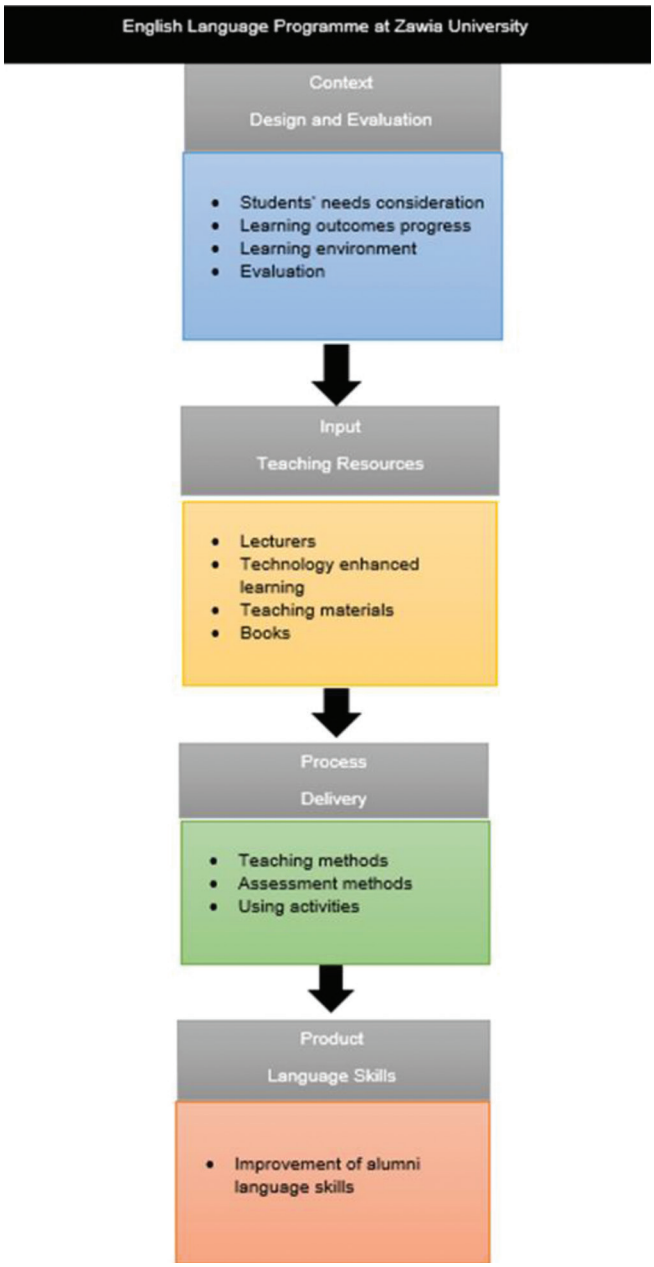

Figure 2. Framework to enhance the provision of the English language

strengths. In accordance with the findings of the present study, in order to improve the English language programme at Zawia University, there is need for an urgent solution to resolve the current inadequacies.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

All research has limitations and this study is no different, with a number of limitations that need to be highlighted. One of the limitations encountered by the researcher was the on-going security situation and turmoil in Libya, which led to challenges in terms of the data collection as the Research Ethics Committee of Liverpool John Moores University refused to provide the author with permission to travel to Libya as a researcher. Consequently, the interviews were conducted via email, which made the collection data stage lengthy, as the

researcher had to follow up with the participants, again by email, in order to acquire full responses to the interview questions. In addition, some of the participants disengaged, which reduced the number of completed interviews. Therefore, the sample size might have been greater and the data more rich if the researcher had been able to travel to Libya in person.

This study did not include current students, because they lack online access (e.g. student portals and email applications). However, the study did include a number of alumni because they were chosen as distinguished students and were regularly available in the department. Although including all the alumni would not have been practical, it might have been more beneficial to include the current students' viewpoints about the English language programme.

Another limitation is that this study was limited to Zawia University, because the researcher is one of the lecturers at the institution and thus could more easily gain access. Furthermore, there is a general paucity of literature regarding Libyan higher education and programme evaluation.

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