# A Study on the Views of English Literature Teachers about How to Teach English Literature: Libyan Higher Education Context

## İngiliz Edebiyatı Öğreten Öğretmenlerin İngiliz Edebiyatını Öğretme ile İlgili Görüşleri:Libya Yüksek Öğretim Örneği

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**Abstract**

This study examined the views of the English Literature teachers about how to teach English Literature in Libyan higher education context. Sixteen English Literature teachers teaching in higher education were the participants of this study. In order to collect data about the phenomena under investigation, semi-structured interviews were employed. Then, the collected data were analyzed qualitatively. The findings indicated that the teaching of English Literature still needs improvements. It was also found that basically three different approaches were followed by the partcipant teachers: Paraphrastic Approach, Information-based Approach and Language-based Approach. Among the preferred approaches to teach English literature, the most commonly followed approach of teaching literature was the Paraphrastic Approach. The findings also revealed that the participant English Literature teachers face some difficulties related to their teaching context and themselves. Context- specific difficuties

were lack of facilities, visual aids, technology and lack of appropriate classroom environment while teacher related difficulties were lack of self-confidence in teachers and lack of establishing rapport in teachers with their students in class.

**Keywords:** *Teaching English Literature, higher education, Paraphrastic Approach.*

**Öz**

Bu çalışma İngiliz Dili Edebiyatı'nın Libya yüksek öğretiminde İngilizce'yi yabancı bir dil olarak öğrenenlere nasıl öğretilmesi konusunda, İngiliz Dili Edebiyatı öğretmenlerinin görüşlerini araştırmayı hedeflemiştir. Bu amaçla gerçekleştirilen çalışmada on altı İngiliz Dili Edebiyatı öğretmeni yer almıştır. Söz konusu araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak yarı yapı landırılmış mülakat uygulanmıştır. Toplanan veri daha sonra nitel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın bulguları Libya'da İngiliz Dili Edebiyatı öğretiminin geliştirilmesi gerektiğini göstermiştir. Verilerin analizi sonucunda İngiliz Dili Edebiyatı

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öğretiminde üç farklı yaklaşımın kullanıldığı ortaya çıkmıştır: Açıklayıcı Yaklaşım (Paraphrastic Approach), Bilgi Temelli Yaklaşım (Information-based Approach) and Dil temelli yaklaşım (Language-based Approach). En çok kullanılan yaklaşımın Açıklayıcı Yaklaşım (Paraphrastic Approach) olduğu tesbit edilmiştir. Buna ek olarak , araştırmanın bulguları katılan öğretmenlerin İngiliz Dili Edebiyatı öğretirken öğretim yaptıkları ortamlar ve kendileriyle ilgili bazı güçlükler yaşadıklarını göstermiştir.Öğrenme-öğretme ortamı ile ilgili sorunların öğretimsel araç-gereç eksikliği, görsel öğrenmeyi destekleyici araç-gereç ve materyal eksikliği, teknolojik destek eksikliği ve sınıfın uygun öğrenme ortamına uygun olmaması olarak saptanmıştır. Öğretmenlerin kendileri kaynaklı olarak ortaya koydukları sıkıntılar ise Edebiyat öğretimi ile ilgili bilgi, beceri eksikliği ve dil yetersizliğinden dolayı öz-güven eksikliği yaşadıkları ve sınıf içerisinde öğrencilerle olumlu ilişkiler kurmakta zorlandıkları yönünde olmuştur.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** *İngiliz Dili Edebiyatı Öğretimi, yüksek öğretim, Açıklayıcı Yaklaşım (Paraphrastic Approach).*

## Introductıon

The effectiveness of using literature is a debated topic in the field of EFL teaching. Some researchers believe that literature has complex aspects in regards to grammar and metaphorical diction, thus they believe that it is not an effective tool in a EFL classroom environment (McKay, 1982). In the 1980's other prominent researchers within the field of EFL teaching have also debated the use of literature by emphasizing that education into the cultural aspects of literature clouded the system of foreign language teaching. Literature can be used as a tool to improve all most all aspects of a learners' capabilities in a language from speaking to pronunciation. In the following section, the methods and ways teachers employ literature as a part of their instruction when teaching English is reviewed. Keshavarzi (2012) emphasized that

> "it can be claimed that the use of literature in language classes encourages more thoughtful and purposeful language learning. In this respect, the learners are not only exposed to the real use of language, but also they become critical thinkers" (p.554).

There are some approaches that can be used to teach literature. For instance, language-based approach, paraphrastic approach, information-based approach, personal-response approach and moral-philosophical approach.

### Language-based approach (LBA)

The language- based approach takes into account the overarching themes of a literature as a focus point and based on them a lesson plan is created. The language- based approach is to

allow students to enjoy and experience the intricacies of literature along with language instruction. It focuses on the premise

> "that LBA can provide teaching literature with both literature and language, working in a symbiotic relationship... By incorporating LBA into literature classes the text becomes an interesting piece of work to be analysed as the approach allows students to go one step further in analysing its content which includes manipulation, transformation, experimentation and dissection" (Dhillon & Mogan, 2014, p.66).

The language- based approach has higher demands of students such as a greater mastery of the language as well as critical thinking skills. Due to the higher demands of the approach, it is not commonly found within EFL classrooms. To fully benefit from the approach, students must show capabilities of understanding complex literature in a foreign language, which is not present in most EFL classrooms.

### Paraphrastic approach

In this approach, learners try to manage the surface properties of the content (Hwang & Emby, 2007). Rosli (1995) stated that this approach allows the instructor to use simpler words and sentence structures and sometimes the instructor can make a comment on different levels. The author asserts that this approach is reasonable for the novice of the target language as the author goes on to detail the excellent verbosity as a stepping stone. The core concept of this approach is to focus on merely the meaning and re-writing of the information found within the text in much simpler form.

### Information-based approach

In this approach it is important to teach learners literary rules and meta-language and increase the ability of learners to use these terms and ideas in writing about speech and literature. This approach is a method for teaching literature about literature as a tool for literary students.

### Personal-response approach

This approach relates to the Personal Growth Model proposed by Carter & Long (1991) to inspire a single reaction and encourage self-improvement of students. This approach advocates Hirvela (1996) that who emphasizes waiting for the author's reaction to the content. Students react to what the author believes in and express their intentions and thus the results may be gained. This approach continues and claims that it also calls upon the tudents to examine their backgrounds and examine the relationship between the subjects of the texts (Rosli, 1995).

### Moral-philosophical approach

This approach is to find moral qualities when researching a particular literary content in concentration (Hwang & Emby, 2007). Due to the higher level of mastery of a language and advanced critical thinking skills that a moral- philosophical approach requires, this approach is very difficult to use in an EFL classroom. The moral- philosophical approach focuses on the literature as a product rather than its content and the content of literature has the grammar and diction that students can use to improve their own language. The product gives cultural insight, such as background into the author and the setting in which they were living in.

Whatever approach is being used, some challenges exist for the teachers who teach literature to the EFL learners. These challenges cannot be underestimated since they can influence both the effectiveness of instructon and motivation of learners and thus their success.

### Difficulties in ınstructing literature

There are some challenges that teachers can face when teaching literature to weaker students. Besides, language issues and cultural barriers can be a great challenge for teachers. A study done by Carter & Long (1991) state that the problems encountered in teaching literature can be avoided by using texts that fit the needs of the students and must be specifically selected.

### Teaching literature to weaker students

Since every student is unique, while some students excel in certain lectures other students struggle. Literature as a whole is a complex topic, without proper understanding it can harm the students more than it can provide. Students have trouble with certain aspects of literature such as characters with complex names or losing interest due to not being able to understand. McKay (1982) stated that literature has much more complex aspects that differ greatly from "Standard English". This suggests that literature is far more complex than the needs of EFL classrooms and can confuse the students rather than help.

### Language ıssues and cultural barriers

Students who have a language problem or cultural barriers to the literature in being used as a instruction tool will find it difficult to relate to the text. It is a common theory of researchers that states literature text should be related to and insight must be drawn from personal viewpoints or experiences, to receive the full benefit of literature. As stated by Maley et.al. (1989) literature concepts are difficult even fornative speakers to comprehend and have difficulty understanding the significance of the text. If native speakers who already have mastery of a language have difficulty understanding the content of literature, then for students who are learning a language as a foreign language must have similar, if not greater difficulty. With a student encountering that much difficulty it is likely that students may be discouraged.

### Lack of prepared materials

Adaptation of literary texts for classroom use is a difficult task and to find a properly appropriate text for a specific classroom is also no easy feat. With such complex conditions teaching using literature is a very complex process, but there are great benefits. The concern for most EFL classrooms is the lack of prepared materials. McKay (1982) states that to remove the complexity of language and cultural aspects when teaching literature is to provide easy texts that fit the needs of the students. This is a difficult task much like how translations can lose a vital part of the context the same idea applies to simplifying literary texts, changing the text to simpler diction while maintaining the meaning that the author is trying to convey. With that in mind, the lack of proper materials for teaching literature is no surprise.

**Current situation in higher education: libyan context**

Basically, in Libyan colleges literary pieces of poetry, short story, drama and novels are the genres utilized. The Libyan Ministry of Education determines the curriculum, aims, course objectives and learning outcomes about the literature departments. The students studying in Literature Departments are expected to read, understand, and react to literary texts. In general, the education of literature in Libya is highly language focused.

**Methodology**

This study aimed to investigate the views of the EFL teachers teaching English literature regarding how to teach literature in Libyan higher education context. It also aimed to explore the difficulties the EFL teachers face when teaching English literature, if any.

For this purpose the following key research questions were designed:

What are the views of the EFL teachers about how to teach literature?

What are the difficulties that EFL teachers who teach literature in higher education in Libya face?

**Research design**

In this  study qualitative means of investigation were employed to examine the EFL teachers' views related to how to teach English literature in Libyan higher education context and to explore the difficulties the EFL teachers experience while teaching literature in their context, if there were any.

**The participants**

In the study, 16 higher education teachers were interviewed and the responses collected. To protect the teachers identities and information, the teachers will be numbered 1-16 and their gender will be revealed to identify each teacher. The participants are well experienced teacher in the field of EFL. The teachers were asked to participate in the study to give deeper insight to the place of literature in higher education.

**Data collection ınstrument**

A semi-structured interview was conducted through the use of a set of interview questions that were used as a guide. The questions helped the interviewer to stay on topic while having the choice to move away and explore specific areas of the topic. A semi-structured interview

is the most common tool used in qualitative research studies because the interview method allows for both parties to feel comfortable and allows for deeper insight to the topic. Semi-structured interview allows exploring views and opinions and it allows for probing when needed. Due to the scope of the research, detecting the views and opinions of the instructors were crucial to the study.

The researcher used the following interview questions to collect the viewpoints of the instructors:

1. How do you think English Literature should be taught in Class? Why?

2. Can you do the tasks/ activities or exercises that you aim to teach Literature in your

    Classes? If not, why?

3. What difficulties do you face with your students, when you teach Literature?

**Data analysis**

Individually the participants were interviewed and the responses were audio recorded. Later, the record responses were transcibed for qualitative analysis. The transcribed data were analyzed by thematic coding. To determine the emerging themes, the researcher employed marginal note-taking and colorful coding techniques.

**Findings**

The findings of this study will be presented for each research question below.

*Research Question 1: What are the views of the EFL teachers about how to teach literature?*

Seven out sixteen teachers stated teaching through the paraphrastic approach which helps students to learn using simpler words and sentence structures compared to the more complicated ones as follows:

"*While I teach through this approach, it gives me opportunity to modify speech; sometimes I translate it into the mother tongue which is Arabic*" T1 (M)

"*This approach is suitable for the level of the Libyan students. It makes learning easier for them*" T7 (M)

"*I intend use this approach in teaching literature, because it fits my students' level I paraphrase and re-word the story to make it easier and understandable*" T4 (F)

*"As you know in Libya we are a non-native country and because of the level of libyan students, I use this approach in order to meet with my students' level and understand the story"* T6 (F)

*"Because of some literary texts are old such as: the story of Macbeth, there is a lot of old and ambiguity words which unclear to students. I use this approach as it is the best approach that fits our environment"* T5 (M)

*"As you know in the case of Libyan context, the majority of students are weak in English, their understanding and comprehension of literature maybe impeded due to their low level, so I prefer to use this approach by re-tell the story using simple words, and paraphrasing the whole text in a simple way, sometimes I use the mother tongue in order to help my students with a better understanding".* T11 (M)

*"In my view, the languages in some literary texts difficult for weaker students, so I prefer to use the mother tongue to ensure those weaker pupils comprehend the literary text".* T16 (F)

All the teachers that stated their preferences of using paraphrastic approach in teaching literature in classroom contexts emphasized that this approach helped them modify and simplify the original language of the literary texts to support their students' comprehension. In this way, they managed to teach literature at an appropriate level suitable to their learners.

Two out sixteen teachers emphasized teaching through the information-based approach which helps students to obtain enough information about literature. They expressed their views as follows:

*"In my point of view, the information-based approach is the suitable as it ensures students gain adequate information on literature and therefore improve their comprehension on the subject matter"* T2 (F)

*"Such an approach allows students to access a text in a systematic and methodical way in order to exemplify specific linguistic features e.g. literal and figurative language, direct and indirect speech"* T15 (M)

Both of the teachers who favoured information-based approach in teaching literature stated that supporting their students by providing them the needed information about literature specific terms (e.g. figurative languge and literal language) and helping them understand become well aware of them helped their students understand the meaning conveyed in the literary pieces that they study in the classroom context.

Two teachers out of sixteen teachers stated that teaching through language-based approach that helps students to focus attention on the way as to how the language is used.

> *"This approach that I like better, and I used it in my classes, in my view this approach aids students to emphasis attention on the way as to how the language is used" T3 (M)*
>
> *"Despite the fact that the low level of the pupils in my class, I teach literature through this approach, I know sometimes pupils do not comprehend, but I trust 30 that this approach is the best because it forces pupils to learn and pay attention to the language" T8 (F)*

The teachers who favoured language-based approach emphasized that this approach helped them create awareness in their students about how language is used in conveying the meaning and message to the reader in literary texts. They emphasized that this awareness can ease learners' understanding the literary pieces since it can create language awareness in the learners.

*Research Question 2: What are the difficulties that EFL teachers who teach literature in higher education in Libya face?*

The analysis of the interviews indicated that the teachers experienced difficulties related to seven main categories; absence of facilities, absence of visual aids, absence of technology, absence of classroom environment, absence of self-confidence in Libyan instructors, absence of teacher autonomy and absence of academic relationship between instructors of English literature and their pupils.

Four instructors believed that the absence of facilities is the main complication in teaching English literature in Libya.

> *"We couldn't provide any language laboratories." T5 (M)*
>
> *"We don't have the proper equipment at university, and usually the course book comes with CDs, but they didn't give us the CDs, and they don't offer us with CD players. So, we just skip that part of the course and just focus on grammar, reading, and answer questions." T10 (F)*
>
> *"The students did not have the facilities that might help them learn a second language, such as language laboratories." T3 (M)*
>
> *"Don't have sufficient resources to improve their English." T8 (F)*

Some of the participant English literature teachers emphasized that the lack of facilities to teach literarture influenced their teaching. They stated that not having enough resources to support the learners is one of the handicaps for teaching literature in their context.

Some teachers articulated the absence of visual aids in Libyan university teaching context. For instance,

> *"We did not have any factors that aided us comprehend that language such as laboratories or, even not laboratories, pictures that one might show because one of the most vital strategies for instructive the language, specifically kids, is the use of pictures. There were no pictures that might aid them to compare or to see the picture and put the word in his mind." T16 (F)*

The lack of visual materials and the needed equipments for providing learners with visual support was articulated to be one of the difficulties that the teachers teaching English literature encountered. They emphasized that this problem influenced their students'understanding of what they read and retaining it in their memory.

Some teachers expressed the absence of technology in Libyan universities. A majority of the participants in this study have stated that the Libyan schools do not provide the facilities required to teach literature properly.

> *"In university, I didn't use any kind of technology before. The only technology I use was the blackboard."* This teacher also suggested *"Using the visual aids like Internet access and projectors should be available in every classroom".* Similarly, participant 11 suggested that technology needs to *"be applied in teaching English literature and it should be applied in all classrooms." T13 (M)*

> Teacher 2 (F) recommended that *"there should be maybe more focus on providing all the materials needed for language learning, such as books, computer labs, Internet." T2 (F)*

> Because of the absence of facilities, Libyan students, as teacher 15 put forward, *"Are not actually encouraged to go to the library to do some research, to do some reading, to borrow some books because simply there's nothing." T15 (M)*

Some participant teachers heavily emphasized the need for technological support in teaching literature.They also pointed out that because of the contextual constraints regarding technology they could not help their students to search and reach information from other sources (e.g.Internet) with the help of technological devices (computers).

The absence of efficient classroom environment in Libyan universities were also articulated. According to Choudhury (2011), the classroom environment is very crucial for both instructors and pupils. The classrooms in Libya are too small for the number of students in each class in

addition the equipment in the classroom is very dated or very low quality such as the board and the chalk. In addition, some of the equipment in even unobtainable such as an eraser for the board. It is apparent that the classroom environment of Libya requires a lot maintenance to become optimal. Without a proper learning environment it is obvious that students will not learn anything, in such a setting.

T15 believed that

> "*Classrooms are one of the worst things in teaching in Libya since they aren't arranged really for teaching.*" *(M)*

T1 defined

> "*classroom in Libyan universites as having big numbers of pupils and lacking any kind of technology.*" *(M)*
>
> "*Most of classrooms in Libya are not very flexible. I mean very large number of students, few spaces, so you can't move. For instance, you can't divide your students into groups and move seats. So, it's prepared in a way that a bit appropriate for lecturing, not activities.*" *T4 (F)*

T6 described classrooms in Libyan universities as:

> "*Not the proper classroom for the learner to learn. The noise is probably sometimes even the number of seats. Another major problem is the large class size. I myself was asked to teach poetry, but I wasn't shown how to teach poetry to nearly 150 people at the same room.*" *(F)*

About the effect of classroom environment in teaching English, six participants talk about the large number of students in the classroom.

> "*The classroom was huge with 50 students in the class, which was difficult for me to deliver my lesson or to start teaching every single student what he or she [is] supposed to do.*" *T9 (M)*

Also, T10 said,

> "*I would assume maybe the problem is the number of the students.*" *(F)*
>
> "*In one class I used to teach almost 300 students in the auditorium, sitting in front of you and in that place a lot of stress to the teacher sometimes. I mean you would not be able to go around every student and help him in person.*" *T11 (M)*
>
> "*We have a lot of students in our classrooms, and because of the lack of teachers, teachers cannot organize their classrooms. And at the same time, they cannot teach all the English language skills equally, so that's why the students are come across a lot of problems, and they cannot overcome these problems.*" *T14 (F)*

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T16 had different experience in teaching English in Libyan universities. He said:

> *"I taught two years in a small village that [is] very close to my city. The student number was very small about 20 students in one class, so at that time I had chance to explain lessons, practice with everyone, double-check that everyone understands. Everybody has the chance to participate speaking, ask questions. But when I moved to another university, the numbers were very huge. The smallest class I have was 50 students, so I just don't have chance to practice and make sure everyone understands."*

T8 said:

> *"Our classrooms are destroyed, deserted . . . colors are faint, chairs are bad, half of the blackboard in most cases is not there. All of these things do not aid in education."* (F)

Teaching-context related problems were strongly emphasized by some of the participants. They pointed out that the contextual realities such as the classroom size and the physical features of the classrooms they teach in influenced their methodological decisions. Teaching in over crowded classrooms and the promlems they face because of the poor classroom conditions influence the way they teach and the degree of the support that they should give learners for learning.

The findings also revealed that some teachers mentioned the absence of self-confidence in Libyan instructors.

T6 stated that Libyan teachers of English

> *"Suffer from self-confidence issues when it comes to teaching English. Even for the teachers who are fluent in English, they still need to be familiarized with the different approaches and techniques to teaching English as a foreign language."* (F)
>
> *"According to some teachers I had the opportunity to speak with, they don't have confidence in their English language abilities."* T6 (F)

Problems arousing due to the lack of self-confidence of the teachers were also articulated by some of the articipants putting emphasis on the problems resulting from the teachers in teaching literature.They emhasized that some teachers neither follow the developments in the area of English language teaching, update their knowledge of teaching and gain new understandings related to teaching and learning nor improve their own language skills.

Some participants stated that the main problem in Libyan instructors of English literature was that they had no control in their instruction because they were controlled and led by other external factors.

T16 stated:

> *"The teachers have no voice in their teaching, so we have the system: this triangle, the students and the teacher. The system is dominant, so you got the books already determined by the system. Everything is determined by the system, so you have nothing to do. You don't prepare your lessons. The lessons [are] prepared already for you in the teacher's book. So, you look at the books, you teach the class, the lesson! You have no effect over the class." (F)*

Lack of teacher autonomy was another factor causing difficulties in teaching and learning stressed by the teachers. Top-down approach to teaching where all the decisions related to the teaching and learning are taken by the authorities desregarding the views and ideas of the teachers was regarded to present difficulties to the teachers as the implementers of those decisions in the classroom context.

The participant teachers also stated the the lack of academic relationship between instructors of English literature and their pupils. According to Lindemann (2001) teaching can be viewed as a dance between two parties, how the teacher teaches and how the student learns are co-dependent. The significance of the statement is that teachers and students have a connection, a dependency in the classroom. About the significance of the connection with students and colleagues, Barduhn (1989) said, teaching is a difficult job that requires mental fortitude from a teacher, the method to ease their difficulties or stress is to form a personal connection or a relationship with fellow instructors and students. The idea stated above shows the importance of relationships and connections in a educational environment, a good relationship between instructor and students benefits both parties. The job of the instructor is eased through the ability connect well with students and the students gain more benefit from the class due to the comfort provided by having a connection with the instructor.

In this study T3 talked about a vital aspect that is heavily lacked within the higher education instructors in Libya. The aspect mentioned before is the ability for teachers to form appropriate relationship with students.

He said,

> *"We don't know how to motivate our learners. We don't get them involved into a successful healthy classroom discussion in English. Of course, we don't maintain a good rapport, which is the good relationship between teacher and their students. Also, the interrelationship between student-student, student-teacher is important as well." T 3 (M)*

Johnston (2004) stated that, the more distant a teacher is from the students it is equality difficult to teach to said students. The significance of how the theory by Johnston is without the

connection between teacher and student it would be almost impossible to correctly teach any subject matter. Another point to be noted is Zanger (1991) statement, if a relationship formed between teacher and pupil fails, the results are devastating for the student. It can be inferred that the results could be from the loss of trust in a instructor, which would lead the student to question majority of what is being taught.

T1 described an experience with his professor in the USA. He said:

> "I was really surprised when I came at the . . ., and when the professor ask[ed] [me] just [to call him with] the first name like John or Joy or whatever, and I was having a hard time just saying their plain names, and trying to use 'professor,' 'doctor,' and stuff like that was weird. And they taught us that [we] have to build like a healthy environment between [us] and the students. This is the first thing [we] have to do. If 41 [we] fail to do and establish that environment, so probably the teaching and learning will be less effective, and there is [no] benefit."(M)

> "These borders the teachers build between them and the students [make] the students passive learners; they just sit and receive the information, but there is no active learning. They are not taking the responsibility; they are not taking part of their own learning, plus the lack of motivation." T1 (M)

Similarly, T12 thought that

> "When you know the students and the neighborhood, or the place where he lives will help you to deal with any situation or any kind of problem with the students." (F)

Consequently,

> "building the healthy environment between the students and the teachers, so the students do not feel embarrassed or terrified and just wait for the class to be over." T6 (F)

When instructors have a good relationship with their pupils, as Peregoy & Boyle (2008) said, through a good relationships with students an instructor can manage problems that span outside of the classroom. For example, a student with a good relationship with their instructors may trust the instructor enough the confide certain problems outside of the classroom that they may have, at which point the teacher can offer advice or emotional support. Through solving the students problems outside of the classroom a teacher can improve performance in the classroom.

Lack of establishing rapport was emphasized as causing difficulties in the learning and teaching environment. Some teachers stated that they do not know how to motivate the learners and they and how to create a learning environment in which learners can take the responsibility of their learning.

**Discussion**

The findings of this study revealed that the teachers teaching English literarture in Libyan higher education context use basically three different approaches in teaching: Paraphrastic approach, information-based approach and language-based approach. The findings revealed that among these three approaches paraphrastic approach was the most preferred approach. It seemes that the approach preference of the participant teachers were basically related to the need of overcoming literature specific language problems and to help their learners understand the complex and demanding language of the literary texts. In this respect, they tended to modify, simlify and sometimes even translate the texts. The teachers who favoured information-based approach over the others seemed to give privilige to helping learners understand the literature specific concepts (such as figurative language), diffentiating literal language and figurative language and becoming aware of the need to develop a critical perspective when reading literary texts. The teachers who preferred to follow language-based approach  were more likely to put emphasis on the language issues. They tried to get their learners attention to how language is used to convey meaning in literary texts. All in all, it seems that the approached preferred by the participants shared a common purpose of language support in order to help them understand the nature of complex literary texts and develop more complex ways of thinking.

The findings of the study also indicated that the participants teachers encounter some contextual difficulties in the teaching and learning of literarture. The difficulties that they stressed out were context specific and teacher specific. The findings showed that the physical conditions of the classrooms were not suitable for the learning and teaching of English. Teaching in over crowded classrooms seemed to present problems for the teachers.Besides, lack of teaching aids, lack of facilities and no technology support seemed to prevent teachers to teach in an appropriate way because they exerted some methodological problems to them. Moreover, lack of teacher autonomy seemed to exert some problems to the teachers in the teaching and learning process because all the decisions taken for the learning and teaching process seemed to be taken in a top-down policy fashion. This seemed to put restrictions on the teachers and prevented them to take methodological decisions themselves in order to meet the needs of their learners as the ones who can detect and understand their learners' needs in class during learnign and teaching. Besides the difficulties encountered due to contextual constraints, the findings revealed that some of the difficulties were related to the teachers themselves. It was articulated that the

teachers seemed to lack the needed knowledge and skills to establish rapport and obtain and maintain the needed learner motivation for learning. They also seemed to be experiencing problems in teaching due the weaknesses related to their English language proficiecy. This seemed to exert some peroblems to them since they may not feel confident enough to teach and take effective decisions while teaching.

### Limitations and implications

There are some limitations of this study. It was conducted with a limited number of participants so the findings cannot be generalized to a larger population. Therefore, there is a need for conducting quantitative investigations witha larger number of participants. Besides, interview was the only one source that the data was collected with and the researcher interviewed the participants only once. Since more than one interview could reveal more information there is a need for conducting more interviews and observing the participants in their teaching contexts.

### Conclusions

To conclude the findings of this study indicated that teachers employed three approaches in order to ensure students' understanding of literature. Interviews indicated that the Paraphrastic Approach was among the most favored by teachers in the teaching of English literature. The incorporation of using translation of L1 is considered as an option for teachers to help weaker students to understand the text, and thus, to guide them to analyze the literature element of the text. This can be seen as to support students who have limited proficiency in the language to learn literature, this followed by Information-Based Approach, the moral-philosophical approach, the personal-response approach, the language-based approach, whilst the stylistic approach remains the lowest. The findings of this study also showed that teachers face some contextual difficulties such as absence of facilities, absence of visual aids, absence of technology, absence of classroom environment. The findings also revealed that the teachers experienced some difficulties realed to themselves such as absence of self-confidence in Libyan instructors and absence of academic relationship between instructors of English literature and their pupils when teaching English literature in Libyan higher education context.

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