



Exploring the types of teaching aids used by English teachers at the Faculty of Education and how do they perceive their role in higher education: A qualitative study

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استكشاف أنواع وسائل التدريس المستخدمة من قبل معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية وكيف
يفهمون دورها بالتعليم العالي: دراسة نوعية

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Abstract

Recently, teaching aids play a significant role in enhancing teaching/ learning process. They act as bridges that connect between theory and practice in classroom. This study aims to identify the types of teaching aids used by English language teachers at the Faculty of Education and the perceptions that make their classroom decisions regarding the role of teaching aids in enhancing teaching/ learning process. The study implemented qualitative research tools: focus group and interview. The findings show that English teachers use the teaching aids: Data show, board, pictures, textbooks, recording, phones, games, posters, films, documentaries, quizzes and teacher. Importantly, they perceive teaching aids as: effective tools in enhancing learning, facilitate teaching, increase entertainment, auxiliary tools, save time and effort, encourage critical thinking and help in class management.

Keywords: teaching aids, learning process, teaching process, perception.

الملخص

مؤخراً، تلعب وسائل التعليم دوراً مهماً في تعزيز العملية التدريسية والتعليمية. فهي تشكل جسراً يربط بين النظرية والتطبيق داخل الفصل الدراسي. هذه الدراسة تهدف إلى تحديد أنواع وسائل التعليم المستخدمة من قبل معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية وأفهامهم التي تحدد قراراتهم داخل الفصل الدراسي فيما يخص دور وسائل التعليم في تعزيز العملية التدريسية والتعليمية. الدراسة طبقت أدوات البحث النوعية: مجموعة تركيز ومقابلة. النتائج توضح أن معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية يستخدمون: جهاز العرض، السبورة، صور، الكتاب الدراسي، تسجيلات، هواتف نقالة، ألعاب، ملصقات، أفلام، وثائقيات، اختبارات، والمعلم. وبشكل مهم، هم يفهمون الوسائل التعليمية على أنها: أدوات فعالة في تعزيز التعلم، تسهل التدريس، تزيد المتعة، أدوات مساعدة، توفر الوقت والجهد، تشجع التفكير النقدي، تساعد في إدارة الفصل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: وسائل التعليم، العملية التدريسية، العملية التعليمية، الفهم.

1. Introduction

In the literature, teaching aids are tools used by teachers that support learning process among learners. They help teachers diversify their teaching methods in ways that align with students' various learning styles. Teaching aids address learning gaps by ensuring that all students get the support they need for their learning. While teachers are required to adhere to curriculum standards, they always face challenges in finding creative ways to boost students' understanding and engagement in the classroom. A body of research shows the effectiveness of using teaching aids in enhancing material accessibility, ensuring resources efficiency, and supporting blended learning.

2. Statement of the problem

In the context of higher education in Libya, teachers face challenges due to low student engagement in the classroom. Despite using teaching aids, students often remain passive and do not actively participate during lessons. Such challenges negatively affect teachers' performance and further hinder efforts to promote students' learning.

3. The aim of the study

This study aims to develop a deeper understanding of the types of teaching aids used by English Department teachers at the Faculty of Education, Misurata University and their role in enhancing learning among students of the department.

4. Research questions:

1. What types of teaching aids are used by English Department teachers?
2. How do English Department teachers perceive the role of teaching aids in enhancing learning?

5. Objectives

- To identify the teaching aids used by English department teachers at the Faculty of Education, Misurata University.
- To analyze teachers' perceptions of the role of teaching in enhancing learning.

6. Related studies

Moving beyond their traditional function as supplementary tools, teaching aids have become a fundamental pillar that has made a significant transformation in recent education, shifting it from teacher-centered learning to student-centered learning that encourages student's taking the initiative in learning process.

6.1 Importance of teaching aids.

For teachers, teaching aids enable teachers to break down complex ideas into comprehensible parts and act as bridges between abstract knowledge and classroom application. Instead of spending much time of explanation, teaching aids allow teachers to cover more material with the least effort and time. They make class lessons more dynamic and interactive through providing teachers with multiple teaching approaches that align with their students' different learning styles and fill the gap of their individual differences (Fleming, 2001). Moreover, teaching aids help in classroom management and create learning environment where students are kept interested and involved. Pajares (1992), claims that teachers' instructional decisions -like choosing the appropriate teaching aids- are affected by their profound beliefs. " Despite teachers' motivation to use teaching aids, they encounter multiple challenges. These challenges were grouped into two categories: Internal classroom challenges include teachers' reluctance, large class size, inadequate time management, limited ICT skills, heavy workload, and lack of lesson preparation" (Momen & Aich 2025, p.1). Importantly, Y. Li et al., (2023), emphasizes the influence of teachers' expertise and qualifications on their choices of teaching aids. Moreover, teachers' perceptions of the importance of teaching aids vary from one context to another.

For students, teaching aids boost students' enthusiasm and motivation through creating enjoyable environment where students interact with concrete examples that facilitate retention and information recall (Schunk, et. al. 2014). According to Hamza et al. (2024), teaching aids provide a real-world applications that help students to make connections between theory (their knowledge) and practice (application of knowledge). When students understand concepts more easily through teaching aids, they feel confident in their abilities. This confidence encourages more participation and interaction, which contribute to enhanced learning. Teaching aids involve the learners physically, mentally, emotionally, and environmentally. A teaching aid can involve learners physically through their senses, mentally through stimulating thinking, emotionally by enhancing motivation, and environmentally through increasing their awareness of what they do. According to Subramony et al., (2014), teaching aids contribute to supporting multiple levels of learning (retention), as illustrated by Sheal (1989):

7.2 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Thematic Analysis was used as it is particularly good for analyzing interview and focus group data. Data that were collected in this study were recorded at a Nominal Level of Measurement, as they can be classified into categories but the categories do not have a natural order (Nowell et al., 2017; Idika et al., 2023).

The responses were coded by the researcher and the participants exchanged their ideas in regard to the research questions. The analysis process included three steps described below:

Step 1: The participants started to discuss the items of the first tool "the focus group" together. And then, each teacher responded to the items of the second tool "the interview" individually.

Phase 2: Any form of qualitative data identified in Phase 1, both focus group and interview were coded based on the themes that emerged from the data through each participant's responses and therefore any duplicate occurrences, or responses, were discarded

Step 3: Results came to light during the interpretation process and the researcher tried to find a common ground among the data that were collected by both of the research tools. The themes within the data are quantified by looking at the frequency and compiling them numerically. The numerical values represent how many times the theme appeared in the data set and is determined through expert opinion for the purpose of reliability.

Step 4: A Chi-Square Goodness-of-Fit Test was conducted to determine whether the types of teaching aids used by English Department teachers and their perceptions of the role of teaching aids were equally distributed across response categories.

7.3 Participants...

Fifteen faculty members from the English Department in the Faculty of Education participated in this study.

7.4 Reliability

- Triangulation: Methodological triangulation between-method (focus group and interview) (Ravitch & Carl 2021).
- Member check: An expert review.

8. Results

8.1 Statistical Analysis

The results revealed no statistically significant deviation from an equal distribution for teaching aid types ($\chi^2(11) = 3.000, p = 0.964$). As shown in **Table 1**, the most frequently used teaching aids were Data show ($n = 13, 18.3\%$), Board ($n = 12, 16.9\%$), and Pictures ($n = 10, 14.1\%$). In contrast, Documentaries ($n = 1, 1.4\%$), Quizzes ($n = 1, 1.4\%$), and Teacher ($n = 1, 1.4\%$) were the least frequently used. These findings indicate that English Department teachers do not use all types of teaching aids equally; instead, they show a strong preference for technological and visual aids such as Data shows, Boards, and Pictures over printed or traditional materials.

The Chi-Square test also showed that was no statistically significant deviation from an equal distribution for teachers' perceptions ($\chi^2(6) = 0.714, p = 0.982$). As presented in **Table 2**, the majority of teachers perceived teaching aids as "very effective in enhancing learning" ($n = 12, 31.6\%$) and as tools that "facilitate teaching" ($n = 10, 26.3\%$). A smaller percentage viewed them as merely "auxiliary instructional tools" ($n = 3, 7.9\%$) or as saving time and effort ($n = 2, 5.3\%$). Very few teachers associated teaching aids with encouraging critical thinking ($n = 1, 2.6\%$) or helping in class management ($n = 1, 2.6\%$). These findings suggest that no single type of perception dominates among the participants.

8.2 Table 1: Frequencies and Percentages of Teaching Aids Used

Teaching Aid	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Data show	13	18.3
Board	12	16.9
Pictures	10	14.1
Textbooks	9	12.7
Recording	8	11.3
Phones	7	9.9
Games	4	5.6
Posters	3	4.2
Films	2	2.8
Documentaries	1	1.4
Quizzes	1	1.4
Teacher	1	1.4
Total	71	100

8.3 Table 2: Frequencies and Percentages of Teachers' Perceptions

Perception Statement	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
They are very effective in enhancing learning	12	31.6
They facilitate teaching	10	26.3
They increase entertainment	9	23.7
They are only auxiliary instructional tools	3	7.9
They save time and effort	2	5.3
They encourage critical thinking	1	2.6
They help in class management	1	2.6
Total	38	100

9. Discussion

This study is a significant contribution to the growing body of literature that highlights the positive role of teaching aids in enhancing learning. It shed light on a variety of teaching aids that frequently used by English teachers in the Libyan context. This may be due to the participants' various levels of expertise and qualifications. According to Y. Li et al., (2023), teachers' choice of teaching aids is basically influenced by their expertise and qualifications. These teaching aids are: Data show, board, pictures, textbooks, recording, phones, games, posters, films, documentaries, quizzes and teacher.

The variation in the use of different types of teaching aids also reflects differences in teachers' perceptions of the role of teaching aids and their beliefs towards their importance in the learning process. According to Pajares (1992), teachers' profound beliefs towards teaching have great influence on their class decisions. The findings show that teachers perceive teaching aids as: effective tools in enhancing learning, facilitate teaching, increase entertainment, auxiliary tools, save time and effort, encourage critical thinking and help in class management.

10. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study findings indicate that English Department teachers hold predominantly positive perceptions of teaching aids, viewing them as effective learning enhancers and teaching facilitators rather than as supplementary or entertainment-focused tools.

11. Limitations

- The sample size hinders the generalization of the study findings.

12. Recommendations

- Future studies may explore the effect of teachers' expertise and qualifications on their perceptions and choice of the types of teaching aids.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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