

## وجهات نظر الأساتذة تجاه التدريس الإبداعي في التعليم العالي

\*فاطمة مصطفى بالحاج

قسم اللغة الإنجليزية ، كلية التربية جنزو ، جامعة طرابلس ، ليبيا

Fatima.fmb88@gmail.com.

تاریخ الارسال 7/7/2025 تاریخ القبول 8/11/2025م

### الملخص :

كليات التربية تعتبر بوابة نحو تعليم أفضل عبر تشجيع طلابها ليصبحوا أساتذة في المستقبل. لهذا السبب فإن الدراسة الحالية تهدف إلى البحث في إدراك أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعات نحو أهمية التدريس بالإبداع. تم اختيار المشاركين في هذا البحث بطريقة عشوائية من كلية التربية جنزو للسنة الدراسية 2024 و 2025. تمت مشاركة 19 عنصر نسائي من أساتذة قسم اللغة الإنجليزية. هذه الدراسة استخدمت في تصميم البحث الطريقة المختلطة في جمع البيانات باستخدام أكثر من أداة. تم استخدام الاستبيان باستخدام مقياس ليكرت الخماسي موزعة على فئتين: المعلومات الديموغرافية وإدراك الأساتذة نحو أهمية التدريس بالإبداع. والطريقة الأخرى في جمع البيانات كانت عن طريق المقابلات شبه المنظمة. نتائج هذا البحث أظهرت أن الأستاذة كان لديهم إدراك إيجابي نحو التدريس بالإبداع. تم أيضا مناقشة توصيات لأبحاث جديدة في المستقبل.

## "Teacher's Perceptions towards Teaching Creatively in Higher Education"

\*Fatema Mostafa Bilhaj

Assistant Lecturer, English Language Department, Janzour Faculty of Education, Tripoli University, Tripoli, Libya.

Fatima.fmb88@gmail.com.

### Abstract

Faculties of education consider a gate towards a better education by encouraging their students to be creative teachers in future. Thus, the present study aims to investigate university EFL teachers' perceptions towards teaching creatively. Participants were chosen randomly from Janzour Faculty

of Education for the academic year 2024-2025. They were 19 female university EFL teachers from English Language Department. The study used a mixed method research design using a questionnaire with Likert's five-point scale distributed into two categories: demographic information and teachers' perceptions towards teaching creatively. To triangulate the data, a semi-structured interview was employed along with the survey. The findings revealed that teachers' perceptions were high. Implications as well as recommendations for future research were discussed.

**Key words:** teaching creatively, EFL, higher education, perceptions, creative practices.

## **1. Introduction**

Promoting creativity in Libyan contemporary education becomes a requirement nowadays. There is a need to involve creative approaches to learning and teaching. For clarity, creativity is one of the important life skills required for teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is one of the skills that enable teachers to prepare students for their future careers (Ismayilova & Laksov, 2022). Creativity should be visible in education community (Hellens, 2020). Teaching creatively demands that teachers produce creative thinkers who can effectively deal with unpredictable situations; therefore, they are responsible for providing a creative environment (Al-Nouh et al. 2014). There is also evidence that teachers are crucial to enhancing creativity in the educational system (Ozdemir ,2016). Therefore, creativity can be taught and learned in our classrooms (Aldujayn & Alsubhi, 2020). Classroom environment has an important value in fostering creativity (Aldujayn & Alsubhi, 2020). Teachers should provide a productive environment where creative activities are employed. As a result, the required outcomes will be achieved (Hellens, 2020).

Teaching creatively results in producing high-achieving students, however, many university teachers still applying rote learning in higher education. (Ismayilova & Laksov, 2022). Although creativity in teaching has been extensively discussed in research field, it is not applicable enough in the work field.

There is a lack of research on teaching creatively in Libyan EFL faculties of education. Particularly, no enough studies have investigated the perception of

Libyan EFL teachers which can lead to better education. Understanding the concept of teaching creatively will produce students with creative teaching practices. For this purpose, this research is aimed to investigate university teachers' perceptions towards teaching creatively in higher education. The study addresses one main research question:

What are the teachers' perceptions towards teaching creatively in higher education?

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

Students in the faculty of education are the core element towards changing the concept of traditional teaching towards a better education as they are going to be a 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers. Preparing these students to be ready for working field demands to investigate teachers' perceptions in faculties of education towards teaching creatively. It is important to gain a better understanding of creativity in teaching context in order to produce actual classrooms where students are enriching with creative thinking and practices.

There is a lack of sufficient studies about teaching creatively in Libyan Context. For this reason, there is a requirement to investigate how teachers understand and foster creativity to gain better educational outcomes. Most importantly, teachers in higher education are more likely to foster rote learning and produce students who are interested in high grades on formal tests rather than equipping them with important life skills.

## **3. Literature Review**

### **3.1. Teacher Conceptualization of Teaching Creatively**

Understanding how teachers perceive the term teaching creatively could enhance teaching in faculties of education. Several studies have investigated teachers' perceptions of creativity from various perspectives. Greenier & Zha (2023) generally introduced creativity as a trait that can be found in majority of people. They also indicated that teachers' conceptualization of creativity in the context of language education could even differ in the same region. The Survey participants in their study affirmed that they do not have a specific definition for creativity. In addition, another research was conducted by Ismayilova & Laksov (2022) revealed that there were slightly different views for creative teaching among university teachers. They expressed that creative teaching is the teachers' ability to involve students in learning process and

problem solving in a challenging situation. Aldujayn & Alsubhi (2020) noted that both male and female participants did not have a clear concept about what creativity is. Rak (2021) pointed out that although participants were aware of the different levels of creativity, they defined creativity in the employment of creative practices.

Talebloo et al. (2015) noted that creativity may define differently according to the researchers' focus on their investigation. Therefore, this was their reason for why creativity has divergent concepts. Based on the majority of their participants' view, creativity in teaching could be applied to all subjects. It is not restricted to specific domains such as visual arts, music, drama and artistic presentation. An earlier study by Sousa (2007) on the perspectives of lecturers of a higher education institution into the effectiveness of teaching creatively. She demonstrated that creativity could be better defined by understanding the interaction between teachers and students. She offered a definition for creative teaching through improving learning process by specific presentation of knowledge in lectures or curriculum. Hellens (2020) stated that every human being is creative at different levels. Therefore, the creativity of students can be enhancing through effective learning process. Hellen (2020) accentuated the need for a framework for teachers to foster creativity and creative thinking in the classroom

### 3.2. Creativity in Language Teaching

A considerable transition nowadays is required in educational system in developing individuals' creativity due to rapid technological changes and innovation. The concept of creativity in teaching has been extensively discussed by different scholars. There is a disagreement between researchers and teachers when defining precisely the term creatively in the teaching context. Supporting this claim, previous research by Ozdemir (2016) believed that teachers must value the characteristics of creative learners in classroom. The finding of Ismayilova & Laksov (2022) asserted that the manifestation of creativity in language teaching depends on how the teacher introduces lectures in innovational or novel process. Hence, recent research by Greenier & Zha (2023) in the Chinese context found that creativity can be found in teaching subjects of any language. They exemplified that there is a constant development and change in the teaching and learning process. However, they

specifically manifested that a higher possibility of creative performance will appear more in music and craftsmanship domains than academic subjects. They viewed that students' academic achievement is a clear indicator for creativity. They clearly viewed that English manifested the least creativity than math, technology, and science.

In previous research by Ismayilova & Laksov (2022) inferred that creativity can be learned and improved by teachers. This finding is akin to Aldujayn & Alsubhi's (2020) finding. They highlighted that creativity is one of the teaching skills that could be enhanced by teachers through teaching fields. They gave the importance for understanding the teaching practices of creativity which facilitate and boost the use of creative approaches and methods in classroom. As findings from Aldujayn & Alsubhi's (2020) study recommended for the importance of the implementation of sufficient support such as financial fund, technological equipment, professional development training, or other educational materials and resources. Moreover, Talebloo et al. (2015) recognized that curriculum planners, designers should reinforce the curriculum with creative practices in order to increase its effectiveness. Sousa (2007) clarified that creativity should be considered as one of the main parts of teaching. Furthermore, Rak (2021) concluded that the students' low level of linguistic knowledge could constrain learner's creativity. Rak expressed that lessons should be supplied with plenty of modern teaching materials. As a result, classrooms will be a place of motivating students to think, take a risk while answering and sharing unusual ideas.

### 3.3. Teachers' Role in Teaching Creatively

The characteristics of a creative teacher varies among researchers depending on the different teaching discipline. Teachers in high education system are a crucial component in the construction of better education. Sousa (2007) noted that teachers have to consider that students are the main goal towards creative teaching. This Portuguese study by Sousa (2007) revealed that creative teachers can give better definition for creativity in teaching than less creative teachers. Early research by Rak (2021) investigated how EFL teachers perceive and encourage creativity in their classrooms showed that creativity should be promoted not only in Languages but also for other subjects. She insisted on the fact that EFL classrooms can enhance creativity through

assigning learners to a plenty of tasks. These tasks whether were oral or written should be interesting to work individually or in pairs. Ozdemir (2016) mentioned that teachers have a noticeable effect on their student's development. Consistent with Greenier & Zha's (2023) study who indicated that teachers are the main part in enhancing student's creative abilities through eliciting, encouraging, and designing creative classroom methods and activities. The results showed that learners' creativity can be developed by teachers. According to Ismayilova & Laksov's (2022) study, the personal attributes of teachers in which being imaginative and reflective are the keys of being a creative teacher. surprisingly, they also found that teachers with less teaching experience and low self-efficacy may increase creative teaching. They explained that when teachers use their imagination to plan their courses with much effort. This challenge results in a creative teaching. Research was done by Talebloo et al. (2015) posited that teachers' creativity can be seen efficient if learners' abilities improved through their learning process. This closely matches Al-Nouh et al. (2014) who stated that teachers are serving as an essential component in fostering creativity for their students. They suggested that learners should be given space to utilize their creativity to solve problems in real situations. Also, these researchers found that teacher's age play a role whether creativity was employed or not in their classes. Young teachers with less experience tend to be motivated than elders. Consequently, participants in Rak's (2021, P. 41) study were asked to give a description for creative teachers, they said "They are brave, risk-takers, spontaneous, imaginative."

### 3.4. Teachers' Perception of Factors for Cultivating Creativity

A number of factors have a significant impact through determining teachers' creative approaches and attitudes in their classrooms. In this regard, Ozdemir (2016) clarified that training to improve teaching creatively in education system is important. He further explained that such training should equip teachers with both the enhancement of creativity in their teaching and curricular modifications. Ozdemir stressed that the most important how the teacher interact with students and give importance to individual styles. Greenier & Zha (2023) affirmed that involving creative activities that require curiosity and noticing play an important contribution to the creative

environment. They enhance the use of critical thinking skills when they are designed with the right level of challenge. Another notable factors for nurturing creativity in the classroom in Greenier & Zha's (2023) study were identified in terms of using humour, giving appropriate feedback, listening carefully without prejudgments, and acknowledging students' individualities. The primary deterring factor found in Ismayilova & Laksov's (2022) study that university teachers had to work under pressure when they are teaching creatively. The researchers clarified that it could be of course a result of the fulfilling other job demands. The other factor identified by Ismayilova & Laksov (2022) was teacher's flexibility in teaching formats, curriculum, and sufficient time for planning could constrain creative teaching. They also referred to how the relationship between colleagues is important to increase their creative teaching practices. They pointed out that the positive environment can be created through the collaboration and support among colleagues. Aldujayn & Alsubhi (2020) suggested that there will be a significant difference for EFL teachers if educational stakeholders allocate official centers for teaching creatively. These centers should provide EFL teachers with creative instruction, strategies and skills that can be employed in real classroom. A Malaysian study was conducted by Talebloo et al. (2015) showed that the historical and social environment had a fundamental impact on teachers' creativity. Nevertheless, they exemplified a plenty of procedures to boost creativity in education. The first was training Courses that provide creative practices. The second was educational policy documentation to raise the attention to the benefits of creative outcomes of implementing creative teaching practices and techniques. This parallels Sousa's claim (2007) who mentioned that faculties should be required to enable teacher to apply creativity without constraints. In this regard, a Kuwaiti study by Al Nouh et al. (2014) reported that curriculum content and the insufficient time of lecture were considered main factors which hinder the proper utilization of creative thinking. Added to these factors were the traditional application of teaching methods, traditional written tests and lack of resources as well as parents' cooperation. These results were consented with Rak (2021) who claimed that reducing the lecture time and curriculum size would increase creativity in classrooms. Rak pointed out that a positive classroom environment can boost

creativity. Moreover, she observed that high creativity in classrooms was when the teachers expressed a sense of humor and positive feedback. Also, when students are allowed to change their seats to be visible to each other. Similarly, Hellens (2020) showed that social and environmental needs of students is important to be taken in consideration to facilitate the process of teaching creatively in classrooms. Hellens also stressed the need for teachers' professional development programs.

#### **4. Methodology**

##### **4.1. Research Design**

To achieve this, a study using a mixed method approach was applied. The researcher looked through the existing literature and found that the mixed method research was the most prominent in relevant previous studies. The quantitative approach could be convenient due to its numerical nature which provides reliable and objective results. Whereas, the qualitative research approach provides rich and detailed description of the research subjects and the event being researched.

##### **4.2. Participants**

The target population of this study was 19 females Libyan EFL teachers in Janzour Faculty of Education. Although the questionnaire was administered to all English faculty members females and males, responses were received from only 19 female teachers. Thus, the study sample consisted of 19 female respondents. A random sample was chosen because the possibilities of data to be apparent, fruitful and had the potential to inform other stakeholders. They were selected on the basis of their willingness to participate in the study and availability to be interviewed at times convenient to both themselves and the researcher. Survey participants were asked to indicate their opinions about the statements by marking one of the following: Strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the demographic diversity within the sample, providing valuable insights into the perceptions of Libyan EFL teachers. Only female teachers who participated to answered the survey.

To probe deeper into EFL teachers' perceptions, 6 female teachers were interviewed separately. A sample of six participants was sufficient to capture diverse viewpoints while maintaining the depth required for qualitative

analysis. Nevertheless, six participants was an adequate number to obtain meaningful qualitative data that complemented the questionnaire results. Interview questions were structured to investigate teacher's perceptions towards teaching creatively in higher education.

### 4.3. Instrumentation

In this study data were collected during the second semester of the academic year Autumn 2024 through a questionnaire and semi structured interviews. To collect the descriptive data, a 25-item questionnaire was designed by the researcher herself to investigate participants' perceptions towards statements about teaching creatively in higher education on a 5-point Likert-type scale of agreement (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree). The researcher- designed questionnaire was based on the study's conceptual framework, which was supported by findings from previous relevant studies. This served as the conceptual basis for constructing the items.

To validate the questionnaire, it was reviewed by Libyan Academic teachers to ensure comprehension and clearness of items. Their comments were used to revise the questionnaire. To test the reliability, a pilot study was conducted in which the questionnaire was given to 4 Libyan Academic teachers to further check comprehension and clarity of the items. As a result, modifications were made for clarity and precision. All of the questionnaire paragraphs were written in positive and negative\_statements. The questionnaire was further categorized into subtitles for ease analysis.

This research employed a focused semi-structured interview using open-ended questions to support the information in the questionnaire. Interviews took place through online messenger calls, one of the online social messaging platforms which is convenient for interviewing in Libya. The interviews focused on Libyan teacher's perceptions towards teaching creatively in higher education. They were conducted by the researcher herself and were recorded for the purpose of analysis. A schedule of further questions was drawn up and used as a rough guide to steer the interview process. Each Interviewee participated in one semi-structured interview which were approximately 20 minutes in duration.

### 4.4. Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire was distributed via e-mail at the beginning of the academic year, in Autumn of 2024. Respondents were given time to complete the survey. An electronic data collection method was chosen because online survey allows for effective and economical surveying of the entire population. The data of questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics, namely frequencies and percentages. The participants' responses were calculated for each statement and then tallied in a table. Content analysis was applied to analyze qualitative data. In parallel with the purpose of the research, data collected through semi-structure interviews revealed several themes which are classified under 5 main headings including: (1) Advantages of teaching creatively in higher education. (2) Disadvantages of higher education. (3) Designing lectures towards teaching creatively. (4) Students' benefits from teaching creatively. (5) Encouragement of Teaching Creatively in Future in Higher Education.

### 5. Results

#### 5.1. Analysis of Interview Data

The interviews aimed to investigate in greater detail the perceptions of Libyan EFL university teachers of teaching creatively in higher education.

##### 5.1.1. Advantages of Teaching Creatively in Higher Education.

Teaching creatively can be considered as a critical component in learning and teaching process. It affects students' personality, abilities, the task itself, and the teachers' behaviors. The following remarks were captured from an interviewee F:

*Teaching creatively leaves impact on students themselves in their personalities, abilities and how they will perform the task. It also effects on how the teacher will behave in his or her classroom.*

All interviewees pointed out that there are plenty of benefits for teaching creatively in higher education. They admitted that it has a huge impact on the development of students' skills and abilities. Teaching creatively would increase students' motivation through encouraging them to actively participate in lesson. Interviewees A, B and D believed that teaching creatively demands to manifest students' creative thinking visible. Similarly, interviewee C affirmed that it is a constant process of development of students' knowledge and it is also an enhancement of their critical thinking

and problem-solving skills. While interviewee F conceded that teaching creatively upgrades students' level. It would stir students to think outside the box and to look to the situation from different perspectives so as a result they would come up with creative solutions. An interviewee F held a similar belief, asserting that teaching creatively stimulates and energizes both the teacher and students. She stated that it promotes their independent learning.

### 5.1.2. Disadvantages of Teaching Creatively in Higher Education.

All interviewees mentioned that teaching creatively is not an easy type of teaching. Interviewee C commented:

*It is not like rote learning. You have to work hard to design your lecture.*

They emphasized that it requires trained instructors who could implement creative methods and approaches. Interviewees A, B and C insisted that financial resources and the lack of facilities and equipment inside institution hinder teaching creatively. Time consuming is considered another obstacle which was mentioned by interviewees E and D. They added that it requires much time for preparing lessons and to collect the appropriate activities. Moreover, some lessons will expand to more than one lecture. They regarded teacher's efforts to come up with modern learning is a kind of obstacle. Interviewees D and F classified teacher's efficacy to utilize standards for assessment as a disadvantage of teaching creatively. They explained that this kind of teaching requires teachers' abilities to objectively measure students' outcome. Other disadvantages demonstrated by interviewees D, E and F where in terms of students' unfamiliarity of this type of teaching, their low language proficiency levels, personalities and their large number. Three of participants viewed teaching creatively would better be implemented with practical subjects than theoretical subjects. All interviewees agreed that teachers must fully understand the nature of teaching creatively to smoothly run the lectures. They also agreed about another element which is self-efficacy that plays an important role to be a creative teacher.

### 5.1.3. Designing Lectures towards Teaching Creatively.

Half of interviewees agreed that teaching creatively would appear clearly in practical subjects than theoretical subjects. Interviewee D intimated thus, *The process is much easier in practical subjects than theoretical subjects. You have less obstacles.*

In direct contrast, interviewee C who teaches writing courses added that teaching creatively occurs when leading students to use their creative thinking whatever the subject is. She believed that the type of teaching practices will reflect students' creativity. She added that it will appear in their writing stories, brainstorming, free writing, mapping, portfolios and giving them risk taking assignments. Interviewee A had a quite different opinion, she thought that teaching creatively would be mainly through utilizing student-centered instead of rote learning. All of interviewees stressed that one of the essential elements that leads to teaching creatively is integrating technology in lesson plans. Nonetheless, they demonstrated that technology influences greatly on how students perceive the lesson. They emphasized that classes should be equipped with smart boards, data show, internet and websites. Another similar opinion was held by all interviewees in which they perceive teaching creatively as the teachers' efficacy to carry out creative practices such as communicative, cognitive and project-based approach into the classrooms. Interviewee F believed that teaching creatively can be achieved through injecting a variety of creative practices into lesson plan such as implementing interactive games, discussions, interesting and intriguing activities. Also, encouraging students to debate. She commented that teaching creatively can take a place if the teacher enriches the subject with visuals, drawings, pictures, charts, graphs, and videos. She believed that teaching creatively is not only restricted to classroom practices but also can be held with assessment. She clarified that the type of assessment should also encourage learner's creativity. Another point was held by interviewee E, she stated that teaching creatively can take place by developing the existed curriculum. She believed that lectures should be designed through engaging students to learn and giving them the opportunity to act upon their learning. Teachers also required to ask deeply questions during the lecture to encourage students to use their creativity. Similarly, interviewee B perceived teaching creatively as the teacher's ability to apply the latest teaching methods and strategies and to generate innovative activities. Majority of Interviewees pointed out that teachers' personal traits play a role in teaching creatively. They gave examples for a creative teacher with an independent and open-minded personality. Interviewee A and C stated teachers' personalities have an impact on how

teaching will be implemented in the lecture. Interviewee A believed that a teacher with a creative personality will respond to unexpected challenges.

### 5.1.4. Implementing Teaching Creatively would Benefit Students

All interviewees admitted that teaching creatively promotes students' skills of deeply critical thinking and problem solving in language learning. One of the interviewees who was teaching creative writing affirmed this, *implementing teaching creatively motivates students to acquire imaginative and life skills.*

She stated that these skills would encourage them to be open minded to others' viewpoint and looking to the problem from different perspectives. Consequently, this will help them to be future leaders. Teachers responded that English language classes where teaching creatively is implemented should provide a friendly and positive classroom environment. This has many benefits to enhance students' creativity. Interviewee F added that these language classes where learners are active and working busily in small groups, sharing ideas, initiating discussions, reinforcing one another. Interviewees found out that the process of teaching creatively enables students to inquire team work skills and promote their positive social interaction that would prepare them to the real life. Moreover, the participants reported that these classes motivate a good rapport between students and teacher.

### 5.1.5. Encouragement of Teaching Creatively in Future in Higher Education

Participants agreed on a number of suggestions that could encourage teaching creatively in higher education. They indicated that in order to achieve teaching creatively, universities should provide facilities and allocate budgets for teaching materials. Also, they suggested that universities should allocate places for holding training workshops and conferences. These workshops and conferences could provide university teachers with teaching creatively insights. Participants showed a highly agreement on implementing technology in higher education as attested in the following statement by interviewee C,

*Each university should have rooms equipped with smart boards, loud speakers and an internet access provider.*

## 5.2. Analysis of Questionnaire

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Teaching Creatively in Higher Education**

Item	SA	A	N	SD	D
Teaching creatively is not a clear concept to me	0.0%	15%	0.0%	36%	47%
Teaching creatively boosts L2 learning	73%	21%	0.0%	0.0%	1%
Teaching creatively refers to the teacher's ability to generate innovative teaching practices	36.8%	63.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Teaching creatively encourages students to solve problems in teaching situations.	52.6%	31.6%	15.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Teaching creatively stirs students towards innovations and novelty in teaching	52.6%	31.6%	10.5%	0.0%	5.3%
Teaching creatively requires investing a huge amount of time on lesson plans.	26.3%	47.4%	21.1%	0.0%	5.3%
Teaching creatively should be teachable in faculties of education	52.6%	47.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The information shows that 36 % of teachers strongly disagreed and 47 % disagreed that the concept of teaching creatively is not clear. while 15 % agreed. In responses to the statement whether teaching creatively boosts L2 learning or not. 73% of teachers strongly agreed and 21% agreed. Only 1 % of them pointed out they disagreed. More than half of survey participants 63.2 % agreed that teaching creatively is the teacher's ability to generate innovative teaching practices whereas 36.8 % strongly agreed. The information regarding the teachers' choice about the students' enhancement of teaching creatively in solve problems shows that 52.6 % of teachers

## "Teacher's Perceptions towards Teaching Creatively in Higher Education"

strongly agreed and 31.6 % agreed, whereas 15. 8 % were undecided. About half of the survey participants 52.6 % strongly agreed and 31.6 % agreed that teaching creatively explores students to the innovations and novelty in teaching. While 5.3% stated that teaching creatively does not explore students to the innovations and novelty in teaching. Only 10.5% of them were undecided. Around 47.4 % of teachers agreed and 26.3 % strongly agreed that teaching creatively demands much time in preparing lesson plans. However, 21.1% of participants were undecided and only 5.3 % of teachers disagreed. When teachers were asked whether teaching creatively should be taught in faculties of education, 52.6 % of teachers responded strongly agree and 47.4% agreed.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Role in Teaching Creatively

Item	SA	A	N	SD	D
Teachers' personality traits determine how much teaching creatively could be applied.	26.3%	57.9%	10.5%	0.0%	5.3%
Imaginative thinking is a requirement for a creative teacher	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%	21.1%	68.4%
Exchanging ideas with colleagues can build the practices of teaching creatively	42.1%	47.4%	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%
Sufficient teaching materials and resources encourage teachers' creativity.	47.4%	42.1%	5.3%	0.0%	5.3%
Teachers' teaching experience is important to be a creative teacher	21.1%	31.6%	15.8%	5.3%	26.3%
Teaching creatively depends on teacher's competence and knowledge	36.8%	42.1%	10.5%	0.0%	10.5%
Teaching creatively can be increased by professional development programs	52.6%	42.1%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Teaching creatively allows to look to the teaching situation from different educational perspectives.	42.1%	5.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

When they were asked whether teacher's personality play a role in deciding the quantity of teaching creativity could be implemented in classrooms, 57.9 % of teachers responded agree and 26.3 % strongly agreed. However, teachers

observed that personality traits did not determine the amount of the teaching creatively in classrooms were 5.3 % disagreed, whereas 10.5 % of them were undecided about their choice. Teachers who disagreed that creative teachers should possess imaginative thinking skills dominated in the total survey (68.4%) whereas 21.1% of teachers who strongly disagreed, although with a large difference, the portions were equal (5.3%) for the participants who agreed and strongly agreed. As can be seen with a slight difference, 47.4 % of participants agreed and 42.1% strongly agreed that their understanding of reinforcement of colleagues' exchanging views on the practices of teaching creatively. Participants who were undecided were 5.3%. Whereas 5.3 % strongly disagreed the teaching creatively practices can be acquired through exchanging ideas with colleagues. University teachers were asked to comment on whether sufficient teaching materials and resources promote their creativity in teaching, 47.4% of teachers who strongly agreed and 42.1% who agreed. The other teachers who were undecided were 5.3% while with an equal portion 5.3% of them disagreed. The percentage of teachers who agreed that teaching experience is an essential element for a creative teacher were 31.6% and 21.1% who strongly agreed. Thus, 15.8 % of teachers were neutral. On the whole in this sample, teachers who disagreed were 26.3% and who strongly disagreed were 5.3%. Teachers were asked to respond whether teaching creatively relies on teacher's competence and knowledge. The answers were given as 42.1 % of teachers who agreed and 36.8% of them strongly agreed. The percentage of teachers who were undecided were 10.5%, whereas 10.5% of teachers disagreed. From the overall sample, the highest percentage of respondents strongly agreed that teaching creatively can be increased by professional development programs with a total percentage (52.6 %) followed by teachers who agreed with (42.1%), then teachers who were undecided with (5.3%). Teachers seemed to have a positive attitude towards the chance through teaching creatively to look to the teaching situation from different educational perspectives. 5.7% of teachers gave an agree response and 42.1% strongly agreed.

## "Teacher's Perceptions towards Teaching Creatively in Higher Education"

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Nature of Creative Classroom Environment

Item	SA	A	N	SD	D
Teaching format has a negative impact on teaching creatively	10.1%	21.1%	47.4%	0.0%	21.1%
Curricula play a role towards teaching creatively	21.1%	42.1%	31.6%	0.0%	5.3%
Integrating technology in lesson plan is essential in teaching creatively	42.1%	31.6%	15.8%	0.0%	10.5%
Teaching creatively requires the proper application of creative thinking activities in a lecture	31.6%	52.6%	10.5%	0.0%	5.3%
Lecture time is an essential factor in teaching creatively	26.3%	57.9%	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%
Students' level of language proficiency can affect teaching creatively	26.3%	10.5%	42.1%	5.3%	15.8%
The large number of students is a key element in teaching creatively	26.3%	31.6%	10.5%	5.3%	26.3%
Teaching creatively greatly impacts students' improvement and performance	42.1%	47.4%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Disruptive behavior is an obstacle to implement teaching creatively	21.1%	57.9%	10.5%	5.3%	5.3%

In responses to the statement which meant to find out whether teaching format influences negatively on teaching creatively, 21.1% of teachers agreed and 10.1% strongly agreed. With the same portion of agreement 21.1% disagreed. Surprisingly, the largest percentage 47.4% of teachers had a neutral opinion. The next statement which meant to sought out whether curricula were important for teaching creatively or not. 42.1% of teachers agreed and 21.1% strongly agreed that it is important, whereas 5.3% of them disagreed, and 31.6% of teachers had a neutral opinion towards its role. The next statement dealt with finding out whether implementing technology in lessons is a foundation for teaching creatively. 31.6% agreed and 42.1% strongly agreed that technology has a strong support in teaching creatively, whereas 15.8% were undecided. The lower percentage was 10.5% who disagreed. The

## "Teacher's Perceptions towards Teaching Creatively in Higher Education"

following statement sought to find out whether utilizing authentic situations preferred to foster more language use. The proportions were equal 36.8% who agreed and strongly agreed. Only 5.3% of teachers disagreed, and 21. % of them had a neutral opinion. Teachers were split in their opinions whether teaching creatively demands the correct use of creative thinking activities in a lecture or not. 31.6 % is the number of teachers who strongly agreed followed by teachers who agreed with (52.6%), then teachers who were undecided with (10.5%) and others with 5.3% who disagreed. In their responses whether lecture time tends to have an important role in teaching creatively, 57.9% agreed and 26.3% strongly agreed that lecture time is an essential element. However, the percentage was equal for the other choices. 5.3% were disagreed and strongly disagreed. Similarly, 5.3% were undecided.

**Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of Students in Creative Classroom Environment**

Item	SA	A	N	SD	D
Students' level of language proficiency can affect teaching creatively	26.3%	10.5%	42.1%	5.3%	15.8%
The large number of students is a key element in teaching creatively	26.3%	31.6%	10.5%	5.3%	26.3%
Teaching creatively greatly impacts students' improvement and performance	42.1%	47.4%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Disruptive behavior is an obstacle to implement teaching creatively	21.1%	57.9%	10.5%	5.3%	5.3%

The information obtained on teachers' attitudes towards the effect of their students' level of language proficiency towards teaching creatively was 26.3% of teachers who strongly agreed and 10.5% agreed. 42.1% of them had a neutral opinion. The others also were 15.8% who disagreed and 5.3% of them where strongly disagreed. The respondents reported that 26.3% strongly agreed that the large number of students is one of the essential pillars followed by 31.6% of them who agreed while 10.5% they did not decide. 26.3% expressed their disagreement and 5.3% strongly disagreed with the given statement. 47.4% of teachers agreed and 42.1% strongly agreed that

teaching creatively increases students' improvement and performance. While 10.5% of teachers were not able to decide whether teaching creatively develops their students' performance or not.

## **6. Discussion**

Data obtained from survey on teachers' perceptions towards teaching creatively on higher education revealed that teachers generally held positive attitudes towards teaching creatively. The results of this study suggested that the participants mostly found the concept of teaching creatively is clear in terms of generating creative teaching practices through students' motivation which is in accordance with what Greenier & Zha (2023) suggest. An opposite view was conducted in a Saudi study by Aldujayn & Alsubhi (2020) which stated that participants of their study were uncertain about how to define creativity in teaching. The finding is dissimilar to the Nedjah & Hamada (2017). They expressed that teachers were unfamiliar with the notion of creativity. They gave an example for the confusion for the assessment whether it should be for the content knowledge or for creative abilities. Hence, the findings of this study showed that teaching creatively enables students to acquire creative thinking skills such as problem-solving and utilizing these skills in authentic situations. These results confirm the findings of Ismayilova & Laksov's study (2022) who defined creative teaching as the teachers' capacity in involving students to solve problems in a challenging teaching situation. Consequently, participants of this study stated that this creativity in teaching led to offering opportunities to boost students' language. In the same view, Nedjah & Hamada (2017) pointed out that teaching creatively improves language students' proficiency level. All participants of this study believed that practices of teaching creatively should be teachable in faculties of education. They added that the purpose of studying in these faculties is to prepare them to be teachers. This result is in agreement with previous study by Aldujayn & Alsubhi (2020). It also resonates Ismayilova & Laksov's study (2022) who asserted that teaching creatively would take place if there is a collaboration in the academic department between teachers and students.

However, participants of this study also claimed that teaching creatively requires a huge amount of time for designing lectures. Their reasons were

because of the content of the curricula they need to cover each semester and the time allocated for each lecture. This result is in agreement with Ismayilova & Laksov's finding (2022) which asserted that teaching creatively would take much time in preparing lessons. Similar responses were noted in the study conducted by Al-Nouh's et al. (2014) on Kawiti primary school teachers. They considered creative language activities as a heavy work load for teachers. They mentioned that participants were under stress because of the insufficient time allocated to cover the content. Contrary, the results also differ with Nedjah & Hamada (2017) who does not consider creative language activities as a heavy workload in their teaching process.

In terms of teachers' role in teaching creatively, the majority of participants revealed that sufficient teaching materials and resources encourage teacher's creativity in higher education. They declared that there should be a need for consideration that integrating technology is an important element in encouraging teaching creatively. This finding is in accordance with Al Nouh's et al. (2014) finding. They stated that lack of teaching resources impeded creative teaching practices. The university teachers of this study confirmed that they would benefit greatly from professional development programs. They stated that this may result in increasing their abilities and skills. This is consistent with Ozdemir (2016) who laid on the importance of creativity training in an educational system. This training should cultivate creativity alongside with curriculum modification. Majority of participants reported that the collaboration and exchanging ideas among university teachers would also boost teaching creatively. In concord to the result of the present research, a study by Ismayilova & Laksov (2022) identified that the relationships between colleagues contributed to the practices of teaching creatively. They stated that positive encouragement, collaboration, and support between teachers can boost teachers' creativity. A similar experience in Kawiti primary schools was conducted by Al-Nouh's et al. (2014). They stressed that teachers' training programs are necessary and need to be held in order to teach students to develop their creative skills.

The findings highlighted the importance of teachers' personality traits in associate with teachers' competence and knowledge. The teacher personality plays an important role since they are responsible for creating a supportive

environment. The previous result supported research results by Sousa (2007) in Portugal. She noted that the teachers' personal style affected teaching creatively. Similarly, this is in parallel with research findings conducted by Ismayilova & Laksov's study (2022) who noted that the important attributes of creative teachers are to be imaginative and reflective. Another finding was given by university teachers when were asked whether teacher's experience is essential in teaching creatively was fairly positive. A different belief was held by Ismayilova & Laksov's finding (2022) who indicated that years of teaching experience are not necessary to be creative teaches. Their reason was alluded from the fact that even less experience teachers could teach creatively if they have the desire and to put much efforts in designing lectures.

On the other hand, it is clearly surprising that most of survey respondents of this study were unable to decide whether teaching format can affect teaching creatively. Whereas, the interview respondents stated that teaching format has the ability to effect on teaching creatively. Nedjah & Hamada (2017) demonstrated that the results showed teaching format was given the priority in their teaching than integrating creativity. They displayed that syllabus restrained teacher's creativity as the second requires time. The previous findings were also slightly consistent with Ismayilova & Laksov's finding (2022) who found that elasticity of teaching format and syllabi are beneficial to increase creativity in teaching.

The current finding announced that participants were aware that teaching creatively positively impacts their students' improvement and practices. They reported that teaching creatively fosters students' motivation in learning. As a result, it can lead to better grades. This result supported research results by Rak (2021) in Croatia. The researcher stated that creativity in teaching has positive effects on students' performance and skills. As can be seen in this study, almost half of teachers reported that teaching creatively can be hindered by the large number of students and their behaviors in the lecture. This finding is also in tandem with what Rak (2021) who suggested that creative teaching process offers a lot of chances for promoting students' creativity. This result is in harmony with Al-Nouh's et al. (2014) findings who found out that students' disruptive behavior is one of the constraints that mitigate creative teaching practices.

Majority of the survey participants were disagreed that imaginative thinking is not a requirement to be a creative teacher. This was also supported by what interviewee respondents declared. Interview participants stated that imaginative skills are a requirement for both teachers and students in teaching creatively. They announced that creative teachers have to train students to be confident in taking risks to encounter different challenges to come up with innovative solutions. The study finding closely matches Rak's (2021) description for creative teachers. The participants described creative teachers as willing to take risks, courageous, spontaneous, and imaginative.

Interviewees respondents highlighted that teacher's teaching experience has not a strong influence in teaching creatively. They claimed that as long as the teacher is energized and motivated so the teacher will have the ability to teach creatively. More surprising, this finding shows quite opposite to survey responses. Half of the survey participants stated that teaching experience positively influences on teacher's teaching creatively during lectures. Concerning the teachers' answers to the survey question related to the ability of teaching creatively, participants held a positive perception towards how teaching creatively will expand teachers' views to look to the teaching situations from different educational perspectives. Moreover, interview findings consider similarity in teachers' perceptions about the advantages of teaching creatively. Around half of interviewee participants revealed that teaching creatively enable both teachers and students to have different educational views to any teaching situation. Correspondingly, according to Hellens (2020) the participants believed that safe classroom environment ought to foster students' creativity. She commented that through involving students in situation, students will imply their skills and look from different perspectives to find solutions.

The results of this study showed an agreement for the demand to correctly implement creative thinking activities in a lecture in order to improve students' skills. Interviewees revealed that such activities enable students to have an active participation in the lecture and increase their achievement. This scenario was also apparent in a study by Greenier & Zha (2023) where all their participants expressed that using a variety of creative classroom activities are important to enhance student's skills and shape a creative

learning environment. Likewise, findings from the Algerian educational system supported the essential role for implementing creative thinking activities in English language classroom. The Algerian researchers Nedjah & Hamada (2017) stated that students through using creative activities, they had improved their skills and received better academic achievement.

## **7. Limitations for Future Research**

There are some limitations that future researchers should consider. First, this study was limited because of participant selection. EFL university teachers were only selected from Janzour Faculty of Education. Therefore, a larger sample and replication of this study with a different sample and faculty would be helpful for the generalizability of our findings. Although the total number of EFL university teachers in English Department in Janzour Faculty of Education were 30 only 19 answered the survey. Also, A further research could be held in school contexts. This study was based on interviews and questionnaires another future studies could apply other approaches to data collection such as classroom observations, and including teachers from other disciplines.

## **8. Recommendation**

Several recommendations emerge, for example, educational stakeholders should plan for a creativity training course in order to develop Libyan teachers' professional needs. These courses will equip teachers with creative teaching practices which lead to achieve teaching creatively in education. Thus, it is recommended that further research is needed on professional development for teaching creativity, to better support teachers in effectively implementing creativity in the classroom. The findings of the present study indicate a need for further research on how to assess creativity. Modern job markets demand adaptable, creative individuals who can innovate in complex, rapidly changing environments. By assessing creativity, institutions prepare students for real-world challenges and workforce expectations. Finally, a study of learners' perceptions of teaching creatively in higher education should be conducted to understand the possibilities and challenges of integrating creativity into the curriculum.

## References

Al-Nouh, N., Abdul-Kareem, M. & Taqi, H. (2014). Primary School EFL Teachers' Attitudes towards Creativity and Their Perceptions of Practice. Canadian Center of Science and Education. Vol 7(9): 74- 90. DOI: 10.5539/elt.v7n9p74

Aldujayn, N. & Alsubhi, A. (2020). Saudi EFL Teachers' Interpretation toward Creativity. Canadian Center of Science and Education. Vol 13(6):162-171. doi: 10.5539/elt.v13n6p162

Hellens, Andrea Margaret. (2020). *Teacher's Perceptions of Creativity and Teaching Creative Thinking in the Secondary School Classroom: Possibilities and Tensions* [PhD Thesis, School of Education, The University of Queensland. Thesis (open access) <https://doi.org/10.14264/9a5f671>

Ismayilova, K. & Laksov, K. (2022): Teaching Creatively in Higher Education: The Roles of Personal Attributes and Environment, Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research. 1-13 DOI: 10.1080/00313831.2022.2042732 <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2022.2042732>

NEDJAH, H., & HAMADA, H. (2017). Creativity in the EFL Classroom: Exploring Teachers' Knowledge and Perceptions. Arab World English Journal, 8 (4). DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol8no4.24>

Ozdemir, G. (2016). *Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Creativity Characteristics* [Master Thesis, State University of New York]. Creative Studies Graduate Student Master's Theses. Vol 28. (1-69) <https://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/creativetheses/28>

Rak, K. (2021). *Teachers' Perceptions of Creativity and the Ways in Which It Can Be Encouraged in an EFL Classroom* [ Master thesis, University of Zagreb] Archive name: ODRAZ - open repository of the University of Zagreb Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:131:383848>

De Sousa, F. (2007). Teachers' Creativity and Effectiveness in Higher Education: Perceptions of Students and Faculty. The Quality in Higher Education. Vol 4 :21-38. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ874258>

Talebloo,B., Roustaee,R. & Pourrajab, M. , Kasmaienezhadfar, S. (2015). Students' Learning Through Teaching Creativity: Teachers' Perception. Journal of Educational, Health and Community Psychology. Vol 4 (1):1-13 <https://media.neliti.com/media/publications/24806-EN-students-learning-through-teaching-creativity-teachers-perception.pdf>

Zha, Z. & Greenier, V. (2023). Chinese Teachers' Perceptions of Creativity in the EFL Classroom: Advancing a Culturally Situated Conceptualization of Creativity. Teaching English Language. Vol 17(2): 169-211. <https://doi.org/10.22132/TEL.2023.181859>