Beyond English Language Classroom: an Investigation into Libyan Undergraduate Petroleum Engineering Students Improving of Language skills

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ABSTRACT

In the Libyan educational system where English is taught as a foreign language, the need to maximize students' exposure to the language is essential. This study aims to use a mixed method approach to investigate the out-of-class activities that undergraduate petroleum engineering students carry out to improve their English language skills. The participants in the present study were 41 students in the petroleum department at the Sabratha Faculty of Engineering. Data were collected through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, and they were analyzed through content analysis procedures. The findings show that watching television, listening to music, surfing the Internet, and using social media and video games are the common activities in which students engage. In addition, engineering students spend more time performing receptive activities such as watching TV and listening to music than doing more productive activities such as speaking. These findings suggest that English language teachers should consider out-of-class activities in developing their materials and activities to establish the link between classroom-based learning and out-of-class learning.

1. Introduction

Recently, there has been increasing focus on 'lifelong learning' as a means of enhancing the learning of the English language. It has been stressed that learning English is not limited to the classroom, but it can take place at any time and in any place, including the home (Koctatepe, 2017). Out-of-class learning may vary from one learner to another. According to Nunan (1991, p. 311), 'the determination to apply their developing language skills outside the classroom can play an important role on learners' language development'.

Current EFL (English as a Foreign Language) education and literature indicates that most English language practices in the Libyan education system can be characterized as occurring in traditional language learning settings, and the teacher-centered method is widely used. Consequently, students are assumed to be passive receivers of knowledge. Furthermore, English language learning has been criticized as an in-class-only learning practice due to the rare opportunities an EFL learner is expected to encounter outside the classroom where opportunities to use English are mainly limited to formal, academic contexts. According to Samuel and Zaitun Bakar (2008), learning a foreign language is considered a challenging task, and factors such as low motivation, mixed abilities, and unsuitable teaching methods are some of the causes of this difficulty. One of the most important factors is probably that these learners lack exposure to and opportunities to use the language in natural settings.

When it comes to Libyan undergraduate engineering students, the situation is even more challenging. In some areas such as the petroleum engineering department, the context of this study, English is the medium of instruction, and all the available references are written in English. Thus, engineering students are expected to improve their English language skills to understand the content of their courses and to present their ideas. According to Talberg (2006), engineering qualifications and improved English skills are equally important for engineering students graduates. These are the main requirements for job opportunities such as employment in international companies. The need for good

English skills among engineering students leads to the development of strategies to improve students' language acquisition. One of these strategies is to encourage students to use English outside the classroom. This study aims to investigate how petroleum engineering students improve their English language skills to cope with the situation and in what kind of activities they engage. According to Malcolm (2004), it is time for teachers/researchers 'to find out exactly what learners do [beyond the classroom] and how they improve [their learning] through doing this' (p. 7). It is hoped that the findings will shed light on ways to maximize engineering students' out-of-class learning and to identify its role in learner autonomy. Such research might contribute to improving EFL teaching practice and establishing a link between classroom-based teaching and out-of-class learning.

According to Norton and Toohey (2001, p. 311), context is a very important consideration in any study investigating out-of-class learning. Thus, it is necessary first of all to provide a glimpse of ELT in Libyan engineering colleges. A brief review of the literature on out-of-class learning is also necessary to establish the theoretical basis and pedagogical significance of the current study before the findings are presented and discussed.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The English Language Curriculum in the Engineering Colleges

In Libya, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL) in all stages of education. When students enter college, they are expected to have already studied English for more than nine years. In most Libyan engineering colleges, General English is taught in the first two semesters, usually two hours per week for 14 weeks. The syllabus consists of different units and covers grammatical rules such as parts of speech, word formation, tenses, as well as some reading comprehension units about engineering topics. In the second semester English II is taught with more focus on grammatical structures such as passive voice. It is necessary for engineering students to pass English I and II along with other subjects to be assigned to different engineering departments such as mechanical engineering, technical engineering, and petroleum engineering. Some subjects are taught in English as the medium of instruction, so students must master the language in order to understand the content of the courses, search for information, and present their work.

2.2 Definition of out-of-class English Language Learning Activities

Formal classroom learning is one way to learn and practice English, but the literature indicates that many opportunities for learning language exist outside the classroom. Multimedia (Internet, television, radio, video games, books) can help students practice and improve their English (Hyland, 2004). Out-of-class learning activities are performed by students to improve their English skills outside the classroom. Benson (2001, p. 62) defined out-of-class learning as 'any kind of learning that takes place outside the classroom' and classified out-of-class learning into three categories: a) self-instruction, i.e., students locating resources to help them improve the target language, b) naturalistic language learning, i.e., students unintentionally learning to communicate and interact with the target language group, and c) self-directed naturalistic language learning, i.e., students creating or searching out a language learning situation.

Many studies have been carried out on students' out-of-class language learning, and learner autonomy has been a focal theme in many of them (Orhon, 2018). 'Learner autonomy' is widely defined as 'the ability to take charge of one's learning' (Holec, 1981, cited by Hui, 2010). According to Dam (1995), autonomous language learners choose their own goals, materials, methods, and tasks. The concept of learner autonomy is derived from learner-centered theories within constructivist epistemologies (Little, 2007). In addition, the concept of autonomy is derived from the 'situated learning theory' which views language as a social practice and sees it as the 'process of being active participants in the *practices* of social communities and constructing *identities* in relation to these communities' (Wenger, 1998, p. 4). Through students' participation in sociocultural practices, learning a language takes place both inside and outside the classroom whether the language learners are learning individually or in groups (Lantolf, 2013).

Hsieh and Hsieh (2019) used interviews to investigate 35 EFL learners' autonomy in their use of out-of-class resources in Taiwan. The findings showed that there is a positive relationship between learners' autonomous behavior and their use of resources outside the classroom. However, it is worth mentioning that this study was limited to the use of resources

available in the learning center at the participants' university.

A number of studies on autonomous learning outside the classroom have adopted narrow conceptions of autonomy and, therefore, present limited findings. For example, Inozu, Sahinkarakas, and Yumru's (2010) research investigating Turkish EFL students' out-of-class learning indicates that they are unable to be autonomous learners because they rely on the guidance of their friends and teachers. It can be argued that autonomous out-of-class learning does not equal an isolated learning experience. Such studies did not recognize that autonomous learning can involve 'depending on those who are perceived as providing support and guidance' (Koctatepe, 2017, p.107) such as teachers and family members.

Another recurring theme in the literature on out-of-class learning is learners' motivation to improve their English outside the classroom. Abdullah, Alghafri, and Alyahyail (2019) defined motivation in the English learning process as people's desire to learn and the impetus of learning. Motivation is one of the most important factors in language learning (Krashen, 2009) without which it would be difficult to learn another language or achieve long-term goals. Motivated students usually possess the interest to undertake their studies and complete the requirements of their course. Generally speaking, motivation is identified as 1) *intrinsic motivation*, that is, for its own interest, enjoyment, challenge, or skill and knowledge development, and 2) *extrinsic motivation*, that is, doing the required work as a means to achieve an outcome, such as avoiding punishment, gaining a qualification, or getting a job (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

In Hong Kong, Manfred (2012) investigated ESL learners' motivations for being involved in out-of-class activities. The results showed that the participants were instrumentally motivated to improve their English outside the classroom.

It is worth mentioning that this study focuses on whether students' motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic to learning English, that is, whether they are self-determined to improve their English or compelled by others such as teachers and parents. Another study conducted by Hyland (2004) explored student teachers' out-of-class activities and their beliefs regarding these activities. The findings showed that students were involved in receptive rather than productive skills.

Another closely related area frequently examined consists of the activities students perform outside the classroom. Pearson (2004, p. 4) investigated the out-of-class learning of Chinese college students and found that they are mainly involved in listening to the radio and music, reading books and newspapers, and watching TV. The findings of the study also revealed that some students considered out-of-class learning as more enjoyable than formal classroom learning. Similarly, Chan, Spratt, and Humphrey's (2002) findings showed that the most common activities outside the classroom among undergraduate students in a university English program in Hong Kong are watching movies, sending emails, and surfing the Internet.

According to Pickard (1996), activities such as reading novels and newspapers are more common among students than using self-study materials in the library. Suh, Wasansomsithi, Short, and Majid's (1999) research indicates that listening to music, watching TV, and going to the cinema are the primary activities performed by the students. Similarly, Orhon (2018) used a questionnaire to investigate the activities of 109 EFL learners carried out to improve their English skills. The findings revealed that the learners were more interested in listening and watching activities. However, using only a questionnaire to collect data was one of the limitations of that study. Accordingly, the present study will adopt a mixed method approach for the triangulation of data.

In Bangladesh, Sultana (2014) explored the techniques that 100 Bengali learners use to improve their English language proficiency. The findings identified songs, movies, and reading newspapers and books as the main activities. Chan (2002) mentioned that most out-of-class activities that students perform such as watching movies, using the Internet, and speaking with friends are related to entertainment and communication.

According to Nunan's (1989) findings, most students who participated in his study think that out-of-class activities enhanced their language skills more compared to traditional classroom teaching. In this regard, it is the English language teachers' role to assist students in their involvement in out-of-class learning with materials and suggested websites. This shift in the teacher's role from controller to more student-centered learning is not easy in

practice as it involves changes in teachers' beliefs and perceptions about teaching (Thanasoulas, 2000). This student-centered autonomous learning has mainly been associated with Western educational settings. It is not common in EFL contexts such as Libya, the context of this study, where teaching is mostly traditional and teacher centered.

While these studies shed light on the activities that English language learners carry out to improve their English proficiency, they did not investigate what exactly non-specialized students did with these activities to gain pedagogic outcomes. Thus, this study aims to heed Orhon's (2018) call for more research to provide a better understanding of learners' use of English outside the classroom, more specifically, to shed light on how engineering students try to improve their English skills outside the classroom and what kinds of activities they do most often.

3. Methodology

3.1 Context & Participants

The current study took place at the petroleum engineering department of the Faculty of Engineering at Sabratha University. It is one of eight departments at Sabratha and was established in 2016. Before that it was combined with the chemical engineering department. There are 135 students and eight faculty members in the department. The participants in this study were 41 undergraduate petroleum engineering students in the college of engineering, Sabratha University. Their ages ranged from 19–22. The participants were 13 females and 28 males, and they had all passed English I and II.

3.2 Research Design & Data Collection Instruments

Both qualitative and quantitative tools for data collection and analysis were adopted in this study to ensure methodological triangulation (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Data were gathered from a questionnaire accompanied by semi-structured interviews.

3.2.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used by the researcher to investigate the activities that students engage in outside the classroom to improve their English language skills. It consisted of closed- and open-ended questions. In the first section, there were closed-end questions where students placed tick marks on one option, and in the last question of this section they put tick marks on more than one option. In the second part,

they were asked two open-ended questions to which they wrote their own comments.

The questionnaire was adapted from Koctatepe (2017), and its validity and reliability have been checked and verified. In addition, the questionnaire was revised by three faculty members from Sabratha University to ensure its validity. It was modified in light of their feedback before distribution. In addition, the questionnaire was piloted first to check its clarity. Some questions were modified according to the comments from the participants.

3.2.2 Semi-structured Interview

A semi-structured interview was done (Cohen & Manion, 1994) to follow up on some of the answers given on the questionnaires. The interview questions were mainly about opportunities the students have to improve their language skills and maximize their out-of-class learning. It was conducted with eleven students selected on a voluntary basis. They included four female and seven male students. All students were given numbers to protect their confidentiality.

These two data collection tools complemented each other. While the questionnaire provided important information, some students gave only basic comments when answering. However, the interview questions and discussions with students provided more detailed information about how students improve their English and their learning outside the classroom.

3.3 Process of Data Collection and Analysis

Upon obtaining permission from the dean of Sabratha engineering college and the head of the petroleum engineering department to conduct this study, the questionnaire was distributed among 65 students out of which 41 agreed to participate. It was emphasized that filling out the questionnaire and participating in the interviews were purely voluntary and that the answers would be confidential. Then, the questionnaires were distributed to the students in person. The total administration time was approximately 20 minutes. The second phase of data collection required interviewing the students to discuss with them in depth their out-of-class learning opportunities. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in Arabic with eleven students, with occasional use of English.

With regard to the analysis, the data was read multiple times; the students' responses to the questionnaire were categorized as their motivation to use English outside the classroom, and the

activities they engaged in and the frequency of the responses were calculated. Qualitative data were categorized using the content analysis method, and the findings were divided into three main themes: 1) what motivates students to use English outside the classroom, 2) whether the students are supported by teachers and family or work individually, and 3) what activities the students perform. These themes were used to identify the participants' activities outside the classroom as summarized in Figure 1 (see section 5.2).

3.4 Research Questions

1. What roles do motivation and learner autonomy play in petroleum students' out-of-class learning?
2. What activities do undergraduate petroleum students carry out in English outside the classroom?

4. Findings

4.1 Learners' Motivation and Autonomy towards out-of-Classroom Learning

Although it is very common in EFL research findings that undergraduate students demonstrate low motivation in English language learning and are not likely to seek out learning on their own (Guo, 2011), 49% of participants in this study emphasized that they are willing to improve their proficiency in English and that they are seeking opportunities to improve their English skills beyond the classroom. In response to a follow-up question, they gave different reasons for their interest in improving their English, such as that they were either planning to work in oil companies or travel abroad to continue their studies and look for job opportunities. These were their extrinsic motives for learning English. More than 22% viewed it as a very important aspect of their careers.

However, nearly 24% said that they are not motivated to improve their English language skills. In the interview, five students mentioned that English is difficult for them, and three students mentioned that they need to graduate to satisfy their parents and that they are not willing to work in academia. S6 said, 'I have to graduate and then I will work in business. I won't need English language. I just do not like it'.

Regarding how often engineering students engage in out-of-class activities, the majority of students claimed frequent engagement in out-of-class learning, with 2% choosing 'every day', 10% choosing 'usually', 59% indicating 'sometimes', 12% choosing 'rarely', and 17% choosing 'never' in response to how often they engaged in out-of-class learning activities. This variation could be attributed to many factors. Some students mentioned in the interview that engineering as a specialization is very demanding. S3 stated, 'I have very limited free time. Always there is assignment to submit, exams and endless preparation'. Another student mentioned that he lacks interest: S6 said, 'I'm not interested to use or study English out of the class'. In this situation, the English teacher plays a significant role in motivating students to use English outside the classroom. If students are motivated and become more autonomous in English language learning, their use of the language will increase (Little, 2007).

In response to a follow-up question about who encourages them to use English outside the classroom, most students said that they encourage themselves. Two students mentioned relatives who work in oil companies, and one student mentioned that her parents encourage her to practice English every day: S2, 'I am lucky because my parents speak English. They help me with my study and encourage me to read and write in English'. However, it was noted that just one student mentioned the English teacher, which indicates that the teachers do not link classroom tasks with out-of-class learning.

Most of the participants in this study were extrinsically motivated to improve their English and take control of their learning. According to Chan (2016), students' engagement in out-of-class activities is a starting point for them to become more autonomous.

4.2 Activities that Undergraduate Petroleum Students Carryout in English outside the Classroom

Data suggested that students' involvement in out-of-class learning activities occurred mostly within students' home contexts, not in the college. In particular, watching television and movies, reading books, and using the Internet were identified in both forms of data collection as popular out-of-class learning resources.
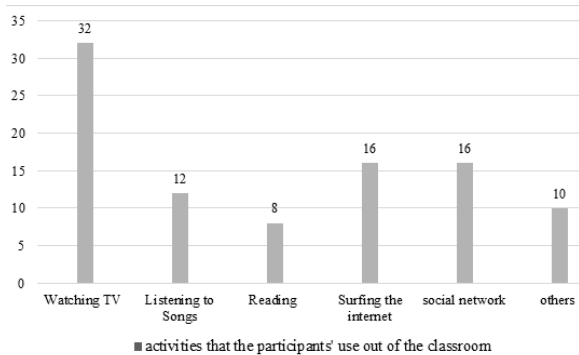
Figure 1: Activities used by the participants outside the classroom

Thirty-two students said that watching TV is the main activity they do to improve their English. This is consistent with Suh, Wasansomsithi, Short, and Majid's (1999) research findings which showed that watching TV is a common activity among ESL university students. In response to follow-up questions about what they watch on TV, most students said that watching American movies is a good way to improve their pronunciation and vocabulary. The participants stated that they watch different genres of movies such as action, romance, and horror.

Based on the interview analysis, watching English programs and movies can be described as self-directed naturalistic language learning in which students aim to have fun and achieve learning goals. Six students out of eleven explained that they watch American movies for enjoyment and to improve their English skills: S4 said, 'Watching movies is beneficial. It helped me to improve my pronunciation and vocabulary'. Similarly, S3 stated, 'I watch movies a lot. That helped me to pronounce correctly and to know everyday language'.

For three students, watching TV was more enjoyable than classroom tasks, which were described mostly as 'boring'. S1 explained that 'watching movies and documentaries in English helped me to improve my ability in listening and grammar more than doing homework and exercises in the class'.

Watching sports with English commentary was another activity that some students mentioned: S10 said, 'I like to watch football and sometimes the commentary are in English. By time I learnt many new words'. Students also mentioned that they noticed improvements in their listening skills: S8 said, 'It was hard at the beginning to understand but then I became familiar with some words and expressions'. According to Richards (2014), media plays an important role in students' learning and can be a very effective educational tool to 'achieve the goal of increasing the efficiency level of EL learning'.

Another activity mentioned by 12 students was listening to English songs. By listening to the words several times, students said that they learned new vocabulary. This is in line with Sultana's findings (2014) in which she stated that students depend on listening to songs to improve their vocabulary and understanding of English. Consequently, this helps them feel more like independent learners who can develop their English language skills outside the classroom.

Reading is another activity mentioned by eight students: S2 said, 'I read whatever I find, books, newspapers, leaflets, in English. I got the general idea from the context, but I do not understand most of the text'. Self-instruction was noted by only two students: S5 said, 'I read books to improve my English. I write the new words in a list and start using them. My focus is on the unknown words in the text not on the information'. According to Sultana (2014), learners' engagement in reading English books and stories helps them improve their writing skills and enriches their vocabulary. This contrasts with Hyland's (2004) research in which she stated that reading in English outside the classroom was not common among the participants in her research.

Another out-of-class activity the participants in this research mentioned was surfing the Internet. Students said that they perform this activity for various reasons such as looking for the correct usage of certain vocabulary or grammatical patterns and searching for simplified texts about the subjects they are studying: S1 said, 'I search in English sometimes to get simplified idea about the topics that we study'. This is consistent with Hoi's (2017) findings which showed that surfing the Internet is a common activity among EFL learners.

Social networks were mentioned by 16 students. The most popular among the participants of this study were Facebook and Twitter: S7 said, 'I'm a member in a Facebook group where we discuss issues related to English language such as how to use certain grammatical structures and the difference between formal and informal styles'. However, some students said that they use Facebook and Twitter for entertainment, not for learning, but they sometimes try to read some posts written in English. According to Chan (2016), out-of-classroom activities such as watching TV and social networking have a dual function:

they provide good learning opportunities and also provide a context that is more useful for self-learning and being autonomous.

Finally, in the 'others' option, ten students added video games as an out-of-class activity that they perform and which they believe helps them improve their English through reading instructions and following tips. According to Richards (2014), video games are popular among young learners, and they offer both entertainment and possibilities for language learning.

It is noted that naturalistic language learning opportunities were mentioned but were not recognized as learning opportunities by the students themselves. For example, three students said that they check the meaning of unknown words when they read English posts or the instructions for video games. S4 said, 'When I read the instructions or see a post in English, I use Google translator to find the meaning and understand the meaning and try to remember it later'.

In terms of pedagogy, self-directed naturalistic learning was dominant among the students. They attempted to focus on both entertainment and developing language competence. Naturalistic learning opportunities were the least visible to students. Some recognized the learning opportunities in their involvement in out-of-class learning only when probed in the interview. This might explain, for example, why nine students ticked 'I do not use English outside the classroom' on the second question of the questionnaire. Then they ticked 'watching TV' and 'listening to songs' in the 5th question as activities they do outside the classroom. S9 said, 'I did not think about it that way. I check Google and sometimes the dictionary in my mobile to understand the meaning of the difficulty words, but I consider that part of watching movie'. Similarly, S11 stated, 'I listen to songs and commentary, but I did not think of that as learning'. This is in line with Koctatepe's research findings (2017, p. 112) in which she stated that 'the students in these contexts achieve real-life outcomes rather than reach a pre-defined learning goal. They did not have an explicit pedagogic agenda in mind as they engaged in the activity'.

5. Discussion

This study set out to investigate what roles motivation and learner autonomy play in students' out-of-class learning. In addition, it was intended to discover out-of-class language activities that petroleum engineering students carry out in order to improve their English language skills. The primary findings indicate that the participants were more extrinsically motivated to improve their English language skills and perform out-of-classroom learning activities that were mostly related to their interests. This was a starting point for fostering their autonomy as language learners. The participants mentioned different activities they engaged in outside the classroom to improve their English. It is worth mentioning that none of the activities the participants mentioned involved face-to-face interaction. Watching TV, listening to songs, reading books, and surfing the Internet were their most common activities. Others included reading newspapers and playing games. This is in line with several studies which showed that most EFL students preferred receptive activities over productive ones. For example, in Orhon's (2018) findings, most of the participants preferred listening to songs, browsing the Internet, and watching English TV channels and movies. Similarly, Manfred's (2012) findings showed that watching TV and listening to songs are the most common out-of-class learning activities among ESL learners in Hong Kong.

Students did not mention speaking outside the classroom; they claimed that they rarely found opportunities to speak English outside class, and even in the English language class Arabic is used most of the time. This is consistent with Orhon's (2018) findings which revealed that speaking activities are not common among Turkish learners. This could result from the method of teaching. The majority of teachers in Libya use traditional methods in which the teacher is the source of knowledge, and the students are passive. Thus, students lack self-confidence to speak the language and learn from their mistakes. The problem is compounded by the fact that undergraduate students depend heavily on their first language to interact with each other because they feel more comfortable. English is largely perceived as a foreign language for which they do not have much use other than in English class. In addition, they tend to lack support for using English at home and in the community, and they inevitably have inadequate or insufficient exposure to the language in their environment. Consequently, the role of English language

teachers is important in such cases as teachers are expected to design classroom-based activities that encourage students to use social media platforms and motivate them to make use of various resources to improve their English proficiency.

However, the findings of the current study contradict some studies in the literature. For example, Hyland's (2004) research, which investigated student teachers' out-of-class English language learning activities in Hong Kong, indicated that speaking with family members was the most useful out-of-class activity for the participants in her research. In contrast, this activity was mentioned by only one participant out of 41 in the current study. This is due to the fact that English is a foreign language in Libya, and most parents do not speak it, whereas in Hong Kong it is the language of education and business (Hyland, 2004).

5.1 Pedagogical Implications

Learning English is no longer limited to the classroom and guided only by English language teachers. The findings of this study showed that out-of-classroom learning provides many opportunities for learners to improve their English language skills and makes learning more interesting and relevant.

Consequently, the findings of the current study suggest a number of pedagogical practices. First, it is important for language teachers to recognize that students are already engaged in learning beyond the classroom. It is highly important for teachers to realize that out-of-classroom learning is not limited to curriculum-based activities but includes the engagement of students in everyday use of the language in its social context (Koctatepe, 2017).

Second, since media and the Internet are popular with engineering students to improve their English language skills, teachers need to develop further pedagogical methods related to the types of knowledge that students gain outside the classroom. Using videos, songs, and stories in the English language classroom might motivate students to practice the language and encourage them to be autonomous learners outside the classroom (Chan, 2016). According to Thanasoulas (2000), this requires a shift of responsibility toward learners and a change in the English language teacher's role in the classroom.

Thus, another pedagogical implication of the study is that English language teachers should move away from teacher-centered classes and towards a more learner-centered environment where students can play an important role in the learning process. In addition, teachers need to guide their students in how to use resources outside the classroom by suggesting movies for them to watch or websites and short stories that might motivate them to look for opportunities to improve their language skills. By taking learning beyond the classroom, learners will find many opportunities to make learning concepts real and relevant by putting them into a more realistic context.

However, Murray (2008) argues that students' stories of learning beyond the classroom can be brought into the classroom instead of teacher intervention being exerted on out-of-classroom learning. Students might share with their classmates the resources they find useful and the strategies they use.

With less-motivated students, teachers can provide more support and guided tasks to attain learning goals. In addition, instead of delivering information from textbooks, using out-of-class activities can increase learners' exposure to authentic language contexts (Thanasoulas, 2000).

5.2 Limitations

This study investigated the out-of-classroom activities engaged in by 41 petroleum engineering students at the Sabratha Faculty of engineering to improve their English language skills. As this study was based on a small number of participants, the research findings cannot be generalized to all engineering students in Libya. Also, the participants represented only one group of engineering students. There are several other groups in other departments and colleges, and the findings of the study might have been different if the researcher had interviewed those others.

6. Conclusion

In Libya, opportunities to use English are mostly limited to formal, academic contexts. This study investigated the activities that petroleum students perform outside the classroom to improve their English language skills. The findings showed that intrinsic motivation played an important role in engineering students' involvement in out-of-class learning. The common activities that they mentioned were watching TV, listening to music, reading, surfing the Internet, social media, and video games. It seems that while the students were aware of many possible strategies that could improve their English language learning

outside the classroom, much of their practice was spent on receptive skills such as reading and listening rather than speaking.

Based on the findings of this study, I recommend the following:
1) Provide in-service training for English language teachers to enhance their teaching skills,
2) Increase the number of English classes and the length of the English period,
3) Establish a connection between English and other subjects by teaching important terminology in each department. This might increase students' exposure to English and help them understand their textbooks and references,
4) Use a student-centered method that provides more opportunities for students to take charge of their learning, and
5) Provide more meaningful and contextualized English language tasks that extend beyond the classroom.

Future research could investigate students' perceptions of out-of-class learning using a larger sample. Another potential area of study would be students who are not engaged in any out-of-class English learning activities and the reasons behind that. Research could also look into English language teachers' views on guiding their students to be engaged in out-of-class learning and the pedagogical impact on students' English language proficiency.

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