



An Evaluative Study of the Remedial English Language Program: A Field-Based Analysis within the Libyan Educational Context

Ahlam Mahmoud Alshaiebi¹* Ulfa Tuhami Tarhouni¹*Mohamed abdu salam Abusanina¹
Global University

Keywords:

remedial education, program evaluation, English language teaching, Libya, educational inequality

ABSTRACT

This study aims to offer an in-depth, field-based evaluation of the Remedial English Language Program implemented in 2025 across selected Libyan schools. The evaluation was conducted through direct field supervision by faculty members from the English Language Department at Global University for Humanities and Applied Sciences. This study examines the program through the lens of real classroom practice, drawing on a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data. The findings of this study highlight a noticeable gap between what the program aims to achieve and what actually takes place in classroom practice. While teachers demonstrate strong professional commitment and adaptive instructional practices, the program is significantly constrained by contextual factors, including inadequate infrastructure, limited instructional resources, inconsistencies in placement procedures, and weak institutional communication. It can be argued that evaluating remedial education without considering its surrounding context may lead to incomplete or even misleading conclusions. Instead, it must be understood as a dynamic interaction between curriculum design, teacher agency, and structural conditions. The paper concludes with theoretically grounded and context-sensitive recommendations aimed at enhancing the sustainability and impact of remedial education in Libya

دراسة تقييمية لبرنامج اللغة الإنجليزية العلاجي: تحليل ميداني في سياق التعليم الليبي

^aاحلام محمود الشايعي* ^bألفة التهامي الترهوني* ^bمحمد عبدالسلام ابوسنينه

^bجامعة العالمية طرابلس

المخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقديم تقييم ميداني معمق لبرنامج التعليم الاستدراكي للغة الإنجليزية المطبق خلال عام 2025 في عدد من المدارس الليبية، حيث كان التقييم تحت إشراف مباشر من أساتذة مختصين بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة العالمية للعلوم التطبيقية والإنسانية من خلال تحليل واقعي لآليات التنفيذ والتحديات المرتبطة به. اعتمدت الدراسة على منهجية البحث المختلط، حيث تم جمع البيانات باستخدام أدوات كمية ونوعية، شملت الاستبانات والملاحظات الصفية وتقارير الإشراف المباشر. كشفت النتائج عن وجود فجوة واضحة بين ما يهدف إليه البرنامج، وبين ما يتم تنفيذه داخل الفصل الدراسي، حيث أظهر المعلمون مستوى عاليًا من الالتزام والمرونة، في حين واجه البرنامج تحديات تتعلق بالبيئة الصفية، ونقص الموارد، وعدم دقة إجراءات تحديد المستوى، وضعف التواصل مع أولياء الأمور. ناقشت الدراسة أن تقييم برنامج التعليم الاستدراكي دون الأخذ بعين الاعتبار الظروف المحيطة به، سيقود لخاتمة غير مكتملة، كما تؤكد الدراسة أن فعالية البرامج الاستدراكية لا ترتبط فقط بجودة التصميم، بل تعتمد بشكل أساسي على ظروف التنفيذ، وقدمت مجموعة من التوصيات المبنية على تحليل ميداني دقيق.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

التعليم الاستدراكي، اللغة الإنجليزية، التقييم التربوي، ليبيا، الفجوة التعليمية.

Introduction

In many educational systems today, remedial education is increasingly seen as a necessary response to on-going learning

*Corresponding author:

E-mail addresses: ahlamelshaiebi@gmail.com, (Second author) ulfa.ot@gmail.com, (Third author) m.abusanina@gmail.com

difficulties among students, particularly in contexts where students struggle to meet expected academic standards. In language education, this need is especially critical, as language proficiency underpins learning across all subject areas (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

In Libya, the implementation of remedial English programs reflects a growing awareness of disparities in students' language proficiency levels. The 2025 Remedial English Language Program was designed to address these gaps by providing targeted instructional support. However, the effectiveness of such initiatives depends not only on curriculum design but also on implementation conditions and contextual realities.

This study draws on direct field supervision and attempts to provide a detailed evaluation based on actual classroom experience rather than theoretical assumptions alone.

Problem of the Study

Despite the implementation of the Remedial English Language Program across multiple schools, there has been a lack of systematic evaluation to assess its effectiveness and identify implementation challenges. Without such evaluation, it remains unclear whether the program successfully meets its intended objectives or addresses the actual needs of learners.

Additionally, field observations suggest the presence of practical challenges related to classroom conditions, resource availability, and instructional alignment. These issues raise concerns about the overall impact and sustainability of the program.

Aims of the Study

This study aims to:

- 1- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Remedial English Language Program in improving students' language skills.
- 2- Identify the main strengths and challenges associated with its implementation.
- 3- Explore teachers' and parents' perceptions of the program.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

- 1- What are the key strengths and challenges observed during the implementation of the program?
- 2- How do teachers and parents perceive the effectiveness of the program?
- 3- What factors influence the success or limitations of the program?

Research Hypotheses

The study tests the following hypotheses:

- 1- The program demonstrates positive outcomes in terms of instructional delivery and student engagement.
- 2- The program faces significant challenges related to infrastructure, instructional resources, and communication.
- 3- Parents perceive noticeable improvement in their children's English language skills.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the limited body of research on remedial education in Libya by providing a field-based evaluation grounded in real classroom practices. It offers valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and curriculum designers, supporting the development of more effective and contextually appropriate remedial programs.

Scope and Limitations

This study focuses specifically on the 2025 Remedial English Language Program implemented in 22 public schools in Libya. It involves data collected from supervisors, teachers, and parents over a six-week period.

However, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study does not include direct measurement of students' academic performance through standardized tests. Second, questionnaire responses may reflect subjective perceptions. Third, the relatively short duration of the study may not capture long-term program

impact.

Literature Review

Remedial Education

For a long time, remedial education has often been viewed from a deficit perspective, where learners are seen as lacking certain essential skills. This perspective, while influential, has been increasingly questioned in contemporary educational research.

More recent studies, however, suggest that what is commonly described as a "learning deficiency" may, in some cases, reflect a mismatch between teaching approaches and learners' actual needs. In this sense, remedial education should not be understood as a process of fixing students, but rather as an opportunity to rethink how learning is structured and delivered (McMillan, 2018).

This shift in perspective is particularly important, especially in contexts where educational conditions are not always ideal. It allows researchers and practitioners to move beyond simplistic explanations and to consider broader systemic factors such as classroom environment, resource availability, and institutional support.

The Nature of Language Learning and the Need for Remediation

Language learning presents a unique case within remedial education due to its cumulative and recursive nature. Unlike discrete subject areas, language proficiency develops through continuous exposure, practice, and interaction across multiple domains.

A key challenge in this regard is that early gaps in language acquisition tend to compound over time. Students who fail to develop foundational competencies in vocabulary, grammar, or phonological awareness often experience increasing difficulty as they progress through the curriculum. This phenomenon has been described as a "snowball effect," where initial weaknesses lead to broader academic struggles (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

However, addressing these gaps requires more than repetition or simplification. Research consistently shows that effective remedial instruction in language learning must be: interaction-driven rather than teacher-dominated, meaning-focused rather than form-focused and integrative rather than skill-isolated.

This has important implications for program design. It suggests that remedial education should not replicate mainstream instruction at a slower pace, but rather adopt qualitatively different approaches that prioritize engagement and meaningful use of language.

Theoretical Foundations

One of the limitations of much of the existing research on remedial education is its reliance on single theoretical perspectives. Such approaches often fail to capture the complexity of real classroom environments, where multiple factors interact simultaneously.

This study adopts an integrated framework that draws on three complementary perspectives: mastery learning, sociocultural theory, and program evaluation models.

Mastery Learning

Bloom's (1968) theory of mastery learning represents a significant departure from traditional views of fixed ability. It posits that given sufficient time and appropriate instructional support, the vast majority of learners can achieve high levels of understanding.

In the context of remedial education, this perspective shifts the focus from learner limitations to instructional conditions. It emphasizes the importance of: continuous diagnostic assessment, immediate corrective feedback and flexible pacing.

However, the practical application of mastery learning raises important questions. In many educational contexts, including Libya, time constraints, large class sizes, and limited resources make it difficult to fully implement such principles. This creates

a tension between theoretical ideals and practical realities.

Sociocultural Theory and the Role of Mediation

While mastery learning focuses on instructional conditions, sociocultural theory offers insight into the social nature of learning. Vygotsky (1978) argues that cognitive development is fundamentally mediated by interaction with others, particularly more knowledgeable individuals.

The concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is central here. It refers to the gap between what learners can achieve independently and what they can achieve with guidance. In remedial settings, this concept is particularly relevant, as learners often require structured support to bridge gaps in understanding.

Effective remedial instruction, from a sociocultural perspective, involves:

- 1- scaffolded guidance rather than direct transmission.
- 2- dialogic interaction rather than one-way explanation.
- 3- collaborative learning rather than isolated practice.

However, these practices depend heavily on classroom conditions and teacher expertise. In environments where resources are limited, the ability to provide such support may be constrained.

Evaluating Educational Programs: The CIPP Model

While the previous frameworks focus on learning processes, the CIPP model (Stufflebeam, 2003) provides a broader lens for evaluating educational programs.

The model distinguishes between four dimensions:

Context: the needs the program is intended to address

Input: the resources and strategies used

Process: the implementation of the program

Product: the outcomes achieved

What makes this model particularly valuable is its emphasis on evaluation as an ongoing process, rather than a final judgment. It encourages evaluators to examine not only whether a program works, but how and under what conditions it works.

This aligns closely with the aims of the present study, which seeks to understand the remedial program as a dynamic system rather than a fixed intervention.

Empirical Studies

A review of empirical studies reveals several recurring themes regarding the effectiveness of remedial education.

First, placement accuracy emerges as a critical factor. Without proper diagnostic assessment, students may be placed in levels that do not match their needs, leading to either frustration or lack of challenge (Callahan, 2019).

Second, resource availability plays a decisive role. Johnson and Smith (2021) argue that even the most well-designed programs can fail if teachers lack access to appropriate materials and tools.

Third, the learning environment significantly influences student engagement and performance. Factors such as classroom size, temperature, and seating arrangements may seem peripheral, but they have been shown to affect cognitive functioning and motivation (Baker & Bernstein, 2020).

Finally, parental involvement has been consistently linked to improved learning outcomes. Epstein (2018) emphasizes that effective education requires collaboration between school and family, particularly in remedial contexts where additional support is needed.

Remedial Education in the Libyan Context

In Libya, remedial education operates within a complex and often challenging environment. While there is growing recognition of the need for such programs, their implementation is shaped by a range of contextual factors.

Field observations and informal reports suggest that:

- Classrooms often include students with widely varying proficiency levels.
- Teaching resources are unevenly distributed.
- Teachers frequently rely on personal initiative to

compensate for systemic limitations.

These conditions create a situation where the success of remedial programs depends less on their formal design and more on how they are adapted in practice.

This highlights the importance of context-sensitive evaluation, which takes into account not only what the program intends to achieve, but also how it is experienced by those involved in its implementation.

Methodology

Research Design

This study makes use of a mixed-methods design in order to capture both numerical trends and more detailed qualitative insights integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the remedial program.

The quantitative component allows for identifying general patterns in perceptions and outcomes, while the qualitative component provides deeper insights into classroom practices, contextual constraints, and stakeholder experiences. Using both approaches makes it possible to develop a more balanced and realistic understanding of the findings.

Research Setting and Participants

The study was conducted across 22 public schools located in different municipalities within the Libyan educational system. These schools were selected to reflect diversity in geographical location, school infrastructure, and student population while Participants included 6 academic supervisors responsible for field monitoring, English language teachers implementing the program and Parents of enrolled students, representing an external evaluative perspective. Each school received three supervisory visits over a period of six weeks, allowing for repeated observation rather than one-time assessment.

Data Collection Instruments

To ensure methodological rigor, multiple instruments were used:

1. Teacher Questionnaire

The questionnaire designed to measure perceptions of curriculum effectiveness, classroom challenges and student engagement.

2. Parent Questionnaire

The questionnaire focused on perceived improvement in student skills, student motivation and satisfaction with the program.

3. Observation Checklist

The checklist used by supervisors to record teaching practices, classroom conditions and student participation.

Field Notes

Qualitative reflections capturing contextual issues, unexpected observations and teacher adaptability.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity instruments were reviewed by subject specialists, questions were aligned with research objectives. While reliability was enhanced through repeated observations, consistency across supervisors and triangulation of data sources.

Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics (percentages, frequencies)

Qualitative data were analysed through thematic analysis, identifying recurring patterns such as resource limitations, instructional adaptation and environmental constraints.

This dual analysis strengthens the credibility of the findings.

Results

Quantitative Findings: Parent Perspectives

Table 1: Perceived Improvement in Language Skills

Skill Area

Table 1: Perceived Improvement in Language Skills

Skill Area	Percentage of Positive Responses
------------	----------------------------------

Listening	61.5%
Speaking	57.7%
Reading	57.7%
Writing	38.5%

The data indicate that oral skills (listening and speaking) show the highest levels of improvement. This suggests that classroom practices may be more aligned with communicative approaches, even in resource-limited settings.

However, the relatively low percentage for writing reflects a common challenge in language learning, where productive written skills require more structured support and time.

Student Motivation and Engagement

Table 2: Student Interest and Motivation

Indicator	Percentage
Increased interest	69.2%
Positive attitude	73.1%
Willingness to participate	65.4%

These findings suggest that the program has a positive affective impact, which is a critical but often overlooked dimension of learning. Motivation plays a central role in language acquisition, and its presence indicates that the program is engaging, even if not fully optimized.

Teacher Perspectives

Table 3: Instructional Effectiveness

Dimension	Agreement (%)
Clarity of objectives	100%
Skill development	91.6%
Student interaction	75%
Achievement improvement	91.6%

Teachers perceive the program as pedagogically sound, particularly in terms of clarity and outcomes. However, the lower percentage for student interaction suggests that classroom practices may still be partially teacher-centered.

Implementation Challenges

Table 4: Major Challenges Identified

Challenge	Frequency
Lack of air conditioning	High
Limited teaching materials	High
Absence of audio resources	High
Weak parent communication	Moderate
Late placement testing	Moderate

The results highlight that the main challenges are structural rather than pedagogical. This distinction is crucial: it indicates that the program design itself is not the primary issue, but rather the conditions under which it is implemented.

Discussion

One of the most noticeable patterns emerging from the findings is the gap between the intended design of the program and the way it is actually implemented. While the program is built on sound pedagogical principles, its effectiveness is significantly shaped by external constraints.

One of the most striking findings is the role of teacher agency. It became clear during field observation that teachers do not simply follow the program as it is written, but actively adapt it based on classroom realities. This aligns with sociocultural perspectives, which view teaching as a dynamic, context-dependent activity. However, relying heavily on individual teacher effort, however, may raise concerns about how sustainable such an approach can be in the long term. Educational programs cannot depend solely on teacher resilience. Without institutional support, such models

become unsustainable.

Furthermore, the misalignment between placement procedures and instructional levels undermines the principles of mastery learning. When learners are not accurately assessed, the entire structure of remedial instruction becomes less effective.

The study also highlights the importance of non-academic factors, particularly motivation and parental involvement. While students show increased interest, the lack of structured communication with parents limits the potential for reinforcing learning outside the classroom.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

Infrastructure Development

Improving classroom conditions, particularly ventilation and cooling systems, should be prioritized.

Resource Provision

Schools must be equipped with: printed materials, audio resources and visual aids.

Placement System Reform

Placement tests should be administered before program implementation and used systematically to group students.

Strengthening School–Family Communication

Regular communication channels should be established to involve parents in the learning process.

Curriculum Adaptation

Materials should be adjusted to better reflect students' actual proficiency levels.

Teacher Professional Development

Ongoing training should focus on differentiated instruction and communicative teaching strategies.

Conclusion

This study has provided a comprehensive, field-based evaluation of the Remedial English Language Program within the Libyan educational context. The findings demonstrate that while the program is grounded in sound pedagogical principles, its success is heavily dependent on contextual and structural factors. The study contributes to a growing body of research emphasizing that educational effectiveness cannot be separated from implementation conditions. It calls for a shift from viewing remedial education as a purely instructional issue to understanding it as a systemic educational challenge.

References

- 1- Baker, L., & Bernstein, S. (2020). The impact of classroom environment on student learning outcomes. *Journal of Educational Research*, 45(3), 210–225.
- 2- Bloom, B. S. (1968). Learning for mastery. *Evaluation Comment*, 1(2), 1–12.
- 3- Callahan, R. M. (2019). Placement and assessment in remedial education: Best practices. *Educational Assessment Review*, 33(4), 112–128.
- 4- Epstein, J. L. (2018). *School, family, and community partnerships* (3rd ed.). Westview Press.
- 5- Johnson, M., & Smith, T. (2021). Resource availability and instructional quality in remedial programs. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 78, 102–115.

- 6- Martinez, P., & Young, K. (2022). Parental involvement in remedial education. *Journal of Family and Education*, 14(2), 88–104.
- 7- McMillan, J. H. (2018). *Classroom Assessment: Principles and Practice for Effective Standards-Based Instruction* (7th Ed.). Pearson.
- 8- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- 9- Stufflebeam, D. L. (2003). The CIPP model for evaluation. In T. Kellaghan & D. L. Stufflebeam (Eds.), *International handbook of educational evaluation* (pp. 31–62). Kluwer.
- 10- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Harvard University Press.