

**THE EFFECTS OF THE STATION ROTATION  
MODEL ON LIBYAN SECONDARY SCHOOL  
STUDENTS' EFL WRITING SKILLS:  
TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS**

**NAJAH ABDUALLAH SALEM ALBELAZI**

**UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA**

**2022**

**THE EFFECTS OF THE STATION ROTATION  
MODEL ON LIBYAN SECONDARY SCHOOL  
STUDENTS' EFL WRITING SKILLS:  
TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS**

by

**NAJAH ABDULLAH SALEM ALBELAZI**

**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**September 2022**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I would like to express my utmost gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Malini Ganapathy, for her supervision, guidance, advice, encouragement and research support. Despite obstacles caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, she always made time to ensure that I was on track throughout my research journey.

My gratitude also goes to all the departments, schools and staff of the USM university who have helped me in the process of completing my thesis. My appreciation also goes to Emhemmed Ben Ibrahim secondary school for granting me the opportunity to conduct the research. The important part of this research is the teachers and students who volunteered to be part of this research; I would like to express my sincere gratitude to them for their utmost cooperation and insightful comments.

I would also like to especially thank my mother for her constant prayers, my dear husband for his continuous support and love, and my beloved children Ibrahim, Remas, Nasreddin and Judy, who persevered with me and provided constant encouragement throughout my journey in completing this thesis. Special appreciation and thanks also go to my sisters, brothers, friends and colleagues who continually enquire how my study was going and always provided encouragement and support to motivate me. Most importantly, thank you, ALLAH.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	<b>x</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	<b>xi</b>
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>xii</b>
<b>ABSTRAK</b> .....	<b>xiii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>xv</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 The Background of the Study .....	5
1.2.1 History of English Education in Libya .....	5
1.2.2 Teaching EFL in Libyan Schools.....	7
1.2.3 Availability of Technology in Teaching EFL at Libyan Schools .....	12
1.3 The Statement of the Problem.....	13
1.4 Objectives of the Study .....	18
1.5 Research Questions .....	18
1.6 Significance of the Study .....	19
1.7 Scope of the Study .....	20
1.8 Limitations of the Study.....	21
1.9 Definitions of Terms .....	22
1.9.1 Blended Learning Approach ‘BLA’ .....	22
1.9.2 Traditional Teaching Approach ‘TTA’ .....	22
1.9.3 Station Rotation Model ‘SRM’ .....	23
1.9.4 English Foreign Language ‘EFL’ .....	23

1.9.5	English as a Second Language ‘ESL’ .....	23
1.9.6	Writing Skills ‘WS’ .....	24
1.9.7	Writing Performance ‘WP’ .....	24
1.10	Conclusion .....	24
<b>CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>		<b>25</b>
2.1	Introduction .....	25
2.2	Research Context and Focus of the SRM .....	25
2.3	Teaching and Learning Writing in EFL Classrooms .....	28
2.4	Models of Writing Approach .....	30
2.4.1	The Product Approach .....	31
2.4.2	The Process Approach.....	32
2.4.3	The Genre Approach .....	35
2.4.4	The Process-Genre Approach .....	35
2.5	Stages of Writing Process .....	37
2.5.1	Pre-Writing.....	38
2.5.2	Drafting .....	39
2.5.3	Revising .....	40
2.5.4	Editing.....	40
2.5.5	Publishing.....	40
2.6	Writing Challenges and Issues at Libyan Schools .....	41
2.7	The Use of Technology in Writing Assignments.....	44
2.8	Blended Learning Approach (BLA).....	45
2.9	The Classifications of BLA.....	51
2.9.1	Rotation Model .....	53
2.9.2	Flex Model .....	54
2.9.3	“A La Carte” Model .....	54
2.9.4	Enriched-Virtual Model .....	55

2.10	Station Rotation Model (SRM) .....	55
2.11	Writing Performance with Blended Learning .....	58
2.12	Philosophy of the Station Rotation Model (SRM).....	61
	2.12.1 The Cognitive Theory of Multi-Media Learning.....	61
	2.12.2 Constructivism Theory.....	63
	2.12.3 Connectivism Theory .....	65
	2.12.4 The Sociocultural Theory of Collaborative Writing .....	66
2.13	Teachers and Students' Role in Station Rotation Model .....	67
	2.13.1 Teacher's Role in the SRM .....	67
	2.13.2 Students' Roles in the SRM .....	68
2.14	The Conceptual Framework.....	70
2.15	Past Studies .....	73
2.16	Conclusion .....	80
	<b>CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>82</b>
3.1	Introduction .....	82
3.2	Research Design.....	82
	3.2.1 Mixed-Methods Research .....	84
	3.2.2 Access and Permission.....	85
3.3	Sampling Techniques .....	86
	3.3.1 Sampling of Students .....	87
	3.3.2 Sampling for Teachers .....	87
	3.3.3 Sampling for Teachers and Students Interviews.....	88
3.4	Research Procedures .....	88
3.5	Interventions.....	89
	3.5.1 Interventions for the Experimental Group .....	89
	3.5.2 Interventions for the Control Group.....	95
3.6	Research Instruments .....	96

3.6.1	Pre-Post and Delayed Post Writing Tests .....	98
3.6.2	Writing Rubric .....	99
3.6.3	Semi-Structured Interview .....	100
3.6.4	Classroom Observation .....	102
3.6.4(a)	Classroom Observation Checklist .....	103
3.6.5	Focus Group Interviews .....	104
3.7	Pedagogical Materials .....	106
3.8	Validity and Reliability of the Study .....	107
3.8.1	The Raters .....	109
3.9	Pilot Study .....	110
3.10	Data Analysis .....	112
3.10.1	Quantitative Data Analysis .....	113
3.10.2	Qualitative Data Analysis .....	114
3.11	Implementing Monitoring .....	115
3.12	Research Process .....	116
3.13	Ethical Considerations .....	117
3.14	Conclusion .....	118
	<b>CHAPTER 4 RESULTS .....</b>	<b>119</b>
4.1	Introduction .....	119
4.2	To what extent does the SRM affect Libyan EFL secondary students' performance in writing? .....	120
4.2.1	The Results of the SRM .....	120
4.2.2	Descriptive Analysis .....	121
4.2.3	Pre-post-tests Analysis of Experimental Group .....	124
4.2.4	Pre-post-tests Analysis of Control Group .....	129
4.2.5	Post-Delayed-Tests Analysis of Experimental Group .....	132
4.3	Summary of the Findings of Research Question 1 .....	134

4.4	What are the teachers' perceptions of the use of the SRM to teach writing? .....	135
4.5	What are the Libyan EFL secondary students' perceptions of the use of the SRM in teaching writing skills?.....	155
4.6	The Results of Observations .....	172
4.6.1	Results of Teacher-Led Instructions .....	173
4.6.2	Results of Collaborative Instructions .....	175
4.6.3	Results of Online Instructions.....	178
4.7	Conclusion .....	180
<b>CHAPTER 5 DISUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.....</b>		<b>181</b>
5.1	Introduction .....	181
5.2	Recapitulation .....	181
5.3	Overview of Background, Procedures, and Summary of Findings.....	182
5.4	Discussion Related to Research Questions .....	184
5.4.1	To What Extent does the SRM Affect Libyan EFL Secondary Students' Performance in Writing? .....	184
5.4.2	What are the Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of the SRM to Teach Writing?.....	189
5.4.3	What are the Libyan EFL Secondary Students' Perceptions of the Use of SRM in Teaching Writing Skills?.....	195
5.5	Pedagogical Implications of the Present Study's Findings .....	204
5.6	Recommendations for Future Research .....	208
5.7	Conclusion .....	211
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>		<b>215</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>		
<b>LIST OF PUBLICATIONS</b>		



## LIST OF TABLES

		<b>Page</b>
Table 3.1	A Sample of Lesson Plan.....	94
Table 3.2	Data Source Explanation .....	97
Table 3.3	Criteria of Assessment Scale .....	111
Table 4.1	Assessment Criteria .....	120
Table 4.2	Pre-Test of Experimental group.....	122
Table 4.3	Post-test of Experimental Group .....	123
Table 4.4	Delayed-test of Experimental Group .....	123
Table 4.5	Pre-test of Control Group .....	123
Table 4.6	Post-test of Control Group.....	124
Table 4.7	Tests of Normality .....	125
Table 4.8	Paired Samples Statistics .....	125
Table 4.9	Paired Samples Test.....	126
Table 4.10	The effect size value .....	127
Table 4.11	Tests of Normality .....	128
Table 4.12	Paired Samples Statistics .....	129
Table 4.13	Paired Samples Test.....	130
Table 4.14	The Effect Size Value.....	131
Table 4.15	Paired Samples Statistics .....	132
Table 4.16	Paired Samples Test.....	132
Table 4.17	The Effective Values .....	133
Table 4.18	Summary of the Findings.....	133
Table 4.19	Interview Questions & Emergent Themes.....	140
Table 4.20	Codes, Pattern, and Theme (Need Assessment in the organisation) .....	141

Table 4.21	Codes, Pattern, and Theme (Need Assessment in the organisation) .....	147
Table 4.22	Codes, Pattern, and Theme of Usability of SRM .....	151
Table 4.23	Classification of Students for Focus Group Interviews.....	155
Table 4.24	Interview Questions & Emergent Themes.....	158
Table 4.25	Codes, Pattern, and Theme (Need Assessment in the organisation) .....	159
Table 4.26	Codes, Pattern, and Theme .....	164
Table 4.27	Codes, Pattern, and Theme .....	169
Table 4.28	Activities Reviewed.....	172
Table 4.29	Teacher-Led Instructions .....	173
Table 4.30	Collaborative Instructions.....	175
Table 4.31	Online Instructions.....	177

## LIST OF FIGURES

	<b>Page</b>
Figure 2.1	The General Concept of Blended Learning (based on Krasnova, 2015) ..... 46
Figure 2.2	Blended Learning (based on Dangwal, 2017) ..... 51
Figure 2.3	Models of Blended Learning (based on Horn, 2014) ..... 52
Figure 2.4	Station Rotation Model (based on Christensen, Horn & Staker, 2013) ..... 57
Figure 2.5	The Conceptual Framework of Study ..... 73
Figure 3.1	Differentiated Instructions (based on Hall, Strangman, & Meyer, 2003) ..... 93
Figure 3.2	The Three Stations Applied in the Classroom ..... 95
Figure 3.3	The Process of the Study ..... 118
Figure 4.1	Displays the Most Used Words ..... 135
Figure 4.2	Text Search Queries, Fieldwork Survey ..... 136
Figure 4.3	Process of Extracting Themes of the Study in Chart, NVivo 12 ..... 137
Figure 4.4	Extracted Themes, Patterns, and Codes of the Study in Chart, NVivo 12 ..... 138
Figure 4.5	Patterns, Themes, and Objectives ..... 139
Figure 4.6	Treemaps for Themes and Subthemes ..... 156
Figure 4.7	Patterns, Themes, and Objectives ..... 157

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

BL	Blended Learning
SRM	Station Rotation Model
WS	Writing Skill
EFL	English Foreign Language
ESL	English Second Language
WP	Writing Performance
GTM	Grammar Translation Method
CLM	Communicative Language Method

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A	LESSON PLAN
APPENDIX B	PRE-POST AND DELAYED WRITING TEST
APPENDIX C	WRITING PERFORMANCE RUBRIC
APPENDIX D	CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST
APPENDIX E	SEMI-STRUCTURED TEACHERS' INTERVIEW
APPENDIX F	FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
APPENDIX G	CONSENT FORMS

**KESAN MODEL GILIRAN STESEN TERHADAP KEMAHIRAN MENULIS  
EFL PELAJAR SEKOLAH MENENGAH LIBYAN: PERSEPSI GURU DAN  
MURID**

**ABSTRAK**

Teknologi pendidikan sering digunakan untuk meningkatkan proses pendidikan pada era digital moden. Walaupun sekolah menengah di Libya mempunyai kemudahan yang minimum, guru-guru tidak digalakkan atau dilatih secara formal menggunakan teknologi. Begitu juga, tidak ada demonstrasi tentang cara teknologi dapat membantu pelajar sekolah menengah meningkatkan kemahiran menulis mereka. Matlamat utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji jika melibatkan pelajar dalam Model Giliran Stesen atau *Station Rotation Model (SRM)*, menggunakan pendekatan pembelajaran teradun, dapat membantu mereka meningkatkan kemahiran menulis. Soalan penyelidikan berikut telah diselesaikan: (1) Sejauh manakah *SRM* mempengaruhi kemahiran menulis pelajar EFL di sebuah sekolah menengah di Libya? (2) Apakah persepsi pelajar EFL apabila menggunakan *SRM* dalam kemahiran menulis di sebuah sekolah menengah di Libya? dan (3) Apakah persepsi guru yang boleh diambil kira apabila mewujudkan garis panduan menggunakan *SRM* untuk mengajar kemahiran menulis EFL pelajar sekolah menengah Libya? Dalam kajian ini, 55 orang pelajar dari kelas kedua kumpulan eksperimen (28 orang pelajar) dan kumpulan kawalan (27 orang pelajar) di sebuah sekolah menengah Libya di Al Khums mengambil bahagian dalam reka bentuk kaedah campuran menggunakan ujian pra-pasca dan tangguhan, temu bual guru, dan FGI dalam mengumpul data. Keputusan ujian pra, pasca, dan tangguhan yang dijalankan oleh guru sebelum dan selepas

pelaksanaan *SRM* dianalisis. Nombor-nombor tersebut dinilai mengikut senarai semak yang disediakan. Markah diberikan mengikut rubrik prestasi kerja, termasuk perkaitan, organisasi, refleksi, ketepatan, dan kefasihan. Analisis data menunjukkan bahawa selepas melaksanakan *SRM*, pelajar meningkatkan kemahiran mereka dengan ketara, dan *SRM* juga mempunyai kesan pendidikan yang sangat baik. Sebaliknya, guru dan pelajar menyatakan beberapa kebimbangan utama yang mesti ditangani. Hal ini termasuk motivasi pelajar-guru, kebimbangan masa, dan latihan guru dan pelajar dalam *SRM* serta teknologi yang berkaitan. Laporan ini mencadangkan perkembangan lanjutan profesional dan teknologi untuk meningkatkan penggunaan *SRM* sebagai alat pembelajaran campuran di sekolah-sekolah Libya.

**THE EFFECTS OF THE STATION ROTATION MODEL ON LIBYAN  
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' EFL WRITING SKILLS:  
TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS**

**ABSTRACT**

Educational technology is often used to improve educational processes in the modern digital age. Although secondary schools in Libya have minimal amenities, teachers have not been formally encouraged or practised using technology. Similarly, there is no demonstration of how technology can help high school pupils enhance their writing skills. The main goal of this study was to examine if involving students in a Station Rotation Model (SRM), utilising a blended learning approach, may help them enhance their writing essays skills. The following research questions were addressed: (1) To what extent does the SRM affect Libyan EFL secondary students' performance in writing? (2) What are the teachers' perceptions of the use of the SRM to teach writing? and (3) What are the Libyan EFL Secondary students' perceptions of the use of the SRM in teaching writing skills? In this study, 2 EFL Libyan teachers, and 55 students from two classes of the second year (28 students in the experimental group class) and (27 students in the control group class) in a Libyan secondary school in Al Khums participated in a mixed-methods design research. The data were collected by applying pre-post and delayed tests, class room observations, teachers' interviews and focus group interviews. The quantitative data were analysed by using descriptive statistics and t-tests while qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis with the help of NVivo. The results of pre, post, and delayed tests carried out by teachers before and after the implementation of SRM were analysed. The marks were given as



per the working performance rubrics, including relevance, organisation, reflection, accuracy, and fluency. The data analysis indicated that after implementing SRM, the students' writing skills improved significantly. Teachers and students, on the other hand, expressed several significant concerns that must be addressed. These included student-teacher motivation, timing concerns, and teacher and student training in SRM and related technology. The report proposes further professional and technological growth for increased usage of SRM as a blended learning tool in Libyan schools.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Some scholars point out that the current global language is English, and the desire to learn English Language (EL) is increasing day by day (Halliday, 2019), probably because English is considerably connected to globalization and is immensely influential in different services such as education, economics, and health (Zein, 2019; Morady & Murray, 2019). The significance of the English language cannot be described in words, and it is intricately related to our existence. English has played a vital role in the growth of every country's education system (Hosseini, 2018). Renau (2016) holds that teaching English as a foreign language in schools aims to improve critical thinking between students to adopt different views of English language, regardless of types of teaching methods (traditional or modern) applied inside the classroom. McKay (2018) believes that undoubtedly English is one of the most difficult languages to be taught due to its multiple variations, its usage in cross-cultural interactions and its lack of a strong contextual base.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, English has become the basic language of higher and scientific education, technology, research, business, medicine, and commerce. English plays a significant role in this evolving cycle as country borders are disappearing and the world is becoming one small village. As an international language, it has caused many changes in the language education policies of most countries over the world. It has been regarded as an initial subject of education plan from fundamental levels at schools. All countries try to introduce English language instruction into their education systems so that their young generations can keep pace with international

developments. To do so, they are investigating new methods, exploring knowledge, and improving themselves through English while examining other societies and their improvements and ideologies. All these initiatives are taken in order to help the new generation become bright, responsible, and law-abiding citizens of the culturally diverse world. The same policies are practised in the Middle East and North Africa (Pathan et al., 2016).

Concerning teaching English, there are numerous methods applied by teachers in education, such as the traditional method, blended learning method, and many more. One of the main objectives of a study by Wei, Shi, Yang, and Liu (2017) was to examine the effect of blended learning and traditional learning approaches on students' performances. They found a distinct difference between blended learning and conventional learning methods in students' performances. According to their findings, the blended learners reported better learning outcomes than their typical peers. The results were compatible with several previous studies, such as Khader's study (2016), which showed that blended learning method plays a more effective role in students' progress on exams than the traditional counterpart. Similarly, Pereira et al., (2007) (as cited in Wei, Shi, Yang and Liu, 2017) revealed higher performance scores among students that relied on the blended learning method rather than the traditional method. Cooner (2010) puts that the blended learning method provides students with tremendous incentives to recognise and develop language skills. In fact, blended learning offers students a greater sense of identity than traditional classes (Rofai & Jordan, 2004). It is stated that the fundamental English skills do not receive enough attention in the traditional method. The basic focus is to ascertain how students interpret every single word and its meaning, as it has been considered important in writing and reading documents (Tyler, 2008).

Alshibany (2018) reported that Libya had recently undergone profound political and social changes. Libya is a fractured and evolving country due to civil war in 2011. Big changes within the world's political, societal, and economic systems usually take a long time to occur. While Libya is in chaos at the moment, suffering from instability; a political gap with no authority in complete control; a shortage of protection and essential facilities such as healthcare, medication, electricity; and with limited or negligible fuel in most of its towns and cities, certain democratic forces are still at work to rationalize the current circumstance.

Jalova (2013) states that although education has been established, the pace of English teaching and learning in Libya has almost halted. The main goal of boosting English teaching and learning in Libya is to allow the country to move along with economic growth and encourage foreign trade. In recent years, it has been recognised that the teacher is a gateway to any progress in education where teachers' essential function needs to be considered to increase students' success (Harwell, 2003; Fullan, 2007; Pridham et al., 2013).

Several studies have been conducted in Libya to reflect the problems and difficulties encountered by teachers (e.g., how to teach a foreign language professionally) and students (how to learn and communicate using a foreign language and how to overcome such problems) (Elabbar, 2011; Elraggas, 2014; Gibreel, 2017; Mehdi, 2018; Shalbag & Belhaj, 2012). Elabbar (2011) also argues that teaching any foreign language needs applying specific approaches, and students will use these methods to improve their skills to write, speak, listen, and read.

Writing is a primary language skill. Cole and Feng (2015) argue that writing skill is one of the basic and core components of language. In spite of its vitality in language teaching, Libyan writers, researchers, and even teachers have not given much attention to this skill (Abukhattala, 2016; Elabbar, 2011). Writing is considered a good resource to help students learn their own way of thinking. It can also settle thoughts and concepts and encourage students to contemplate them. According to Klimova (2012), although some students lack practice and experience in formal writing, they need to get involved in writing in English.

The continuous development of technology and its essential role in many scopes like education cannot be easily ignored. Chew, Jones, and Turner (2008) refer to blended learning (BL) as a mixture of two areas of concern: education and technology. A more comprehensive approach has been presented by Staker and Horn (2014), who work on four models of BL: Rotation Model, Flex Model, A La Carte Model, and Enriched Virtual Model. In the current study, Station Rotation Model (SRM) will be used as evidence of teaching English writing in classes. According to this model, students will rotate between learning modalities, representing online learning. Practically, these stations rotations mean that students come to school and attend classes and stay at their desks, but switch between the traditional instruments like a tutorial on paper and online learning on devices like smartphones, tablets, or laptops. It also means that students move from the classroom to a computer lab for specific lessons. For example, students need to attend the flipped classroom to get the needed content for the course online, and then they head to the “brick-and-mortar” school for face-to-face teacher-guided classroom instruction (Lalima & Dangwal, 2017).

## **1.2 The Background of the Study**

As a background to this study, it is fundamentally necessary to explain the Libyan education policies and EFL programme. It is hoped that a brief observation of the Libyan education system can contextualise this research in terms of the issues of EFL teaching and learning practices in the present schooling system.

### **1.2.1 History of English Education in Libya**

EFL education in Libya has not changed significantly since Gaddafi became the country's leader in 1969. The insecurity, as well as short term plans, had affected the country passively in various ways, representing education in general and English language education in particular (Ibrahim, 2015).

In the 1970s, the country witnessed many efforts to improve English education. Unfortunately, all these efforts were focused exclusively on the implementation of grammar embedded in the curricula developed by a few Libyan teachers (non-native speakers of English). In an attempt to improve English language teaching in Libya, in the 2000s, the country's Ministry of Education established new English language curricula based on communicative principles. The new curricula were applied in Libyan primary and high schools inside and outside the country, replacing the former curriculum that mainly relied on teaching grammar and reading, ignoring the other skills such as listening, writing, and speaking. Nevertheless, Libyan English teachers were unable to support their English students to meet the aims of the new curricula because they just used the traditional teaching methods such as Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and teacher-centre learning (Ibrahim, 2015).

The quality of training English language teachers in Libya is underdeveloped because the Libyan government's accreditation procedures are not well-developed for universities, programmes, and courses (Aloreibi & Carey, 2017). It has been reported that the centre makes annual visits to Libya's tertiary institutions and allows providers to request accreditation applications. Nevertheless, it is impossible to test the consistency of this procedure since the officials at the centre claimed that the public cannot have access to their accreditation requirements. As a result, the centre accredits all professional establishments in Libya in both areas of research and vocation. It is somewhat distinct from the method of accreditation in western settings where accreditation for technical education is discipline-specific, more closely supervised, and open (Aloreibi & Carey, 2017; NCQAAETI, 2012).

Although the usage of technologies has been an essential part of successful language acquisition and teaching worldwide, the role of technology in Libya is categorically absent in most English language classes. In Libya, education policy makers demand that technology represent an important educational invention. However, they are not freely implemented in foreign language schools in Libya. As several scholars have pointed out, the successful application of instructional technologies critically relies on teachers, who eventually decide whether or not to combine them and whether they should be utilised in the education systems (e.g., Abukhattala, 2016; Aloreibi & Carey, 2017; Ibrahim, 2015).

Up to now, many changes have been made in curricula planning, teaching approaches, and syllabuses. Nevertheless, they have not been seriously acted upon by teachers or administrators.

### **1.2.2 Teaching EFL in Libyan Schools**

Teaching EFL in Libya dates back to the 1940s during the Second World War when British influence was established in Northern Libya. Teaching English in the nation became a part of British strategy. Interesting and comprehensive English language courses were enjoyed by the Libyan people (El-Haddad, 1997).

The first series of English language books used in Libya were called “Basic Way to English.” They were published by KC Ogden and based on teaching English based on vocabulary (teaching 850 words). There were two more books on literacy and learning entitled “Basic Reading Book” by L.W. Lockhart. In 1968, the ministry of education accepted a new proposal to set up a commission to reform Libya’s education framework. In a few months, there were vital changes in the programme of English as a foreign language in preparatory and high schools. This decision introduced English as the instruction language in secondary and university education courses (Hashim, 1997).

At the end of the 1960s, it was felt necessary to design and produce a new series of textbooks for Libya's whole English teaching process. The series was named “English for Libya”, and it was written by Mustafa Gusbi. The series was determined to respond to Libyan learners' linguistic and cultural needs. This series included three student textbooks, three workbooks and three teacher books for three preparatory levels. These books were the first type that helped the students get acquainted with Libya’s local culture. They continued to be used until the mid-1980s.

In 1986, teaching English as a foreign language was stopped in Libya. Despite the decision, in the 1993-1994 academic year, it was reinstated in the Libyan schooling programme. There were several problems encountered throughout the teaching



process, such as a significant lack of English language teachers and students' poor performance. As a result, the students were learning only to pass the courses without necessarily acquiring the language. The limited number of trained English teachers made it quite challenging to meet the needs. A new set of English for Libya released by “Garnet Education” was used in both the preparatory and secondary levels during the academic year 1998-1999. A new textbook was introduced in 2005-2006 for 3 primary classes. English was taught for only one year in the 3rd class, then stopped but introduced to the 5th and 6th classes in 2006-2007. English became a mandatory course from 1st primary to 3rd secondary class in 2018. In other words, it is being taught for 12 years (Mohsen, 2014). Frino et al., (2008) states that the books that are going to be published need to take into consideration the unique needs of Libyan students. It implies that the ways and concepts in which the vocabulary is used should pursue students’ global understanding and experience, as well as their personal interests.

Libya’s school year is split into two terms/parts, and each part lasts four months. Students take two tests each term: a mid-term test and a final test. Students must complete the whole course to pass the school year. The total passing mark for each course must not be less than 50%. In cases where students fail the final exam, they will be given another chance to sit for a second session, provided that there should be no more than two subjects. However, students who fail three or more subjects must spend another year in the same college, and they must take all the courses again (Mohsin, 2014).

Concerning EFL writing, it is stated that writing is not only one of the most critical skills for educational success, but also one of the most complex skills to be mastered, and it poses most obstacles for students in writing class (Fareed, Ashraf &

Bilal, 2016, Tillema, 2012). To produce a coherent, fluent, and extended piece of writing, the challenges are enormous for second language learners, particularly for foreign language students (Nunan, 1999). Celce-Murcia (2001) believes that through writing, a writer can send many messages to a reader or readers, near or far away, known or unknown. Therefore, writing as a communicative practice requires language learners to be supported and nurtured.

Wang, Jarrell and Iwata (2015) (as cited in Matthews, 2018) state that the appropriate response to society's developments and education needs is to ensure that the role of teachers is no longer just a knowledge provider. More importantly, teachers are required to be facilitators, mentors or coaches to guide the learning process and apply the appropriate methods inside the classroom.

Similar to other foreign language students, Libyan students have many problems and difficulties in English writing, as explained in the statement of the problem. Many factors are underpinning their writing troubles and difficulties. Chou (2011) shows in his study two main reasons for the difficulties which English language learners might face while preparing their English writing assignments. The first reason is the type of cultural background from which EFL students come. Second, as those students are not taught to be critical thinkers, they have lower expectations than those who consider themselves critical English writers.

Of all four language skills, writing is the most difficult skill to learn and to teach in schools. It requires professional skills and the ability to simplify and effectively transmit ideas or thoughts. These abilities can only be accomplished if a learner masters specific writing techniques to know how to obtain ideas on what he or she is going to write about, how to articulate them in a series of sentences, how to

organise them chronologically and coherently, and how to review and then improve the composition before the final draft (Sadiku, 2015). The skill is even more complex because of its “distancing” characteristic. That is to say, the writer is required to be able to balance what can be assumed to be a private background knowledge of the communicative intent of the text with the ability of the audience to make inferences, which depends on both language knowledge and real-world knowledge. It is important to understand the difficult phase a learner will be moving through (Sa’diyah, 2017).

Al Fadda (2012) also points out that one of the basics of writing skills is the learners’ ability to find the appropriate references and evaluate these references to put together the different ideas and opinions to develop their own voices. The student writers could also use suggestions made by other writers and use them in their own language (Dehkordi & Allami, 2012). Al-Khasawneh and Maher (2010) stress the significance of other literary basics such as plot, explanation, and paraphrasing. Ahmad and Alamin (2012) add other basic elements which form, develop, and organise ideas. In fact, learners will consciously decide whether or not to compose persuasive supporting sentences in order to get a flawless piece of content and eventually edit them (Alsamdani, 2010). Moreover, Al Fadda (2012) holds that using punctuation marks such as full stop, comma, semicolon, colon, dot, a hyphen, and capitalization are common among high-level learners.

According to Annab (2016), the third-year English students at Bajaya University have multiple difficulties in writing. According to the findings obtained from the questionnaire, students’ main difficulties are more concerned with vocabulary, syntax and academic style. Furthermore, the analysis of students’ written productions revealed that most errors were found in spelling, capitalisation, punctuation marks, and word choice. Therefore, teachers are advised to use these

findings effectively in their writing classes. On the other hand, students are encouraged to use these findings in improving their writing proficiency.

Abukhattala (2016) criticises English teachers in that although they are living in the era of technology, they still use traditional and obsolete methods in teaching English skills. Consequently, writing and listening skills receive less attention, and students also have no distinct role inside the classroom except passively receiving lessons (Abukhattala, 2016). As English has become a vital language in higher learning, which is used as a means of interaction and other educational objectives and practical life (Darmi & Albion, 2013), the progress of technology could have practical implications in English language classrooms. Halili et al., (2018) argues that students have several needs, interests, previous knowledge, and support in class, which makes it demanding for teachers to meet their requirements while expanding their comprehension.

Undoubtedly, schools play a fundamental role in offering the new technology in the lesson design, which the teachers could advance to get the desired outcomes. To make the teaching process more appealing and enjoyable, teachers have to merge traditional methods with online ones. A teacher should also teach students effectively by designing real, challenging and productive learning activities related to their experiences (Aloreibi & Carey, 2017).

Based on the previous explanations, we intend to investigate the effects of a model of BL named “SRM” on the Libyan students’ writing performance. The main reasons for conducting such a study are our concerns about students’ difficulty in English writing, which were clearly illustrated by previous studies, and the teaching methods, which are still traditional even in the era of technology and the Internet.

### **1.2.3 Availability of Technology in Teaching EFL at Libyan Schools**

Teaching and studying a foreign language via technology has been a current phenomenon in worldwide foreign language education (Almekhlafi & Almeqdadi, 2010; Shihiba & Embark, 2011). Nowadays, using technology in classrooms has an essential role in teaching and learning EFL. It can be a vital source of support for both the instructor and the learner. New technologies significantly affect students' learning skills, especially writing skills (Shihiba, & Embark, 2011; Youssef, 2012; Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, & Alzwari, 2012; Soliman, 2013; Hu, et al., 2021). The rise in technology integration has considerably revolutionised second language education, especially in the area of reading and writing. Such incorporation into second language learning indicates a shift in instructional styles from behaviour to constructivist learning (Kasapaglu-akyol, 2010). The recent developments in new technology, computers, and machines are distinctly reflected in literacy. Hence, the pressure on teachers to keep up with new developments would increase expectations in classrooms (Feiler & Logan, 2007). This not only motivates and encourages EFL students to engage in reading and writing activities productively but also promotes the different ways in improving students' writing skills (Lee, 2013).

Abukhattala (2016) puts that the grammar-translation method is still used in Libya at all educational levels. Accordingly, practitioners may experience a significant tension between policy-level standards and actual practices. This research mainly focuses on grammar codes, language memorization and (mostly decontextualized) comprehension of sentences. Language courses are primarily presented in Arabic, with less, if any, in English. The secondary English textbook was, until recently, is primarily a set of grammatical structures in which grammar points were treated structurally with virtually no engaging communicative exercises.

In Libya, English language education has shifted to the communicative language teaching (CLT) method (Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, & Alzwari, 2012; Shihiba & Embark, 2011; Salem, & Mohammadzadeh, 2018; Sabitha, 2013). Savignon (1997) notes that the theoretical concept of CLT is communication competency that allows language learners to use languages effectively for communicative purposes at an individual, contextual, and cultural level. Nevertheless, many Libyan EFL learners also face difficulties improving their communication skills outside the classroom, primarily because they do not have a friendly learning atmosphere where they can hear and understand English for communicative purposes (Abukhattala, 2016; Youssef, 2012; Soliman, 2013)

Most Libyan EFL teachers still count on the traditional methods such as the grammar-translation method (GTM) and communication language learning (CLL). However, using information and communication technologies (ICT) in the Libyan classrooms is limited or nearly absent because many factors such as the thoughts, experiences and behaviours of teachers affect their usage of technology in their classrooms (Abukhattala, 2016).

### **1.3 The Statement of the Problem**

Many researchers stress that there are several challenges and problems that students face while studying EFL writing (Abdualkareem, 2013; Gibreel, 2017, Alharbi, 2019; Sasmita & Setyowati, 2021; Almahameed & Alajalein, 2021). Similarly, Libyan students encounter many challenges and hardships in learning EFL writing (Elmadwi, 2015; Elraggas, 2014; Shalbag & Belhaj, 2012). There are growing international recommendations and interests in teaching and learning approaches applied in classes. However, very few, if any, local studies have been conducted in this

area. As a result, the current study takes this aspect into consideration and investigates the effects of SRM on secondary students' EFL writing skills in Libya. Based on the findings of several international studies (for instance see, Ogude & Chukweggu, 2019; Uztosun, 2021; Zhang, Zhang & Wang, 2022) that have shown the SRM method's effectiveness in the teaching and learning process, it indicates that SRM will be a good model for improving EFL students' writing skills and solving their related problems. Like any other EFL students, Libyan secondary EFL students face difficulties learning English writing, which has been confirmed by several research (Elmadwi, 2015; Elraggas, 2014; Gibreel, 2017; Mehdi, 2018). Although writing is considered as one of the most challenging skills for students, EFL teachers at Libyan schools give less attention to this skill (Pathan and Marayi, 2016). Instead, they put more pressure on their students to produce well-structured sentences in exams, assignments, reports, and essays (Abukhatala, 2016; Aloreibi & Carey, 2017). Such difficulties affect students' writing performance, even though this skill is considered crucial to transmit their thoughts in linguistically accurate writing (Supiani, 2017). In other words, the students encounter problems in real situations submitting their formal letters, essays, and projects in English writing classes. This poses a major obstacle for the students who do not know how to master functional and monologue texts in different writing genres such as descriptive, narrative, retail, and report (Depdiknas, 2006). Although writing is a challenging skill to acquire, it is the primary tool for students in exams (Abdulkareem, 2013; Alfadda, 2012).

Libyan students generally encounter difficulties and problems in learning language skills. Conversely, writing skill has caused serious concern among EFL learners (Elmadwi, 2015; Elraggas, 2014; Gibreel, 2017; Mehdi, 2018). According to the previous studies, Libyan students cannot share their feelings and convey their

thoughts and ideas accurately. They usually make many mistakes and errors when asked to write essays, emails, reports, and formal letters. Most studies used tests to identify these difficulties and problems. Elmadwi (2015) was one of the Libyan researchers who explored and analysed the errors in English writing papers provided by Libyan secondary students. The findings showed that the Libyan secondary students encountered some problems and challenges in producing a correct language. It was found that their systematic errors root in the intervention of their mother tongue, misunderstanding of rules restrictions, over generalisation, imperfect implementation of rules and presumed misconceptions, implying that the current methods used in teaching writing have not been appropriate or effective (Elmadwi, 2015).

Mehdi (2018) tried to identify, categorise and describe the sources of the mistakes made by Libyan secondary students. The results showed that first-year secondary school students have considerable trouble writing in English.

Although many studies have highlighted the problems Libyan students have in EFL writing, the current study attempts to solve and overcome these problems by using SRM to improve the Libyan students' English writing skills. It is upsetting to see that the Libyan teachers still use the traditional methods in their classes, even in the era of technology. They still apply teacher-centred methods, which they believe are more effective in the context of teaching and learning (Alshibany, 2014). In the teacher-centred approach, the teacher is the primary controller in class, and students are just receivers and remain passive during the entire time of class. This explanation parallels Abukhattala (2016), who argues that most Libyan schools still rely on traditional methods at all levels of education. The grammar-translation method (GTM) is still popular in Libyan schools either inside or outside the country. According to this traditional method, the emphasis is primarily on learning grammar, memorising



vocabulary, and translating sentences to the mother language. Teachers present English lessons in Arabic, with limited to nearly no use of English. Although traditional methods have long been used in classrooms, it is quite obvious that these methods are no longer promising and do not give students any chance to play a role inside the classroom. Hence, their needs and interests to collaborate and report are not fully addressed (Mapesos, 2017).

Nowadays, mixed learning is strongly recommended in classrooms. This is worth mentioning that many schools prescribe to this idea. However, no one has made an effort to cleverly design or apply the blended learning materials. Since there is no particular learning theory to adopt, various theories have been formulated to create the teaching materials (Sayed & Baker, 2014).

Moreover, many scholars recommend using technology inside the classroom to encourage students to apply it off-site. For instance, Picciano (2006), Souhila, (2021), Van, Dang, Pham, Vo & Pham, (2021). Odabasi (2000) and Hill and Hannafin (2001) all unanimously agree that technology is useful for both learning and teaching. As technology has become an indispensable part of everyday life, there is constant pressure to integrate technology into education. Under this continuous pressure, it is imperative for all involved parties to get together and discuss motivations and purposes (Abukhattala, 2016).

Based on the above discussion, implementing a type of blended learning in the classroom will be the best choice to improve the Libyan students' writing. This type of blended learning is SRM, known as the most appropriate type of BL and could be used in Libyan schools. Because it is a method similar to the traditional methods applied by Libyan teachers, in station rotation classes, teachers will keep using the

traditional teaching methods in the classroom, but they will merge them with the online learning methods. SRM is defined as a model of blended learning which combines the traditional methods with online learning methods (Horn & Staker, 2014). Garrison and Kanuka (2004) argue that BL is a concept that describes the different attempts made by teachers to integrate the technology dimensions into the conventional classroom environment.

As emphasised by the literature, most Libyan students, in particular, have serious problems with EFL writing at the age of technology. Most students spend much time on electronic devices such as smartphones, laptops, and tablets that have useful and assisting applications (Rao & Durga, 2018). The current study considers this aspect and investigates the effects of SRM on Libyan students' EFL writing skills. It is proposed that SRM will be a good teaching model to improve EFL students' writing skills and address Libyan students' writing problems. Our findings could encourage students to use their gadgets to improve their writing skills instead of playing or surfing on the Internet. The rotation can involve only one station in online learning. Many activities are included in the stations such as small-group, class instruction, collaborative group projects, individual learning, and traditional assignments (Horn & Staker, 2014).

This present study is a mixed-methods study employing four ways to collect data: pre-post and delayed tests, classroom observation, teachers' interview, and focus group interviews in order to achieve three aims: to examine the effects of the SRM on Libyan EFL Secondary students' performance in writing; to identify the Libyan EFL Secondary students' perceptions of the use of the SRM in teaching writing skills; and to determine teachers' perceptions of the use of the SRM to teach writing. The target sample of this study comprises EFL Libyan students at a state secondary school in

Libya. Since there is limited research, if any, investigating the SRM's effect on EFL performance, it is hoped that this study will be a different attempt by providing significant pedagogical implications and recommendations that will facilitate and improve the process of teaching and learning EFL writing using the SRM. The outcomes of the present study are expected to help improve the students' performance in the writing course. It is hoped that curriculum designers will be able to incorporate this model of blended learning in their lesson plans when designing the Libyan syllabus.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

This research aims to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To examine the effects of the SRM on Libyan EFL Secondary students' performance in writing.
2. To determine teachers' perceptions of the use of the SRM to teach writing
3. To identify the Libyan EFL Secondary students' perceptions of the use of the SRM in teaching writing skills.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. To what extent does the SRM affect Libyan EFL secondary students' performance in writing?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions of the use of the SRM to teach writing?

3. What are the Libyan EFL Secondary students' perceptions of the use of the SRM in teaching writing skills?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

It is acknowledged by many researchers that the teaching and learning of a new foreign language is not always an enjoyable experience. In other words, EFL learning and teaching process is complicated (Oxford, 2003). This research intends to examine the effect of the SRM in EFL writing classes and how the SRM could improve students' ability in EFL writing. It is assumed that the current research has a realistic significance by providing practical findings which will provide guidance for pupils, instructors, academics, curriculum designers, and the entire society.

For the students, the outcomes of this study may increase awareness of the basics of English writing using technology inside and outside the classroom. Applying new technology inside the classroom makes the learning process easier and more interesting. The classroom will also be learner-centred instead of teacher-centred. This research is expected to reveal how the SRM resolves the difficulties faced by Libyan students when learning English writing.

In addition, the findings of the study will enable teachers to develop their own teaching methods in EFL writing. The SRM could be an additional activity used by teachers and their students in the classroom. EFL Teachers will consider merging modern technology with the approaches they already apply inside their classrooms. As Ibrahim (2021) points out, teachers are advised to use the findings of any research on English teaching for effective teaching in the future.

For the researchers, the present findings will stimulate other new research. The interested researchers can launch new studies in the light of the present findings and recommendations to see whether these findings will be consistent with other views of researchers.

With regard to the curricula designers, this study is critical as it will help curricula designers gain new experiences in applying the outcomes of the present study as the basic syllabus activities in the curriculum. Finally, this study is promising as it provides the foundation for further plans or actions regarding teaching English as a foreign language in Arabic countries like Libya. It can also offer guidelines for applying the SRM in English writing classes in higher education.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

The current study will focus on the secondary school students' writing skills in Libya by applying one type of BL named station rotation model (SRM) to collect data through tests, classroom observations, and interviews with teachers and focus groups. The study is conducted on a sample of Libyan students whose mother tongue is Arabic. Shalbag and Belhaj (2012), Abdualkareem (2013), Elmadwi (2015), Gibreel (2017), and others emphasised that Libyan students encounter many difficulties in learning English writing and that these difficulties involve sentence structure, training, the practice of writing, vocabulary, and educational background. This study will apply SRM in order to improve students' English writing skills and reduce/overcome those difficulties as much as possible.

The scope of the current study is limited to the effect of the SRM on the writing skills of Libyan secondary students, the EFL students' experiences of using the SRM

in learning writing skills at a secondary school in Libya, the factors that teachers can take into consideration when using the SRM to teach Libyan secondary students EFL writing skills.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

There were a few limitations to this study, which are expected in a study of this nature. These limitations will assist readers in determining the generalisability of this study to their learning environments (Creswell et al., 2011). The first limitation is that this study was limited to a single district and one school. Second, despite repeated assurances of anonymity, teachers may have exhibited some bias due to a relationship with the researcher. Additionally, no pedagogical practices were presented beyond defining the instructional process's use of technology. The questions focused on two areas: whether a teacher believed a student could learn from the technology and whether a teacher believed a student could learn using technology in the absence of the teacher. The study compared technology-mediated instruction to traditional face-to-face instruction. Another limitation of this study was the small number of students eligible to participate. This study lasted one semester and included only those students who received instruction. The small sample size represents a non-representative sample of all 11th graders worldwide. Additionally, because these students were all recruited from the same school, the data were representative of students attending a low socioeconomic, high poverty school. However, the perspectives of students attending a high socioeconomic school may differ from those in this study. Finally, the qualitative section of the study examined changes in teachers' and students' perceptions and attitudes over six months between Term 1 and Term 2. Longer-term studies are

necessary to determine whether the gains can be sustained and whether the improvement is permanent.

## **1.9 Definitions of Terms**

The following are some definitions of terms in this study. They are described and expanded operationally to eliminate ambiguities and improve clarity, as they appear in several sections of this research.

### **1.9.1 Blended Learning Approach ‘BLA’**

According to Krasnova (2015) (as cited in Bryan & Volchenkova, 2016), blended learning could be defined as a training approach that incorporates the most effective face-to-face instruction methods and collaborative online communication, all creating a structure that operates in continuous conjunction and becomes a cohesive entity.

### **1.9.2 Traditional Teaching Approach ‘TTA’**

Walia (2012) describes the traditional teaching approach as a strategy that focuses and emphasises primarily on learning grammar rules and vocabulary and does not pay much attention to the four mainly LSRW (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) competencies. Students mainly rely on grammar rules by translating them from their native language when it comes to learning. For instance, in the area of reading, the grammar translation approach creates patterns that represent deciphering rather than reading (Tyler, 2008).

### **1.9.3 Station Rotation Model ‘SRM’**

The station rotation model means that students come to the school, attend classes, and stay at their desks, but switch between the traditional instruments like paper and pencil and online learning devices like smartphones, tablets, or laptops. For example, students sometimes leave the classroom to a computer lab for specific lessons (Lalima & Dangwal, 2017).

### **1.9.4 English Foreign Language ‘EFL’**

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is studied in countries other than English where English is not the primary language, such as China, Venezuela, or Arabic countries. However, as Modiano (2009) notes, the standard concept of the foreign-language speaking community is now breaking down, as the growing usage of English due to globalization has made it impossible to discern between second language and foreign-language speaking populations. Sweden is an excellent example of such a disintegration (Brown, 2013).

### **1.9.5 English as a Second Language ‘ESL’**

English as a second language refers to a situation where students or immigrants are learning English in countries where it is widely used and formally spoken as a communication tool. Students or immigrants are taught English in English-speaking countries like the USA, Canada, England, Australia or New Zealand. There are a significant number of English-speaking countries such as Puerto Rico, India, or Kenya, where people use English daily for purposes other than international communication. (Brown, 2013).



### **1.9.6 Writing Skills ‘WS’**

Writing skills are defined as those skills through which writers introduce ideas and facts to others in a pleasantly written format. Writers deliver what they have learned in a way that conforms to the reader’s needs based on a certain writing style. For example, a news article shows facts while commentary represents personal views/opinions. A sports article is about how a sports event is unfolded (Mallia, 2017).

### **1.9.7 Writing Performance ‘WP’**

It is defined as the achievement level of students/learners in writing (for example; EFL writing skill). Brown (2001) (as cited in Ganapathy, 2011) mentioned five main types of writing performances in a classroom. “In the EFL context, display writing is adopted in the school curriculum. The important aspect of show writing applies to brief reaction tests, assessments and even research papers.” (Ganapathy, 2011: p. 27). The current study employs a station rotation approach to particularly investigate students’ writing performance.

### **1.10 Conclusion**

This introductory chapter presented the background of research, the problem statement, and the study’s purpose of investigating the effect of the SRM on Libyan students’ English writing skills. The relevant research questions were proposed appropriately, accompanied by the study's significance. The abbreviated terms used throughout the whole research were subsequently elaborated. The chapter ended with the limitation and summary. The following chapter will present the most recent and related views of literature that contextualizes the thesis.