

# **The Role of EFL Teachers in the Jordanian Schools \***

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**\*Received:26/4/2016, Accepted: 9/7/2016.**

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## دور معلمي اللغة الانجليزية في المدارس الأردنية

### ملخص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة النظرية إلى البحث في دور معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بشكل عام ودورهم في الأردن بشكل خاص. قد أصبح دور معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية أكثر تعقيداً. إن الأدوار التي يؤديها المعلم بشكل مباشر أو غير مباشر هي أدوار متنوعة، لكن الدور التقليدي المعتاد لمعلم اللغة الإنجليزية هو الدور التعليمي. هناك أدوار أخرى رئيسة لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية يجب أخذها بعين الاعتبار إلى جانب الدور التعليمي. ومن هذه الأدوار المفهومة ضمناً الدور الاجتماعي، والدور الأخلاقي، والدور المنهجي. إن القيام بإلقاء نظرة سريعة على تلك الأدوار المهمة لمعلم اللغة الإنجليزية هو أمر ضروري ليس فقط على صعيد تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية، إنما على عدة أوجه وإسهامات في المجتمع يقوم معلمو اللغة الإنجليزية بتقديمها كعامل رئيس في تكوينه، بطريقة أو بأخرى. وفي المحصلة، فإن مناقشة أدوار معلم اللغة الإنجليزية سواءً الدور الاجتماعي أم الدور التعليمي أم دوره في تصميم وتخطيط ونقد المنهاج التعليمي، هي أدوار أساسية لا يمكن تجاهلها عند الحديث عن الأدوار المتنوعة، مع ذكر عدة تحديات تعيق معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية من القيام بأدوارهم المتنوعة. وبالتالي، يجب تقديم هذه التحديات ومناقشتها، ومن ثم تقديم اقتراحات معينة لحلها.

### Abstract:

This theoretical paper aimed at investigating EFL teachers' roles generally and the Jordanian EFL teachers' roles particularly. Recently, EFL teachers' roles became more complex. The essential roles of EFL teachers directly or indirectly are diverse, but the traditional role of the teacher is to teach. . There are main roles for EFL teachers that should be taken into account, in parallel with the educational role. These roles are inferred, such as social, moral, and academic roles. It is inevitable to have a brief look at such crucial roles, not only about teaching English, but also the various aspects or contributions in society that EFL teachers offer

and shape in a way or another. Consequently, EFL teacher' role in society, in education and in curriculum, whether designing, planning, or assessing are all unavoidable when discussing such roles with different challenges that hinder EFL teachers from achieving their various roles. These challenges should be presented and discussed then they should be solved by different suggested solutions.

**Key Words:** EFL teachers, Teachers' roles, Jordanian EFL teachers.

## Introduction

Teaching is a demanding process because of the challenges that could appear as a result of the necessary interaction between schools, teachers, students and their community. Teaching is a complex job as it imposes various responsibilities and changes upon the teacher's roles, character and behavior. The first divine word said to our Prophet Mohammad was "Read, by the name of your God who creates". Teaching was a mission, if not the entire mission, and one of the messages of all Prophets and Messengers. Our Prophet, Mohammad (Peace Be upon Him), appreciated the teacher's job by saying "Hadn't I been a messenger, I would have been a teacher" which means that the word "teacher" is not exclusive to schools, nor to the tutors or educators who are expected to practice this role (Al-Jabali and Obeidat 2013, p.696).

Traditionally, teaching was considered as a source of different services such as introducing information and caring about students. In this regard, Cuban (2014) suggests that the typical model of a school was an educational factory in which students study hard, learn by heart and memorize various materials to be tested in the end. The actual reality which should be taken into consideration about education, (both the teaching and learning process), is the apparent change on both levels of teachers and students roles and responsibilities. Students are not only consumers of facts and knowledge, nor containers of the received information. Actually, they are creative users of knowledge. Schools do not represent just the educational factories anymore, nowadays; they are the centers

for lifelong learning, caring and friendship. However, the most important change according to the process of teaching is viewing it as one of the most difficult, dynamic and vital career to the social, cultural, economic position of any country.

As the process of teaching and learning transformed radically, all the educational components are affected by this change. For instance, teachers, the essential components in teaching, have to adapt with all the teaching process inputs: students, curriculum, classroom environment, students' parents, the society, and the principals. They have to deal with those inputs separately. They have to adapt with all students' conditions and psychological problems. These aspects require the teacher to perform various roles during the day, or even during the lesson. Veira (2012, p. 1) asserts that "Teachers perform different roles when making decisions about the planning and teaching of lessons". Teachers in general and English Language teachers in particular play a fundamental role in their learners' learning and academic achievement (Choudhury 2011, p. 34).

Today's teacher is not only the transmitter of information or knowledge; teachers have multiple roles to play including teaching, research, consultancy, development of instructional resources and management of instruction. The focus in this article is directed towards the EFL teachers' roles, since their mission is not as easy as it seems to be, but rather it is an extremely accurate job that needs specific attention, care and effort. The quality of English competence and performance of EFL students depends to a great extent on the skills and ability of the EFL teachers. Apart from the supposed educational role, all teachers generally and EFL teachers specifically experience a big challenge that is related to technology, pedagogy and various competences. The entire world is still changing; therefore, even minimal pieces of life should cope with the tremendous change.

## Methodology

The researcher followed the descriptive analytical approach by reviewing related literature to answer the questions of the study.

## Statement of the problem

In the field of teaching EFL, there have been some efforts to study and investigate the teacher's roles generally and the effect of their roles on their practices and performance in the classroom. It is important to recognize the fact that exploring EFL teacher's roles is an important means of understanding classroom practices and performance with a view to improving them for better teaching process. In Jordan, there is a need to investigate EFL teachers' role. Many studies were conducted in order to investigate EFL teachers partially. Few of these studies discussed restricted roles without presenting an expansion, other studies presented challenges without realistic solutions. The researcher tries to fill a small gap in the literature by discussing EFL teachers' roles, challenges and possible solutions.

## Purpose of the Study

This study aimed at exploring the EFL teachers' roles generally and the Jordanian EFL teachers' roles specifically and the challenges that may impede them from achieving their traditional and perceived roles. These challenges and obstacles should be confronted by finding different solutions.

## Questions of the study

**This study attempted to answer the following questions:**

1. What are the traditional and perceived roles of Jordanian EFL teachers?
2. What are the common challenges that Jordanian EFL teachers encounter?
3. How could the Jordanian EFL teachers overcome such challenges?
4. What is the Jordanian Government's role in reforming the educational process and teachers' role?

## Significance of the Study

Since there is a profound need to explore EFL teachers' roles while teaching English as

a foreign language and to what extent there is a relationship between these roles and their classroom practices, it is hoped that the results of the study may provide Jordanian EFL teachers with insights into their essential roles in the classroom and with some suggested solutions to overcome some challenges in their EFL teaching process. In addition, this study will also shed light on the importance of changing teacher's roles because one of the main requirements of professional teaching involves changes in the roles of teachers.

## Review of Related Literature

Nowadays, language teaching is a necessity and mastering an official language by the majority of people is a crucial requirement in order to achieve an acceptable degree of harmony and be part of the globalization era. An International language is a logical requirement during the era of information diffusion and the globalization demand. It is undoubtable that English is primitively considered as the official and international language of communication and this huge expansion in English Language Teaching worldwide has given additional responsibilities to those who contribute to the development of teaching and learning programs, methodology and materials. The responsibility of executing these programs, methodology and materials has fallen on the shoulder of the EFL teachers. Consequently, EFL teachers could face many difficulties while teaching such a language because they are required to teach the language as a whole, especially to those whose languages do not have a similar origin with English, such as Arabs who tend to learn English as a foreign language. Teachers play a significant and valuable role because of their permanent effect on their students' behaviors, morals and conducts. Students are influenced by their teachers' characters, their morals, their competence and patience.

Language teaching methods and approaches assigned different roles to the EFL teacher. For instance, The Oral Approach and Situational Language Teaching considers the teacher as a skillful conductor of an orchestra from learners (Richards and Rodgers 2003, p, 43), and a skillful

manipulator to elicit correct sentences from learners and to set the pace for learning. That is, classes were teacher-directed ones. While The Audiolingual Method is a teacher-dominated one as the teacher models the target language, controls the direction and pace of learning and monitors and corrects the learners' performance (Richards and Rodgers 2003, p. 62). Richards and Rodgers (2003) present another approach; it is The Total Physical Response which views the teacher as a provider of opportunities for learning. It also suggests that the teacher should behave like a parent in correcting students' mistakes and giving feedback depending on the learner's age. Richards and Rodgers (2003), p.83) summarize the teacher's roles for The Silent Way as "to teach, to test, and to get out of the way". The Suggestopedia assumes that the teacher's primary role is to create situations for good language learning (Richards & Rodgers 2003, p. 103). The Whole Language Approach pointed out that the teacher's role is seen as a facilitator and an active participant in the learning community. Concerning The Multiple Intelligences Theory, Campbell (1997, p. 19) indicated that the teacher has to construct and develop the curriculum and be professional in as she /he has to improve her/himself as an educator.

In today's world, teaching is a multifaceted profession. According to Beltran (2001) teachers have two major roles in the classroom: The first is known as the 'enabling' or the manager's function, in order to create the conditions within which learning can take place. It could be seen as the social side of teaching, and the second role has an instructional function of the teacher to be delivered to their students by a variety of means, the teacher is known by applying such a role as an instructor. These two roles complement each other, the latter would be more or less impossible without the former. It is very difficult to separate the two roles and when the teacher often acts in the classroom, he or she can perform both functions simultaneously.

The change in teachers' roles does not necessarily mean forgetting their educational role, it means keeping their original educational work with additional and supplementary roles.

Harrison and Killion (2007) define a teacher as someone who imparts knowledge. A teacher is a person with different combined responsibilities and roles. One could not be a teacher without being able to handle a lot of responsibilities and a flexible personality to adapt with different situations. They also suppose that many teachers try to adopt new practices that combine teaching and learning process as an art and a science at the same time.

Many researchers discuss new tendencies of innovation and their effect on teaching and learning processes. For instance, Zukowska (2007) claims that in this stage, and because of the technical age that dominates us, and because of the inevitable accelerated change, the big question should address the agreement between the school structure, the roles and responsibilities of teachers which will lead to the desired engagement, the comprehensive learning and the acceptable level of confidence for all students.

Additionally, researchers such as Xiongyong, Samuel and Hua (2012) have engaged in EFL teacher's role innovation, urging EFL teachers to be helpers, organizers, monitors, co-communicators, explainers, involvers, and enablers. They assume that EFL teacher's role may change from one activity to another or from one stage of an activity to another in the classroom. EFL teachers face a set of cases that are largely specific to teaching English, many skills have to be learnt by students, and therefore the role of the English teacher is a unique one. One of the most powerful forces and causes changing teachers' and students' roles in teaching and learning process is the new technology and the digital devices which are prominent in our daily life. Before living in the technological age, teachers and their books were the official sources of information, they were considered as the main tools to spread knowledge to the students with a few other ways such as televisions or radios. However, nowadays the world explodes into tremendous waves of information because of the multiple printed materials and electronic sources.

Huijie (2012) attributes the change and

shift in the language teacher's roles from those of a ruler and dominant to those of an advisor and a facilitator to the theory of constructivism when the teaching pattern changed from teacher-centered method to learner-centered method. Huijie suggests that a language teacher should be a manager and an organizer of language teaching class, a designer of teaching process, a source of teaching material, an investigator and a counselor of students' learning and a promoter of deepening and confirming the accepted knowledge.

Consequently, teachers need to cope with these new technologies and be active during their classes by utilizing such technical tools and not let their students to be the exclusive users of digital devices. Sue B (2013) supposes that recently, different forms of a huge transformation in education appeared, and the change is inevitable. This revolutionary movement is encouraged by the accelerated innovation in knowledge, information technology, and public demand of a better learning. This evolution requires a parallel change of teachers' roles and responsibilities.

The fundamental job of the teacher is no longer to distribute facts nor deliver them readily to students but rather to help their students learn how to use these facts and information by developing their abilities to think critically, solve problems, make logical judgments, and create knowledge for both the students and the society. Furthermore, students' needs, skills, interests and attention are various and changeable so, any teacher should be aware to these differences. Teaching is not a unified or a unique method that fits any class and every student randomly, the same classroom includes many students with multiple individual differences and multiple levels, which imposes different conducts and behaviors of the teacher to suit these differences and achieve an acceptable degree of balance. Moreover, the variation in grades imposes certain behaviors, conducts and techniques on the teacher's method. The change of a teacher's role depends on the grade in which he or she teaches.

The teacher is the one who shapes the

personality and the elementary stage of students; it is one of the noblest professions that humans engaged with since it contributes in building the future of those learners as well as their countries and the overall society. It is evident after reviewing different resources that researchers believe in the idea of the inevitable change in teachers' roles generally (e.g. Al-Jabali and Obeidat 2013, Sue B, 2013 Samuel and Hua 2012, Zukowska 2007 Harrison and Killion 2007). However, they theorized about teachers' roles without suggesting realistic techniques that help teachers improve their positions. It is believed that the improvements of teachers' roles is not only a need but also rather an urgent necessity that imposes new visions to the whole educational body. Without effective techniques, instructions and new methods are followed, the change in EFL teachers' roles will not be possible.

The educational roles of teacher is reduced because of the huge technological development in favor of new roles. Moral, pedagogical or planning roles are more prominent currently, learners could find any educational materials they need as soon as they press the button of their computers whereas instructional and moral needs presented mainly by teachers who play the parents' roles. Discussing traditional and new roles needs an intensified research which could help in answering the questions of the study.

Thus, and because of the restriction on their creativity, many teachers simply preferred standing in front of the class and delivered the same lessons year after year, suffering from the boring routine and were not allowed to broaden their practices and activities. The essence of education is not merely presenting information, but rather it is a close relationship between knowledge, compassion and security to achieve the ultimate goal of the educational process. Teachers and students are in need to recognize that the educational environment is not restricted to the classroom only, but instead, it could be extended to the home, the community and the surrounded area, in other words, the whole environment. Information is not found primarily in books, but rather it is available

everywhere and in anytime in this environment. These changes in view led consequently to think about new roles of teachers.

As education evolves, so does the role of the teacher. Many teachers rethink about the minimal parts of their jobs, their relationship with students, colleagues, and the community, the tools and techniques they employ, their rights and responsibilities, the form and content of curriculum to be taught, what standards to set and how to assess whether they are met, their preparation as teachers and their professional development.

To answer the first question of this study: What are the traditional and perceived roles of EFL teachers? Different Jordanian researchers and many studies discuss the actual roles that are fulfilled by the EFL teachers and their tendencies while teaching English. These studies reflect Jordanian EFL teachers' practices and strategies which attempt to master their classes and competencies while teaching. In this regard, Dweik and Awajan (2013) asserted in a study about the EFL teachers in Jordan and their motivation towards their job that the EFL teachers' motivation on the public level is neglected. In spite of all the efforts that have been made to improve the process of education, the teacher in general and the English language teacher in particular in Jordan is not motivated, which will negatively affect foreign language achievement in the Jordanian schools, teachers themselves could not be interested in improving their performance nor fulfill their roles effectively.

Furthermore, most of the Jordanian EFL teachers in the public schools have B.A degrees in English language and literature without having any courses related to the language teaching methodology. So the role of the English language teacher needs more attention because of the extreme lack of experience and the low level of EFL teachers' language competence on its different components, such as the grammatical, strategic, semantic and sociological competences.

Dweik and Awajan (2013) added that people in Jordan tend to blame EFL teachers

for the children's failure and if the children are already clever they attribute success to the family. Consequently, EFL teachers need to be encouraged and supported by the students' parents and also must be grateful and appreciate their work. All these challenges in a way or another, and depending on the previous study do not reflect a bright view to the current situation on the EFL teaching or the EFL teachers' role currently.

In order to examine the dominance of EFL teachers in the classroom, Sakarneh (2014) conducted a study and found out that many EFL teachers in Jordan still dominate most lesson time and do not give their students an opportunity to express and /or direct themselves nor direct their own learning, which means that numerous EFL teachers still play the controller, director and manager roles. Not only that, but also the focus most the time is on teaching specific skills such as reading and writing skills, with a remarkable neglecting or abandoning of listening and speaking activities.

Jordan's new curriculum provides all students with an opportunity to learn. Sakarneh (2014) stated that students' learning is influenced by a number of factors, including the student's learning needs, gender, geographical location and social background. All these aspects should be taken in consideration in order to enhance students' comprehension and performance. A successful EFL teacher needs to understand the importance of creating a suitable educational environment that is equitable and safe for all students and accommodate a diversity of student needs. The EFL teacher should also be able to utilize his/her tools to improve EFL student's levels.

The teacher –centered method is apparent within many Jordanian classes. Al-Shara'h, Abu Nabaah and Khzouz (2011) discussed EFL teachers' role in Jordan by insisting on appealing to the traditional methods of teaching, the teacher-centered approach of teaching during which the standard lecture is considered to be the principal mode of rendering the knowledge. There seems to be a wide gap between the way teachers teach English and the way they assess

their students. The appropriate term in this position is delivering the content; in a very real sense precisely what most lectures serve to do is to deliver content from the one who knows to those who do not know. The EFL teacher is the controller, the director and the manager.

Al-Shara'h, Abu Nabaah and Khzouz presents a new aspect according to the EFL assessment, they stress the fact that EFL teachers are supposed to teach English communicatively, actual assessment practices do not seem to be used. It appears that there is a lack of agreement between the way teachers teach and the way they evaluate their students' learning. It is true that most Jordanian EFL teachers have been fully prepared to teach English in a communicative way. However, they fail to realize the reason for their students' poor achievement, which could refer to teachers' practices of evaluation.

The traditional role of Jordanian EFL teachers was an educational one. However, it is evident that different researchers are unsatisfied about the sole educational role that Jordanian EFL teachers play. Jordanian EFL teachers themselves do not try to reinforce their positions and play essential roles similarly to their educational one. Even their essential role of teaching English is not fulfilled as it should to be. The traditional way of teaching is the common method used in public or even in many private schools. It is the teacher- centered approach. Consequently, new tendencies and a evolutionistic manner should be adapted in order to enhance the entire teaching and learning processes. Researchers criticized the restriction of teachers' role and state that students nowadays are more aware about teaching and learning processes. By referring to such idea of restricting EFL teachers' role only into the educational or informative one, a sort of injustice could be adhered to teachers. Their explicit and traditional role was an educational one in the past, but today's teachers generally and EFL teachers particularly depending on the current research should carry multiple roles and responsibilities, within these roles, the majority are hidden roles

After discussing the traditional roles of

EFL teachers generally and the Jordanian ones particularly, many new roles could be suitable to think about in order to reform the EFL teachers role in a way that could change the entire point of view towards the EFL teachers.

As for the new and expected roles of Jordanian EFL teachers, re-manipulating the role of EFL teachers inside and outside the classroom can result in significantly better schools and better educated students. Many researchers dig deeply to specify, analyze or even synthesize the varied roles of EFL teachers. Different pieces of research try to shed lights on English teachers' roles in the educational fields as the solo crucial role. In this position, the focus mainly is on the EFL teachers' role as an owner of the English language and the one who enables his students to master it as possible as he can.

Being an English teacher is both a rewarding and a challenging occupation, as a great deal of engaging is required to inspire students to maintain their motivation to learn such a language. When teaching English or any foreign language, the teacher needs to be aware of the students' levels and preferences, he or she also needs to achieve an acceptable degree of balance between controlling the classroom and facilitating their tasks Orlando (2013) stated that an English teacher should possess two kinds of characteristics: teaching characteristics and personal characteristics. As Orlando indicated, teaching characteristics include having cultural knowledge, being interested in students' issues, listening and understanding to their problems and using multiple approaches to solve them. Personal characteristics include being caring, being friendly, having patience and respecting students.

An EFL teacher is expected to play different roles such as a counselor, a motivator, or communication skills trainer. EFL teachers must also be aware of the latest technologies, methods and approaches of language teaching explore new ideas and have certain amount of specialization in the concerned subject or the materials and skills he tries to teach his students. The EFL teacher should take into consideration

his or her students' interests and utilizing different topics that appeal to their interests. The balance between teacher talk and students' talk in the classroom should take place, teachers have to give their students the vital role they need to gain the intended fluency and accuracy while learning English, this means skipping the traditional role of the EFL teacher as a lecturer and a controller. However, fulfilling the role as a facilitator does not mean letting the class erupt into anarchy, the important principle in this position is about putting the majority of speaking time into the hands of the students in order to enhance their learning after a delicate preparation of students to engage in such responsibility (Brown, 2007).

In addition to the previous inevitable roles, Veira (2012) asserted that the new role of the EFL teacher in the 21st century requires different changes in his knowledge, the classroom behaviors, strategies and their whole vision towards the teaching process. If students want to be productive members of the 21st century workplace, they must improve themselves, move beyond their old skills and master the 21st century skills, not only the English language skills, but also their technical skills, their critical thinking and their global interests. Sue B (2013) adds that the characteristics of the 21st Century classroom will be very different from those in the classrooms of the past because the current focus is on producing students who are highly productive, effective communicators, intelligent thinkers, and masters of technology. According Sue B, the most common EFL teacher's roles are to be an assessor, an organizer and a tutor.

An EFL class therefore needs a teacher who has potential, a teacher who does not only know the concepts or methodologies of teaching but also, he or she knows how to work with students according to their humanity, a teacher who is capable of leading and accepting the idea of being led, the majority of teachers in general and EFL teachers in particular have to take on a variety of roles within the classroom. These roles are categorized into seven roles as following: a controller, a prompter, a provider of information, an assessor, an organizer, a participant and a tutor.

EFL teachers need to change their traditional role about teaching the English language. Being more dynamic and active plays a crucial role in learning such a language. Oktay and Osam (2013 ,p. 263) discuss different roles of EFL teachers which do not go further than the previous roles of teachers, most of them are similar in a way or another with a minimal change on their characteristics. They generally state different new teacher's role such as a manager, a counselor, and a collaborator. Many roles of EFL teachers could be inferred as a result of reviewing various viewpoints and multiple aspects of teachers' roles.

The role of the English teacher became more complex and more important in last decades. The teacher is no longer an exclusive director of students' learning; he became students' mentor, equal partner and a true friend, responsible for not only an intellectual growth of his or her students, but for the entire country. There are main roles that should be taken into account, in addition to the essential role, the educational one. These roles are inferred, such as the social, moral, and curricular roles. It is inevitable to have a brief look on such crucial roles , not only about teaching the English language to students , but also to the varied aspects or contributions in life that EFL teachers offer and shape in a way or another. So, EFL teachers' role in society, their role in education and their role in curriculum, whether designing, planning, or criticizing are all unavoidable when discussing such roles.

Apparently, the majority of these roles and in spite of their various categories or terms has common aspects, features and similarities, consequently, EFL teachers' roles can be discussed on three levels. The educational role, the social role, and the curricular role. These roles have a balanced degree of prominence, all of them are essential to create the comprehensive teacher's personality, each role among them completes the other, and they are in a complementary distribution. What is noticed here is that the roles are often interchangeable. Additionally, the teacher's role is never static. Any experienced teacher can smoothly combine these roles. A brief discussion is needed in this position. Teachers have educational, social,

moral and curricular roles.

It is inferred that among the various new roles of EFL teachers, three main roles are the most crucial ones that EFL teachers everywhere have play are the traditional, the social and the planning roles. The educational role is still considered as permanent one in spite of the reality that technological innovations approximately replaced the educational role of teachers in different domains. However, learners of the primary stages are in need to their teachers' support, help and instructions. Whereas the social and planning curriculum could not be avoided. Technology could not replace the social neither the planning roles because teachers are the real parameters who can measure learners' needs, behaviours and abilities. The following paragraphs discuss briefly each role.

Moreover, other expected roles of EFL teachers is in society which is essential; he or she is the yardstick that decides the quality of the educational system and effects on the entire society. A teacher plays a crucial role in achieving the social development, after all, the society is a mirror that reflects its people's thinking, their ideas, their believes and their education quality. Patil (2012) claims that teachers help their students transform into good humans beings with a positive attitudes, confidence, and motivation to rise up their level, consequently change the whole picture of a society and improve its position. According to them, teaching is the only profession that teaches all the other professions, educates generations, and helps them to find their way.

Gilakjani (2012) suggests that the world changes rapidly and there is no doubt that the modern society is not similar to the ancient one. The main difference is the use of multimedia in teaching and learning which leads to higher learning. Multimedia provides multiple experiences in exploring our world through the presentation of information by means of texts, graphics, and images, audio and video devices. Teachers try to find the most effective way to create a better foreign language teaching and learning environment through multimedia

technologies. The development of such technical devices is a main facilitator to globalize English language, its importance is expanded from a day to another, so teaching EFL by appealing to multimedia helps the society represented by its young students enter the global area and be an effective part. Educational system has changed completely, nowadays being an EFL teacher does not mean only being a helper in difficult process of getting education or absorbing the language, it means being creative and a guide who accompanies students during their way in studying.

One of the most important aspects of any society is the youngest generation, since they represent the future and the background that any society could depend on. Teachers can enrich the young generations, so that the future is a safe and great place to live in for every person. A teacher that can help students at a young age to realize the value of learning and a solid education is doing a great service not only to that student, but also to the society in general. Anyone needs to see and appreciate the importance of education on changing the whole image of life and making it better and easier to live in should have a quick look on the rate of technological innovation.

It is apparent that contemporary EFL teachers should pay more attention to new methods of teaching that will make learning English more enjoyable, effective and durable. Nowadays, people generally has the access to multiple resources, such as books, science research, and web pages so, teacher's role which provides students with the necessary information and knowledge is not similar in these days as in the past. Teachers have to be aware of their roles, and their effect on shaping the future, recently, they are facilitators for students' learning and creators of productive classroom environments, in which students can develop the skills they might need at present or in future.

In addition , EFL teachers' roles in curriculum building. Solner (1994) states that EFL teachers know their students' needs better than others involved in the curriculum

designing and planning processes, such as the curriculum designers and specialists. An EFL teacher can provide insights into the types of materials, activities and specific skills that need to be included. EFL teachers from multiple grade-levels may collaborate to identify skills students need at each level and ensure that the curriculum adequately prepares students to advance to the next grade-level and to meet the standards. Because teachers have to use the curriculum, it is preferable to have input and participation during its creation.

Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) believe that EFL teachers can decide whether the designed activities could fit their students' levels, knowledge, readiness, and the time that is convenient to engage in. As teachers provide input, they will gain ownership in the final product and feel more confident that the curriculum is created with their concerns and the needs of their particular students in mind. Sharma (1990) claims that EFL teachers also could participate in reflecting on a curriculum, if they do not have the opportunity to participate in its designing or formation so, the minimalist possible role should be presenting a reflection on the curriculum contents which could allow teachers and others involved in the process to find any weaknesses in the curriculum and attempt to make it better.

EFL teachers may reflect on curriculum in multiple ways, such as keeping a journal as they implement the curriculum, giving student's surveys and reviewing the results or analyzing assessment data and individual student performance. Reflection could serve in improving any specific curriculum; it also guides the creation of new curriculum and reinforces teacher's self-confidence, since they have the responsibility not only to plan and implement educational programs and to assess the students' learning, but also to assess the course and the recommended curriculum.

After discussing the different roles of teachers generally and the EFL teachers particularly, a question could be necessary about their actual position in the real life and whether their roles are attainable, possible and

respectable. What are the challenges that could forbid them from being actual and effective leaders? Are their roles apparent and applicable nowadays?

To answer the second question of this study: What are the common challenges that Jordanian EFL teachers encounter? It can be concluded that The Arab world has witnessed a big movement toward the learning of the English language to the extent that it is replacing the native languages in some countries of the Arab region, such as the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Qatar, in the professional and educational fields (Zughoul, 2003). Accordingly, teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in the Arab region is a growing phenomenon. In spite of how English language use has spread in the Arab region, there are still some problems in the learning and teaching of English as a foreign language. Therefore, there is an increasing need for new and more effective approaches to teaching English appropriately, which is parallel to the rising number of EFL learners during the last decades. According to research in the field, many of the problems and challenges pertain to teaching methods, EFL teachers' skills, and the EFL curriculum (Abbas, 2012; Al-Mahrooqi, 2012; Hammad, 2014). Many studies attribute the problems of the EFL teaching process in the Arab world to the teaching pedagogy and to the program content. The EFL materials used in Arab-region countries present multiple problems. The EFL materials in some countries are designed and then imported from overseas while local teachers are not trained to apply those materials (Abbas, 2012).

According to the Jordanian EFL teachers, they face challenges and difficulties while teaching the language. These challenges arise from insufficient pedagogical training and self-development (Gebhard, 2006). Research has shown that most of the Jordanian EFL teachers still use the traditional methods to teach English (Abbas, 2012; Al-Mahrooqi, 2012; Hammad, 2014). The traditional methods of teaching mostly focus on grammar, memorization, drilling, translation and other practices that do not promote the development of communicative competence. Further, other factors may include

the EFL teachers' lack of motivation or the inability to modify their teaching practices due to strict governmental policies (Abbas, 2012; Al-Mahrooqi, 2012; Hammad, 2014).

Additionally, Shah, Hussain, and Nasseef (2013) claim in their study that one of the main factors that hinders the English language education process in Jordan is teachers' competence. Even using approaches like Communicative Language Teaching Approach to teach English in some Arab-region countries has not been completely successful. Ultimately, the ones suffering the most because of these problems are the Arab EFL learners who are unable to reach a fluid level of proficiency in the language (Al-Khafaji, 2015).

Consequently, there are different challenges that could in a way or another prevent EFL teachers generally from fulfilling their intended roles accurately; these challenges are caused by current changes and variation. They gradually vary according to their cause or source; they could be social challenges, technological challenges or challenges and changes pertinent to schools or classrooms internally: these changes may include:

The new responsibilities demanded from EFL teachers: EFL teachers are continually asked to take more responsibilities. At the present time, teachers cannot claim that their tasks are limited only to develop the intellectual skills of their students and teach them how to speak the English language. In addition to mastering their subjects well, today teachers are expected to facilitate learning, be an efficient instructors and organizer of the work groups.

The transformation of the role of families also considered as a social challenge that affect teacher's role and increases their responsibilities towards their students. The increase in the number of divorce cases also contributed to the neglect of many children. Consequently, today's parents have less effect on their children, so that the teaching of basic human relations and moral values out by parents and relatives must be undertaken by teachers.

Another challenge that could confront

teachers is the media, which is considered as a technological change that affect the entire picture of teaching process, even such a source has many advantages, it may represent a counterpart to teachers, it offers multiple possibilities for learning in interesting forms and contents, it could be an alternative to the teacher in a way or another.

The contradictions and the multi-policies that change rapidly may cause confusion to teachers, this challenge is internal. The problem worsens when teachers themselves do not make clear decisions about the type of teaching they want to carry out.

Moreover, the change of the social value of education is viewed as an additional effort on teachers to play the role of persuasion. The value of education has recently changed and teacher's value also has changed. Because of the new life's revolution, many jobs have replaced teaching in its importance, and society today tends to rank social status in terms of earnings.

The permanent need to improve the curriculum contents and make it more comprehensive and acceptable for the entire elements during the teaching process is another challenge of teacher's qualification. The world improves quickly and students should be taught to think globally. As a consequence, curriculum and textbooks should be formed and designed in a way that serves these successive changes. The load on teachers might be increased in order to enhance their levels with these changes and innovation.

The school authority and the current discipline could play a crucial role in restricting teachers' role, and this challenge is one of the most apparent one, many teachers could not found satisfactory ways to organize a peaceful environment that offers respect and a secure place to teach and learn within. Violence is a problem that couldn't be passed or neglected since it threatens teachers' productivity while teaching. In such an environment of conflict, it is difficult to ask teachers to bear their demanded roles and accomplish them perfectly. They could not be able anymore to be creative or monitor.

The overload of teachers is also a challenge that could affect their performance while teaching. Some teachers find themselves teaching badly or they are unsatisfied because they cannot attend to all the extra tasks in the time available. In addition to their classroom work, they have to do different administrative tasks and they need to keep time for planning and prepare for their students' evaluations. Teachers who lack the sufficient time to achieve their responsibilities could be frustrated; this overloading may cause exhaustion to those teachers. The need to attend or be aware of so many things during their working day limits the attention and effort that they can give to each task and inevitably their teaching quality will not as it should to be.

As for answering the third question: How could the Jordanian EFL teachers overcome such challenges? It is evident that all the aforementioned obstacles, challenges and problems are inevitable in a way or another in the educational systems everywhere. In order to obtain the demanded results and get the ultimate goal of teaching and learning process, not only the whole vision to the teachers' role should be discussed, but also what the convenient, suitable and attainable methods and instructions should be redirected and reinforced to support teachers' role. In the Arab and Jordanian context, the Ministries of Education (MoEs) cannot succeed if they do not know in which direction to move. They always try to reform their educational systems but minimally they improve these systems. Improvement cannot take place unless Arab and Jordanian teachers employ remarkably more effective instructional methods. Moreover, teachers ought to be convinced that teaching can be studied and improved. In addition, they should be persuaded that there is always a room for improvement, no matter how well our students are doing now; it is foolish not to try to improve. An evolutionistic change is needed to rebuild the EFL teachers' role.

These challenges could not be solved from a solo angle, but rather such various problems need an intensive cooperation of teachers, students, academicians, principals and students' families. Challenges such as: the media and the

multi-policies are problems that the Ministry of Education is responsible to solve. The Ministry of Education should redesign their policies in a way that help the teacher to confront these challenges and reinforce their positions in the society. Whereas challenges such as: the overload of teachers, teachers' responsibilities and the restricted school authority could be pertinent and solved by schools. A very disappointing problem is the change of the social asset of education which should be taken into consideration seriously because it may affect teachers' achievement and students' behaviors towards their teachers. People all over the world should recognize the nobleness of teaching since it was the career of many prophets and messengers.

Teachers themselves should rethink about the essence of their career and try to cope with these new challenges. They should provide information and show their students how to utilize them during the digital era or even they could benefit from their students' knowledge in the technological domain, as a reaction to the accumulative responsibilities they have to accomplish. Teachers are supposed to be supporters rather than educators and also advisors to the parents. In today's world of education, the teacher's role is quite multifaceted, therefore, teachers should be awarded officially for their new roles such as counseling students, helping them learn how to use their knowledge and integrate it into their lives so they will be valuable members of society.

Teachers should be encouraged to think about how each individual student learns, and try to inspire him to learn more. Teacher's education needs to be changed in the near future. The need of a generation of teachers who aims to develop learners instead of teaching them only, who helps students to become independent and excited while learning, who provides students with motivation and interest for life-long learning and urge them to become autonomous learners, is essential in the education of the future.

Due to the transformation of families' role, schools and teachers should take care about their

students' tendencies, thoughts and values in order to compensate students for their families' absence because of divorce or separation.

To talk about EFL teachers in particular, it is clear that the first and foremost important goal that EFL teacher should achieve is to help the students overcome their fears about communication and motivate them to develop more positive perceptions of communication activities. The EFL teacher is expected to play different roles such as a counselor, a motivator, a communication skills trainer. The EFL teachers should also be aware of the latest technologies, methods and approaches of language teaching, explore new ideas and have a certain extent of specialization and knowledge about the intended skills.

Different responsibilities and ideas should be taken in account in order to be successful teachers in general and effective EFL teachers in particular, when teachers take the following instructions into consideration, they could be able to overcome the multiple challenges discussed previously, so:

1. Teachers need to impart knowledge of their subject matter to students. This goes beyond simply stating the knowledge that they have gained through their own education. Instead, teachers should possess an aptitude to teach the material through different methods based on the needs and preferences of their students.
2. Teachers need to be able to meet the needs of students of varying abilities within the same classroom. Therefore, they have the responsibility to diversify instruction and enable all students to get an equal opportunity to learn.
3. Teachers need to have common sense. Any teacher is required to make numerous decisions every day. A good decision making ability grounded in common sense will lead to more successful teaching experience, but more importantly teachers who do not use their common sense and make erroneous judgment are more likely to create difficulties for

themselves and for their students.

4. Teachers should be organized. Without a good system of organization and daily procedures in place, the job of teaching not only becomes disordered, but also teachers themselves could also create a confused cycle. If a teacher does not keep accurate attendance, grade, and behavioral records, this could result in administrative and educational problems.
5. Teachers in the 21st century confront the challenges caused by globalization. Teachers should introduce students to their world. Moreover, they should inspire their students about their own power to create the innovation in the world. Teachers should not just transmit knowledge to students; they should instill in them a sense of their place in the larger world and urge them to be active participants in it.
6. The traditional goals of education remain the same. Teachers should help their students be effective, critical thinkers and life-long learners shielded with a strong sense of their social responsibilities. They can also employ information technology effectively to help facilitate rather than disrupt the learning.
7. Students always need teachers, both inside and outside the classroom. This is true today more than ever before, as school violence, families' separation and other dangers have been becoming more and more common. Teachers need to take their role as both a resource for students' knowledge and as a guide through the difficulties of life seriously and should make a huge effort to foster healthy relationships with their students.

All these suggestions and probable solutions could not be achieved by individual efforts. Such a crucial transformation in teachers' roles should be reinforced individually and officially by a governmental support to help teachers perform their roles perfectly. Nowadays, different training programs are urgent to reform the teachers' perception about their noble career

holistically. Therefore, the next section presents the official and governmental contributions towards the reform of teachers' roles and the educational process generally.

***Finally, to answer the last question in this study: What is the Jordanian Government's role in reforming the educational process and teachers' role?***

The World Bank report on educational reforms states that Jordan exceeded the other Arab countries in educational reforms (World Bank, 2007, 2008). For example, a five-year Education Reform for Knowledge Economy project (ERFKE) 2003–2008 was carried out to develop many sectors of the educational system. One of the main areas that the project focused on introducing new curricula that emphasizing critical thinking, group work and research. The Jordanian Ministry of Education (MOE) works on planning, upgrading, implementing, and evaluating all educational components for students, teachers, and staff, including curricula, educational materials, facilities, and other related issues. MOE (2006) put down a list of guidelines that stress the integral role of foreign language education in developing Jordanian students in the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and other domains. The (2006) guideline asserts the following:

1. An emphasis of knowledge economy competencies.
2. Integration of information and communication technologies.
3. New role for students by giving students opportunities to define their own ways of reaching outcomes.
4. New role of teachers to help students to learn and communicate effectively by giving greater consideration to the individual learning needs.
5. A variety of instructional strategies to ensure that all students achieve learning goals
6. New way of assessment strategies and tools (Ministry of education 2006).

Additionally, Queen Rania has initiated a national award for rewarding teachers for their achievements entitled “Queen Rania Award for Excellence in Education” which is presented annually to the distinguished teachers in Jordan. Such an award motivates teachers to work harder and be competitive. The competition between teachers improves the educational process and leads consequently to important outcomes according to students, teachers and teaching.

However, a closer look at the results of teachers qualifying examination to teaching job entry in Jordan held by Ministry of Education showed that only 74 out of 297 (24.9% (24.9% percent) graduates of English language majors have passed the qualifying examination (Jordanian Teachers Syndicate, 2015a). This may suggest that preparing English language educators for teaching professions is not adequately addressed professionally and this may in turn carry out possible caveats against school students learning. Not only do students at higher education system have inadequate preparation programs, but a large portion of in-service teachers are also teaching with very little in-service teacher training (ibid). Al-Khatib (2008) suggests that a lack of national guidelines and standards in English language education, protecting and preserving burnout and intentions to leave among competent teachers and limited financial resources are among the problematic issues to English language education.

It is recommended that teachers should be subjected to more specialized pre-service and in-service training programs and workshops that concentrate on modern teachers’ roles in the classroom; and the supervisors should follow-up the activation of these programs. More studies should be carried out to investigate the effect of other variables on language teachers’ roles.

## Conclusion

The role of EFL teachers is to help students apply concepts, through classroom instruction and presentations. Their role is also to prepare lessons, grade papers, manage the classroom, meet with parents, and work closely with school

staff. Elementary EFL school teachers play an important role in the development of students. They are often the sole source of students learning experiences. What students learn in their primitive years can shape how they are in the future. Nowadays, teaching has been transformed radically during the globalised era. Consequently, EFL teachers need to cope with the inevitable changes and take into their consideration the new requirements of the current innovation. Nowadays multiple challenges may encounter EFL teachers and forbid them from accomplishing their educational processes properly. Therefore, teachers generally need to be aware to the tremendous waves of changes and work hard to be able to absorb the inevitable obstacles while teaching.

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