

The Impact of Teaching English on Learning Arabic at the Primary Education: The view of Educational Inspectors in Aljabal Al-Aakhdhar Region

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Abstract: *This research paper aims to address the impact of English language teaching on Arabic language learning in primary education. Two groups of Arabic and English language inspectors were selected to conduct the interviews, using group interviews. The importance of teaching Arabic and its skills to primary school students is well known. It is the mother tongue, the language of the Quran, heritage, and communication, and the language of formal education. At the same time, we must recognize that English is a global language, the language of science and technology, and is needed by many Libyan students who aspire to pursue postgraduate studies, such as master's and doctoral degrees. This paper answers profound questions that are being ignored by officials and clearly demonstrates the need to prioritize the education sector, as it is the driving force behind society's advancement. Arabic is the language of education in Libya. As one Arabic language specialist said, "If we want to reform education, we must reform the teaching of Arabic." Therefore, it has become imperative to focus on its teaching and provide all necessary resources, training, and curricula to improve the quality of student performance. This paper provides recommendations for improving the learning of Arabic and English.*

Keywords: Arabic education, English language, language of communication, dominance of colloquial language, influence of English language

INTRODUCTION

Libyan education officials recognize the importance of teaching primary school students their mother tongue. It is the language of the Quran, the language of heritage and literature, and the language of education. In recent years, English has been approved for primary

school instruction. Private kindergartens even teach basic English before students enter primary school. This new development has sparked debate among various parties. Some claim that teaching English at the primary level has negatively impacted Arabic language learning. It is clear that there is a decline in Arabic language proficiency at all levels. Conferences have been held on the declining language skills in schools, and university faculty members complain about students' inability to read, write, and speak Arabic. The Libyan National Security Council, in a meeting with a group of professors from Omar Al-Mukhtar University and Imam Muhammad bin Ali Al-Sanussi University, pointed to the need to investigate the claim that the decline in Arabic language proficiency is due to the teaching of English starting from the first grade of primary school.

Addressing this topic raises many questions, including, for example, what is the reality of Arabic language education? How is it taught? What suggestions might be made to improve students' Arabic language performance? Conversely, we can ask: How does teaching English affect Arabic language learning? How is English taught? What are parents' attitudes toward it? How can we improve English language teaching methods, which students need for their studies and communication? To answer the above questions, it was necessary to conduct a dialogue with specialists to seek objective answers that could be presented as recommendations. A dialogue session was held with faculty members from the Arabic Language Department at Omar Al-Mukhtar University, and some of them were hosted on a radio program. These Arabic language specialists emphasized that students, starting from the first elementary stage, should learn Arabic that is, they should acquire language skills that will help them succeed in their studies.

Some surprising ideas were presented, namely that Arabic is taught as a "foreign" language in primary school, that the Libyan dialect predominates over Arabic, that students in schools and universities have weak reading and writing skills due to a lack of training in Arabic language skills, and that the objective exams in the preparatory and secondary certificates, which students pass with high grades, are based on objective questions such as true/false, multiple choice, and multiple-choice questions, which generally only measure memory skills. Considering Benjamin Bloom's classification of the skills, the tests only measure students' ability to remember data and information, they do not measure other important skills such as comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation, and innovation. All of these skills require reading skills for comprehension and writing skills for expression, analysis, and evaluation. Since educational inspectors design and supervise exams, and they also monitor the performance of primary school teachers, it made sense to meet with primary school supervisors and specialists in Arabic and English language

supervision to discuss the declining performance of students in Arabic and the relationship between the teaching of English at the primary level and this decline.

The importance of Languages

English is known to be a global language, as the Encyclopedia Britannica indicates that

"The high number of non-native speakers often approaches or exceeds the number of native speakers. English, for instance, has fewer than 400 million native speakers, but more than 1 billion non-native speakers". It is also, the language of the media and the Internet, not to mention that many countries, including Libya, send graduate students to study for master's and doctoral degrees in various sciences in English.

Broughton, G et al (1980: 6) claims that "English is also the language of official institutions—of law courts, local and central government and of education. It is also the language of large commercial and industrial organizations".

It is also the official language of the United States of America, Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, South Africa and African and Asian countries. It is the language of debates at the United Nations, and the language of command for NATO, it is the official language of international aviation, and unofficially is the first language of international sport.

There is, however, a further reason why English enjoys world-wide custatus, apart from political and historical considerations. The rapidly developing technology of the English-speaking countries has made British and American television and radio programmes, films, recordings and books readily available in all but the most undeveloped countries. Half the world's scientific literature is written in English. (Broughton, G et al.1980: 3)

It is worth mentioning that Libyan students need a certain level of English to help them continue their postgraduate studies to obtain a master's or doctorate degree.

Maurice and Mukamazimpaka (2021) may have a different view. In his article which aims at examining the effect of English as a "language of instruction" on the mother tongue (Kinyarwanda). They suggest that the education sector in Gicumbi should enhance the mastery of students' mother tongue among all primary school students in both public and private primary schools. They added that Ministry of Education should provide teaching and learning materials and increase the time allocated to students' mother tongue.

On the other hand, Cahyati, P and Madya, S (2019) refers to the benefit of teaching English to primary school pupils and states:

"It gives more benefits to the students because they will have more time and chances to learn English. Teaching English in the primary level provides children more opportunities to understand foreign cultures and to be more tolerant to others".

In an attempt to answer the question Teaching English At Primary School: Will It Threaten the Growth of Students' National feeling? Ayuningtias, D. (2017) was so critical of the English Teaching Learning, and describe it as satisfactory. He suggests that the primary school curriculum and teachers should well-prepared and he adds that that *"There is fear that teaching English as foreign language at primary school will threaten students' feeling of nationalism. It is because students at primary levels are still in the process of gaining the awareness of their country. However, this fear is not proven"*

The previous question is interesting and it will be put forward to the English language inspectors and see what will be their answers.

The Ofsted (The Office for Standards in Education) report cited in Long, R and Danechi, S (2024), states that: Stress the important of languages and claim that *" languages are the key to not only the government's European Baccalaureate ambition, but also to unlocking the world and its cultures to young people"*.

It is important to conclude this discussion with the outcomes of the UNESCO (2025) Languages Matter: Global Guidance on Multilingual Education. summary of practical actions and recommendations are presented in this guidance. The aim of these recommendations is to equip learners with the skills, knowledge, and opportunities to succeed in a multilingual and interconnected world. It highlights the importance of mother tongue to enhance the education quality by benefitting from learners and teachers' knowledge and experience. Also, the report considers Language as a key part of intercultural education, enabling understanding among different groups of population and ensuring respect for basic rights.

Research questions:

Arabic inspectors' group

- ✓ What is the importance of teaching Arabic in the primary school education?
- ✓ How do educational inspectors evaluate the teaching of Arabic?
- ✓ What are the reasons for pupils' poor proficiency in Arabic language skills?
- ✓ How do educational inspectors explain the predominance of the Libyan dialect over Arabic?

- ✓ How can Arabic language teaching be improved to become the language of science and education?
- ✓ What is the impact of teaching English on learning Arabic in the early years of education?

English inspectors' group:

- ✓ What is the importance of teaching English as foreign language in primary school Education?
- ✓ What are the objectives of English language teaching from the perspective of educational inspectors?
- ✓ What is the educational inspectors' evaluation of English language teaching at the primary education?
- ✓ How do parents view English language teaching?
- ✓ What is the impact of English language teaching on students' identity?
- ✓ What is the impact of English language teaching on Arabic language learning?

The data collection methods: (The Group Interviewing)

The group interviewing method is used to collect data from two groups of Educational inspectors: the English language inspectors and the Arabic language inspectors. According to (Watts and Ebbutt 1987 cited in Cohen and other (2007)). "such interviews are useful ...where a group of people have been working together for some time or common purpose, or where it is seen as important that everyone concerned is aware of what others in the group are saying".

The two groups consist of experts in the fields of teaching English and Arabic. The two group interviews were conducted in two different days. It is believed that the two groups generate a wider range of responses to the interviews' questions.

The two groups of educational inspectors were selected by the head of the Educational Inspection Office. They have the knowledge and the experience needed to answer the questions which are related to teaching and learning of Arabic and English language in Libyan schools. Each member of the group was asked the same questions and he/she provides the answer. There was pressure or suggestion to give a specific answer, each respondent in the two groups provided his/her own answer. It was noted that the two groups of experts offered different opinion, but agreed on their analysis of the current state of teaching English and Arabic. Some useful suggestions were introduced and these will be included in the study conclusion.

Both group interviews were recorded and transcribed. This step is needed to analyse and categorise the themes that provide answers to research questions. The experience and the open-mindedness of the respondents provided objective and important views that will likely improve the quality of teaching and learning of Arabic and English.

Why were educational inspectors chosen?

Despite the downgrading of the role of inspectors by the previous political regime, they remain the official staff closest to teachers and the educational process. They visit schools and attend classes to conduct the required assessments. They also reduce the curricula at the end of the school year so that students can take their exams. Inspectors set the exams for middle and secondary school certificates and are called upon to correct errors in the exams. Inspectors are also responsible for writing reports on teachers' competence, evaluating them, and proposing any measures to improve their performance.

Arabic interview data:

The importance of teaching Arabic in the primary school education.

- It is the official language of the country.
- Students' progress in their studies is linked to their proficiency in Arabic language skills.
- It is the language of the Qur'an, the language of the Arabs, the language of our heritage and civilization, so it must be taught and preserved.
- It is the language of formal education. It is important for communication.
- The Arabic language is our identity, our mother tongue.
- It is the language of our heritage and education, and it continues with us during school and beyond.

Educational inspectors' evaluation of Arabic teaching at the primary level

- **Arabic language inspectors pointed out that**
- Teachers, who are key players in the educational process, are unqualified and do not teach the basics of the Arabic language that students need in the foundational stage.
- They do not cover the lessons that should be taught to pupils in the first three years.
- There is neglect of the "Phonic Method, they cannot analyze the word phonetically

- The role of teachers is limited to encouraging students to memorize words, copying them without knowing their meaning or analyzing them phonetically
- Many teachers are not specialized in the Arabic language. Many of them have graduated from accounting or economics, and other specializations that have nothing to do with the Arabic language.
- One inspector talked about "strange phenomenon". Teachers give a final grade for dictation without checking for grammatical and spelling errors. And student cannot read or write.
- Arabic must be taught properly, starting from the early education stage (kindergarten).
- we suffer from a lack of specialized Arabic teachers. There are female teachers who are not specialized, but they have 15 to 20 years of experience, and they are slightly better.
- Teachers lack specialization, especially for the first grades. There are female teachers who cannot teach using letters and their sounds, and when the matter discussed with them, their excuse is the fact that " Arabic is not my specialty" and "They are forced to teach Arabic."
- In an attempt to fill the gap in the school's class timetable, the school headteacher forces unqualified female teachers to teach Arabic in the first, second, and third grades of primary school.
- One of the inspectors suggest concentrating on teaching Arabic and its basic skills from the first grade of primary school to the third. Then, we begin teaching science and mathematics from the third grade of primary school.
- If the pupils are able to read and write in Arabic, they will advance in their studies. The difficulty lies in reading and writing. If they master them, they will succeed in all subjects. (This observation is confirmed by the UNESCO Quality Report.)

An important final note:

- The number of students in the first grades is large, with each classroom containing between 50 and 60 students. This is one of the reasons for the general decline in education, and teachers are unable to give students in the first three grades the time to practice reading and writing. With 50 and 60 students in the classroom, and a class length of 40 minutes, the teacher is unable to monitor students' performance or progress.

The reasons for pupils' poor proficiency in Arabic language skills.

- The weakness of reading and writing is attributed to the neglect of the "phonic Method". There is neglect of writing, handwriting, and letter pronunciation, and teachers do not teach letter articulation.

(The researcher) The phonic method is a way to teach reading and writing by connecting sounds with letters or groups of letters). (teach simple consonants and vowels- introduce blending with simple 3 letter words- then introduce more complex consonant and add 4 letter words)

- Teachers do not use the phonic method, and there is no connection between the picture and the word. They do not teach letters with vowels, nor the phonetic analysis of words.
- In addition, there is no consideration for individual differences among students. All students are on the same level. If one of them understands, this is an indication of the understanding of all. The blame lies with the teacher.
- There is neglect of the Arabic language skills and its teaching in the early grades. Therefore, attention must be paid to teaching reading, writing, and speaking skills, and qualified and competent teachers must be employed.
- There is another issue, which is the phenomenon of "transition" (promoting pupils who have failed automatically to a higher grade without taking an exam). It is a disaster for education, leading to success being awarded to weak students who do not deserve it.

Students who fail a year are expected to repeat that year rather than being automatically promoted to the next year. Some schools offer alternative pathway such as summer school or remedial program to help students to catch up on missed materials and prepare for the next grade level. Schools may promote students to the next year with the condition that they participate in specific support program. (The researcher)

- Teachers who are not specialized in teaching Arabic don't know that correcting students' mistakes may help them to improve their language skills. There is no precision in correcting students' notebooks. The teacher gives students a composition to write at home or a dictation topic. We find nearly 90% linguistic and spelling errors. When correcting, the teacher signs automatically and does not correct the mistakes.
- *(Reading must be taught to students at an early age, and they must be encouraged to read stories appropriate for their age. Some novels start with one line with a picture, and the stories progress from easy to more difficult. There is a gradation in the words and difficulty of the text, and he continues reading the stories until he reaches the sixth grade, and he will be able to read easily. In my opinion, this is better than designing a reading book with (40) pieces on different topics, where the teacher reads the lesson and the questions, and teaches the students the answer to the questions. This is boring and kills the students' curiosity. (The researcher)*

The supervisors' explanation for the dominance of the Libyan dialect over the Arabic language: *(The Arabic language has become a foreign language)*

- The Libyan dialect is more prevalent than the Arabic language. Because from the beginning of the school year, teachers don't use Arabic, teachers and students become accustomed to hearing the Libyan dialect and accept it as the language of teaching.
- The correct approach is for teachers to use Arabic and use correct Arabic words. Using the Libyan dialect weakens the Arabic language, and students write colloquial words incorrectly and pronounce them incorrectly. The correct approach is to get used to correct pronunciation in Arabic from the beginning of learning.
- Some children are encouraged by their families to speak Arabic, but they are verbally bullied by other students. Those who speak Arabic are described as having "autism".
- Inspectors asked Arabic language teachers to speak and explain in Arabic, but they confirmed that parents asked them to explain lessons in the Libyan dialect because the students did not understand Arabic.
- The weakness is fundamentally on the part of teachers, who use the Libyan dialect, from the beginning of the school year, students are supposed to be taught the names of animals, tools, equipment, and colors in Arabic. "This is a bag", هذه حقيبة "This is a pen", هذا قلم, "Open the door" افتح الباب and "Open the window" افتح النافذة. " We must teach students Arabic words and phrases.
- The pupils express themselves in Libyan dialect when writing a composition. There's a topic on "winter." One student wrote "there are a lot of "zabat" (slang word for mud) in the streets.
- Teachers don't explain the meanings of new words in Arabic. Imagine an elementary school student who doesn't know the meaning of the word "asfour." (A bird) I told them that the bird on the tree is "asfour" a sparrow. Unfortunately, the Arabic language is disappearing.
- Teaching in the Libyan dialect, in primary education, is responsible for the predominance of colloquial dialect over Arabic. Strict regulations and instructions should be issued stipulating that teachers use Arabic in their teaching.

(The researcher): The Arabic language has three levels: traditional standard Arabic, modern standard Arabic, and colloquial Arabic. The researcher recommends using modern standard Arabic as the language of instruction.

Note: Defense of the use of the Libyan dialect: (a single view)

- Our Arabic language is a mixture of the Libyan dialect and classical Arabic. Teachers use the Libyan dialect to communicate information. Teachers are forced to speak in the colloquial dialect for students to understand. Even during exams, teachers use colloquial words to help students understand and answer the questions. It's okay to use the Libyan dialect, but not on a large scale.

Improving Arabic language teaching to become the language of science and education.

- Qualified and specialized teachers should be employed to enable them to be successful educators.
- Teachers should be prepared and trained well, and female teachers must be assigned to teach in the first grades. Also, current Arabic language teachers should attend courses to improve their performance.
- A good method is for the teacher to move with the students from the first grade to the second, third, and fourth grades.
- The focus should be on teaching students Arabic language skills in the early grades. Regulations must be established for school headteachers to regulate the allocation of teachers to the early grades, and qualified and specialized female teachers must be assigned to the early grades. (There is a special name for the early grades.)
- School headteachers assign qualified female teachers specializing in Arabic to teach fifth and sixth grades, and assigns biology and chemistry teachers to teach early grades. How can education succeed if basic education is neglected?
- The Arabic language curriculum must be updated so that students can learn Arabic language skills in reading, writing, and speaking.
- There are difficult topics in the Arabic language curriculum, and some texts are beyond the students' level. In the first grade, we study the letters, their shapes, sounds, and pronunciation, then how to form words. Finally, the student writes a three-word sentence. How do we give students a song that includes difficult vocabulary?
- The Arabic language curriculum should be examined. We must bring together Arabic language experts to develop curricula that are appropriate for children and engage them in reading, writing, and speaking. Unnecessary material should be eliminated from the curriculum.
- As part of the Arabic language learning project, parents should participate in Arabic language classes to enable them to use Arabic vocabulary at home and encourage

students to speak it. Parents should also encourage and support students to read at home and visit the library to choose an appropriate story for their children. Students should also schedule time to visit the school library to read or borrow a book.

- To enhance the status of the Arabic language, Arabic language skills should be taught from first to third grade. We must only teach the Arabic language, until students master the Arabic language in reading and writing. If students study Arabic in an engaging way in the first three grades and master it, they will continue to succeed, and they will not drop out of school.

(The researcher): *In Britain, books are kept in the classrooms, so students can read or borrow them. There is a graded series of stories suitable for children from first to sixth grade. The teacher gives the story to the student to read at home, records it in the "student's log book", and signs it for the parent.*

- The duration of the classes and the number of Arabic language classes must be reconsidered, the class time increased to (60) minutes, and the full-time system applied from (8:30 am to 3:30 pm), with the necessity of including sports and artistic activities.

The impact of teaching English on learning Arabic in the early years of education:

- I don't think that teaching English has a negative impact on learning Arabic. Each subject has its own teacher and curriculum, and there are more Arabic classes than English classes.
- Teaching English does not affect learning Arabic. English is important, and students must study it from the elementary stage. I was very upset when the previous regime abolished English. I was in the seventh grade. English should be taught from the first grade of primary school, and that is better.
- Educational inspectors noticed that the English teacher attracts the children more than the Arabic teacher. The English teacher uses teaching aids and pictures, and there are conversation exercises, which the Arabic teacher does not have.
- I am not in favor of teaching English at the elementary level. Some children learn English in kindergarten, and therefore in elementary school they use English words instead of Arabic. Some children say "no" and "yes" in class.
- Certainly, teaching English affects learning Arabic. If we start teaching English from kindergarten or first grade, and ask the student to write from right to left, while in English they write from left to right, taking into account that the letters are different, this will cause confusion for the student.

- Teaching English should start at an advanced stage, that is, after third grade, and teaching should start from fourth grade. In the early grades, we need to train the student on the letters and how to write them from right to left. Some students wrote Arabic from left to right. In my opinion, teaching English affects learning Arabic in the early grades.
- In the 1970s, English was introduced in the fifth grade, a decision made by experts at the time. This gives students an opportunity to learn the basics of the Arabic language, and we ensure that teaching English does not interfere with students' learning of the Arabic language.

English interview data:

The importance of teaching English in primary education:

- Teaching English is very important to keep up with the era, many activities, businesses and studies are done in English. If you want to travel, the simplest thing is, you find strange faces and dialects at the airport, the common language is English, and the simplest language is English, you can speak it locally and abroad. language is very important; it is the language of the era.
- English is required for general communication. All technology devices require English. If you travel to any country, you need English. Even children go to YouTube, watch programs, and download games. If you go to YouTube, you will find many educational and training programs in English. The best language I like to use, especially with children, is English.
- English is a contemporary language. Everything is in English: the internet, international media sites, and international relations. If you travel abroad, you need English. There are those who look for an English language learning book to use when ordering food, searching for an apartment, or ordering food. Honestly, English is the language of the era.
- In Morocco, students study English and French, and they also study Spanish due to their proximity to Spain. These are important languages, and I consider them the languages of our time. People have the capacity to learn two or three languages; there's no problem learning a foreign language. If you need a plane ticket or a bill, you'll find it in English.
- No one can say that there is no need to teach English. This is an extreme view. Other foreign languages should be taught, not necessarily from elementary school, but from middle school. In the 1970s, we studied both English and French.

- English is the language of science, but with the global advancement of technology, it has become the language of commerce. Even equipment made in China is labeled "Made in China" in English. If it was made in Japan or Latin America, it's labeled in English.

Objectives of teaching English from the inspectors' point of view:

- Basically, the whole world is moving towards teaching living languages, but they must be taught in an engaging way. It shouldn't be a pass or fail subject in the first or second grade of primary school.
- Students can study English in the early grades, with assessment starting in the fourth grade. The goal is for students to use the language. Teaching begins in the early grades by teaching everyday English sentences, "Good morning" "How are you?" "What is your name?", and when they reach the fourth grade, they will have a good grasp of the language, and then we start using the curriculum.
- The main goal of teaching English is for students to become fluent in a second language. Students are expected to speak English by the time they reach preparatory school (years 7, 8, and 9). Students study English in elementary school for six years and middle school for three years. If you asked a student to introduce themselves in English, they would be unable to do so.
- One of the goals of teaching English is for students to learn a foreign language. They're supposed to learn a language that will benefit them in their future studies, but unfortunately, they're not learning the language. English has become a difficult subject. If you look at social media, you'll find that everyone is afraid of failing an English subject. Teachers have made students hate it.
- The goal of teaching English at the primary level is to prepare students early to learn the language. So, when they join the University, the English language enable them to study Medicine, Engineering and natural science. These subjects are taught in English.
- Unfortunately, following the airstrikes launched by the US and UK against the Gaddafi regime in 1986, the Minister of Education issued a decision suspending the teaching of foreign languages in Libya. This decision negatively impacted university students who later wished to pursue higher education. (*The Ministry of Education decision No 195/1986, suspending the teaching of foreign languages in Libya*)
- The English language curriculum should be studied at the elementary level and realistic goals should be set. These goals include mastering the language skills of reading, listening, writing, and speaking. In the early grades, teachers should use the phonics

method to teach reading and writing. This way, students will be able to read and speak the language by the time they reach high school.

Educational inspectors' evaluation of English language teaching at the primary Education.

- "Frustrating", *how?* Let me tell you, there is no teacher who works conscientiously, except for five or six teachers. The rest have neither the ability nor the desire to teach. It is they who made the students hate English, the teachers, not the parents.
- The student is a recipient, he receives what the teacher explains to him, he learns from him/her, but the problem is in the teaching methods. In the early stages of education (first, second, third and fourth grades), they choose non-specialized teachers to teach English, because there are no specialized teachers, even though the university trains and graduates English teachers every year. Where do these graduates go? God knows!!
- Unqualified teachers with degrees in science, sociology, history, or Islamic education, teaches English at the elementary level. When the student reaches preparatory school (grades seven, eight, or nine), he / she encounters significant difficulty, even though the teacher is competent and capable. The teacher is excellent, but the student lacks the basics of the English language and does not know how to write, read, or speak.
- Recruiting unqualified teachers is a phenomenon, and this isn't just in English. One year, to address the shortage of English teachers, the local education authority addressed the teacher shortage by announcing contracts. Graduates of health, law, and Arabic language institutes applied, but they lacked the educational qualifications necessary to teach. This is a process of filling the teacher shortage with unqualified teachers.
- Teachers who are "unqualified" or incapable of teaching cannot be dismissed. They remain in the school and continue teaching. The school headteacher keeps them on because there are no replacements, meaning there are no teachers
- Under normal circumstances, we would give a weak or average teacher a poor grade or require them to attend a teaching course. Nowadays, we give them a "good" grade because they teach at school, while others do not.

(The researcher: This refers to the thousands of teachers who sit at home, receiving their salaries without working.)

- There is a time problem. The class time is not suitable for covering a lesson to study the language. The class time is (40) minutes. By the way, every book for teaching English has a CD for practicing conversation. I have not found a single teacher who uses a conversation "CD". I have not seen any school that opens an "English language

lab" for students to listen to conversation. If English is taught correctly in the early stages, students will love it and use it in conversation.

- The curriculum is suitable for primary school, and there are books in the bookstores that can be used, but the teachers are the problem. Non-specialized teachers are assigned to teach English. A teacher in a private school, teaches English, French, mathematics, and Arabic. She is not specialized, but she brings books from the bookstore, then she writes sentences for the students on the blackboard, and the students copy them.
- In general, the current teaching method has had confusing results. It's true that the books are modern, colorful, and of good quality, but there are problems and mismanagement in schools and educational districts. For example, this year, they canceled half of the curriculum, citing exams and time constraints, which has put pressure on students. The English books for the fourth and fifth grades, and they were very similar. Once, they canceled the second-grade book and moved it down to the first grade, and they canceled the third-grade books and moved them down to the second grade. On my visit to one of the schools, I found a teacher teaching from the canceled book.
- A major problem facing public education is that the number of students in a classroom ranges from 40 to 60, with three or four students per desk. In this situation, the inspector cannot evaluate teachers. On the other hand, in remote areas, we find that the ninth grade has only one female student, and one of the third secondary classes has two students. Note the large number of teachers teaching one or two students. This represents a significant cost to the state.
- The schools are ill-equipped, and classrooms and desks are insufficient. In some schools, students stand from morning until the end of the school day. In addition, the government carries out school maintenance projects during the school year, so two schools have been merged into one building.

(the researcher) Clearly, the teacher shortage is being offset by unqualified teachers. English teacher training courses require teachers who can read, write, and speak English. Teaching English also requires teachers who know how to plan lessons, prepare appropriate materials, manage the classroom, and use classroom language. Teachers must know how to use educational technology to engage students in the lesson. For example, using a PowerPoint presentation that provides audio and video, is easy to use. Mobile phones can also be used to practice conversations, especially since students use technology in their daily lives.

parents view of English language teaching

- Some parents ask the school headteacher to translate English language materials for the students. Parents don't understand English. They don't know it. They didn't study it because the former regime, for political reasons, abolished its teaching. As a result, entire generations in Libya have never studied English, so parents feel difficult and embarrassed by their inability to help their children.
- The general view of English is that it's a pass-or-fail subject, not a language study subject. It's a subject like math and science, so you rarely find a student who is passionate about learning words, pronunciation, or writing.
- Once, on the occasion of Mother's Day, students asked me to teach them how to write "letters" to their mothers. I stopped the lesson and taught them how to write a Mother's Day letter. These students were eager to learn how to write a letter, but in general, English is a pass-or-fail subject, and you rarely find a student who loves it.
- Those who teach English are not specialized. Parents ask the teacher to translate the lesson into Arabic. This is an indication of shortcomings on the part of the teacher. If the teachers were competent, specialized, and performing their duties, the parent would not interfere. The teacher is the most important factor, so the focus must be on preparing the teacher well.
- Once, a teacher, was approached by a parent who was waiting for her outside. He asked, "When you explain to my son in class, speak to him in Arabic".
- When a teacher wants to prepare an exam for students, parents ask the teacher to assign questions for the students to prepare for the exam. Any change to a question, or even a word or a letter, leaves the student confused and unable to find the answer, and this is followed by protests from parents.
- Libyans lack the desire to learn and the will to succeed. They are accustomed to laziness and neglect. They take everything easily, even unwilling to make the effort to acquire knowledge. If a parent did not complete their education for certain reasons, they should ensure that their children learn English and acquire its vocabulary. They should encourage them to love the language, as it is extremely important.

The impact of teaching English on students' identity:

- It has no effect on identity, it increases the student's culture, and he is proud to learn more than one language. Learning a foreign language is beneficial to the student, and he is exposed to another culture.
- When a child is familiar with their culture and religion, a foreign language will have no impact on their identity. Learning English may attract foreigners to learn Arabic.

I've met foreigners who speak Arabic, and I've found foreign women learning Arabic on YouTube. Learning a foreign language doesn't affect identity.

- Language is a carrier of culture. If a student learns the Arabic language and Islamic education in a good way, and learns the English language, then English will not affect his culture. Rather, he will learn another language and be exposed to another culture.
- Studying English has no impact on a student's identity. Identity is culture, traditions, values, and belonging to the family and society, which the child acquires within his or her community.
- As for the English language curricula, they contain nothing that conflicts with Islam, nor does it affect or contradict identity. Some topics present symbols, cities, landmarks, or flags of other countries, including Libya, and there are topics containing texts about India, China, America, and Libya.
- There is a lesson that was objected to by parents, which is about the Titanic incident. It was not understood on the pretext that it is a romantic story, although it is a story with exciting events, and a movie was made that spread all over the world.

The impact of teaching English on learning Arabic:

- It all depends on how Arabic is taught. If it is taught correctly, the pupils learn the vocabulary, reading, writing, and speaking skills, there will be no influence or interference from any foreign language.
- Arabic language teaching should be based on listening from first to fourth grade, with emphasis on listening, speaking, and pronunciation. Writing begins in fourth grade. If the Arabic and English curricula are taught well, there will be no overlap between them.
- Teaching English in the early grades will not affect learning Arabic, especially if the two subjects are taught in a correct way that attracts students and teaches them reading, writing, and speaking.
- As much as we are keen to teach English in a good way that benefits students, we also want other subjects, including Arabic, to be taught in a good way. This method relies on teaching language skills.
- In the past, students studied English starting in the seventh grade. However, the world has evolved and become a global village, and social media has become a reality. Therefore, English must be taught starting in kindergarten and continuing through the third grade, with a focus on listening and speaking, without taking exams.
- The teacher has specific duties, he prepares the lesson plan in English, manages the class, listens to the students to correct their mistakes, and reads, writes and speaks in

English. I supervise (48) English language teachers, (18) of whom are not specialized. Some teachers do not know that they are English language teachers, and do not know their role as English language teachers. By the way, that is why you find them using Arabic in teaching.

- If we continue with the current method of teaching English, with unqualified teachers, teachers who mispronounce and teach incorrectly, and with a clear shortage of English teachers, then English should be taught from the seventh grade on, provided that qualified teachers are available, and the curriculum should be changed to be suitable for seventh grade students as beginners.

THE CONCLUSION AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS

In general, it can be said that this study answered all the questions. Some may consider the research questions to be numerous, but the study sheds light on the importance of teaching both Arabic and English, evaluating the teaching of each in the first cycle of primary education, the reasons for the poor performance of students, how to improve the teaching of these two languages, and the impact of teaching English as a foreign language on Arabic language learning. Two group interviews were conducted with educational inspectors with experience in teaching and educational inspection. They responded in a manner that reflected their expertise in their fields and made practical recommendations and observations. The teaching of both languages is carried out by non-specialized teachers, who therefore lack teaching and classroom management skills. Furthermore, schools are not equipped to accommodate primary school students and do not provide an environment that encourages students to participate in the educational process. The time allocated for learning is insufficient, falling far short of the time indicated in the (UNESCO Report 2004) on the quality of education. Most supervisors agreed that teaching English has no negative impact on students' learning of Arabic. After analyzing the data, recommendations for this study were extracted, as follows:

First: General Recommendations

Preparing teachers to be able to teach Arabic or English

Educational inspectors in both groups explained that unqualified teachers were teaching Arabic and English at the primary level, which is one of the reasons for the poor performance of teachers and students. To solve this dilemma, colleges of education that graduate teachers must set conditions for student admission. These conditions include the following:

- ✓ Conduct a personal interview and an entrance exam to ensure correct pronunciation and fluency in Arabic or English, both reading, writing, and speaking. The English language proficiency must be "upper intermediate."
- ✓ The student must have a "General Secondary Certificate with a very good grade."
- ✓ In order to provide student teachers with excellent qualifications, they must be trained in appropriate teaching methods for Arabic and English, be trained in classroom management, and use modern technology and Microsoft applications in lesson planning and delivery.
- ✓ Organize practical teaching so that the first part is training in the College of Education, with the school attachment being limited to a period of (14) weeks. Performance evaluation criteria are established, involving the supervising lecturer and the classroom teacher.
- ✓ This qualification must be followed by binding decisions from the Ministry of Education prohibiting local education authorities and schools from employing any unqualified or unskilled teachers to teach Arabic and English. The prohibition on hiring unqualified teachers should be clearly stated. Furthermore, providing teachers with excellent qualifications in teaching Arabic and English will encourage students to use their Arabic and English language skills and will limit the use of the Libyan dialect in teaching Arabic and English. Parents will realize that English is an important language of communication and learning for their children, changing their negative perception of it as a pass/fail subject.

Equipping schools with the equipment, supplies, and applications required for the educational process.

Study respondents pointed to a severe shortage of equipment and supplies, such as desks. They noted overcrowded classrooms, with classes reaching 50/60 students per class, and that in some schools, students remain standing during lessons. They also noted the lack of language labs, not to mention the lack of technology in education. From personal experience, a strong message must be sent to education officials: Take the education sector seriously, plan to provide school buildings with classrooms of varying sizes that meet health and safety requirements, and ensure that maintenance work in schools is not carried out during the school year. Laboratories, teaching aids, smart boards, and the use of learning technology must be provided. Training on the use of educational technology should be provided to enable teachers to use hardware, software, and Microsoft applications in preparing and teaching lessons, with the goal of improving the educational process and engaging students.

Reconsidering the Time Allocated for Learning

The educational supervisors recommended reconsidering the time allocated for teaching Arabic and English, and increasing the time allocated for the full school day. According to the annual plan for the academic year 2024/2025, the Arabic language classes from the first to the third grades are (6) classes, the English language classes are (3), and the number of weekly classes is (22). In comparison with the curriculum approved by the British administration (1941/1945), the students of the first grades of primary school study (36) classes per week, and the share of Arabic language classes in the primary stage was (12) classes, in addition to the subjects of Islamic education (3), drawing (3) classes, physical education (3) classes, and principles of science (3) classes. Ashaik, R (1972: 285)

Considering the time allocated for the school day in the primary stage from 8:00 am to 12:30 pm, with (4) study hours per day including a break of (20) minutes only, and in the evening period, evening period students attend school from (1:00) pm to (4) pm, with a break of (20) minutes. This time is not sufficient, and students cannot learn the language skills that they will study throughout their study period. Therefore, the semester system must be reconsidered to be two semesters, i.e. (14) weeks for each semester excluding official holidays and excluding the month of Ramadan, provided that study in each school is from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm, and the duration of the class must be increased to one hour. Thus, the number of hours will be close to the average hours mentioned in the (UNESCO 2004) report which states that

" Instruction time is a crucial correlate of achievement: the broadly agreed benchmark of 850–1,000 hours of instruction per year for all pupils is not reached in many countries. Test scores clearly show that the amount of class time spent on mathematics, science and language strongly affects performance in these subjects".

Second: Recommendations for teaching Arabic:

"Whoever wants to improve education must improve the teaching of Arabic".

"Arabic is taught as a foreign language".

The country may need to develop its education sector and outline its educational philosophy. However, the scope of this study is the teaching of Arabic and English and the extent to which English influences Arabic language learning. However, the recommendations, in general, serve the teaching of other subjects and advance the education sector. They lay the foundation for a renaissance embodied in the quality of

teacher training and the preparation of schools to accommodate primary school students and create attractive environments for students. They also call for developing curricula and reconsidering the time allocated for learning to support both teachers and students in learning their mother tongue and other subjects. These recommendations form the basis of a project or strategic plan to advance the teaching of Arabic as a mother tongue. Arabic language specialists must be consulted to develop curricula that are appropriate for students' age groups, taking into account the following points:

Use the phonic method to teach consonant and vowel sounds in early primary school classes, linking them to words that students can visualize. This builds reading and spelling skills. Perhaps following the example of English language teaching in Britain, supervisors and teachers should be trained to teach using the phonic method, and educational programs should be disseminated that present letter sounds and pictures of objects and animals so that students can envisage the meanings of words.

Encourage students to read at home and at school by increasing Arabic language classes, creating a library in each classroom, and developing a series of stories appropriate for each age group. Students should be encouraged to read appropriate stories from first to sixth grade.

The objectives of Arabic language curricula and materials should reinforce the learning of Arabic language skills, namely reading, writing, speaking, and listening, while utilizing educational technology to train these skills through language learning programs that offer stories, speaking, writing, and listening to texts.

Full focus should be placed on teaching Arabic language skills at the primary level, and spreading reading should impose the use of Arabic as the language of instruction in schools. Considering the levels of Arabic language mentioned by Badawi (1973), the targeted Arabic language is Modern Standard Arabic, which the educated person masters and which is not difficult for others to understand. What is certain is that the Libyan dialect is used in teaching at all levels from primary to university. This has a negative impact on learning Arabic, which educational inspectors have described as the language of the Qur'an, heritage and science.

Most of the educational inspectors in both groups indicated that teaching English had no negative impact on learning Arabic. However, due to the general weakness of students' Arabic language skills, the weakness of the curricula, and the inability of non-specialized teachers to teach Arabic, emphasis should be placed on teaching the mother tongue,

especially in the first cycle of primary education. Therefore, a proposal was crystallized, indicated by the Arabic language inspectors, which is to begin teaching English from the fifth grade of primary school, that is, after students have studied their mother tongue for four years. This requires specialized teachers, modern and engaging educational programs for students, and teaching methods based on teaching Arabic language skills.

In this regard, Bufalaga, S (2024:16) pointed out,

"Many views have suggested that foreign language learning should be partial and not early. This education is based on avoiding the introduction of a foreign language at an early age, allowing the child to develop, in the first stage, his or her national (mother) language and to master it sufficiently and effectively. Foreign language instruction begins at the age of 9 or 12; that is, starting from the fourth grade of primary school (for children who have completed kindergarten), the first year of middle school (for those who have not), and continuing through adolescence."

Third: Recommendations for teaching English:

Educational inspectors pointed out the importance of teaching English, as it is a global language used for communication between companies and countries, and is needed by students seeking to complete their postgraduate studies at English-speaking universities. In addition to the general recommendations mentioned above, English language teachers must be trained in a practical and conditional manner, including their proficiency in English. Recognized and competent entities must be consulted to develop English language curricula, making them interesting and useful for students. English language curricula and textbooks must be prepared well in advance to avoid the chaos that accompanies the approval of textbooks for different years or the cancellation of parts of them when there is insufficient time to complete the semester's study hours.

Although educational inspectors emphasized the importance of teaching English, as it is a global language used for communication between companies and countries, and is needed by students seeking to complete their postgraduate studies at English-speaking universities. In addition to the general recommendations mentioned above, they emphasized the need to prepare English language curricula and textbooks early enough to avoid the chaos that accompanies the approval of books for different years or the cancellation of parts of them when there is insufficient time to complete the semester hours. They also proposed the idea of teaching English from the fifth grade, a justified proposal. If this proposal is adopted, it means that the student studies English from the fifth grade to university, meaning that he will study the language for a full (12) years, which is sufficient to learn English language

skills provided that it is taught by qualified specialists and that there are organized curricula with realistic objectives.

It must be emphasized that English is a language of communication. Therefore, the four language skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) must be taught and integrated. The learner's role must be activated to be a participant in the learning process. Therefore, learners must be encouraged to engage in activities that require understanding grammar and practicing skills. Developing listening and speaking skills requires the use of activities such as role-playing, dialogue, and monologue (individual performance). Regarding teaching reading comprehension, practicing reading strategies such as scanning, skimming, and summarizing (Nunan 1991)

Bufalaga, S (2024:15) summarized the importance of teaching methods, saying:

"An effective and efficient teaching method is one that deepens linguistic knowledge in the minds of students and is appropriate to the student in terms of his age, inclinations, needs, and social requirements. If we ask what mastery of a foreign language means, then mastery has four aspects: understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. Accordingly, after the specified period of his education, the student must be able to understand, speak, read, and write. These four skills must be achieved within a deliberate number of words that must be learned."

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