

The Role of Arabic Language in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

Asst. Prof. Hayder Abdulzahra Shalash

Department of Hotel studies/ College of Tourism Sciences/ Mustansiriyah University

Email: longstory2010.edbs@uomustansiriyah.edu.iq

دور اللغة العربية في تعليم اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية

ا.م. حيدر عبد الزهرة شلش

قسم الدراسات الفندقية/ كلية العلوم السياحية/ الجامعة المستنصرية

الايمل : longstory2010.edbs@uomustansiriyah.edu.iq

Abstract

The important function that Arabic plays in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in English classes is examined in this study. The study investigates how Arabic can be used as an advantageous instrument to help people learn English by improving their vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities. An over-reliance on Arabic may hinder the development of fluency and spontaneous communication in English, even while it could decrease learner anxiety and enhance comprehension. The study makes use of real-world examples, classroom observations, and a thorough literature review. There are suggestions about how to successfully incorporate Arabic into EFL classes.

Keywords: EFL

1- Introduction

English is taught as a foreign language in many Arab nations and has emerged as a global lingua franca. Despite the significance of becoming proficient in English, many students struggle since Arabic and English have different language structures. As the mother tongue, Arabic serves two purposes in this process. On the one hand, it can offer cultural context, ease tension, and assist with comprehension. However, if learners are overly dependent on Arabic, their exposure to English may be limited, which could impede their progress in fluency.

2- objectives.

The main objectives of this study are:

1. To examine how Arabic affects English language acquisition in EFL classes.
2. To determine the advantages and possible disadvantages of teaching English using L1.
3. To offer suggestions on how educators might successfully incorporate Arabic without impeding students' learning of English.

3- Literature Review

Many studies have been conducted on the function of the first language (L1) in second language acquisition (SLA). According to Cummins (2000), L1 reading and competency have a major role in L2 learning, particularly when it comes to comprehending intricate linguistic patterns. The idea that understandable input, occasionally made possible by L1 explanations, improves acquisition is supported by Krashen (1985). According to several studies, Arabic is frequently utilized in Arab EFL courses to promote vocabulary learning, clarify meanings, and explain

complex grammar (Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2001). To guarantee understanding, teachers might, for instance, translate colloquial phrases or offer Arabic translations for unfamiliar terms. Additionally, it has been discovered that learning Arabic lowers anxiety in students, especially in novices. Studies show that when instructions or explanations are periodically provided in L1, students feel more comfortable and are more likely to participate and engage in class activities.

4- Theoretical Framework

The following important theories and models in foreign language acquisition (FLA) form the theoretical basis of this study:

- Learner errors are mostly caused by disparities between L1 and L2, according to the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH).
- The Interference Hypothesis describes how L1 structures obstruct the formation of L2.
- Krashen's Input Hypothesis: This theory emphasises the value of understandable input, which is bolstered by sporadic L1 usage.
- Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory: Highlights how a learner's language and cultural background shapes their educational experiences.

5- The Role of Arabic in Teaching EFL

Arabic language plays a dual role in EFL classrooms:

- It makes understanding difficult grammatical rules easier.
- It assists in vocabulary development by offering synonyms.
- It reduces students' anxiety by offering a familiar reference point.

Negative Roles:

- Leads to overreliance on translation instead of active communication.
- Causes interlingual errors such as misuse of articles, prepositions, and verb tenses.
- Slows down the development of communicative competence.

6- Practical Applications in the Classroom

Teachers in Arabic-speaking contexts should adopt a balanced approach in using Arabic. Some practical strategies include:

- Using Arabic only to explain abstract or difficult concepts.
- Encouraging students to compare linguistic structures between Arabic and English.
- Gradually reducing the use of Arabic as students' progress.
- Promoting communicative activities where Arabic is minimized.

7- Case Studies and Examples

The impacts of utilizing Arabic in the classroom have been shown in a number of research conducted in Arab nations. Al-Nofaie (2010), for instance, found that Saudi EFL students favoured the occasional usage of Arabic to elucidate terminology. Similarly, research conducted in Jordan and Iraq revealed that learners felt more comfortable when teachers used Arabic to explain grammar, but that an over-reliance on the language hampered the development of fluency.

8- Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive method, integrating practical classroom observations with a thorough literature analysis. In order to observe examples of Arabic usage and its impact on student involvement, comprehension, and performance, a number of Arab EFL classrooms were examined. Teacher interviews, classroom notes, and reviews of earlier empirical research were used to gather data. Finding trends, benefits, and possible risks of L1 integration was the main goal of the analysis.

9- Example of Classroom Integration

Table 1 below illustrates a practical example of how Arabic can be strategically used in an EFL classroom

Activity	Use of Arabic	Purpose
Grammar explanation	Brief L1 explanation of past tense rules	Enhance understanding
Vocabulary introduction	Provide Arabic equivalents for 5-10 new words	Facilitate memory
Reading comprehension	Explain difficult sentences in Arabic	Ensure content grasp
Speaking practice	Encourage English response, allow occasional Arabic	Reduce anxiety

10- Findings / Discussion

The findings demonstrate that, when used properly, Arabic is an essential tool for enhancing EFL learning. One of its main contributions is the clarification of intricate grammatical structures through L1 explanations. Besides, it encourages the acquisition of vocabulary by use of translation and semantic relationships.

Furthermore, it could Provide context or explanations of challenging instructions to aid in listening comprehension.

Reducing nervousness and boosting self-esteem, especially in novice students. It also improves self-esteem and lowering anxiety, particularly between new learners.

Nevertheless, the findings also point to possible disadvantages. A reliance on Arabic can prevent students from thinking directly in English and limit their practice possibilities. Consequently, educators must strike a balance between the usage of L1 and exposure to immersive English.

Examples of practical applications that have been noted include summarizing instructions in Arabic prior to English-language activities, offering Arabic glossaries for new concepts, and utilizing Arabic to explain phrasal verbs. These techniques worked well to sustain English practice while improving comprehension.

11- Conclusion and Recommendations

To sum up, Arabic is a useful teaching aid in EFL classes, but its application needs to be planned. In order to keep learners fully engaged in English, teachers should carefully combine L1. Reducing Arabic usage gradually helps improve fluency without losing understanding.

Recommendations for teachers include:

1. Only employ Arabic to explain difficult concepts or cultural background.
2. Encourage learners to gradually think and react in English.
3. Implement exercises that strike a balance between practicing English communication and providing L1 support.
4. Get professional instruction in efficient bilingual teaching techniques.
5. Monitor student development to modify the degree of L1 integration.

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المستخلص

تتناول هذه الدراسة الدور المهم الذي تؤديه اللغة العربية في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية. وتبحث في كيفية استخدام اللغة العربية كأداة فعّالة لمساعدة الطلاب في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية من خلال تحسين مفرداتهم وقواعدهم ومهاراتهم في القراءة والكتابة والتحدث والاستماع. قد يعيق الاعتماد المفرط على اللغة العربية تطور الطلاقة والتواصل التلقائي باللغة الإنجليزية، مع أنه قد يُخفف من قلق المتعلم ويُعزز فهمه. وتعتمد الدراسة على أمثلة واقعية، وملاحظات صفيّة، ومراجعة شاملة للأدبيات. وتقدم الدراسة اقتراحات حول كيفية دمج اللغة العربية بنجاح في فصول تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية

