

Introduction

There is a large potential of errors of interference when Arab learners produce written or spoken English. With the fact that Arabic is a morphologically richer language than English, its interference while learning English as a foreign language is more obvious and detectable. The overwhelming dominance of English language makes it imperative for an aspiring Arab to learn English to be a prominent part of this fast changing world.

But for most Arabic speaking people, English has not yet replaced Arabic even in multicultural classrooms. Though English has evolved as a global language, it is the very essence of an Arab's ethnicity and it is an invariable medium which binds them close to their culture and religion.

A native Arabic primary/ elementary student's English is heavily punctuated by the influence of Arabic in all areas like pronunciation, intonation, stress and phonology. English has its own set of patterns and rules which leads to comparison and blind imitation of pattern in most second language learning situations. Moreover, a native Arabic speaker brings to the class a multitude of social and personal variables that heavily influence their second language learning. Paired with this, in most of the private and international schools they are taught by expatriates who are heavily laden with their own cultural back log. Not many studies are conducted to better equip teachers to handle this situation or to better involve students in an active learning atmosphere. Learning in most of the class rooms are heavy repetitions of severe methods which are proven successful in understanding grammatical structures and gaining better grades. Especially an Indian teacher's classroom is heavily loaded with grammar practice and memorization of spellings more than communicative method of teaching. The demand from parents' side forces the teacher to stick to methods that would gain the students a 'high grade' and thus language learning is severely neglected. Responses from different sources point out the fact that the satisfactory or good exam results of Arabic students do not result in a better English language proficiency, which still remains low.

Mastering the use of four skills don't happen in a balanced level, and structure learning is given utmost importance as in the case of Indian classrooms where English is learnt as a second language.

The culture that is amalgamated in English contradicts so strongly with the conservative Arabic cultural experience expressed in Arabic which proves a hindrance too high to overcome. It is next to impossible to think about a successful learning method separating English from the Arabic culture. There definitely is a need for the improvement of instruction methods by understanding the areas of difficulties in teaching and learning of English as a second language. The fundamental relationship between language and culture is very strong in Arab classrooms. A competent teacher's understanding of the target language (English) is not enough in Arab classrooms. Her understanding of the local language culture carries an important role. As we usually say 'language is more than just a code. It also involves social practices of interpreting

and making meanings.’ An intelligent teacher has to make smart interferences where this ‘interpreting’ is concerned. It is important for an English second language teacher who goes to an Arab class room to consider seriously how language as code and language as a social practice are balanced. Teachers need to constantly reflect and refer back to what language is in an Arab world. Without this referral back an English second language teacher may fail to even grab the attention of Arab students. A Teacher’s understanding of local culture and language-culture connections affect the way they teach a language.

Viewing language only as a code and giving more importance to its structure may not open up the complexities involved in using language for communication. In the scenario of an Arab class room where both the students and teachers come from different cultures and the target language brings in an entirely different culture perspective, the idea of ‘being intercultural’ becomes crucially important. This is the strongest hazard in such classrooms, which, if not turned for an ideal base for learning the target language, will make the entire process of teaching- learning a difficult experience. Both the learner and the teacher need to become familiar with how they can engage with linguistic and cultural diversity.

It might not be a regular, method based programme that a classroom like this needs, but indeed is a more realistic and practical one; one that will enable the student to be confident of using English much better than he is doing now, with less holdbacks.

Aim of the study

There is a large potential of errors of interference when Arab learners produce written or spoken English. With the fact that Arabic is a morphologically richer language than English, its interference while learning English as a foreign language is more obvious and detectable

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the problems faced by the Indian teachers when they teach English as a second language to the Arabs
- To decipher the problems of Indian teachers while introducing writing mechanics to the arab children
- To suggest some measures to overcome the difficulties faced in the teaching learning process
- To deliberate the sentence structures used in writing performance of the students.
- To suggest appropriate remedial measures to the students for better usage and learning of sentence structures
- to suggest some measures to the teachers to facilitate easy learning of writing skill mechanics to the Arab learners

Data for the Study

The data for the present study is of thirty Arab students of grades 4 and 5 studying English as their second language in different international schools in Qatar. The 300 students selected for the study are from different international schools in Qatar which employ Indians to teach English as second language.

Methodology

Some writing exercises are given to the large group to elicit the mistakes which are being researched on.

Mixed methods are used to stratify the larger group to the current group of 30. Qualitative and Quantitative methods and structural interviews are conducted for the progress of the research. The methodology to be employed for this study would be experimental and intervention methods.

Significance of the Study

The study is aimed to investigate the problems faced by the Arabic students who start to learn writing skill. This study also takes into consideration the challenges faced by the Indian teachers teaching English as second language to the Arab students. In this multilingual context, fostering effective English Language learning is significant. The results of this study would help the students and teachers to make the teaching and learning process effective by enabling the Indian teachers to identify the problems from a different perspective and so enabling them to deal with the issues effectively.

Scheme of the Study

The present study consists of five chapters. The details of the chapters are given below:

Chapter I – Introduction

The introductory chapter introduces the topic of research and the importance of such a study in the current situation. The back ground of English teaching in Qatar is mentioned and the socio-cultural back ground which leads to the research problem is analysed. Along with the methodological experience of the present research , review of literature on this field, the social relevance of the study, aim and objectives of the study, the limitations to the study etc. have also been included in this chapter. It also describes the methods of data collection carried out for the

present study. The organization of the presentation of the study has also been included in this chapter.

Chapter II

English Language Learning Issues of Arab Learners

The second chapter examines in detail the English learning issues of the Arab learners. This chapter explores the loyalty of the Arabs to their mother tongue and how English has become an unavoidable factor in the present life of the Arabs in Qatar. Along with the mother tongue influence, the chapter also tries to explore other factors which hinder the English learning of the Arab students. Difficulty in learning the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are also explained in this chapter. To explain this, basic language difference between Arabic and English is examined.

Chapter III

Challenges Faced in the Field of Learning Writing Skills

The third chapter examines in detail the difficulties faced by the Arab learners in learning the mechanics of writing skills. The chapter further explains how the faulty learning of other skills has led to the difficulty of understanding and in turn carrying out of writing tasks. The study proposes to explore the basic mistakes of writing mechanics of the learners who begin learning writing skill. How the memorized structure of the mother tongue interferes with the learning of English.

Chapter IV

Challenges of non-Arabic Teachers in Teaching English as L2 to Arabic Students

The fourth chapter explains the difficulties faced by the Indian teachers teaching English as a second language to the Arabs. The inter and intra cultural situation created in the class room is explained. The hold backs on the side of an Indian teacher and the way it reflects on his/ her English teaching is also dealt with. The possible mother tongue influence of the teacher and the necessity to correct and improve one self and possible methods to do so is explored. Importance of cultural awareness and the tolerance of cultural diversity are also dealt with in this chapter.

Chapter V

Data Analysis

This chapter deals with analyzing the errors made by the grade 4 and 5 students in their writing mechanics. Errors have been analysed and remedial measures suggested. This chapter consists of

statistical analysis of errors made by the Arab learners of English as second language in the use of full stops and commas and also spelling mistakes involving vowels and consonant clusters. It also elaborates the quantitative methods in language studies especially in the field of error analysis, variables selected for the study, latent variables revealed from the present study. This chapter also explains the tests administered to find out the errors made by the respondents. The influence of different parameters on their performance in English with special reference to writing skill has been probed in detail and the result is drawn in this chapter.

Chapter VI

Conclusion

Sixth chapter summarizes the problems faced by the Arab students who learn English as second language in writing skill. It also puts forth some recommendations for the students to overcome the errors in the area. The chapter talks about the findings of the present study and future prospective is discussed. The sixth chapter is followed by the section bibliography which lists books, research papers, journals and unpublished thesis referred for this study. This chapter focuses on findings and the noteworthy features of the analysis of the study conducted. It proposes scope and provides research space for succeeding researchers and teachers who teach English as second language to the Arabs.