



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Language Planning and the Integration of the English Language in Algerian Primary Schools

Dr. Fatiha Mouili¹©

Lecturer Professor Class «A», Faculty of Foreign Languages,
Department of English, University of Tahri Mohamed Bechar, Algeria.



Amina Kandouci²

Teacher of English, Department of foreign languages, Faculty of letters and
languages at Tahri Mohamed University of Bechar, Algeria.



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The introduction of the English language in Algerian primary schools set the country on a crucial learning path. In this initiative, Algerian pupils will be prepared for a more globalized world as part of the Global Movement for Multilingualism. However, language planning and policy decisions, entailing a series of problems and the need to develop effective strategies, are significant factors impacting the success of this program. Thus, this study analyses the effective integration of English as a second language in Algerian primary schools, considering the country's multilingual and Arabic-speaking context. It aims to provide insights into the intricate relationship between language policies and classroom practices by reviewing challenges and strategies during this educational transition.

Keywords: Algerian Primary Schools, Educational Policy, Language Planning, Sociolinguistic Challenges, the English Language.

¹ E-mail: mouili.fatiha@univ-bechar.dz © (Corresponding Author)

² E-mail: aminakandouci3@gmail.com

Introduction

The emergence of bilingual and multilingual education is evidence worldwide; and the teaching of English to young learners has demonstrated extraordinary growth over the last 20 years or more. The demand for English as a second language has increased as a result of how quickly the world has advanced economically and scientifically. New initiatives have been made to enhance foreign language instruction both globally and nationally. Indeed, The Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune has announced: “*French is a spoil of war, but English is an international language*” thus deciding English to be taught in the primary school in the late 2022. This decision presents both opportunities and challenges to the country. Within this context, Algeria experienced a significant reform of its educational system in 2022. Indeed, English (the foreign language) has been implemented in Algerian primary schools at the level of the third year. Since then the country has encountered unprecedented obstacles and expectations. Therefore, this study ultimately seeks to provide essential information on the path toward establishing a robust and effective English language education system for Algerian primary school pupils, with implications that extend to the broader field of language policy and planning worldwide. Therefore; how will the decision of integrating English language in primary schools affect primary school teachers and students?

English has increasingly achieved a global status among languages that were dominated before its spread as a universal language, “Over time, those languages were downgraded due to the expansion of English as a lingua franca (Othmane & Bouyakoub, 2020). English language proficiency confers a competitive advantage in various sectors of the global economy, politics, media, sports, and beyond. Algeria, a nation celebrated for its linguistic diversity and rich cultural heritage, has embarked on a significant endeavor by introducing English language education at the primary school level. This initiative aligns with the broader Global Movement for Multilingualism and aims to equip Algerian students with the tools to navigate a globalized world. However, the success of this program hinges on intricate language planning and policy decisions, which, in turn, give rise to a series of complex challenges.

Language Planning and Policy

Because of various circumstances and for the favor of different political issues; a given society may plan to advance the use of the language or languages they speak through government policy. This process is called “*language planning*” which was introduced by the American linguist Einar Haugen in the late 1950s and refers to all conscious efforts that aim to modify the linguistic behavior of a given speech community. Its appearance was associated with decolonization and language problems of newly emerged states (Ferguson, 2006). Haugen (1959, 8) defines such process as: “*The activity of preparing a normative orthography, grammar and dictionary for the guidance of writers and speakers in a non homogeneous speech community.*” Terrence G. (2009, 6) claims that such process is generally seen as entailing the formation and implementation of a policy designed to prescribe, or influence, the language(s) and varieties of language that will be used and the purposes for which they will be used. Language planning is a highly political and ideological activity and it is normally policy driven; this view to language planning has been criticized by many academics who argue that such process can be conducted by a wide range of institutions apart from government, including language academics, ministries of education, Church, language societies.

According to Haugen (1966, 12) language planning includes four stages which can be sequential; these stages are: selection, codification, implementation, and elaboration.

Selection: is the first stage of language planning; it refers to the choice of one language to serve certain functions in a given society, as an official language, medium of instruction, or religious language;

Codification: is the creation of a linguistic standard or a norm for a selected linguistic code. This stage is again divided into three other stages: graphisation which means developing a writing system; grammatication that refers to the process of deciding for the rules and the norms of grammar; and lexicalisation which requires vocabulary identification;

Implementation: refers to the socio-political realisation of the decisions made in the previous stages of selection and codification; it is typically conducted by the state and involves the production of books, newspapers and textbooks.

Elaboration: (often described as modernization) involves the terminological and stylistic development of a codified language to reach the continuous communicative demands of modern life and technology.

Those stages can be structured under the two main aspects of language planning; corpus planning which is concerned with the internal structure of the language, and status planning which refers to all efforts undertaken to change the status and the function of the language within a given society. *Corpus planning*: is used to change and develop the structure and the content of a language so that it can have more functions in society. Typical activities of corpus planning include devising a writing system for a spoken language, initiating spelling reforms, coining new terms and publishing grammar books. A central aspect of corpus planning is language standardization, which can be understood as the creation and establishment of a uniform linguistic norm.

Status planning: refers to the amount of new functions to a language, such as using the language as medium of instruction or as an official language, it also affects the role that a language plays within a given society. These two forms of language planning often operate together since decisions to alter the status of a language require some sort of corpus planning. Education exists in both types; status issues include the choice of a language of instruction or a foreign language, and corpus issues implies the actual teaching of linguistic elements and the choice involved. Therefore; this allusion created the third type called *education planning* or *language in acquisition planning* which refers to the implementation of a strategy or a policy aiming at increasing the use and the users of a language through education.

In the 1970s until the 1980s, the language planning and policy field witnessed the emergence of theories of frameworks like Haugen fourfold model, Cobarrubias ethical issues in status planning and Rubin rational model of planning (Hornberger, 2006). Meanwhile, from 1990s onwards there has been a growing concern towards a critically and theoretically-informed viewpoints. At this phase, new critical approaches towards language planning and policy like linguistic imperialism, planning for equality and governmentality were developed. Scholars at this stage, advocate relationships between language policies and ideologies (Hornberger, 2006). According to Ricento (2006): «*studies on language policy should encompass other related areas like politics, economy and social theory which enable language planning and policy scholars to get more insights on particular policies or approaches*». Ricento (2006) further proposed that the research must be multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary whereby scholars need to integrate

conceptual and methodological tools from different disciplines to solve language problems in the society.

Language Planning and Social Change

From another view of language planning, Cooper (1989) provided a thorough and readable book of language planning which involves a variety of concrete, interesting examples of language planning that span both geography and history. In his book Cooper recounts the formation of the Academic French, the revitalization of Hebrew in Palestine, the American feminist campaign for non-sexist language use, and the Ethiopian mass literacy campaign. Cooper (1989, 45) defines language planning as: "a deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes." He sees it as the long-term treatment of a language by authorities, either to change the language itself or to alter its function among speakers. This effort aims to assist language users in solving problems and addressing issues during communication, allowing a language to adapt to various changes over time (1989, 30-31). Cooper further characterizes language planning as an authorized and purposeful change in the language system or language use to achieve specific objectives (Cooper 1989, 30). Additionally, language planning is an organized framework established by the government or a specialized authority, treating language as a dynamic subject requiring changes over time based on speakers' needs (Djennane 2016, 9). Consequently, this process enables the language to adapt to societal changes and remain suitable for use at any given time.

Cooper (1989) agreed with Haugen in reviewing three central types of planning such as: corpus planning, status planning and acquisition planning. Language planning for him emphasizes on maintenance and preservation of language. For Cooper (1989): «*the main tasks of language planners is to: describe; predict; explain processes and outcomes; and derive generalizations*». He understands the activity of language planning in terms of the following factors: management of innovation, marketing, a tool for power, and an instance of decision making. Cooper (1989) also reviews the terms status planning, corpus planning and acquisition planning respectively. Whereas status planning refers to the various functions languages have in societies, corpus planning refers to modification or maintenance of the actual forms of language, which are deemed appropriate for the functions of the language. Acquisition planning looks at the organized efforts to promote the learning of language. Moreover, he notes that physical environment, population, discovery and invention, cultural diffusion, ideology and decision making often work together in some way to form social change.

Finally; Cooper (1989) concluded that language planning involves many complex issues, a theory of language planning can not be determined until the field is better able find a satisfactory theory of social change. Language planning is always concerned with the maintenance or the transfer of power. It is often concerned with language ideology as much as it is concerned with actual language behavior. With a comprehensive index of authors and subjects. Cooper's conceptualization of language planning became very influential in one additional respect. Cooper introduced the term "acquisition planning" as the third basic area of language planning (in addition to corpus and status planning), by which he made language planning explicitly relevant for applied linguistics dealing with the teaching of languages.

Models of Language Planning and Policy

Language planning is a specific discipline which has existed for less than fifty years; yet, intervention in language and communication is an activity that dates back to antiquity. Neustupny (2008) attempted to describe the history of language planning as social practice using the concept of developmental types, which are determined by the specific order of a number of sociocultural phenomena (e.g., means of production, social equality level, dominant ideology or attitude toward language variation). Thus, he concluded four historical types of language planning: Premodern, Early Modern, Modern and Postmodern. These types correspond to a certain degree with specific time periods, but in the language planning system of a specific country, several of these types or their features can be present at the same time. The first three of these historical types can be found in the following examples. The Postmodern type, which corresponds broadly with the current ecology of languages paradigm, will be presented in a subsequent section.

One concrete example of language planning which can be categorized as a Premodern type is that of the *French Academy*, a language academy founded in 1634. This institution came into existence due to the initiative of Cardinal Richelieu at a time when European elites began to use the local vernacular languages in functions that had up to that time been reserved for Latin, during the time when the French state was restabilizing, and when Richelieu wanted to strengthen the unity and order of this state through the unity and order of the language. The French academy's aim was "to give explicit rules to our language [i.e., French] and to render it pure, eloquent, and capable of treating the arts and sciences" Cooper (1989, 10). This aim was to be achieved through the publication of grammars, dictionaries and manuals of rhetoric and poetics, though in the end only the dictionaries were written. The French academy became a model for the founding of similar institutions in Europe (e.g., in Sweden), but it was not the oldest institute of its kind in Europe, but rather it was continuing in the tradition of a similar "Italian" institution that was a half century older. The founding and activity of the Académie française is discussed in detail in Cooper (1989) as the primary part of the argument that the definitions of language planning must also incorporate language planning situations that are not connected to the breakdown of the colonial system that had occurred around 1960, i.e., the situations in which language planning as an academic discipline (i.e., "classic language planning") was born.

A second example illustrating the Early Modern type is the language planning process undertaken by the European national movements of the nineteenth century. These movements led to the formation of a number of modern nations in the Herderian sense (Slovak, Czech, Norwegian, Finnish and other nations). These were originally nations (ethnic groups) with less power, whose members were oppressed by more powerful nations within a single ethnically heterogeneous state unit. Characteristic of language planning of the Early Modern type were large changes (reforms) concerning the selection of varieties to be standardized, and orthography or lexicon. In the Czech national movement, which was battling the more powerful German culture, the second generation of patriots led by Josef Jungmann (1773–1847) laid out the principles for enriching the Czech lexicon (they designated Old Czech, dialects and Slavic languages as the sources of the new lexicon, and the formation of new words was also considered acceptable), and they summarized the results of their work in the extensive five-volume Czech–German Dictionary (1834–1839).

Another model is the case of language planning in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s; it can belong to the Early Modern type. There were more than one hundred ethnic groups in the Soviet Union. The languages of most of these ethnic groups existed only in spoken forms, and only a few of them had their own standard language, and these were also at various levels of development. During the early Soviet period, the Leninist doctrine of the Soviet state declared the right of self-determination for ethnic groups including schooling based on their languages. This led to the creation of tens of new alphabets, orthography systems, the modernization of most of the languages, and the production of textbooks. Alpatov (2000, 222), for example, states: «*more than seventy alphabets were created for the languages of the Soviet Union during this period*»

Algeria, in particular, is a good example of the process of language planning. The country witnessed many cases of changing the status of certain languages in its repertoire. It all started since the independence in 1962 when officials regained the status of Arabic as the official language of the nation after a process of Arabization keeping the French language as the first foreign language (Benrabah, 2005). Then, in May 2002, with regard to acquisition planning, two language recommendations were held: the introduction of French in the second year of elementary education instead of the fourth year; and the teaching of scientific modules in French in secondary education. After an uprising burst in the Berber speaking areas in April 2001, parliamentarians declared Berber as a national (but not official) language in April 2002. Then, in March 2016, it was recognized as Algeria's second Official language (Abdelhay et al, 2020).

Language planning and policy in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines emphasizes the significant role of English in today's globalized world (Osman et al, 2022). In Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, it has been institutionalized as either a second language or foreign language which is used widely in education, business and international communication, while in Singapore and the Philippines it has been made an official language. For both functions of the language, English has become increasingly demanding where opportunities to be educationally developed, socially acceptable and economically successful are depending on the proficiency and mastery of the language (Low and Ao, 2018). Policymakers in these southeastern countries implemented English to be used in education, either as a medium of instruction (Singapore and Philippines) or as a subject in schools and universities (Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand). Simultaneously, more and more English-related job opportunities are provided and people thus, either forcibly or voluntarily spend time, money and effort to be good in the language for life survival. This, however, has burdened certain quarters who do not have many privileges and capacity to be good in the language. Excessive prominence of the English language in language policy is regarded by some as a form of injustice because it hampers language rights and multilingualism considerations.

Critics on Language Planning

Discussion on language planning and policy area has evolved over time with focus on orthographic and codification in 1960s, language problems for nation development in 1970s, frameworks and contrasting theories in 1980s and critical viewpoints in 1990s up to now. During the 1980s and in the following years, there were many voices criticizing language planning theory of the previous period. This came as a result of the failure of the process of modernization in many developing nations where language planning was meant to help them. «*The theory of classic*

language planning had only a small influence on the actual practice of the process itself» said Nekvapil (2011). The atmosphere in the social sciences was changing; the visible diversion from scientifically oriented structuralism was accompanied by the growing influence of critical theory. The economic planning model, the so-called “rational model,” which was the basis for classic language planning theory, was criticized in general theories of social planning, and planning itself as a practical activity of the state gave way to the forces of the market economy (Nekvapil 2011).

Rubin (1986) admits the existence of numerous “wicked problems”; she also proposes to involve the greatest possible number of concerned parties including the “target population” in the formulation of goals to be achieved. This leads to the idea that became the central one on the later ecological approach in language planning: in a specific language planning social system, it is necessary to deal with all types of languages used and the relationships between them (Rubin 1986, 119). The book of Cooper (1989) represents clear critical views of the previous development of language planning. Although he does not abandon the initial term “plan,” he refuses to conceptualize language planning as problem-solving in his book and he significantly expands the definition of language planning.

Jernudd (1997) demonstrated that: «language planning is not specific to the developing nations, it also occurs in developed nations» It does not take place only on a state level, but also on lower levels. It does not represent the interests of the socially non-differentiated societies (nation, state), but is the resultant force of the conflict between the interests of various groups. A number of other authors, in particular Williams (1992), Tollefson (1991, 2012), and Blommaert (1996), have uncovered and criticized the “covert” ideational basis of classic language planning. These authors argued that all language planning assumes a specific theory of social change and as a political matter it cannot exist without political analysis (Cooper 1989). Furthermore, they argued that early language planning was closely connected to the evolutionary theory of modernization based on structural functionalism which did not contribute to change, but rather, to the solidification of the social and economic inequality in the developing nations (Nekvapil, 2011).

Tollefson (2006) declares that: «communicative problems in a multilingual setting can be easily solved but in fact, there exist many forms of social inequality because policy-makers often promote the interests of dominant social groups». He sees that inequality prevails in many countries where there are influxes of minorities with diverse linguistic and cultural diversity. These countries do not promote language-in-education policy which allows the minorities to access social and political institutions. Tollefson (2006) believes that research in language planning and policy should involve other elements of ideology, power and social structure. Critical and postcolonial theory where the analysis of language planning and policy began to take on a more politicised tone (Osman et al, 2022). Studies that take this method, would also normally talk about the importance of languages, issues on multiculturalism and multilingualism, language rights, impact of certain language planning and policy on unity and nation-building. According to Tollefson (2015), critical approach features may exist in all the planning processes at all levels

The emphasis on English in the language policy of many countries has led to certain issues. In the Philippines for example, «the Filipino and English languages are promoted, however, this only benefits 30% of the population who speak the language» declares Young and Igcailinos (2019). When English and Filipino become more extensively used, the identities, language and social practices of more than 180 minorities are diminished. Young and Igcailinos (2019) state that this led to social

and economic disparities, as individuals who do not speak Filipino have fewer opportunities to engage in public life, obtain higher education, influence political decisions, and take advantage of economic opportunities. Indonesia also has an issue with giving prominence to the English language as there are more than 400 ethnic groups with major native languages like Javanese, Sundanese, Batak, Minangkabau and Balinese (Zein, 2019). Zheng and Mei (2021) states: «*it is a huge problem to offer English in a way that aligns with the Indonesian people's religious and societal beliefs in terms of character development*».

Malaysia, on the other hand, seems receptive to the status of English as the second language in the country, however, making it a medium of instruction in even just 2 subjects (Science and Mathematics) in schools has caused an uproar among its multi-ethnic population. This has made the government change its approach by making English with the National language (Malay language) in schools' dual-language program. Unlike Malaysia, Singapore is devoid of any anti-English slogans and demonstrations in its multilingual and multicultural society. However, the strengthening of English status in the country has gradually undermined the position of indigenous languages like non-standard Chinese dialects, Hindi and Malayalam (Low and Ao, 2018). The debate also occurs in Thailand over the increasing prominence given to English as a foreign language although it is important for the economy and international communication (Low and Ao, 2018). The calls for a systematic planning for linguistic diversity have gained significant attention (Li et al 2020), including a coherent framework of language planning involving dimensions of actors, typologies and process (Shen and Kang, 2020). De Gruyter (2020) recommended that linguistic diversity should be taken more seriously and that people must be better prepared for public emergency communication challenges in the future.

Goals of Language Planning

The main goals of language planning include language purification in order to exclude errors; it also leads to language revival and its standardization; in addition to its spread and maintenance. It can also foster a sense of national consciousness, thus reinforcing the political unity of the country. Language planning can be a factor either in solving communication problems or in causing them. Some of the more common causes of conflicts occur during periods of rapid social and demographic change. People who had previously enjoyed privilege and high status feel threatened by a newly mobilized language minority group (Crawford, 1992; Coulmas, 1994). Similarly, language decisions in Algeria are made on the basis of nationalism (feelings that develop from a sense of group identity), the promotion of Arabic as the national and official language has had a conflicting effect: it has undermined rather than strengthened political unity, and the government policy of promoting a national identity through the Arabisation process has not resulted in political unity but it has led to social and political upheavals especially in Greater Kabylia as the government passed edicts against the use of Tamazight on radio and television networks as supportive measures to the Arabisation process.

The Algerian administration consolidated the process of Arabisation to weaken the status of the French language in the Algeria, but the Algerian linguistic cleaning has failed (Sahel, 2017). The use of Arabic as a national and official language as well as the language of instruction in schools caused friction between two largely components: the arabophones who favoured the use of Arabic as the only way of achieving national identity, whereas the use of French as a disloyal. On the other hand, the francophones, felt threatened by the revival of classical Arabic,

encountered the Arabisation process with great hostility. The stated reasons for promoting language change often sound noble and frequently cite the greater good that will result from the change. However, there is usually more at issue than just language, because decisions about language often lead to benefits for some and loss of privilege, status, and rights for others (Leibowitz, 1971). Simon (1988) adds: «*language planning often pursues economically motivated goals, such as those pertaining to communication and marketing in international trade*». As an instrument of social control, language often becomes a surrogate for other factors underlying the language conflict (Tollefson, 1991; Phillipson, 1989).

English Language Education in Algerian Primary Schools

The minister of National Education, Abdelhakim Belabed, announced in 2022: “*The introduction of English in primary education (third grade) from the academic year 2022-2023; the State has taken a challenge to allow pupils to learn this universal language.*” However, teaching English in primary schools is not an easy task since it is directly related to the readiness of the schools, pupils and teachers as well. ELT became required for third, fourth, and fifth-year primary school students in the academic year 2022–2023. For its part, the National Office for Educational Publications announced the printing of one and a half million copies of the new English book after an in-depth study by experts and specialists. There are numerous covert reasons for this reform's quick implementation among them the French colonial linguistic policy and the failure to Arabize the educational system (Cheref, 2022). Furthermore, to offer pupils the opportunity to begin learning English and to strengthen their language skills. (Saada, 2022)

Additionally, the Ministry of National Education started a teaching program in order to train English language teachers and give them opportunities for ongoing professional development and to improve the quality of teaching in general. Another interesting step towards promotion of English education in Algeria is related to mandatory training in English for teachers in all universities. These teachers are required to learn the English language, through re-registration in the first year of a *licence* degree in English language, or through intensive education centers located at the level of all universities in the country. These reforms express the consent of the Algerian government to improve English language education and prepare active citizens in the globalized world.

One of the most complicated issues in language teaching in the primary level is that whether children should be given special educational treatment because their language variety was sufficiently different from standard English to pose a barrier to their educational progress (Crawford, 1991; Norgren & Nanda, 1988). Therefore; instructing English in the primary schools involves a significant aspect that should be emphasized due to its focus on young learners with distinctive traits. These characteristics include being egocentric, imaginative, active, self-centered, prone to boredom, facing challenges in distinguishing between concrete and abstract concepts, having a low concentration level, and a preference for independent tasks. The introduction of English into Algeria's multilingual framework is a relatively recent development, primarily driven by global trends and the recognition of English as a global lingua franca. English is viewed as a means to engage with the international community, enhance educational opportunities, and participate in the global economy. The integration of English into the Algerian education system aims to offer students an additional tool for accessing global knowledge and opportunities (Ghoul 2013, 102). It is worth noting that the introduction of English does not replace the existing languages (Arabic and French) but complements them.

In 1985, English became the compulsory foreign language introduced in the second year of middle schools "8th year in the foundation school. This shift aimed to reduce the widespread influence of French in Algeria, granting English a stronger position to enable Algerian students to explore a new foreign language and culture beyond French dominance. This reform started to limit the wide extension of French in Algeria. And now since English has been planted in the primary schools of Algeria, the new reform start Giving English a stronger position, the Algerian pupil would be able to discover a new foreign language with a new culture and new notions far away from French dominance. English language education in Algerian primary schools is guided by policies set by the Ministry of National Education. These policies outline the importance of teaching English from the early stages of education to equip students with essential language skills for future academic and professional success. One of the key documents that shapes English language education is the "National Curriculum for Primary Education," which provides a framework for English language teaching.

Significance of the Issue

English language learning and teaching are highly related to culture since it provides teachers and learners with an insight into what is happening around them in other cultures (Alfehaid, 2014). Thus, the integration of English language education in Algerian primary schools is a significant issue for several compelling reasons:

1. Globalization and English: In an interconnected world where English serves as the bridge for international communication, Algerian students need to acquire English proficiency to participate in the global economy effectively. English is the language of diplomacy, science, technology, and business, and competency in English is essential for Algeria to compete on the world stage.
2. Economic Advancement: As Algeria seeks to diversify its economy and reduce its reliance on oil and gas, it is crucial to equip its workforce with the skills required for emerging industries. Proficiency in English can enhance employability, promote foreign investment, and facilitate trade, all of which are critical for economic growth and diversification.
3. Education Quality and Equity: English language education at the primary level can contribute to the improvement of overall education quality in Algeria. Ensuring access to quality English education for students from diverse backgrounds can help bridge educational disparities and promote social equity.
4. Policy and Implementation Challenges: The successful integration of English language education in primary schools in Algeria is not without its challenges. These challenges include issues related to curriculum development, teacher training, resource allocation, and linguistic diversity.

In summary, the integration of English language education in Algerian primary schools is a crucial issue with far-reaching implications for the country's socio-economic development and educational quality. By addressing the research gap and providing insights into the strategies and challenges associated with this integration, the thesis contributes to the ongoing discourse on English language education in Algeria.

Policies and Curriculum Guidelines

English language education in Algerian primary schools is guided by policies set by the Ministry of National Education. These policies outline the importance of teaching English from the early stages of education to equip students with essential language skills for future academic and professional success. One of the key

documents that shapes English language education is the "National Curriculum for Primary Education," which provides a framework for English language teaching.

The decision of teaching English in primary schools brought contradictory reactions from educationalists, teachers' unions and politicians. Some of them welcomed such decision and regarded it as a good thing. All primary school teachers of English were obliged to go through several training sessions before joining their schools. The trainees are required to be trained on the following modules: Didactics, planning learning, assessment, class management, curriculum and syllabus.

It's evident that the decision to introduce English in primary education was a significant undertaking by the State, aimed at providing pupils with the opportunity to learn this universal language. The initial skepticism and contradictory reactions from various stakeholders indicate the challenges and debates surrounding this educational initiative. Khamari, et-al (2014, 35) explains: *"the mandatory training sessions for primary English teachers before joining their schools reflects a proactive approach to prepare educators for the new curriculum."* The outlined modules covering didactics, planning learning, assessment, class management, and curriculum signify a comprehensive training structure. However, the specifics of the training's effectiveness or any challenges faced during the implementation are not elaborated upon.

The recommendations for English primary teachers emphasize on the importance of positivity, effective planning, establishing rapport with learners, and integrating fun and technology into lessons. These recommendations align with pedagogical principles that can contribute to a successful language teaching experience. The emphasis on continuing professional development is particularly noteworthy, recognizing the dynamic nature of education and the need for ongoing learning, and preparing learners for vocational education through the choice of English (Mami 2013, 913).

Regarding the evaluation of performance during the academic year, it might be premature to assess the newly appointed teachers comprehensively. However, there is a positive note indicating that the teachers are putting in efforts to learn and adapt to their roles, which is a commendable approach (Dornyei 2007, 62). The teachers suggest a generally optimistic outlook. However, the mention of the process being a routine procedure without specific criteria raises questions about the depth of the evaluation system and whether it adequately measures the effectiveness of the integration initiative. In summary, the overall positive tone suggests a willingness to embrace the changes, but ongoing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms may need refinement for a more comprehensive assessment of the program's success.

The Impact of English Language on Primary School Students

The relationship between the English language and primary school students is multifaceted and has several significant effects. Here are some of the key relationships and impacts:

1. Cognitive Development: Learning English at an early age can have positive effects on cognitive development. It challenges students' brains and enhances their problem-solving skills and critical thinking abilities. Exposure to a second language like English can improve memory, multitasking, and creative thinking, which are crucial skills for students as they progress through their education.

2. Communication Skills: Learning English in primary school fosters effective communication skills. Students learn how to express their thoughts, ideas, and emotions in a different language, enhancing their overall communication abilities.

This improved communication extends to better listening and comprehension skills, as students learn to understand and respond to English-language input.

3. Academic Achievement: English language proficiency can positively impact academic performance. It provides students with the ability to access a broader range of academic materials, including research papers, textbooks, and online resources. It can also lead to higher scores on standardized tests, as many subjects and exams are conducted in English or contain English components

4. Multilingualism and Cultural Awareness: Learning English introduces students to multilingualism, fostering an understanding of different languages and cultures. It promotes a more open and global perspective. Multilingual students often have a better appreciation of diversity and cultural differences, which is an important life skill.

5. Globalization and Connectivity: Learning English connects students to the globalized world. It enables them to participate in international conversations, exchange ideas, and collaborate with people from various countries. As the lingua franca of the internet and global business, English facilitates global connectivity, information exchange, and networking.

6. Cultural Enrichment: English language learning also exposes students to English-language literature, music, films, and pop culture, enriching their cultural experiences and broadening their understanding of the world. In summary, the relationship between the English language and primary school students is dynamic and transformative. Learning English at a young age has far-reaching effects on cognitive development, communication skills, academic achievement, and future opportunities. It also contributes to students' cultural awareness and global connectivity, enriching their lives and expanding their horizons.

Methodology

Data collection was based on the use of the three primary sources: observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Observation was held during listening speaking sessions at a classe in a primary school. It was basically non-participant one, that is the researches stayed passive observers watching the behaviour and the interactions between the teachers and their pupils. The teacher subsequently structured the lesson with two distinct tasks. The first task required written responses matching images with corresponding descriptions; while the second involved a form of early feedback, encompassing the repetition of newly introduced vocabulary. This methodology aimed to gain understanding and encourage active engagement. The overall experience was described as both fanciful and captivating. The learners exhibited a high level of enthusiasm and surprise throughout the session, reflecting the success of the teacher's participatory approach. Notably, the teacher maintained effective control over the classroom dynamics. Documenting the occasion, the teacher strategically captured moments through both video recording and periodic photography, employing these strategies as integral components to enhance the lesson's appeal and student engagement

The second method used was structured interviews which were conducted using a tape or digital recorder; and the contents of these recordings are subsequently labelled and analyzed. The structured interview was used with limited number of experts such as: the inspector of English Language Education and Training in the state of Béchar, and a trainer teacher at the secondary level. The interviewees were required to answer the following questions :

Question 1: seeks to deeply understand from the experts how was the process of integrating English language teachers into primary schools.

Question 2: the experts here were asked if the primary English language teachers undergo pre-training before joining schools ; and how it was undertaken.

Question 3: seeks to gather some recommendations and pieces of advice directed to the teachers.

Question 4: is about an evaluation of the academic results and achievements.

Question 5: seeks to know if the integration of the English language into primary schools is successful or not.

Additionally, a list of questions has been addressed to the teachers of different primary schools in an online form seeking to gather information and insights about the main topic of this study. The questions covered a range of different issues including the teachers' general background, years of experience, satisfaction about the program, views on teaching methods and materials, technology integration, feedback on the practicality of the training course attended by the teacher, challenges faced, and strategies for fostering student success and motivation. Each question aims to discover a certain point:

Question 01: asks about the educational background and qualifications of the English language teacher.

Question 02: aims to gather information about the teacher's experience and level in teaching English, providing insight into their expertise.

Question 03: seeks to understand the teacher's satisfaction level with teaching English in primary schools, exploring their feelings about their profession.

Question 04: aims to assess the perceived level of challenge in teaching English, exploring the difficulties or complexities faced by the teacher.

Question 05: explores the teacher's perspective on the optimal age to start teaching English, referring to their beliefs about language acquisition.

Question 06: checks a feedback on the practicality of the training course attended by the teacher, assessing whether it provided hands-on, applicable skills.

Question 07: aims to gather information about the teaching materials commonly used in English language instruction in primary schools, covering various language skills.

Question 08: assesses the perceived success of integrating the English language into primary school curricula, gauging the effectiveness of the integration.

Question 09: seeks the teacher's satisfaction on the English language teaching program in primary schools.

Question 10: explores the teacher's opinion on the use of technology in teaching English to primary school children, assessing their comfort or resistance.

Question 11: aims to understand the teacher's feelings and reflections after a period of teaching, providing insights into job satisfaction and personal experiences.

Question 12: seeks to identify the challenges and obstacles perceived by the teacher in promoting English language teaching in primary schools.

Question 13: explores the teacher strategies and recommendations for promoting children success, well-being, and overall development in the classroom.

Question 14: asks the teacher's about the classroom management strategies, particularly those focused on motivating students.

Question 15: seeks recommendations and insights from the teachers based on their experience with children in primary school English teaching.

The samples of this study were mainly teachers, inspectors, trainers, and pupils under observation whose sample size was between 20 to 28 according to each primary school. The number of the teachers was around twenty teachers who answered the questionnaires from various levels, taking into account their differing

teaching experiences. The inspector of English language in the secondary education level and one trainer at the middle education level responsible for training in the education sector were the interviewees.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process must be carried out in order to draw conclusions and fulfill the objectives of this study. Data analysis will combine both qualitative and quantitative techniques to provide several levels of analysis. In this context Dörnyei (2007, 45) states that: « *we gain a better understanding of complex phenomena by converging numeric trends from quantitative data and specific details from qualitative data* ». Words can be used to add meaning to numbers and numbers can be used to add precision to words. The data will first be quantitatively analyzed by shifting and classifying the obtained information, editing and combining them to get accurate findings. An essential element of quantitative data analysis involves coding the data, then employing computational and statistical methods for statistical, mathematical or numerical examination of the findings.

In this study, a deeper analysis is conducted after the descriptive and inferential statistical analysis to offer more relevant data. In this regard, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, 17) defined mixed methods research as: « *the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study* ». Therefore, the data collected from the teachers' questionnaire will be quantitatively analyzed and displayed in the form of figures and statistics; whereas the information gathered from classroom observation and interviews will be qualitatively analyzed and presented in the form of texts.

Interviews

Both interviewees argued that the decision of teaching English in primary schools brought contradictory reactions from educationalists, teachers' unions and politicians. Some of them agreed and argue that such initiative "is a good idea" in which it will make universality accessible to Algerians. However, others felt that the decision was taken in a haste way. As an instruction, all the new primary school teachers of English were obliged to go through several training sessions before joining their schools. The first training took place on the 30th of July, 2022. The trainees were supposed to be trained on the following modules: didactics, planning learning, assessment, class management, curriculum and syllabus.

The trainers insisted on the following points to help the new trainees to perform their jobs on the right way: being positive; planning for the year; having a good rapport with the learners; calling the learners by their first names; setting rules for the classroom; acknowledging every student the first time to see them every day; teaching with fun; being caring and empathetic; looking for continuing educational opportunities; and finally trying to include technology in the lessons. The initial skepticism and contradictory reactions from various stakeholders indicate the challenges and debates surrounding this educational initiative. The mandatory training sessions for primary English teachers before joining their schools reflects a proactive approach to prepare educators for the new curriculum. The outlined modules signify a comprehensive training structure. The interviewees' recommendations for English primary teachers align with pedagogical principles that can contribute to a successful language teaching experience.

The emphasis on continuing professional development is particularly noteworthy, recognizing the dynamic nature of education and the need for ongoing learning. Regarding the evaluation of performance during the academic year, the

responses acknowledge that it might be premature to assess the newly appointed teachers comprehensively. However, there is a positive note indicating that the teachers are putting in efforts to learn and adapt to their roles, which is a commendable approach. The interviewees' perspectives on the integration process and teacher evaluation suggest a generally optimistic outlook.

Observation

The observation provides a practical illustration of English language teaching in Algerian primary schools, aligning with the broader theme of language planning and policy. The teacher's engaging approach, including multimedia presentations and real-world connections, addresses challenges by fostering comprehension in a relatable context. Structuring the lesson with varied tasks enhances the learning experience. The students' enthusiasm reflects the success of the participatory approach, highlighting effective strategies in language education. The teacher's control over the classroom and strategic documentation further contribute to the lesson's appeal and student engagement, offering valuable insights for the research on language planning and policy in Algerian primary schools.

Questionnaire

This section analyses the most important issues asked to the teachers. As an introductory question, they were asked about their level of education, either Licence (BA) or a Master degree.

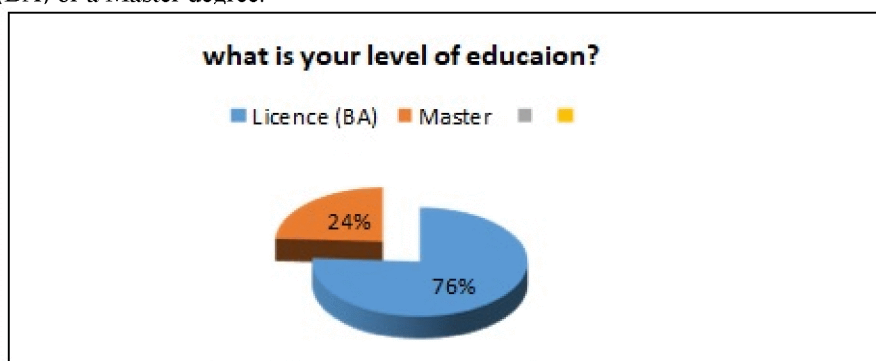


Figure 1: The Teachers' Level of Education.

The first crucial issue is that of the teachers' satisfaction when teaching the English language at the primary level. All the respondent teachers declared that despite of the existence of many challenges but they have all welcomed such decision of English language teaching in the primary school. One must notice that the majority, if not all, the teachers at this level are novice ones who were given the chance to get a job through contracts. Nevertheless, an inspector declared that; *"It's not yet to evaluate the performance of the newly appointed teachers because they are crawling like babies making their first steps. Yet; we can affirm that they are doing their best to learn more and more to be able to do their work properly »*.

Another important question was about the challenges faced by those teachers when teaching the English language. 94% of the teachers announced that they really face many challenges in the teaching process.

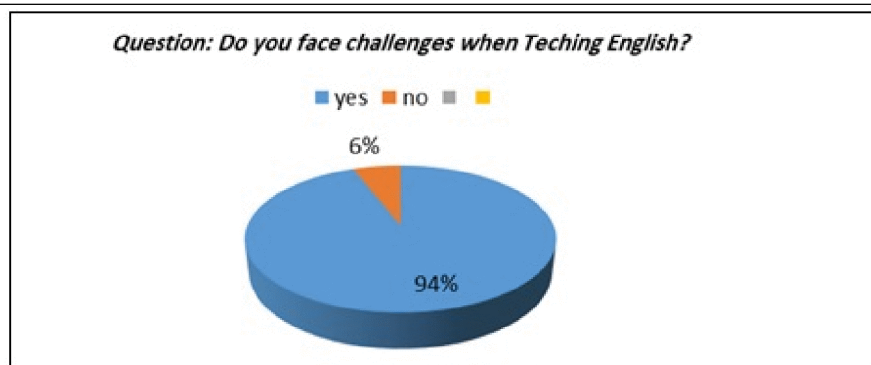


Figure 2: The Challenges Faced by the Teachers in the Primary Level.

English language teachers in Algerian primary schools face a range of challenges, including linguistic barriers, limited resources, overcrowded classrooms, and logistical issues. Balancing time constraints and addressing individual differences, especially challenging behaviors, compounds the complexities of effective language instruction. One teacher declared: *"I am trying to encourage my pupils to minimize the use of Arabic in the classroom. I ask them to practice the language outside with their parents and peers »*. Thus, The overarching goal of minimizing the use of students' mother tongue adds an additional layer of complexity to the teaching environment. These challenges collectively underscore the need for tailored strategies to enhance language education in primary schools. One strategy was adopted by the state in which it devoted scientific-oriented training via training courses to the novice teachers. 88% of them declared that they have really benefited from the training courses held from well experienced teachers in the field. Among the 12% of the teachers who did not attend the program of training justified their absence by special reasons mainly the large distance between the training center and their locations and the vacations.



Figure 3: Practical Orientation of ESL Teacher Training

The Teaching Methods

Teaching methods in Algerian primary schools often focus on communicative language teaching. These methods emphasize on interaction in which the students are encouraged to use English in practical, meaningful contexts. Some common teaching strategies and methods include:

Interactive Language Activities: Teachers use a variety of activities like role-playing, games, and group discussions to encourage active participation and language practice.

1. **Use of Visual Aids:** Visual aids, such as flashcards, multimedia presentations, and videos, are often employed to make the learning process more engaging and effective.

2. **Storytelling and Story Reading:** The use of stories and reading materials in English is common to improve reading and comprehension skills.

3. **Language Labs:** Some schools have language labs where students can practice listening and speaking skills through technology-assisted activities.

Materials Used: In Algerian primary schools, teaching English requires the use of materials such as: textbooks, workbooks, audiovisual resources, and digital materials. These materials are designed to align with the curriculum and teaching methods. Common English language teaching materials are often locally developed or adapted to the Algerian context.

Challenges: According to (International Bureau of Education, 2017, 7) several challenges exist in the current state of English language education in this thesis statement, the case is in Algerian primary schools:

1. **Lack of Qualified Teachers:** There is a shortage of teachers with the necessary qualifications and proficiency in English, which can affect the quality of instruction.

2. **Inadequate Resources:** Many schools face resource constraints, including a lack of appropriate materials and technology for effective language teaching.

3. **Linguistic Diversity:** Algeria's linguistic diversity, including Berber languages, can complicate the introduction of English and require careful consideration in curriculum development.

4. **Consistency in Implementation:** The consistent implementation of English language education across the country can be challenging, leading to variations in quality and outcomes.

English language education in Algerian primary schools is guided by national policies and curriculum guidelines with a focus on developing basic language skills, fostering communication abilities, and promoting cultural awareness. Teaching methods are typically communicative, with the use of various materials and resources. Despite its importance, challenges related to teacher qualifications, resources, linguistic diversity, and consistency in implementation persist and require attention for the successful integration of English in primary education. However, 52% among the teachers announced that they are satisfied by the programs whereas 47% are not.

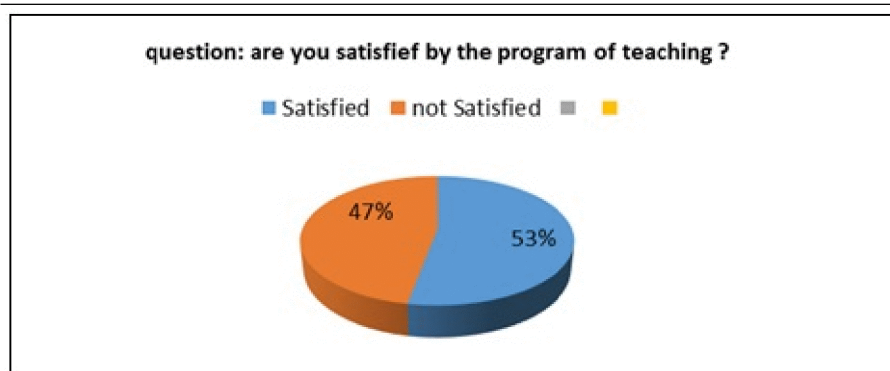


Figure 4: Teachers' Satifcation about the Program

The responses reveal a consensus among the teachers about the need for more materials and enhanced skills to effectively teach young learners. Patience and confidence are highlighted as essential qualities, emphasizing on the challenging nature of the current program, which some find unsuitable for the children's age. Suggestions include creating specific English classrooms, streamlining lessons, increasing educational resources and time, reconsidering the program, and focusing on vocabulary rather than grammar. The emphasis on being role models, creating a conducive teaching environment, practicing English through games, and avoiding lengthy and difficult programs underscores the importance of adapting teaching methods to the unique needs and capabilities of young learners.

Moreover, when the teachers were asked about the issues of integrating technology in their classes they all declared that they actually involve it in their teaching process using the available technological materials in their schools such as the data show and videos rather than the tradional printed materials. This will help the teachers in enhancing the lesson's appeal and provides valuable insights for the broader exploration of language planning and policy inAlgerian primary schools.

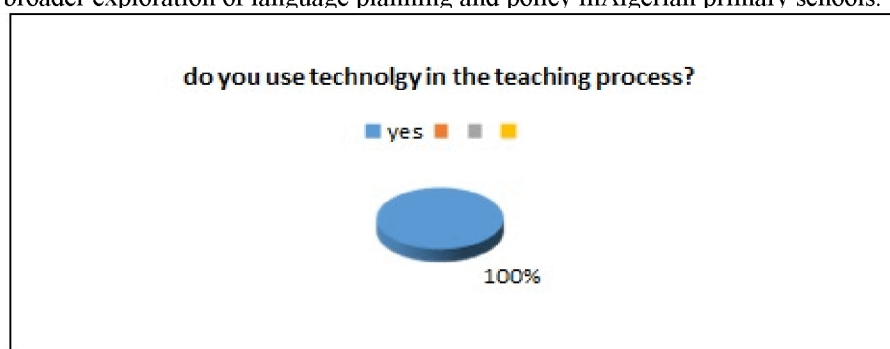


Figure 5: The Integration of Technology in English Language Classroom. Classroom Management in Motivating Pupils

There is a variety of strategies for classroom management to motivate ESL learners; such as: incorporating songs and games, utilizing modern teaching techniques like TEFL approaches (e.g., CBA/TPR/learning through doing), and encouraging learner interaction and sharing of new words are prominent suggestions. In addition to emphasizing on positive reinforcement, avoiding

punishment, and using rewards demonstrates a proactive approach to fostering a positive learning environment. The incorporation of various activities, methods, and continuous encouragement highlights a comprehensive and student-centered approach to classroom management.

Results: Difficulties and Challenges of Introducing English in Primary Schools

Teaching English in primary schools poses inherent challenges due to the need for distinct methods tailored to children compared to adult learners. These difficulties encompass both internal and external factors, including pedagogy, motivation, identity, textbooks, learning resources, teachers' English proficiency, and class size. One teacher even declared: *"there are many objectives to achieve with limited time"*. Internally, the first challenge revolves around pedagogical competence and the adept application of teaching strategies. Despite the existence of innovative methodologies like Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Learning and Teaching (CBLT), implementation may face obstacles, especially in resource-limited, large classrooms (Copland, F. et al. 2014, p740).

Motivating children to learn English presents another internal challenge. Varied motivations among students, coupled with infrequent progress assessments, hinder teachers' ability to gauge understanding. This deficiency in assessment negatively impacts motivation, particularly among those with lower proficiency levels. Identity poses an additional internal challenge, as teachers aim to instill global insights in young learners while preserving national identity. Striking a balance between fostering pride in one's country and generating interest in foreign cultures demands a nuanced approach.

Externally, textbooks represent a significant challenge with shortages reported. Adequate teaching aids and media are crucial for engaging students physically, but many schools lack these resources. Teachers' English proficiency constitutes another external challenge influencing their confidence, interaction with children, and comprehension of materials. Insufficient training compounds this issue, leaving teachers dissatisfied and ill-prepared to address the diverse needs of young learners.

Class size emerges as a common challenge with larger classes impeding learner-centered teaching. Insufficient classroom space further restricts students' activities. Addressing these challenges necessitates collaborative efforts between the government, teachers, and school committees to formulate effective solutions, ensuring enhanced English language education in primary schools. English competes with Arabic and French, which have established positions in Algeria's linguistic hierarchy. Balancing the roles of these languages is a delicate challenge. Developing effective pedagogical approaches for teaching English alongside Arabic and French is essential. Teachers must be equipped with the necessary skills to teach a third language effectively. The introduction of English can raise questions about the preservation of Algeria's linguistic and cultural identity. It is crucial to address concerns about the potential erosion of local languages and cultures.

In summary, Algeria's history of colonization, which introduced French alongside Arabic, has contributed significantly to the country's multilingualism. The introduction of English into this linguistic landscape reflects the recognition of English's global importance and its potential to open up new opportunities for Algerian students. However, this endeavor comes with challenges related to linguistic balance, pedagogy, and cultural preservation that must be carefully navigated.

Discussion

The results of the study provide valuable insights into effective pedagogical strategies applicable to language planning and policy. The teacher's innovative approach, characterized by the integration of multimedia presentations and real-world connections, serves as a practical illustration of overcoming challenges in language education. The use of multimedia presentations, exemplified by the diorama showcasing a student's growth journey, establishes a relatable context that captures students' attention and fosters comprehension. The inclusion of visual aids underscores the importance of employing diverse instructional tools to enhance the overall learning experience. The teacher's approach to structuring the lesson with distinct tasks, involving written responses and vocabulary repetition, contributes to the solidification of understanding and encourages active engagement. This method aligns with effective language education practices, offering students various opportunities to interact with the language through different modalities.

The teacher's effective control over classroom dynamics underscores the significance of a well-managed learning environment, emphasizing the need for a conducive setting for effective language education. Strategic documentation through video recording and periodic photography showcases the teacher's commitment to enhance the lesson's appeal and provides valuable insights for the broader exploration of language planning and policy in Algerian primary schools. This documentation serves as evidence of successful teaching strategies that foster student engagement and facilitate effective language acquisition.

The results of these analyses related to teaching English in primary schools demonstrate how innovative and participatory approaches can effectively address challenges in language education. The success of the employed strategies contributes valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on language planning and policy in Algerian primary schools. This broader perspective emphasizes the importance of adopting diverse and engaging methods to enhance English in primary settings. The results also underscore the necessity of teacher training and preparation to ensure their competence, a crucial aspect for the success of this new decision in the educational and pedagogical institution.

Recommendations

On the basis of the obstacles and the barriers that face both the teachers of English and their pupils, teaching English effectively in primary school requires engaging strategies that foster language acquisition and communication skills. Here are some recommendations that we propose:

1. Revise the English language educational policies and programs so that it can fit the pupils' age;
2. Intensify the teachers' training in a time that fit all of them in order to avoid the absence;
3. Provide resources, mainly digital ones, in order to facilitate English language learning by the pupils who seem to be more active when watching videos and photos. In the same sense, incorporate songs and rhymes to make learning natural.
4. Focus on listening and speaking through storytelling, role-playing, and discussions.
5. Use interactive and multisensory teaching methods through including hands on activities like drawing, crafting, or acting out words.
6. Engage students with interactive whiteboards or flashcards.
7. Read aloud daily and ask predictive questions.

8. Provide continuous feedback and positive reinforcement. Similarly, celebrate achievements with praise and rewards.
9. Offer constructive feedback to improve confidence and use peer assessments and self-reflection activities.
10. finally, engage the parents through providing home activities and reading lists. Organize family-friendly language workshops.

By incorporating these strategies, English learning and teaching becomes engaging, effective, and enjoyable for primary school students.

Conclusion

The integration of the English language in the primary level in Algeria is a significant educational political decision with far-reaching implications for teachers, students, and the effectiveness of English as a Second Language (ESL) education. Thus, the present study is devoted to the quantitative and qualitative analysis of data, which were gathered through classroom observation, interviewing two experts, and questionnaire addressed to primary school teachers in order to discuss such issue of. One of the most significant findings to emerge from this study is that teachers are facing several challenges including: the effect of L1 in classroom, overcrowded classrooms, and time constraints, insufficiency of teachers' training, lack of teaching materials, and difficulty to maintain pupils' motivation, poor classroom management and floating between different schools. Because of the limited number of the teachers of English mainly in the villages, some teachers are obliged to travel from one village to another in order to meet their pupils. Moreover, not all the teachers are satisfied with the educational program and they demand its refinement. The research has shown that teachers assume that teaching English at the primary level could be more fruitful if appropriate solutions are undertaken. They also demanded for more technological tools in the academic institutions so as to make the teaching process more effective. In order minimize those challenges, the state implemented various strategies, including:

- Teacher training programs: by providing comprehensive training to primary school teachers in ESL pedagogy, methodology, and classroom management techniques.
- Curriculum development: by designing age-appropriate and engaging English language learning curricula that cater to the needs and interests of young learners.
- Resource allocation: by investing adequate teaching materials, technology, and support services to enhance the quality of ESL instruction.

These strategies have contributed to overcoming some of the challenges. However, there is still room for improvement to ensure that all pupils have equal access to high-quality education in English. To maximize the effectiveness of English teaching in Algeria primary schools, it is essential that these strategies are constantly evaluated, refined and adapted. Such initiative presents both opportunities and challenges, but by implementing effective strategies and continuously evaluating their impact, Algeria can foster a generation of young learners with strong English language skills, preparing them for success in an increasingly globalized world. Such decision brings opportunities to enhance communication skills, prepare students for global engagement, and diversify language learning experiences. The parents hold two different views; few of them welcomed such initiative while most of them opposed arguing that their children are not capable enough to study two foreign languages, French and English, in the primary level; but they have been united in a desire for their children to have access to quality education. On the contrary, all the teachers of English welcomed the government

decision since it provided job positions for the unemployed ones. The results presented in this study represent broader areas to better understand young learners and their educational contexts in Algerian primary schools.

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برنامه‌ریزی زبانی و ادغام زبان انگلیسی در مدارس ابتدایی الجزایر

دکتر فتیحة مولی^۱

استاد کلاس «الف»، دانشکده زبان‌های خارجی، گروه زبان انگلیسی،
دانشگاه طاهری محمد بشار، الجزایر.

امینه قندوسی^۲

جامعه‌شناس زبان، تخصص زبان انگلیسی، دانشکده زبان‌های خارجی، گروه زبان‌های خارجی،
دانشگاه طاهری محمد بشار، الجزایر.

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معرفی زبان انگلیسی در مدارس ابتدایی الجزایر، این کشور را در مسیری حیاتی از یادگیری قرار داده است. در این طرح، دانش‌آموزان الجزایری به‌منزله بخشی از جنبش جهانی چندزبانگی، برای زیستن در جهانی همبسته‌تر آماده خواهند شد. با این حال، تصمیمات مربوط به برنامه‌ریزی و سیاست‌گذاری زبانی که متضمن مجموعه‌ای از مسائل و ضرورت تدوین راهبردهای مؤثر است، از عوامل معناداری به شمار می‌روند که بر موفقیت این برنامه تأثیر می‌گذارند. از این رو، مطالعه حاضر به تحلیل ادغام مؤثر زبان انگلیسی به‌عنوان زبان دوم در مدارس ابتدایی الجزایر، با در نظر گرفتن زمینه چندزبانه و عرب‌زبان این کشور می‌پردازد. این پژوهش با بررسی چالش‌ها و راهبردهای موجود در جریان این گذار آموزشی، درصدد ارائه بینش‌هایی در باب رابطه پیچیده میان سیاست‌های زبانی و رویه‌های کلاسی است.

واژه‌های کلیدی: زبان انگلیسی، برنامه‌ریزی زبانی، چالش‌های جامعه‌شناسی زبان، سیاست آموزشی، مدارس ابتدایی الجزایر.

¹ E-mail: mouili.fatiha@univ-bechar.dz

© (نویسنده مسؤول)

² E-mail: aminakandouci3@gmail.com