

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE EARLY ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AT THE FOURTH LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT BASIC EDUCATION SCHOOLS .

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Introduction

Yemen is an ancient Arab country. Its history dates back to a very early age. Arabic language is the native language of all the Yemenis. It is the language of communication in the country. Arabic language is taught in schools from the first year of the Basic Education schools. It is also the medium of teaching at all levels of education except some scientific courses which are taught by English language .

English language became the instrument of international communication . So it has been given a prominent place in Yemeni education since 1963. It has been introduced as a compulsory subject at both the preparatory and secondary schools and a pass grade in the course is a must for promotion for the next higher grade. English course-books , workbooks , teacher's books , and cassettes are provided by the Ministry of Education. But Governmental schools are not equipped with the language laboratories , wall-charts , flashcards video cassettes and so on.

The Problem of the Study

At present, Yemen witnesses several changes in all the aspects of life. Some of these changes are local and the others are international .

Education is one of the important field which requires rooted reformation. The early kind of reformations in education is introducing English language early because it became the international language. In order to enable Yemenis to use English fluently in different situations in daily life, they should learn it early in order to confront the uses of the target language .

On the other hand, the Ministry of Education took decision to introduce English Language at level four of the Basic Education, but it did not depend on scientific studies' results, at the same time, it does not prepare appropriate curricula yet. Also, there is no consensus among educators and linguists about introducing a foreign language at level four in Yemeni schools .

But there are two main points of views about introducing English as a foreign language . Firstly, some of educators and linguists suggest that English language should be taught along with the Arabic language at the first level of the Basic Education stage. This team of educators and linguists see that English is the language of the knowledge explosion and the technological revolution. At the same time , it is the language of the communication in the world. Secondly, the second team believes that introducing English in the first level of the Basic Education stage will affect learning the Arabic language as a native language because of some

reports confirmed that more than half of Yemeni population is not educated enough to assist their children at homes .

Generally, those children whose parents are ignorant go to schools and they have no idea about Arabic language reading and writing skills .

The researcher believes that the second viewpoint is correct since most of the Yemeni population live in villages. It is known that most of the facilities which are available in the big cities do not exist in the villages.

The researcher , therefore, thought of doing this research to substantiate the differences of the points of views about introducing English language as a foreign language objectively and the results of it will motivate Ministry of Education to implement its decision which concerns with introducing English Language early or not.

The Purposes of the Study

This study has six main purposes , they are as follows :

1. It highlights the significance and status of English in Basic Education and secondary Government schools in Yemen .
2. It establishes a case to justify the teaching of English in Government schools in Yemen beginning at the fourth level of the Basic Education, in light of the existing data and introduction gleaned from research related to foreign language teaching and learning.
3. It confirms the reactions of EFL teachers who teach in Government schools.
4. It reveals the positive and negative reactions of the parents towards introducing English language at level four of the Basic Education stage.

Questions of the Study

Depending on the above written purposes, the following questions were posed :

1. What is the status of English as a foreign language in Yemeni Governmental schools?
2. How is it justified to start EFL in the Basic Education schools from the level four, based on the existing data and information collected from the research on foreign language teaching ?
3. How do parents and EFL teachers feel about starting the teaching of English as a foreign language at the fourth level of the Basic Education schools?

Limitation of the Study

This study was confined to :

1. Some EFL teachers who teach in the Government Basic Education schools .
2. Some English supervisors who supervise English teachers .

Review of Literature

1. The Status of EFL Program in Government Schools

The status of English in Yemen, it is fully recognized as the important and useful foreign language not only from the viewpoint of its useful in international communication, but also for many vital reasons, they are as follows :

1. English is the mother tongue or the first language of people in many countries in the world like U.S.A., Britain, Australia, and so on;

2. It is the second language in several countries such as India, Pakistan, some African countries and so on ;
3. It is also a foreign language in important countries like China, Japan, Arab countries etc.;
4. It is one of three official languages of the United Nations Organization. This means, it is the language of international politics and relationship;
5. It is the language of international travel and tourism, whereas all international airlines use it as one of the official languages;
6. It is the language of media at the international level, whereas most of the world publications are published in English such as newspapers, magazines , journals etc.. It is also used in television and radio in most of the countries of the world;
7. It is the language of science and technology. Most of the studies in the fields of science and technology are also published in English .

Yemenis learn English Language for the following reasons :

1. Yemen is a developing country interested in good relationship with all the countries of the world ; English will be the instrument for communication between Yemen and these countries;
2. Yemen is rich with old culture, ancient culture is becoming the main attraction for foreigners. So English will aid boost the country's tourism industry;
3. The number of people who come from non-Arabic speaking countries coming to work in Yemen is increasing firmly; this forces on Yemeni workers in different industries and tourist companies and establishments and historical places to use English more
4. Aden is a Free Zone, it receives several ships over the world, this increases the chances of Yemeni citizens to communicate with many foreigners who cannot speak Arabic language exactly in the fields of commerce and trade ;
5. The trade relationship of Yemen with other countries is increasing strengthening and there is a developing need for English in the local and international trade;
6. The higher studies in Yemen is developing quickly and there is a want for offering advanced courses in the fields of science and technology. This puts pressure on the use of English in higher education more ;
7. The number of Yemeni students who are going to countries like India, British, USA and so on for higher education is firmly increasing and they need to use English fluently;
8. The number of Yemeni citizens who watch TV channels like BBC, CNN, is increasing and they need English to understand these channels (Bose , 2002 : 14- 16)
9. The number of Yemeni citizens who use Internet is steadily increasing, so they need English to enable to use it well;
10. The number of Yemenis who participate in international conferences and forums is steadily increasing and they need English for presenting

researches and studies. They also need English which enables them to discuss different subjects and affairs .

It is therefore, no wonder, that the English language is gaining popularity amongst Yemeni younger generation and educational authority are interested in promoting English language learning and raising its standard as a subject of study both at school and university levels.

Recognizing the usefulness of the English language for the Yemeni society, the first Ministry of Education , after revolution of 1962, had decided to introduce English language as a compulsory subject in all the schools in 1963-64. Yemeni students start learning English from the 7th level of the Government basic Education schools , and continue learning it as a compulsory subject until the 12th level of the secondary schools. Passing this subject has also been made obligatory for every student for promotion to the next higher level.

Private schools were allowed to introduced English as a school subject right from the first level in the elementary stage, this was before the unification, but after the blessing unification of the Republic of Yemen which has raised on May 22,1990, and Private schools were expanded in all the cities of the country of the Republic of Yemen. Now, these schools teach English as a school subject right from the kindergarten level in order to meet the needs of the children of those Yemenis who want their children to have an early orientation to the English language. In some of these schools, English is used as a medium of instruction . Some parents prefer to send their children to these private schools in order to provide them with an opportunity to learn English from early childhood .

But some parents complain of the low standard of their children in English language, this low standard in English, may be , dues to different factors, they are as follows :

1. The EFL teachers whom are always selected are incompetent because most of the private schools advocate meager salary ;
2. The quality of the English textbooks and related materials is below the standard since they are selected from bookshops by people who are not curricula specialists and without any scientific criteria ;
3. I have been mentioned earlier that English teachers who teach in most of private schools are not qualified well, this makes them use classical methods and techniques of teaching and inappropriate audio-visual aids;
4. Also, the in-service education facilities for the EFL teachers are insufficient;
5. Educational supervision is not seen in the private schools, this makes the owners of the schools grant students high marks to reveal that the students' achievement is better than the public schools, in fact, the matter is mostly vice versa .

All these reasons, as a researcher, understands , are associated with the problem of poor quality of education and need a thorough probe and investigation, but other significant factors which have not been paid enough attention by some Arab language experts are the effect of the foreign language on Arabic language as a native language , the age factor , time allocation, and available sources. Probably, we do not enable to derive complete benefits of our efforts which made in this

direction so that we introduce English as a foreign language in early adolescence instead of early childhood .

2. Justification for the Introduction of EFL at level four of the

Basic Education Schools.

The researcher will discuss the following factors which present sound suggestions for introducing English at level four of the Government Basic Education schools .

The effect of the foreign language on the native language:

The notion of starting to learn a foreign language late, of course, affects the native language because of educators believe that mastery and competence in the native language should be obtained prior to the child's exposure to a foreign language . However, Diller (1978; 110) explains that " a child usually masters his native language by age six or seven- some linguists even say four." Afterwards, the child will learn a sentence complicity, sentence length, and vocabulary .

Four years of teaching as proposed in research above allocated only the Arabic language seem appropriate for having a suitable mastery of it . It also enables child to establish a steadily basis in his native language that in turn has been claimed to get many benefits through this limited time.

Moreover, the idea of late start of foreign language seems suitable particularly if the new language and the native language of the child originates from two different families of the languages.

In Yemen, Arabic language is the native language of our children which is derived from the Semitic language family , whereas English is the foreign language that belongs to the Indo- European languages.

These two languages are different, exactly in their phonic and orthographic systems. In addition, the importance of the Arabic language is firmly secured since its people recognize it as the language of their religion.

But Gardner and Lambert (1972: 69) observe that " language acquirers who do not reject their own language and culture succeed better in second [foreign] language acquisition than those who have negative attitudes towards their own group." Therefore, the Arabic language is merely language used at home and supported by school authority and the community members. Of course, teaching of Arabic language as a native language and English language as a foreign language , simultaneously, cannot initially be implemented in early childhood without encountering some obstacles and problems and without having harmful effects on the children who would learn them. For instance, psychological problems may arise and the standard of learning Arabic may also suffer to great extent.

It is difficult to disagree with point of view mentioned above concerning the introduction of a foreign language right from the first year of the Basic Education, meanwhile, delaying its teaching until the age of thirteen years seems to be another extreme that has been proved irrational and unjustified to McNeill (1966:15-84), Lenneberg (1967) and Stern(1983) .

I have been mentioned earlier the teaching of English starts from the seventh level of the Basic Education stage when the average age of enrolled students is thirteen

years. This is the age of the beginning of adolescence, this is the opinion of many psychologists, linguists and educators, Oyama (1978), Harley (1986), and Scovel (1988), that it is not appropriate time to introduce a new foreign language particularly the children live in the era of the technological explosion and globalization whereas life requires uses of various equipment.

Moreover, some of the evidences indicate that any postponement beyond late childhood is detrimental for learning a foreign language.

However, Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991a: 154) state "Young learners have an advantage, particularly where ultimate levels of attainment such as accent free second language performance, are concerned." Also, Karmiloff-Smith (1986) claims that the years before puberty are biologically active period of second language development.

Many linguists such as Krashen, and Long (1982), Ovando and Collier (1985) assert that children develop fluency and native language-like pronunciation better than adolescents and adults, while, some other linguists like Genesee (1988), Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle (1978), Snow (1983), and Flege (1978) claim that adults are better learners since they start off faster.

In addition, Krashen, Long and Ccarcella (1979: 573-582) confirm that adults proceed through early stages of syntactic and morphological development faster than children. While, Diller (1978: 102) asserts that children are better language learners than adults if they are given an optimum environment. Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982: 86) reveal that "children around ten years of age may be the faster of all in learning syntax and morphology." They also confirm that children under the age of ten years who experience enough natural communication in the target language nearly always succeed in achieving native-like proficiency meanwhile those over 15 years rarely do so. Many linguists such as Larsen-Freeman and Lon (1991a), Stern and Weinrib (1978) maintain that the phonological system of a new language is more successfully acquired by children than adults. They also confirm that language is sound to children, but sense to adults, because children tend to generalize sound by using an analogous sound pattern, while the adolescents argue and reason about it.

Moreover, Yamada, Takasuka, Kotak and Kuru (1980) in the research on Japanese learners concluded that younger learners are more successful than their older counterparts in memorizing new vocabulary in a second language.

Several experts such as Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982: 86), Ovando and Colier (1985: 60) maintain that the later childhood period starting from the age of ten onwards is suited for learning a new language, because a ten-year old child, in their opinion, reveals signs of pseudo-maturity, is happy and carefree and does not bother about the criticism or blame that may come from his classmates or others in his environment. He will be ready to undertake any new task with confidence.

Hana, Farouk (1999: 297) conducted a study that aimed to figure out the effects of learning English language as a foreign language on native language (Arabic). He concluded that a child who learns English language at level four, it does not affect his achievement in Arabic language, but it increases his achievement in some aspects of Arabic language.

However, the postpone introducing a foreign language in the early adolescence period , for instance, in the age of 13, may create many problems for learners, because language learning encourages expressions, and in its early or later stages involves many incorrect expressions which may cause shame and ridicule from his classmates.

It is also known that the speech organs at an early age are much flexible and more able to produce new sounds. But with the passage of time these speech organs become rusty, rigid and inflexible so much because it becomes difficult for learners to learn the pronunciation of a foreign language with accuracy and fluency.

Carrol as quoted by Stern (1983: 365) asserts that the main advantage in introducing a foreign language early is to provide learners with more time to accomplish a required performance level at a given stage. Borg (1980: 50) confirms that “ we must conclude that allocated time is a powerful tool that teachers and administrators can use to increase pupil achievement.”

However, the necessary need for the early introduction of English as a foreign language becomes fact when the achievement of this language becomes very low because it is introduced when the learners age is 13 years. In this age the learners encounter many problems of adolescence and their speech organs are inflexible and rigid.

Evidently, the focus on English teaching has become weaker and ineffective in the Government schools. In addition to, there are many local and international changes like globalization and so on .

Moreover, Educational Researches Development Center (2003:65) conducted research entitled “ Teaching English Language : Current Situation and Introducing it at Level Four from the Basic Education in Republic of Yemen.” Sample of the study consisted of the following :

1. 111 English teachers who were teaching in the Basic Education Schools.
2. 23 English supervisors who were supervising English language teaching in the same stage.
3. 40 headmasters of the study sample schools .
4. 154 students' parents who their sons were learning English in the study sample schools.

The study revealed the following conclusion :

91.4 % of English teachers , supervisors and headmasters of the selected Basic Education Schools asserted that introducing English language at level four from the Basic Education became urgent necessity. Also, (88. 32%) of students' parents confirmed the same idea .

This means, the Basic Education schools are ready to teaching English at the level four and Yemeni community also realizes the importance of introducing English at the target level.

In short, factors that I have been discussed earlier which concern with introducing English language from level four have given due consideration in the previous pages . These factors are : i) the absence of negative effect of the foreign language on the native language (Arabic) because ,here, English language will be introduced at level four, at this level , learners have studied Arabic language for three years in the Basic Education schools until they have a good background in it

and they can speak, read, and write Arabic with facility, clarity and a reasonable degree of correctness, ii) educational values attributed to the age period, iii) great time allocation for English language as a foreign language instruction and iv) the local and international changes which require using English language correctly,

The researcher maintains that the teaching of English language as a foreign language should be introduced at level four of the Basic Education Stage in order to achieve the objective achieving a reasonable good standard of English as stated by the Ministry of Education in the English language curricula for the Basic Education schools.

Design of the Study

The researcher used the descriptive- analytical method, the survey according to Cohen and Manion (1985:140) and Horn (1999) because of it is a famous descriptive method in educational studies.

Sample of the Study

Secretariat capital consists of (10) instructional districts. Large number of ELF supervisors and teachers who teach in these instructional districts schools. The researcher cannot conduct his study in all of these instructional districts because he needs team of assistant researchers and huge budget so as to cover the research expenses. Therefore, he selected Assabeen District randomly to be appropriate instructional district for administering his research.

Participants in the questionnaires consisted of all of EFL teachers (N= 80) who were teaching in the Basic Education and Secondary schools and the EFL supervisors (N=3) who were supervising the teaching of English language as a foreign language in the same schools, in Assabeen District, Secretariat Capital, Republic of Yemen. The EFL teachers ranged in age from 26- 34 years. Table No. 1. describes EFL teachers and supervisors participating in the questionnaires. All the subjects were heterogeneous in terms of sex, and educational qualifications. However, all of them were Arabic language speakers. The distributed questionnaires were not completely answered and returned.

Table No. 1.

| Participants | No | Nationality | | Sex | | Educational qualifications | | |
|-----------------|----|-------------|------------|-----|----|-------------------------------------|----|------|
| | | Yemeni | Non-Yemeni | M | F | Diploma after Secondary Certificate | BA | MA |
| EFL Teachers | 78 | | | | | | | |
| | | 77 | 1 | 25 | 53 | | | |
| EFL Supervisors | 3 | 3 | --- | 2 | 1 | 3 | 77 | 1 |
| Total | 81 | 80 | 1 F. | 27 | 54 | 3 | 77 | 1=81 |

A total of 80 copies of the questionnaire were administered to EFL teachers and 3 copies of the questionnaire were administered to EFL supervisors of both male and female. The number of respondent female subjects was more than their male counterparts because Ministry of Education distributes female teachers in big cities

This means, when Ministry of Education distributes female teachers in big cities , it tempts the female to continue their education because there is gender gap that is still wide between males and females which reached (40%) for the benefit of the males [Educational Denoters (Indicators)in the Republic of Yemen, 2004: 9] .

Developing Questionnaires

The instruments for data collection were a EFL teachers questionnaire and EFL supervisors questionnaire . They were developed as a the data-source for the target research . EFL teachers questionnaire consisted of 14 close-ended statements and one open-ended question. EFL supervisors questionnaire consisted of the same statements and a question on subjects' positive and negative reactions to introducing TEFL at level four in the Basic Education Government Schools. EFL teachers and supervisors of the Basic Education and Secondary Government schools were asked to write their points of views about the suggested early introducing of the EFL programme on a 4- point Likert scale (4= strongly to strongly disagree) .**The Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaires**

The tools of the data collection should be valid and reliable. In order to accomplish this, the researcher used the following steps:

The Validity of the Questionnaires

The first drafts of the two questionnaires statements were submitted to two linguists , an EFL specialist and two psychologists who were teaching at the College of Education, Al-Nadirah. The revisions were made on the basis of suggestions and comments of those specialists, the final drafts were ready for administration.

The Reliability of the Questionnaires

The questionnaire of the EFL teachers was pilot tested with 8 EFL teachers and the questionnaires supervisors was also pilot tested with 2 supervisors . After twenty five days , the researcher retested the target questionnaires by the same subjects. The revisions were made on the basis of these pilot tests and the questionnaires were reliable . The reliability of the two questionnaires was . 87 and . 82 respectively.

Administering the Questionnaires to the Sample of the Study.

The researcher administered the questionnaire of EFL teachers to the selected sample in 12- 18 April .He visited the target school and submitted the headmaster of the school copy of permission that he was provided by Instructional Assabeen District. The headmaster, in his turn, summoned the EFL teachers into the administration room in order to meet the researcher . The researcher , in his turn, submitted each teacher copy of the questionnaire and demanded him to read it for inquiries, if he has. By the way , the researcher distributed the copies of questionnaire to all the sample schools. After two or three days of the submission the copies, he returned to target school for collecting them.

In 20 of the same month, he administered the questionnaire of EFL supervisors by the chief of Department of English .

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis will be made on the responses to the two questionnaires. Descriptive statistics will be obtained by applying the frequency program of the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) to the research variables of the questionnaires.

The responses to the four- point scale questionnaire were combined under two categories. The positive category (4+3) encompasses two choices : strongly agree and agree. The negative category (2+1) contains the other two choices: strongly disagree and disagree. The purpose of this combination is made to facilitate reading the tables and understanding the analysis of data .

The questionnaire of the research consisted of fifteen statements , fourteen of them were close-ended statements and the last one was open-ended statement. The fourteen statements were divided into two axes, the first one which included seventh statements was about EFL teachers' and supervisors' feelings toward the early EFL introduction in the public schools at the Basic Education Stage . The other one also contained fourteen statements that were about EFL teachers' and supervisors' hopes and concerns about the same notion. Meanwhile, the last statement was open-ended statement whereas informants were asked to write suggestions which support or oppose the idea of EFL introduction at level four of the Basic Education Stage .

Notice: The researcher excluded 2 copies from teachers versions because they were incomplete.

The statements of the first axis that pertain to EFL teachers' and supervisors' feelings toward the early EFL introduction at level four of the Basic Education Stage:

1. Parents will like the idea of the early EFL introduction ;
2. EFL teachers are happy with the idea of the early EFL introduction ;
3. The Arabic language teachers will go against the idea of the early introduction of EFL ;
4. Teachers of Islamic studies will object to the idea of the early introduction of EFL;
5. Educational authorities will consider that the idea needs new budget and will not finance it ;
6. Headmasters of Government schools will support the idea of the teaching EFL at the fourth level of the Basic Education Stage ;
7. The new generation students will be happy with the idea of the early EFL introduction at the fourth level of the Basic Education Stage.

Table No. (2) Shows the Responses to the EFL Teachers' and Supervisors' Feelings Toward the Early EFL Introduction:

| No. of statement | Teachers | | | | | | | | | | Supervisors | | | | | |
|------------------|----------|----|------|-----|----|------|----|-----|-----|-----|-------------|------|----|-----|------|--|
| | Sc. | F | % | Sc | F | % | TF | TP | SD | Sc | F | % | TF | TP | SD | |
| 1. | 4+3 | 73 | 93.6 | 2+1 | 5 | 6.4 | 78 | 100 | .65 | 4+3 | - | - | 3 | 100 | .58 | |
| 2. | = | 65 | 83.4 | = | 13 | 16.4 | = | = | .83 | = | 2 | 66.7 | = | = | 1.15 | |
| 3. | = | 11 | 14.1 | = | 67 | 85.9 | = | = | .78 | = | 3 | 100 | = | = | - | |
| 4. | = | 18 | 23.1 | = | 60 | 76.9 | = | = | .90 | = | 3 | 100 | = | = | - | |
| 5. | = | 56 | 71.6 | = | 22 | 28.2 | = | = | .77 | = | 3 | 100 | = | = | .58 | |
| 6. | = | 63 | 80.7 | = | 15 | 19.2 | = | = | .83 | = | 2 | 66.7 | = | = | 1:00 | |
| 7. | = | 76 | 97.4 | = | 2 | 2.6 | = | = | .55 | = | 3 | 100 | = | = | - | |

Abbreviations used in tables

Sc= Scale . F= Frequency . % - Percentage . TF= Total of frequencies .

TP= Total of percentages . SD= Standard derivation .

By a glance at this table, it is obvious that .65 SD and 93.6 % of teachers believed that parents would like the idea of EFL early introduction at level four of the Basic Education schools as against 6.4% who considered they would not . While .58 SD and all supervisors had negative feelings towards the same idea due to they believed that introducing EFL at level four of the Basic Education would affect on acquisition of the Arabic language.

This a discrepancy, however, between EFL teachers and supervisors about introducing EFL at level four of the Basic Education stage whereas the former always suffers from the low level of students' achievement in the target language and believed that introduction EFL at the target level would improve the students' achievement in the target language.

Statement No. 2: .83 SD and 83.4% of the teachers claimed that EFL teachers would be happy with the notion of the early EFL introduction at level four of the Basic Education stage as compared to 16.7 percent who felt they would not .

On the other hand, 1.15 SD and 66.7 % of supervisors agreed with the same idea as compared to 33.3 percent of supervisors who did not agree with the same notion.

However, the majority of respondents indubitably showed their satisfaction with the idea of the early EFL introduction at level four of the Basic Education Stage .

Statement No. 3: .78 SD and 85.9 percent of teachers disagreed with the statement that the Arabic language teachers would object the idea of the early EFL introduction at the target level as in opposition to 14.1 % of the same group who agreed with the notion.

On the contrary, all the supervisors believed that the target idea would not be rejected by Arabic teachers .

There is a discrepancy, between the two groups about point of view of the Arabic language teachers that concerns with teaching English language at level four of the Basic Education whereas the majority of the teachers thought that Arabic teachers would reject the idea since teaching EFL at level four would affect on the Arabic language learning, while all the supervisors felt that Arabic language teachers would accept the target notion as EFL supervisors claimed that EFL introduction at level four of the Basic Education would not affect on acquisition the Arabic language because each language has its own special system.

Statement No. 4: .90 SD and 76.9% of teachers thought that teachers of Islamic studies would refuse the idea of early EFL introduction , while 23.1 % of the same group believed that the teachers of Islamic studies would not oppose the target notion.

On the other hand, all the supervisors felt that the teachers of religion would not reject the same idea since they believed that English language became the international language that would help Islam scholars in persuading non-Muslims to convert into Islam, as well as it should aid them to spread Islamic invitation in non-Arab world.

Furthermore, the two groups members' responses were inconsistent due to differentiating their educational and linguistic experiences .

Statement No. 5: .77 SD and 71.6 percent of teachers agreed that educational authorities would finance the notion with funds, while 28.2 percent who thought they would not .

In contrast, all the supervisors approved the same statement.

Furthermore, the majority of teachers' and all supervisors' responses the this statement were very consistent because they realized the importance of teaching English at level four of the Basic Education would strengthen the students' acquisition in the target language at advanced levels .

Statement No. 6 : .83 SD and 80.7 % of teachers agreed with the idea that principals of the Basic Education public schools would support the notion of teaching EFL at level four, whereas 19.2 percent who rejected the same idea.

While 1:00 SD and 66.7 % of the supervisors approved with proposition , as 33.3 percent of the same group thought that principals would not .

As a matter of fact, the majority of informants asserted that the principals of the public schools would support the target idea because they optimize that teaching of EFL would help educational authorities to overcome the deficiencies and shortcomings that hinder the success of students in acquisition and using the target language fluently .

Statement No. 7: .55 SD and 97. 4 percent of teachers agreed that the new generation would accept the idea of the early EFL introduction at level four of the Basic Education , while opposed to 2.6 % who felt that they would not .

On the other hand, all the supervisors thought that the idea would be welcomed by the young people. .

The statements of the second axis that pertain to EFL teachers' and supervisors' hopes and concerns about the early EFL introduction :

8. The early EFL introduction will immediately have public support ;
9. The idea will find resistance only from the old people ;
10. Educators will have different opinions and those educated outside the country will support it strongly ;
11. The idea will become a reality with the increased awareness about the importance of the English language in the world ;
12. The study of Arabic language will be affected by beginning to learn English language at level four of the Basic Education Stage ;
13. It is not wise to teach English to students who do not master their native language yet.
14. The idea of early EFL introduction will confine to the big cities only .

Table No. (3) Shows the Responses to the EFL Teachers' and Supervisors' Hopes and Concerns About the Early EFL Introduction:

| No. of statement | Teachers | | | | | | | Supervisors | | | | | | |
|------------------|----------|----|------|-----|----|------|-----|-------------|-----|---|------|-----|------|--|
| | Sc | F | % | Sc | F | % | TP | SD | Sc | F | % | TP | SD | |
| 8. | 4+3 | 61 | 78.2 | 2+1 | 17 | 21.8 | 100 | .92 | 4+3 | . | . | 100 | .58 | |
| 9. | = | 27 | 34.6 | = | 51 | 65.4 | = | .87 | = | . | . | = | .58 | |
| 10. | = | 59 | 75.7 | = | 19 | 24.3 | = | .91 | = | 2 | 66.7 | = | 1.00 | |
| 11. | = | 70 | 89.8 | = | 8 | 10.2 | = | .75 | = | 2 | 66.7 | = | 1.00 | |
| 12. | = | 30 | 38.4 | = | 48 | 61.6 | = | .99 | = | 1 | 33.3 | = | 1.53 | |
| 13. | = | 25 | 32 | = | 53 | 68 | = | .92 | = | . | . | = | .58 | |
| 14. | = | 55 | 70.5 | = | 23 | 28.5 | = | .86 | = | 2 | 66.7 | = | 1.15 | |

The data in table No. 3, reveals that .92 SD and 78.2% of teachers thought that the idea of early EFL introduction would immediately have public support, as opposed to 21.8 percent who did not expect this support.

On the other hand, all the supervisors claimed that the public would not support the idea.

There is a discrepancy between the supervisors and the majority of teachers about public support the idea of early EFL introduction at level four of the Basic Education whereas all the supervisors believed that the idea would not get support

from public people because the matter pertains to the Government , meanwhile, the majority of teachers thought the idea would be supported by public people since the society should share in education of new generation.

Statement No. 9: .87 SD and 65. 4% of teachers rejected the proposition that the idea of early EFL introduction at level four of the Basic Education would encounter resistance from old people , as compared to 34.6 percent who confirmed that the idea would be faced resistance from old people.

On the contrary , all the supervisors did not agree that the idea would cope resistance from old people .

The data of statement No. 9 that were collected from informants indicate that all supervisors and majority of teachers confirmed that the idea of early EFL introduction at the target level would find welcome from old people because EL became an international language , as I have been mentioned earlier , whereas it enables Yemenis to follow up-to-date technology and experiences easily .

Statement No. 10: The majority(.91 SD and 75.7 %) of teachers agreed that educators would have different opinions and those educated outside the country would support it strongly , as contrasted with 24.3 percent who disagreed .

While 1:00 SD and 66.7% supervisors believed that the idea would be supported by those only who educated outside the country as opposed to 33.3 percent of them.

However, the majority of respondents reported that there is differences among educators about the level in which EF should be introduced , but those who educated outside the country would support the idea strongly because they found EL was taught in some countries from the beginning of the Basic Education stage .

Statement No. 11: The great number (.75 SD and 89.8%) of teachers asserted that the idea would become a reality with the increased awareness about the importance of the EF in the world, as compared with 10. 2 percent who disagreed .

Also , great number (1:00 SD and 66.7%) of supervisors agreed about the same proposition, while 33.3 percent of them did not agree .

Thus, we can induce that the majority of clients of the study reported that the idea of introducing EL at level four of the Basic Education would become a reality when Yemenis would be aware of the importance of EL in the world affairs .

Statement No. 12 : The great number (.99 SD and 61.6 %) of teachers believed that the study of Arabic language would **not** be affected by starting teaching English at level four of the Basic Education , as contrasted with 38.4 percent who did not agree with the same idea, but this percentage of teachers is not possible neglected its opinion .

Also, 1.53 SD and 66.7 % of supervisors rejected the target proposition , while 33.3 percent of the supervisors asserted that Arabic language learning , at the level, would be affected by teaching EL at level four .

This shows that the great number of informants reported that Arabic language learning would not be affected by teaching EL because each language has its own system , at the same time , more than quarter of the sample of the study believed the vice versa .

Statement No. 13 : The majority(.92 SD and 68 %) of teachers and all supervisors opposed the idea that mentions to "it is not wise to teach English to

students who do not master their native language yet' as contrasted with 32 percent who saw the vice versa .

Statement No. 14: The great number (.86 SD and 70.5 %) of teachers and (1.15 SD and 66.6 %) of supervisors agreed that the idea of early EFL introduction would confine to the big cities, as compared to 28.5 % of teachers and 33.3 % of supervisors opposed the same idea because they believed that teaching EL at level four of the Basic Education should cover all the schools in Republic of Yemen .

Suggestions posed by Sample of the study

In the second section of the questionnaire, the informants were asked an open-ended question that required them to write suggestions which support or oppose the idea of EFL introduction at level four of the Basic Education Stage. The respondents proposed suggestions were studied and classified into the following categories :

Firstly : Propaganda

Before introducing English language at level four of the Basic Education , Ministry of Education should raise awareness of people about the importance of EL in the 21st century . This matter should be via mass media especially Satellite Channel and local channel programmes, the purpose of these programmes is drawing the students' attention to the importance of EL at present era .

Second : Supporting the Project

The idea of introducing EL at level four requires big budget because this project requires preparing appropriate curricula, teaching aids, qualified teachers, media propaganda and so on . These facilities need sufficient budget , if the Ministry of Education will not support this project, the outcomes of EL teaching will be very weak .

Thirdly : Suggestions Which Support the Idea

- Introducing EFL at level four of the Basic Education stage will enable students to use English language in different situations fluently;
- Teaching EFL in the same level will be able students to master and use the target language easily and this will make labour market receives them eagerly ;
- Introducing EFL in the same level will help EFL teachers at advanced levels since the students' performance in the target language will aid them to achieve assignment tasks easily;
- Introducing EFL in the same level will protect parents from some business private schools because these schools tempt the parents of students via untrue media propaganda that they teach their sons English from level one of the Basic Education stage, but the truth is different , most the students who graduate from these schools are very weak in English .
- Teaching EFL in the same level will make students understand and use the EFL better than when it is introduced at level seven ;
- At level four students are more interested in learning EFL than level seven;
- Not only EFL should be introduced in the big cities , but also in rural schools ;

- Teaching EFL at level four will strengthen the abilities of students to acquire Arabic language by using various expressions ;
- Introducing the target language will not affect on Arabic learning since each language has its own system ;
- Teaching EFL in the same level will certainly help in developing our beloved country.

Fourthly : Training EFL Teachers

- Teachers who will teach EFL from level four to level nine – because these levels are considered the basic levels of acquisition the foreign language- should be trained on using appropriate and special methods and techniques of teaching ;

-Those teachers should be trained on using appropriate teaching aids that encourage students to use the language in various situations fluently;

-Also, those teachers should have certain characteristics and experiences that help them in dealing with children in different situations .

Fifth : Curricula and Materials

a. Curricula:

- Ministry of Education Authorities should prepare English curricula which will be assigned at the beginning levels (4-6) of learning English language as a foreign language putting in consideration the students' growth features . These curricula should be different from Crescent English for Yemen(CEFY) whereas new series' contents should be taken from Yemeni environmental situations, each situation that will provide students with vocabulary words , language areas and skills which enable them to use the target language easily imitating the real situations included in the lessons they have learnt ;

- Specifications of new curricula that will be assigned at levels (4-6) of learning the target language are different from specifications of the (CEFY) such as :

- a. Font of printing should be bigger than one which was used in printing (CEFY) because the learners are still children ;
- b. New series should include clear and coloured drawings, charts, pictures, realiaThat encourage students to acquire the foreign language eagerly ;
- c. It should contain several dialogues that focus on real situations like at the bank, at the old market, at the post office, at the supermarket, conducting debate on TV. at the airport , at the passport office and so on . These dialogues should include simple and easy words which students can understand and use them easily;
- d. The main skills of the language should be taught gradually, for instance, the lessons - that should be taught in the first six weeks of the beginning of study year- should focus on listening skill and its sub-skills more than other language skills. Then speaking skill and its sub-skills also should be focused on coming next six weeks, by way, the remain skills of the language should be taught following the same procedure .Thus , the main skills of language

should be taught sequentially, then , they should be taught in balanced way.

e. New curricula should be written in clear and easy style.

b. Instructional Materials

Various materials that help students make a direct association between the target language and meaning. Therefore, instructional materials consist of the following :

Cassettes :

The dialogues which will be available in the new curricula should be registered by native speakers so that learners will imitate their pronunciation, intonation, stress, rhythm and so on .

Conclusions of the Study

First of all, I would like to mention that the delay beyond late childhood , for instance, the age of 12-14 years is harmful for acquisition a foreign language. But there are some factors govern the introduction of English language at level four of the Basic Education stage. These factors are as follows :

- i. The absent of the effect of English language on Arabic language as it has been mentioned earlier by the respondents of the study ;
- ii. Greater time allocation for EFL teaching ;
- iii. Existence of sufficient EFL trained and qualified teachers and appropriate curricula and educational materials in order to introduce EFL at level four of the Basic Education public schools ;
- iv. Awareness of parents of the students and the students themselves about the importance of the EFL and their need to use it in the new millennium ;

No doubt that these factors are in favour of introducing English language at the target level of the Basic Education in public schools stimulate Ministry of Education for the implementation of an early introduction of the English language in public schools of the Basic Education stage .

However, based on the analysis of data that collected from informants of the study of the study and suggestions posed by the same informants by conducting two questionnaires which have been developed for achieving the objectives of the study , the following conclusions could be drawn :

1. A great number (93.6 %) of teachers expressed positive feelings towards introducing EFL at level four of the Basic of Education, depending on parents' recognition the significance of having an early English learning for their sons. While all supervisors were vice versa of the teachers' ;
2. The majority participants (83.4 %) of teachers and (66.7 %) of supervisors welcomed the idea and hoped it would become a reality ;
3. The majority (85.9 %) of teachers reported that Arabic language teachers were versus the idea because Arabic teachers have negative feelings towards introducing EFL at level four . As all supervisors were vie versa of EFL teachers' . Therefore, there is a difference between EFL teachers and

- supervisors about the point of view of Arabic teachers towards introducing EFL at level four ;
4. Also, the great number (76.9 %) of teachers believed that the teachers of Islamic studies would oppose the idea, as all the supervisors were vice versa the EFL teachers' ;
 5. Most of the teachers (71.6 %) and all the supervisors asserted that the idea of introducing EFL at level four of the public schools would be supported financially by the educational authorities ;
 6. Also, the majority of the teachers confirmed that the proposition would be supported administratively by the principals of the target schools ;
 7. About all the respondents of the study claimed that new generation students would welcome the target idea ;
 8. The majority (78.2 %) of teachers indicated that the early EFL introduction at the target level would soon be had public support. In contrast , all the supervisors claimed that the idea would not be had public support because most of parents are poor ;
 9. More than half (65.4 %) of the teachers and all the supervisors denied that idea would face resistance from old people ;
 10. Most of the clients of the study acknowledged that there was difference among educators who studied inside the country about introducing EFL at level four of the Basic Education stage, on contrary , those who studied outside the country would support the same idea ;
 11. Most of the subjects of the study hoped that the idea would become a reality in immediate future result of the increased awareness of Yemeni society about the importance of the English language in this era ;
 12. A great number of informants reported that Arabic language learning would not be affected by introducing EFL at level four of the Basic Education . This result contradicts with a segment that pertains to EFL teachers of the result No. 3 ;
 13. Again, a great number (68 %) of EFL teachers and all supervisors reported that introduction of EFL at level four would not affect on teaching Arabic language even if students still do not master their native language. This result enhances result No12 ;
 14. New curricula of EFL that will be taught from level four until level six should be written in light of special specifications
(see suggestions posed by sample of the study) ;
 15. EFL teachers who will teach at level 4 through level six should be trained on using methods and techniques of teaching that are appropriate the features of students who will learn at these levels.

Recommendations

The conclusions and suggestions of this study favour the following recommendations :

1. The Ministry of Education should raise awareness of the pupils , parents, the teachers of Islamic studies and Arabic teachers about the importance of English language in developing our beloved country specially and its positive role in communication with foreigners in general.
2. The Ministry of Education should prepare new EFL curricula that will be taught from level four until level six in light of certain specifications that suggested by members of the study sample (see pp. 27 & 28).
3. Colleges of Education should prepare and train EFL teachers who will teach in the Basic Education schools according to the pupils' growth features .
4. Colleges of Education should provide students who will teach EFL in the Basic Education schools with appropriate methods of teaching , teaching aids, and educational theories.
5. Ministry of Education should prepare instructional materials that attract pupils' attention to acquiring English language eagerly.

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