



Lecturers' and Students' Attitudes towards Language Education Policy at the Tertiary Level in Palestine

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Abstract: This paper describes a study designed to investigate faculty of Applied Sciences lecturers' and students' perception of English and Arabic as media of instruction at the tertiary level in Palestine. The quantitative method which fits the nature of the present study was adopted. The researchers used a questionnaire prepared by Yu (2010) as a main tool to collect the data of the current study. Being validated, the questionnaire was distributed to 50 lecturers and 350 students who were both selected purposefully using purposive sampling. The results indicated that both lecturers and students hold positive attitudes towards English language, nonetheless, they do not favour it as a medium of instruction at the tertiary level. In addition, students showed high preference to the English language since they have greater desires to learn it for both utilitarian and academic reasons. Therefore, a medium of instruction should be designed to achieve this purpose and to enable students to perform successfully in their educational and occupational settings.

Keywords: Language education policy, attitudes, medium of instruction, tertiary level

1. INTRODUCTION

The global demand for English in education requires a fair level of competency that surpasses the existing institutional capacity of many universities and institutions. English language proficiency is important for the education of science students since many international scientific books, journals and information resources require English. Recognizing this need, the interest of nations in English has significant influence on language policy-making and practices concerning languages. In these nations, one of the most significant educational trends world-wide is the teaching of a growing number of courses in universities through the medium of English (Nunan, 2003; Carroll-Boegh, 2005).

The literature in linguistic research exhibited that the use of languages in all education levels particularly at the tertiary level need a sound of stakeholders which should be clearly viewed as active agents, with the power to implement policy. These stakeholders should work together to create and implement language policy which benefits both top-down and bottom-up attempts at solidity (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996).

By investigating language policy in the Palestinian context, it can be said that English has been the dominant foreign language in universities as a medium of

instruction for more than four decades. It has also been introduced as a compulsory subject at Grade (1) in almost all elementary schools (Mazawi, 2000). It is worth mentioning, since September 2001 all colleges and universities administered by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education MOEHE in Palestine were instructed to use English as the main language of instruction in courses such as information technology, finance, foreign trade, economics, and pure sciences (Amara, 2003). Hence, English learning has become a de facto as attempt through the nationwide college curriculum. The content-based English instruction was previously introduced as bilingual education in science faculties

Language planning in Palestine is a vital matter especially in educational settings. Sullivan (1991) submits that language planning in Palestine takes place involving the different factors including multilingualism, the occupation, the responsibility of instruction as an agent of social change, international integration, and development. Amara (2003) added in developing a Palestinian language education policy especially English following the Oslo agreements, the Palestinians have responsibility to supervise education after many years depending on Jordanian and Egyptian curricula. Therefore, the new Palestinian curriculum shows an international orientation which is clearly part of the language policy in education.



He further argued that the recent history of Palestine, after 1993 at different levels of school and tertiary level, shows an international orientation, which is obviously a part of the language policy (both foreign language and Arabic language), accordingly; the learning and teaching of languages are a key concern in identity construction. Through Arabic, the relations with the Arab countries in the region can be maintained. However, Hebrew and English also serve as a medium of communication in Palestine. In addition, knowledge of English language is needed to maintain contacts with other parts of the world. For historical reasons, Palestine has been in contact with many different countries all over the world (Amara, 2003).

There is a current interest in learning or enhancing English among different sectors of Palestinians for different purposes including job promotion. Even during the current great interest in English language learning, policies and practices involving implementation of English Medium Instruction in Palestinian universities have been unclear and probably resulted in delaying better foreign language acquisition (USAID Report, 2009). Nonetheless, the potential advantages can be obtained only when suitable conditions prevail. These conditions include a perceived need for English as the medium of instruction, professionally trained teachers, and well-designed learning materials. Therefore, Palestinian educational authorities could be well advised to review the policy to use English beside Arabic as media of instruction in some faculties and to take great caution in its promotion (AMIDEAST Report, 2009).

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although the MOEHE strongly encourages students to learn in English in faculties of science at tertiary level, the students' attitudes have not been investigated. By providing insights into attitudes of Palestinian students toward the language of instruction, their purposes for learning in English and language education policies, this study contributes to an understanding of the use of languages as media of instruction at the tertiary level in Palestine. Furthermore, this study aims to offer insights into language attitude, motivation of students and teachers, and the main factors that may explain the variability of their attitudes and motivation at the tertiary level.

On the other hand, the first attempt to reform curriculum in the educational system in Palestine was in 1998. Almost ten years ago MOEHE introduced English, besides Arabic, as a foreign language in all Palestinian schools; but no attempt has been made to reform language policy at the tertiary level where English is important as the medium of instruction, especially for science faculties. As a result of strong positive feelings towards English, MOEHE did not support change of language policy at the tertiary level. The attempt of education reform in

Palestine, and the reactions and responses to it are investigated by Antony (1991). The language policy that encouraged bilingual instruction at the tertiary level has not been developing through years; the biggest problem is that students are still weak in English though they had been exposed to it for 12 years in the pre-university levels.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The prime goal of the present study is to investigate lecturers and students' attitude toward language education policy at the tertiary level in Palestine. More specifically, it seeks to investigate Faculty of Applied Sciences lecturers and students' preferred choice towards the use of Arabic and English as media of instruction in one of the Palestinian national universities. Other objectives and aims emerging from the study are:

- 1- Investigating Lecturers' attitudes towards English as a medium of instruction in Faculty of Applied Sciences in one of the Palestinian national universities.
- 2- Identifying students' attitudes towards English as a medium of instruction in Faculty of Applied Sciences in one of the Palestinian national universities.
- 3- Investigating Lecturers' attitudes towards Arabic as a medium of instruction in Faculty of Applied Sciences in one of the Palestinian national universities.
- 4- Identifying students' attitudes towards Arabic as a medium of instruction in Faculty of Applied Sciences in one of the Palestinian national universities.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, the researchers review related and existing literature through which they have done their best to choose the most convenient theories to be implemented in the present study. Having reviewed different models of language planning and policy in education, the researchers have selected the most relevant and clear cut model for this study. A number of planners such as Cooper (1989), Ferguson (1968), Fishman (1974) and Haugen (1983) have put forward what might constitute a model for Language policy and planning. For instance, Haugen (1987) introduced a four-dimensional model for understanding language planning policy. Haugen's model includes various possible features of any given language policy. It is also valuable for examining national as well as foreign language policy. Thus, the model appears suitable for examining language policy and planning in Palestine. This introduces status, acquisition, and corpus planning in the latest Palestinian initiatives, though there is a particularly strong focus on aspects of acquisition planning. Haugen also recognizes the fact that while official government institutions are often involved, individuals may also make their selections which eventually are followed by professional groups, whose practice may become used in a church, political party, a territory or even a whole country.

On the Bases of Haugen's (1987) model, Baldauf (2005) has developed a language planning framework. He suggested that the practice of overt (explicit, planned) or covert (implicit, unplanned language policy and planning may be one of four types: (1) status planning – about society, (2) corpus planning about Language-in-education, (3) Acquisition planning; about learning (Baldauf & Kaplan, 2005), and finally (4) prestige planning – about image. These types of language planning can be realized under a policy approach” with a stress on form: fundamental language and policy decisions and their implementation, or “a cultivation approach” with highlighting the determined extension of language progress and use. Baldauf (2005) view Language-in-Education Policy as being the same as what Cooper (1989) terms acquisition planning. The education sector is the main component for bringing about a country's language change. Language-in-Education Policy is a subset of the national language policy; therefore the former has to be in line with the latter. The education sector has to formulate its policy in a way that promotes the goals of the national language policy.

Moreover, Baldauf (2005) stated that the areas of policy development vary from country to country, depending on how their education system operates. These policy processes provide guidelines which will assist in observing the plan implemented at Al- Aqsa University. In addition, Shohamy (2006) proposed a model based on Spolsky's (2004) explanation, i.e. language policy model. In this model (Fig. 2.1), three components of language policy (beliefs, practice and management) are considered. Language beliefs refer to the ideologies regarding languages that undergird each policy. Spolsky cites an example where a group may believe that a nation equals its language; therefore, to them, language becomes the unifying factor of their nation. By the same token, Spolsky (2004: 222) argues that the real language policy of a community is more likely evident in its practices than in its management. He stresses that unless the management is consistent with the language practices and beliefs.

The previous models will be referred to in different parts of this study. It is worth mentioning that Palestinian new language policy was reformed after depending for many years on other countries' curricula which were actualized in the Palestinian education sectors. Recent language policy requires teaching six Arabic classes as national language, and five English classes from first grade till secondary school weekly. The situation is different in higher education where Arabic and English are required courses for university students and English is considered as the language of instruction for faculties of science.

Language planning policy LPP is, without doubt, grounded in language as resource orientation. Evidence of this can be seen in numerous public scientific articles

in English where there are a lot of articles in English. In addition, the ministry of education powerfully recommends that the medium of instruction of English should be English in order to increase the sum of input students obtain. Since Palestine is an EFL situation, students have limited opportunities to take in target language input external of the school (Abu Shamis, 2003).

Shohamy (2006), based on Spolsky's (2004) explanation presents a model figured as ‘language policy model’. In this model (Fig. 2.1), three components of language policy, viz., beliefs, practice and management are included. Language beliefs refer to ideologies about language that underlie each policy. He gives an example where a group may have a belief that a nation equals language; therefore, to them a language is a unifying factor for their nation. Language practice refers to the ecology of language and focuses on the kind of language practices that actually occur in the entity. For example, regardless of the policy and beliefs, certain languages are used in certain places for various reasons. For example, the Training and Education Policy (1995) in Tanzania states that the language of instruction in secondary schools is English; however, it is common to find Kiswahili being used inside most classrooms due to education problems prevailing in the secondary schools in Tanzania. This ties in with Shohamy's disagreement where he suggests “it is always the case that official language documents become no more than an assertion of plan that can easily be manipulated and contradicted” (p. 53).

Spolsky (2004) argues that the real language policy of a community is more likely to be found in its application than in its management. He stresses that, unless the management is consistent with the language practices and beliefs, and with the other contextual forces in play, the explicit policy written in the constitution and laws probably has no more effect on how people speak than the activities of generations of school teachers vainly arguing the choice of correct language. Language management refers to specific acts that occur to manage and manipulate language behavior in a given entity and they are related with the activities of this study. In the case of foreign languages in Palestine, in the higher levels of education, in general, one of the main motivations behind planning seems to be economic factors, and aims at national development.

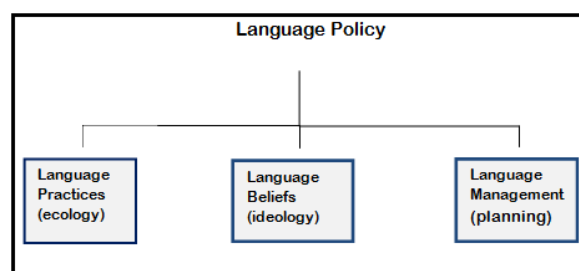


Figure 1. Language Policy, (Source: Shohamy,2006 p. 53)



This model is of abundant importance as (it offers the foundation for the introduction of the concept of mechanisms or policy devices and serves as a medium through which policies can be introduced and hidden agendas of the language policy can be incorporated (Shohamy, 2006). These approaches can be understood through the goals that the planners fixed up to realize, which may be at the macro-, meso- or micro-levels, with macro top-down goals. Almost all of the goals in the LPP framework are not independent of each other, e.g. policy-planning goals, in general, need the support of cultivation-planning. A particular language planning problem may also have a number of different goals, Ingram (1990), also has pointed out in relation to Language-in-Education planning, it "is more often random, secondary to other policy-making, and regular than it is coherent, rational, included, or comprehensive" (p. 54).

A. An overview of the bilingual instruction

The literature concerning the different types of bilingual instruction programs shows that each bilingual education model has special goals and objectives (Brisk, 1998). The purpose of transitional bilingual education (TBE) is to shift children from the minority language to the majority language. On the other hand, "Maintenance Bilingual Education", such as the Immersion Program and the Two-Way Program, intends to teach children the majority language whilst continuing to encourage their first language, enhancing the students' educational identities and affirming the cultural diversity of the nation (Christian, 1994; Genesee, 1995). However, Brisk (1998) mentions that it has been found that the categorization of bilingual education programs varies to a large extent and, therefore, it is important for researchers to investigate the goals and objectives of bilingual education, and the definite educational practices in each bilingual education program, in order to discover how the program helps students advance their bilingual abilities.

In the school context, the school environment regarding bilingualism, looks closely at how the language of power in school and in the society at large affects the bilingual individual's use of languages and attitudes toward bilingualism; (McCollum, 1999). Therefore, it is necessary to explore the environments surrounding the bilingual students when examining their attitudes toward bilingualism and motivation (Brock-Utne, 2005). According to Spolsky bilingual education may be seen as a means of improving the quality of education in general, as a "means of making education appropriate to the particular community. In order to create effective bilingual education that supports the bilingual/ bicultural development of students, the program should have clear goals and objectives, information about every student involved in the program, qualified teachers, and a supportive atmosphere for the bilingual students. All of these play important roles in the promotion the students'

positive attitudes toward bilingualism and their motivation to learn two languages.

Finally, the general attitudes of the Palestinians towards English and towards bilingualism are highlighted. The research on the bilingualism of the Palestinian people reveals that they generally entertain positive attitudes toward bilingualism and are motivated to be bilingual (Zvi Bekerman, 2005). Despite having these positive attitudes and a high motivation to learn English, some researchers argue regarding the difficulty that the Palestinian students have in becoming English-Arabic bilinguals (USAID report, 2009). These researchers state that the linguistic variation between English and Arabic impedes English-Arabic bilingual development. This language distinction between English and Arabic should be taken into account when assessing bilingual development in English and Palestinian. However, other researchers have found that some English-Arabic bilinguals overcome the linguistic dissimilarity between the two languages and successfully develop bilingual proficiency.

The research attributes the success of the bilingual development in the Palestinian-English bilinguals to the enthusiasm of the learners to learn a new culture and language, to their efforts in maintaining their own culture and language, as well as to the abundance of opportunities to use both languages (USAID report). As there are no studies regarding both the successful and unsuccessful cases which could provide practical data to prove their point of view, the relationships among the language dissimilarity between English and Arab, bilingual proficiency, and the language attitudes of the Palestinian students remain unclear. It is, therefore, important for this study to investigate the problems of implementing English medium instruction in tertiary education which we need to overcome, and its possible solutions to be implemented successfully.

B. Choices in relation to foreign language education planning

Language Planning and policy can be categorized into the macro, meso and micro levels. Macro-level policies made at the top levels of government level to entities such as schools, which may be considered meso-level in such a hierarchy of planning. Despite the planned outcomes, macro or meso-level policies can often fail in their attempts to set up, similarly, policies can backfire or make unexpected results (Spolsky, 2004).

It is important to mention that the activities of our study belong to micro language planning. Government activities are the top-down, macro-level components of LPP; in contrast, meso-level activities are more limited in scope and are often aimed at a specific group within society (Kaplan and Baldauf, 1997). According to Baldauf, categories can be outlined as Macro-level planning. This involves 'top-down' nationwide administration policies. It does not contain local-



government initiatives or the planning behaviors of local individuals; Macro is the level of institutions.

The literature discusses students' choices in relation to foreign language education planning as a case of micro-language planning in the context of the classroom as a part of the micro-level planning practice, students themselves, as the receivers of the outcomes of language planning, can contribute significantly to foreign language and curriculum planning processes.

For instance, Genoz, (2012) examines issues related to the important impact of language policy in the Basque Country in recent decades. Basque, a minority language that was not allowed in the public space until the late 1970s, is an official language along with Spanish in the Basque Autonomous Community. The development of Basque has been most significant in education where it is not only a school subject but also the main language of instruction for most children. The paper briefly summarizes this development and then moves to a focus on the use of Basque at the university level. The legal and organizational bases supporting the use of Basque are explained as well as the challenges faced by a minority language in higher education. The paper discusses the tension between internationalization and the use of Basque for teaching and research in higher education.

In their quantitative study Tong & Shi (2012) examine current practice and challenges of Chinese-English bilingual education in Chinese tertiary institutions and present a case study of a bilingual course by investigating learners' attitudes toward this educational and language policy. Using a convenience sampling strategy with an instrument modified from a nation-wide survey on bilingual education, this study involves 153 undergraduate science majors from a university located southeast of China. Results indicate that students held positive attitudes toward bilingual instruction and believed that such a model will not threaten the status of Chinese language and culture; and such an attitude significantly predicted students' academic achievement whereas the level of English proficiency did not. Further, female students outscored their male counterparts in the final examination. Finally, the positive relationship between years of learning English and attitudes toward bilingualism corroborates with the current literature that earlier exposure results in additive bilingualism. They recommend future studies be conducted to identify the threshold for a minimal level of English skills commensurate with distribution of language of instruction so that college students can benefit from bilingual education. In conclusion, despite challenges, Chinese-English bilingual education is still expected to be a legitimate and eventually rewarding educational practice that fits the socio-political environment of developing China.

Gao's (2012) reports on a study that investigated the views of teachers, administrators and policy makers about the intended use of educational technology embedded in the policy and the success of the policy in achieving this goal. The paper attempts to clarify how lecturers in higher education in China have been oriented by the College English Curriculum Requirements CECR towards pedagogical change. This paper reports on the responses of teachers towards the specific requirements of CECR 2004 by reviewing their present understanding of information and communications technology (ICT), the requirements of CECR 2004 regarding ICT, the present consensus on ICT in pedagogy and the views of policy makers and administrators about these issues. This paper found that there is a gap between the policy and the reality in terms of ICT pedagogy in tertiary English teaching in the context of China.

In the previous few decades, some studies assessing the attitudes and orientations of Arabs towards English have been carried out. One recent study is that by Hunt (2012). Hunt, critically examines attitudes, practices and policies surrounding the role of Arabic in English language teaching at an English medium institution in the United Arab Emirates. Findings reveal that teachers, students and college administration all resist and comply with instructions to minimize Arabic, and that individuals intervene in institutional methodological structure with often contradictory positions emerging. A secondary aspect portrays managerial policing of teachers for methodological rigor with implications for teachers' professional autonomy and development. Hunt argues that such responses reflect English Language teaching methodology's position as an aspect of the global pattern of deployment of cultural and economic power.

Another important study was that of Tushyeh (1986) who conducted a study among English majors at An-Najah National University in the West Bank. This study indicated that the students considered English an important and useful language. There was also a significant trend for instrumental motivation for learning English. The majority of the students expressed positive attitudes towards English. However, they had mixed attitudes towards English-speaking peoples and their culture.

In addition, Suleiman (1993) conducted study using qualitative and quantitative techniques to investigate Arab university students' motivation for studying English as a second language (ESL), attitudes toward studying English and the English language, attitudes toward Americans and the United States, and future expectations for study of English. The sample was confined to 15 male and 7 female students from diverse Arabic-speaking backgrounds, all with at least five years of ESL study, studying at Arizona State University. Results revealed a number of categories of motivation for studying English, both before and after arrival in the United States, and also



showed gender-related differences in motivation. Attitudes toward study of English fell into nine categories ranging from amusement to resentment; again, some gender differences were found. Attitudes toward methods of English instruction in the home country were generally unfavorable, but were generally favorable toward English instruction in the United States. Attitudes toward Americans and the United States before arrival fell into five categories: attraction; admiration; dislike; fear; and indifference; most students expressed positive feelings. After arrival in the United States, attitudes become more complex and reflected culture conflict and significant adjustment; female attitudes were generally negative. Most felt little need to study English further.

Moreover, another study that dealt with attitudes of Palestinian university students learning English was conducted by Khalil and Sanbee (1987) at Bethlehem University. Their results indicated that the students maintain both instrumental and integrative orientations. They thought that learning English helped them in their college work and offered them good job opportunities. They were interested in meeting and communicating with native speakers of English. However, they were not interested in adopting the modes of thinking and patterns of behavior of these native speakers.

The relationship between high school students' achievement in English and their motivation to learn English was investigated by Bakir (1996). Her findings emphasized the importance of motivation in accounting for success or failure in learning English. Instrumental motivation was a factor since students sought the social advantages of learning English.

5. METHODOLOGY

This descriptive study aimed to investigate attitudes of the lecturers and students of Faculty of Applied Sciences at a Palestinian national university. The researcher, therefore, used the quantitative method which best suits the nature of the current study. Four questionnaires were mainly used to collect the data of the study. The choices of responses from the attitude towards current language policy in Palestine ranging from 1 to 6, therefore the choices of the responses for the items in the questionnaire are clustered into three groups: low, medium and high. Table 1 illustrates the procedures to cluster the 6-point Likert rating into three levels: low, moderate and high.

TABLE 1. INDICATOR OF MEAN SCORES FOR THE LEVEL OF POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS AND LECTURERS

Range	Indicator
1.00-2.67	Low
2.68-4.34	Medium
4.35-6.00	High

Source: Green, Salkind & Akey (1997)

A. Participants

Selection of lecturers

This study is descriptive one which sought to identify the lecturers' attitudes towards the use of English and Arabic in Faculty of Applied Sciences at. For this purpose 50 lecturers from the aforementioned faculty were purposefully chosen to constitute the sample of the study. Only lecturers who have teaching experience for 3 to 5 years were chosen to complete the survey. It is worth mentioning, most of lecturers were really willing to participate in the study, and were accessible without any constraints.

Selection of lecturers

The targeted students who participated and responded to the questionnaires were 350 male and female students during the academic year 2011- 2012. They were mainly taken from Departments of Chemistry, Mathematics, Biology and Physics of the Faculty of Applied Sciences of a Palestinian national university. The subjects would be exposed to English as language of instruction for four years to graduate with a B.Sc. In addition, an English language course was taught for all students over two semesters in their first year. Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents.

TABLE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY SAMPLE

Lecturers 3 to 5 years' experience	Students from 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th levels
10 physics	100 (physics)
15 chemistry	100 (chemistry)
10 biology	50 (biology)
15 math	100 (math)
50	350
Total 400	

B. The Study design and instrument

The Four questionnaires were mainly used to collect the data of the study, i.e. the first investigates students' attitudes towards the use of English as a medium of instruction, whereas the second attempts to explore the lecturers' attitudes in the same area and towards the current language policy in Palestine. The other two questionnaires seek to identify students' and lecturers' attitudes independently towards the use of Arabic as a medium of instruction at the same faculty. Each questionnaire consists of nine items only. The questionnaires are based on the instrument designed by Yu (2010) to identify the attitudes of learners toward studying English in China and the role of social factors in their motivation. Yu's study itself is based on two scales of Gardner's (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery



(AMTB) (the instrumental and integrative orientation scales).

The lecturers' questionnaires included unstructured (open-ended) questions. Students were requested only to give their honest views on a 6-point Likert rating. That was as follows: 6 = strongly agree (SA), 5 = agree (A), 4 = slightly agree (SLA), 3 = slightly disagree (SLD), 2 = disagree (D), 1 = strongly disagree (SD). The data collected were analyzed using SPSS. Ranks, range, means and standard deviation were computed to identify the language which students and lecturers most likely preferred in learning and teaching. lecturers' questionnaires included unstructured (open-ended) questions. Students were requested only to give their honest views on a 6-point Likert rating. That was as follows: 6 = strongly agree (SA), 5 = agree (A), 4 = slightly agree (SLA), 3 = slightly disagree (SLD), 2 = disagree (D), 1 = strongly disagree (SD). The data collected were analyzed using SPSS. Ranks, range, means and standard deviation were computed to identify the language which students and lecturers most likely preferred in learning and teaching.

C. Validity

Validity of the questionnaires was partially established from the previous studies from which the current instrument was drawn (Chen et al., 2005; Kirkgöz, 2005; Yashima, 2002; Carroll-Boegh, 2005; Young, 2006; Lam, 2005). Moreover, it was presented to two English TESOL professors in Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)- Malaysia who reviewed their appropriateness and clearness.

D. Reliability

The study instruments proved reliable statistically. Alpha Cornbach correlation regarding the parts of questionnaires after modification was more than (0.884), which indicates that they were reliable to be administered and to collect the data in concern.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Palestinian Faculty of Applied Sciences students' and lecturers' preferred choice towards Arabic and English as mediums of instruction.

What is the preferred choice for the faculty of Applied sciences' students and lecturers towards Arabic and English as mediums of instruction at Palestinian national university?

The findings in Table 3 indicates that the students have reflected on English as a medium of instruction (EMI) as useful for them, which is evident from the following facts: 100%, specifically (9.70% +38.60%+51.70%) of the subjects strongly agreed with the statement 'English should be used at the tertiary

education to help the government and business offices in getting things done easily.' In the same vein, (91.10%) of the subjects believe that the development of our country is possible mainly by educated people who know English well. These scores indicate that the majority of students, namely 90.90 % have strong feelings towards the use of English at the tertiary level due to the fact that it is useful.

Regarding the strong reactions to other items such as Physics and Chemistry should be taught in English at the secondary level in Palestine. The findings show that 61, 8% of the sample had strong feelings towards the use of English at the secondary level in Palestine and other 68.1% found that educational science films in English are more enjoyable than films in Arabic language. Only 38 subjects did not prefer the use of English at the tertiary level and nearly 90% favored it. Their belief of the importance of English as an international language does not have a great influence on their feelings about studying it as a medium of instruction. The finding here indicates that the students are aware of the importance of English but they have less confidence with the use of English in such subjects such as Chemistry, Physics, and math at the tertiary level.

Table 4 demonstrates that lecturers have positive attitudes towards English as it can be seen from the high percentages given to statements. It is obvious from table 4 that the highest mean 5 is received by the statement 'When I hear a lecturer speak English well, I wish I could speak like him', whereas the statement 'I don't favor the use of English at the tertiary level' received the lowest mean, i.e. 2.30. The overall mean is 4.0846 with standard deviation of 0.40789. The responses show that the lecturers' attitudes are moderately positive towards the current language policy. In a similar context, Gao (2012) found that there is a gap between the policy and the reality in terms of ICT pedagogy in tertiary English teaching in the context of China.

Table 5 shows that most of the students generally had quite strong reactions towards Arabic since its use is likely to give power and prestige in Palestine as evidenced by the mean (5.03) and Std. Dev. (1.15765) scores. These scores suggest that 79.70% participants have strong feelings about this issue compared to their generally low reactions where 60.6% of students see that lecturers in Palestine are fully equipped to teach using Arabic in the Faculty of Applied Sciences and this may be due to the few number of available scientific references translated in Arabic, which is a very daunting and costly process that requires special skills and time. Concerning the ability of Arabic to express scientific and educational concepts, 79.7% agree in different degrees. However, about 57% disagree that Arabic should continue as medium of instruction MI at the secondary schools. This tendency may exhibit the disagreement of students on the apparent language policy of MOEHE. In addition, the analysis of



the items of the questionnaires indicate that 53.40% of the students have different attitudes concerning the use of Arabic as MI from primary school to University level.

Table 6 presents lecturers' attitudes of regarding Arabic MI in the Faculty of Applied Sciences. The findings demonstrate that the lecturers have positive attitudes towards Arabic as it can be seen from the high percentages given to statements. It can also be viewed from table 6 that the statement 'Arabic can express educational and scientific concepts.' got the highest mean,

i.e. 4.80 is, whereas the lowest mean 2.80 was given to the statement 'Language institutes and organizations contribute positively towards the development of Arabic'. The overall mean is 3.62 with standard deviation of 1.7363. The responses show that the lecturers have moderate attitudes towards Arabic medium instruction. The preference of students for only-Arabic medium is relatively stronger.

TABLE 3. STUDENTS' ATTITUDES REGARDING ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN THE FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

(SA = strongly agree, A = agree, SLA = slightly agree, SLD = slightly disagree, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree).

No	Statements		Disagreement %			Agreement %			Mean	Std. Dev.
			SD	D	SLD	SLA	A	SA		
A1	The development of our country is possible mainly by educated people who know English well.	Count	0	0	31	54	113	152	5.10	0.9669
		%	0.00%	0.00%	8.90%	15.40%	32.30%	43.40%		
A2	English should be used at the tertiary education to help government and business offices in getting things done easily.	Count	0	0	0	34	135	181	5.42	0.6627
		%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.70%	38.60%	51.70%		
A3	English should not be a compulsory subject in secondary schools in Palestine	Count	140	62	0	100	15	33	2.68	1.728
		%	40.00%	17.70%	0.00%	28.60%	4.30%	9.40%		
A4	I find English as a Medium Instruction (EMI) useful for me.	Count	0	0	32	97	39	182	5.06	1.078
		%	0.00%	0.00%	9.10%	27.70%	11.10%	52.00%		
A5	At least some subjects like Physics and Chemistry should be taught in English at the secondary level in Palestine.	Count	0	16	118	87	98	31	4.03	1.076
		%	0.00%	4.60%	33.70%	24.90%	28.00%	8.90%		
A6	Educational science films in English are more enjoyable than films in Arabic.	Count	0	37	64	62	98	89	4.39	1.324
		%	0.00%	10.60%	18.30%	17.70%	28.00%	25.40%		
A7	I don't favour the use of English at the tertiary level.	Count	167	129	16	0	0	38	2.00	1.505
		%	47.70%	36.90%	4.60%	0.00%	0.00%	10.90%		
A8	English language can express educational and scientific concepts better.	Count	16	0	64	135	63	72	4.27	1.236
		%	4.60%	0.00%	18.30%	38.60%	18.00%	20.60%		
A9	When I hear a lecturer speak English well, I wish I could speak like him.	Count	0	0	16	0	30	304	5.78	0.670
		%	0.00%	0.00%	4.60%	0.00%	8.60%	86.90%		
Average Score									4.30	1.139

TABLE 4: ATTITUDES OF LECTURERS TOWARD ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Item No.	Statements	Disagreement %			Agreement %			Mean	Std. Dev.
		SD	D	SLD	SLA	A	SA		
Q1	The development of our country is possible mainly by educated people who know English well.	8	1	7	9	17	8	4.00	1.6413
		16.00%	2.00%	14.00%	18.00%	34.00%	16.00%		
Q2	English should be used at the tertiary education to help government and business offices in getting things done easily.	9	7	10	0	18	6	3.58	1.7623
		18.00%	14.00%	20.00%	0.00%	36.00%	12.00%		
Q3	English should not be a compulsory subject in secondary schools	17	1	16	1	6	9	3.10	1.8871
		34.00%	2.00%	32.00%	2.00%	12.00%	18.00%		
Q4	I find English as a Medium Instruction (EMI) useful for me	4	7	4	5	19	11	4.22	1.6199
		8.00%	14.00%	8.00%	10.00%	38.00%	22.00%		
Q5	At least some subjects like Physics and Chemistry should be taught in English at the secondary level.	13	2	10	6	18	1	3.34	1.6612
		26.00%	4.00%	20.00%	12.00%	36.00%	2.00%		



Q6	Educational science films in English are more enjoyable than films in Arabic.	10	5	15	1	13	6	3.40	1.7143
		20.00%	10.00%	30.00%	2.00%	26.00%	12.00%		
Q7	I don't favour the use of English at the tertiary level.	21	13	6	1	8	1	2.30	1.5286
		42.00%	26.00%	12.00%	2.00%	16.00%	2.00%		
Q8	English language can express educational and scientific concepts better.	1	13	21	9	2	4	3.20	1.1780
		2.00%	26.00%	42.00%	18.00%	4.00%	8.00%		
Q9	When I hear a lecturer speak English well, I wish I could speak like him.	0	0	10	1	18	21	5.00	1.1249
		0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	2.00%	36.00%	42.00%		
Average Score								3.57	1.5686

TABLE 5. STUDENTS' ATTITUDES REGARDING ARABIC AS MI IN THE FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

No	Statements		SD	D	SLD	SLA	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
A1	There are efforts being made to promote Arabic as medium of instruction.	Count	16	0	81	54	118	81	4.43	1.31321
		%	4.60%	0.00%	23.10%	15.40%	33.70%	23.10%		
A2	Arabic is likely to give you power and prestige in Palestine	Count	0	16	71	30	68	165	4.84	1.32678
		%	0.00%	4.60%	20.30%	8.60%	19.40%	47.10%		
A3	Arabic can express educational and scientific concepts.	Count	0	0	71	16	95	168	5.03	1.15765
		%	0.00%	0.00%	20.30%	4.60%	27.10%	48.00%		
A4	The use of Arabic as MI at the tertiary level requires urgent attention.	Count	0	17	54	49	92	138	4.80	1.24620
		%	0.00%	4.90%	15.40%	14.00%	26.30%	39.40%		
A5	Language institutes and organizations contribute positively towards the development of Arabic.	Count	16	32	0	81	105	116	4.64	1.41255
		%	4.60%	9.10%	0.00%	23.10%	30.00%	33.10%		
A6	Arabic should continue as MI in the secondary schools	Count	0	17	184	50	52	47	3.79	1.16932
		%	0.00%	4.90%	52.60%	14.30%	14.90%	13.40%		
A7	Lecturers in Palestine are fully equipped to teach using Arabic in sciences schools.	Count	0	33	105	80	86	46	4.02	1.20512
		%	0.00%	9.40%	30.00%	22.90%	24.60%	13.10%		
A8	Arabic should be used as a medium of instruction in science faculties	Count	0	36	100	83	52	79	4.11	1.31976
		%	0.00%	10.30%	28.60%	23.70%	14.90%	22.60%		
A9	You would be happy if all subjects from primary to University are studied using Arabic.	Count	31	100	68	19	67	65	3.53	1.69032
		%	8.90%	28.60%	19.40%	5.40%	19.10%	18.60%		
Average Score									4.36	1.3157

TABLE 6. ATTITUDES OF LECTURERS REGARDING ARABIC AS MI IN FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE

NO.	Statement	Disagreement %			Agreement %			Mean	Std. Dev.
		SD	D	SLD	SLA	A	SA		
Q1	There are efforts being made to promote Arabic as medium of instruction.	15	0	15	1	8	11	3.40	1.9378
		30.00%	0.00%	30.00%	2.00%	16.00%	22.00%		
Q2	Arabic is likely to give you power and prestige in Palestine	3	4	8	10	15	10	4.20	1.4569
		6.00%	8.00%	16.00%	20.00%	30.00%	20.00%		
Q3	Arabic can express educational and scientific concepts.	0	5	5	2	21	17	4.80	1.2936
		0.00%	10.00%	10.00%	4.00%	42.00%	34.00%		
Q4	The use of Arabic as MI at the tertiary level requires urgent attention.	14	1	10	9	12	4	3.32	1.7195
		28.00%	2.00%	20.00%	18.00%	24.00%	8.00%		
Q5	Language institutes and organizations contribute positively towards the development of Arabic.	19	2	14	4	7	4	2.80	1.7143
		38.00%	4.00%	28.00%	8.00%	14.00%	8.00%		
Q6	Arabic should continue as MI in the secondary schools	13	4	18	0	5	10	3.20	1.8295
		26.00%	8.00%	36.00%	0.00%	10.00%	20.00%		



Q7	Lecturers in Palestine are fully equipped to teach using Arabic in sciences schools.	10	5	15	4	2	14	3.50	1.8654
		20.00%	10.00%	30.00%	8.00%	4.00%	28.00%		
Q8	Arabic should be used as a medium of instruction in science faculties	9	7	9	8	4	13	3.60	1.8406
		18.00%	14.00%	18.00%	16.00%	8.00%	26.00%		
Q9	You would be happy if all subjects from primary to University are studied using Arabic.	10	9	1	11	3	16	3.72	1.9696
		20.00%	18.00%	2.00%	22.00%	6.00%	32.00%		
Average Score								3.62	1.7363

Section B of the lecturers' questionnaire sought to explore responses from the Open-Ended questions: "Are you satisfied in teaching science courses through a medium of English? Does studying your academic subject through English have any disadvantages for you?"

The findings of the open-ended question at the end of lecturers' questionnaire revealed that a vast majority of lecturers have satisfaction with the use of English to teach science in faculty of Applied Sciences. These answers fall under the following reasons:

1. Science subjects must be taught in English since English is the language of science.
2. Math and science are full of numeric, equations; and therefore, do not influence students' understanding, and it represented in Arabic or English.
3. A medium of instruction is useful for our English FL learning.
4. Use of English in teaching is worth all the trouble.
5. Use of English as a medium of instruction is possible with a good level of students, and it could be provided for students in secondary school.
6. Students must choose a medium of instruction as the case Islamic university of Gaza; the university made it optional to the students in some faculties.

The findings show that (45%), lecturers prefer to write and represent content in English. However, the results showed that (55%) of the lecturers focus on translating into Arabic. This agrees with the results of interview which showed that (45%) lecturers had used English in their lectures in lectures.

To elaborate more in this area, lecturers see the use of English in lectures as a means of strengthening their comprehension in the science subject, as indicated by one of the lecturers' comments "When [the] teacher teaches in English and explains in Arabic, [then] I can understand very easily and this improves my language." Similar comments were received from most of the participants regardless of the language of their background schooling. "Math and science are full of numeric, equations; and therefore, do not influence students' understanding, whether represented in Arabic or in English"

The results show that some of lecturers think that the proficiency of lectures in English language is not very competent, and this is due to the fact that the medium of

instruction of their tuition was not English but rather other languages such as Arabic, Turkish, or French. The results also show a second disadvantage of teaching science through English, a few think the inability of the lecturers to facilitate information for students. Yet, only 12% of the lecturers think that the lack of using multiple methods of teaching such as scientific movies or giving presentation does not facilitate content in English.

Comparing the lecturers' language attitude towards using one language (either Arabic or English) in teaching sciences, the findings indicate that there is partial agreement on preferring English only in teaching, and mostly prefer using English then explaining in Arabic as a medium of instruction. Generally, the majority of lecturers strongly agree that using one language is not beneficial to students. The results indicate that the lecturers tend toward only-Arabic medium for teaching the subject in their lectures. Lecturers have difficulty in making students understand the academic content in English and similarly in understanding exam questions. In general, lecturers are motivated to use both English and Arabic as a media of instruction despite their dissatisfaction with students' level in English at the present. 64% of the participants strongly agreed that the use of the two languages had a positive impact on increasing students' chances of passing their course exams. Therefore, the use of the two languages in teaching has a great impact on students' academic performances as it is seen as an influential teaching tool to facilitate learning and teaching.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In light of the findings discussed, it can be said that although the use of English MI at the Faculty of Applied Sciences at Palestinian Universities constitutes a challenge for both lecturers and students, it is still preferred side by side with Arabic. Hence, attitudes towards bilingual education are positive due to the fact that it is a matter of ease at the teaching/ learning process. The results obtained indicate that students held positive attitudes toward bilingual instruction, which disagrees with the current instruction policies adopted by MOEHE. Then, the researchers recommend:

1. Raising students' awareness concerning the importance of learning English at different academic levels through establishing language workshops and seminars in MOEHE focussing on how to support the students' desire to learn English as a foreign language at basic and secondary levels.



2. Similar studies could be carried out at secondary schools in Palestine, in which the students of scientific stream would have started using English but would have continued EFL exposure for a longer time.

3. Investigating learning through English at secondary level should be initiated in governmental schools in Palestine. Then, similar studies can be conducted on these investigational schools and those results can be compared with students' achievements in private schools.

4. University students in Palestine have had little experience in studying through a medium of English, so there is a special need for them to be guided towards training courses before joining university. However, it might not be enough to study courses. One has to note at even the use of English is likely to benefit users, and their attitudes are positive, but they do not support the use of English to learn in science faculties because they suffer. These attitudes ought to be taken into consideration to encourage users to develop positive attitudes towards the proposed language.

8. CONCLUSION

The main question of the study asked about the preferred choice for the faculty of Applied Sciences' students and lecturers towards Arabic and English MI at the tertiary level in Palestine. The findings show that the students are aware of the importance of English but they have less confidence with the use of English as a medium of instruction in science faculties at the tertiary level. Lecturers are motivated to use both English and Arabic as media of instruction despite their dissatisfaction with students' level in English at the present. Palestinian university students face difficulties in the study of science subjects taught in English, therefore, students are advised to study specialized courses in English before joining the university.

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