



Loss of Arabic in the UAE: Is Bilingual Education the Solution?

Rana Raddawi¹ & Doha Meslem²

¹ Department of English, American University of Sharja, Sharja, U.A.E

² Department of English, American University of Sharjah, Sharjah, U.A.E

Received 4th Nov. 2015, Revised 7th Nov. 2015, Accepted 15th Nov. 2015, Published 1st Dec. 2015

Abstract: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is threatened by an identity-loss, due a lack of balance between Arabic and English education in the country hence, the National Federal Council has proposed a draft for a monolingual Arabic shift in all public schools and universities. This paper is an attempt to demonstrate that such a shift could be irrational when it comes to UAE context. Two-way bilingualism is an alternative that could help preserve UAE's identity while taking into consideration UAE's multicultural context and keeping the country up breast with the rest of the world. The present study shows how bilingual education can be physically implemented in UAE using a two way-bilingual program. Theoretical framework involving inter-emotionality and cultural frame switching is used to prove that languages are related to identities. The paper uses a variety of secondary sources such as journal and newspaper articles, chapters from books, websites and dissertations which support both the theoretical and the practical aspects of the study. Recommendations suggest that implementing bilingual education in UAE schools would help preserve Arabic, and potentially make speakers of Arabic believe in their mother tongue.

Keywords: UAE, bilingualism, Arabic, English, education, identity

1. INTRODUCTION

The educational system in the United Arab Emirates has undergone four stages of development to reach to its current stage. As stated by the ministry of education these four phases are informal education, scientific circle education, developed or semi systematic, and systematic education (The Evolution of Education in UAE, n.d.) The first phase of education was conducted by a "mutawwa" or a "mutawaa" and focused on Islamic studies and writing and calligraphy. It was soon followed by the scientific circle education prior to 1907, which was taught by scholars who had strong knowledge in history, grammar and religious studies. Then, the semi systematic education form started to prevail between 1907 and 1953. accompanied by a development process in the Department of Knowledge, the first knowledge department in the UAE .Towards the end of 1940s an economic recession occurred due to the introduction of artificial pearls, and World War II effects on the Gulf region. This led schooling to decrease for a while, until the full systematic educational system took over. The first formal academic year in the UAE was 1953/1954, in

Al Qassimia School in Sharjah. Initially this was controlled by the Department of Knowledge, but after the unification of United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 1971, schooling was managed by the Ministry of Education and Youth (The Evolution of Education in UAE, n.d.).

UAE was under the British rule for almost 150 years (Hopkyns , 2014). Therefore, the English language was used in the UAE ever since, but its usage did not prolifer across the country until the discovery of oil in the late 1950s. Moreover, with oil boom , UAE's economy skyrocketed, and obvious changes in the infrastructure, took place (Hopkyns ,2014). This was followed by an influx of immigrants who came from across the world and needed a common language to communicate hence used English as a medium of communication, making it effectively a lingua franca (Hopkyns ,2014). Hence foreign workers helped in the development of the country, and as economy flourished, UAE became an attractive country for a higher number of foreign laborers and tourists. More expatriates entered the country to fill in job vacancies made vacant by the economic boom as stated by Boyle (2011).



The schooling system kept going through educational reforms with the last one being the introduction of Madares Al Ghad in Dubai and Sharjah in 2007 (Al Najami, October 18 2007) and the New School Model (NSM) or the Bilingual Abu Dhabi School Model as is currently called, in Abu Dhabi in 2008 (Pennington, March 25 2015). Both models somehow focus on integrating the English language into the curricula, as will be elaborated in a later section of this paper.

As a result a general decline of the use of Arabic and increase demand for English were witnessed due to globalization and flow of western labor. In fact, English took the lead in being the medium of instruction in almost all private schools (Randall & Samimi 2010) and in public schools in Abu Dhabi as well. In the last decade this situation gave birth to a debate about the threat of Arabic and loss of identity (Al-Issa and Dahan (Ed.), 2011)

The debate about Arabic being in danger and whether it should be preserved has lately been more intense in the UAE (Randall & Samimi 2010). Arabic is technically being replaced by English as stated by Al-Issa and Dahan (2011) however the reason is not because English has become the lingua franca. Arabic is being weakened mainly because of how it is perceived by its native speakers. Speakers of Arabic are no more believers in the Arabic language. Habbash & Troudi (2015) state in their study that all Saudis who participated in the study perceived English as superior to Arabic, especially when talking about it being a powerful language, and a language of science in comparison to Arabic. Arabic is perceived as an inferior language by Arabs thus making them feel less emotionally attached to it and consequently less willing to learn it. The weakened status of Arabic has therefore caused a shift away towards English. So more clearly, the “replacement” of Arabic as a consequence of its low status caused directly a misperception of the language. A better term would therefore be, not “replacing” Arabic but shifting away from it. One needs to reinstate this faith in the language of Sibaweh, Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and AlMutanabi. Before Arabs learn their language they should love it, and to love it they need to perceive it as an equal to English. This is the pursuit of true bilingualism. True bilingualism is specifically when an individual is equally fluent in both their first and their second language, in almost all contexts as inferred from Al-Issa (February 9 2012). This paper aims to prove that bilingual education will eventually help preserve Arabic. Along with proving so, and proposing an operational solution on how to implement the bilingual system, it would be explored that this case of “replacement” needs not to exist and that thanks to bilingualism, two languages can coexist. Before coming up with such a conclusion, the possibility of languages not growing at the expense of each other but

growing side by side needs to be elaborated. This is illustrated through the perception of languages. That is, if we build up a correct knowledge on language acquisition process, the hypothesis presented in the paper can be well founded.

2. BACKGROUND

UAE’s setting is unique, it consists of 7 million expatriates, distributed culturally upon Asians, Americans, Arabs, Europeans and Iranians among others (Snoj, April 12, 2015) and therefore the corresponding languages of all those nationalities are spoken in the UAE. A unique setting demands a unique educational system, however most writers and researchers tend to overlook the setting when discussing the issue of Arabic-English imbalance amongst school graduates. “Few research has been made on “language-in-education” in the region” says Al Khatib as cited in Gallagher (2011, p.64). Some scholars addressed this issue, however most of them went to analyze the situation of the imbalanced equation between Arabic and English and the reasons behind it. While other studies touched on bilingual education being a possibility yet without providing a feasible operational plan. In fact more effort was put into explaining the situation rather than on seeking a solution, and even those who named bilingual education as a solution, failed to discuss its physical implementation. Naming a few of the former, Al-Issa and Dahan in their article “Global English and endangered Arabic in UAE” and Sarah Hopkyns in her article “The effects of global English on culture and identity in the UAE: a double edged sword” both discuss the current linguistic situation in the UAE. They intend to raise awareness on the issue of globalization and English versus identity and Arabic. Of the latter, Al Najami reporting for the Gulf news brings up bilingual education as a solution in the article “Bilingual education hangs in the balance for schools”, yet focuses on “why” it would work rather than “how”. Hamidaddin in her master’s thesis “important factors to consider for bilingual education in the UAE” and Gallagher in the article “bilingual education in the UAE factors, variables, and critical questions” both proceed in a more practical approach, where they explain bilingual education in the context of UAE, and the factors that make certain approaches applicable. They take a necessary step further, yet this on its own does not force a change. It is insufficient to call for bilingual education as a solution as it shows a lack of knowledge of both bilingualism and UAE’s context. The existing ten types of bilingual programs (McCarty 2008) may not all fit within the United Arab Emirates. context This paper aims at explaining “how” bilingualism would be better implemented using a two-way bilingual system, a type of the ten types, in order to create a solution that fits the conditions of the UAE.



The previously mentioned literature is however extremely helpful when discussing theoretical aspects of identity, its relation to languages, and its presumable loss. This paper builds on such relevant pieces of literature.

UAE's government has taken the loss of the Arab identity seriously. According to Randall & Al Samimi (2010), the 2016 National Strategic Plan in Dubai points out the importance of enforcing the Arabic language and culture. It is also stated that UAE's president, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed, and UAE's vice president Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid did organize a national identity conference, which focused on the Arabic language and its status (Randall & Al Samimi, 2010; Salem, June 12, 2010). Moreover, in the beginning of 2009, Arabic was standardized as the official language in all UAE's institutions. (Salem, June 12, 2010). A year earlier, according to Salem (June 12, 2010) the DHAD certificate, which is an Arabic exam, was added to schools across UAE, both private and public. Added to that, as described by Gaad, Arif and Scott (2006), UAE has put the national heritage of UAE as one of the four "pillars" of its 2020 educational vision.

As will be discussed later in the paper, the government has also made efforts to preserve the language for the identity to be preserved, by reformations made to the educational systems. Abu Dhabi's Educational Council's New School Model, Madares Al Ghad in Dubai, Sharjah and Ajman, and other emirates along with the Federal National Council's proposition to shift to a monolingual Arabic system in state schools and universities are all examples of this attempt. The government realized the paramount significance of the relationship of identity and heritage with the Arabic language

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Neither Arabic nor English should be lost in the process of the country's development. It is important to seek balance between keeping up with breakthroughs and globalization on one hand and preserving the Arab culture heritage language on the other. This in our opinion can be reached through the establishment of bilingual education in schools of the UAE enhanced by a language policy instated by decision makers in this regard

Awareness on the risks of losing identity and the latter's direct link to languages are highlighted in this paper. The study mainly provides bilingual education as a solution to allow both languages to coexist. However, a correct understanding of what bilingual educational system fits the UAE is necessary. There are ten types of bilingual education systems, and so a choice based on acknowledging UAE's diversity is necessary and is touched on in this paper. The difference between true bilingualism and the "common" bilingualism is necessary for arguing whether to implement it, and whether it

would help preserve both languages and their corresponding identities. Copying any bilingual education system from other countries therefore does not result in a positive outcome, and that is what might cause certain bilingual systems to fail upon implementation.

Bilingual education is a new notion coming to UAE, as it is obvious from the fact that Abu Dhabi, UAE's capital, has only lately thought of introducing bilingualism into its educational system, acknowledging its importance, by adding the New School Model in 2008; thus the dearth of literature on bilingualism in the UAE. This study engages in such literature exploring the two-way bilingual education solution

4. METHODOLOGY

This paper relies mainly on secondary sources. The theoretical part focuses on the language imbalance in UAE, where the situation of globalization and English on one side and identity and Arabic on the other is discussed. To support the theoretical part of the paper, the theories of Inter-emotionality and cultural frame switching are included, in an effort to prove that identity is related to languages. For Inter-emotionality, Pishghadam, Adamson, and Shayesteh's "Emotion-Based Language Instruction as a new perspective in bilingual education" article is used. For cultural frame switching, Ramírez et al's "Do bilinguals have two personalities? A special case of cultural frame switching" article is examined. For the practical part where a solution is proposed, Gallagher's and Calderón and Carreón's articles were used, among other articles. The latter is a report which discusses the results of a successful specific bilingual system in USA, and the former discusses the UAE situation in relation to bilingualism. Several dissertations were used, Zakharia's was used to support that Lebanon is a multilingual country. Several newspaper articles, a magazine article and four websites were examined to support various statistics and UAE's situation. Moreover, Martin East's article on Glocalization was used to introduce the theory of bilingual education as presented in the paper.

5. PERCEPTION OF A LANGUAGE: IDENTITY VS. MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

According to Merriam-Webster (n.d) identity can be defined as who someone is and the qualities and beliefs that make a person unique. Further interpreted as the set



of traits that identify the person or group. "The set of traits" includes languages, political preferences, cuisines, dress code, religion and all shared practices and beliefs. However in practice, each of those contributes to the genetic pool of identity at a certain ratio, and this ratio changes based on culture. In fact, identity is dynamic, and changes not only over time but also over cultural changes and conditions. For this reason identity cannot have a sole definition. Therefore it is not possible to say that any of these traits is identity on its own, which is a major misconception, it is however possible to state that the trait that possesses the biggest ratio could be considered as a representative of identity. This will be explained further in the paper. For reasons that will be mentioned later in this study, languages can often be considered as representatives of identity, because they mainly reveal some features of the culture. Language and culture are mirrors of the same (Jandt, 2016). To be more specific "culture" and "identity" are not interchangeable but they overlap, as they both relate to the "set of traits" and shared experiences that define one's identity.

A language can either be perceived as a means of communication only or as a key to an identity. However, a proof that a language should be perceived as a key to identity would be both the theories of "cultural frame switching, CFS" and "inter-emotionality". Cultural Frame Switching (CFS) relates to when a person behaves differently and changes personality upon the change of language use (Ramírez-Esparza et al, 2004). This means that personality changes with languages, which in turn changes according to the culture reflected by that language. Personality is related to identity; an identity is shown through personality. Therefore, languages are related to identities. As this theory exists in practice, it supports the notion that a language is related to an identity. This also proves that identity is as a consequence, dynamic; as it changes, with languages being the direct stimuli, and cultures being the indirect one.

Language and inter-emotionality

The theory of inter-emotionality, developed from the concept of emotional intelligence, which relates to second language acquisition, further proves that a language should be perceived as a key to an identity. Inter-emotionality revolves around the fact that there exists an emotional flow between the words in first language L1 and a second language L2 (Pishghadam et al, 2013). Easily understood as: word in L1-emotion-word in L2-process. This process occurs where an acquirer knows a word in L1, develops an emotion for it and translates it easily to L2. Acquirers therefore learn vocabulary faster with less memorization. Emotions here act as catalysts speeding up the language acquisition process. The process also works backwards. A lack of

understanding of a word means that the chances of developing an emotion for it decrease. Acquiring a language therefore becomes harder. The article also states that if a word doesn't exist in the person's cultural context, or the person does not identify with it, then no emotion could be developed, hindering the process. This proves that languages are related to emotions. Emotions reveal a lot about one's identity, if not act as identity on their own. Therefore, languages relate to identities. Those two theories in application prove that practically this is how a language should be perceived.

6. LINGUISTIC SITUATION IN THE UAE: SCHOOLS AND SCOEITY

The linguistic situation in the UAE is complex, with over 200 nationalities residing in the country (The National (22 March 2009) as cited in Randall & Samimi, 2010; ; Constantine and Al Lawati , 2007 as cited in Hanani, 2009; Boyle , 2011) The English language starts to prevail as UAE becomes more cosmopolitan; while Arabic, UAE's official language, is the third most-spoken language in the UAE (Hundley, 2010). With this linguistic and cultural diversity, and the limited-expected usage of Arabic language as described by Al-Issa & Dahan (2011), questions arise; is the fact that UAE is becoming more cosmopolitan, affecting its identity? Is UAE considered cosmopolitan, or is it suffering from an identity loss? Moreover, do Arabs in the UAE belong everywhere or nowhere at all? Before delving into the situation, it is necessary to clarify what a first and a second language are.

As proven earlier, languages relate to identity and culture. Based on that therefore the first language of an individual is the language of the person's culture, the language of the individual's thinking, and mentality. The beliefs people hold reflect a certain cultural background, the language of that culture is their first. It is however possible for an individual to become more proficient in their second language than in their first. In other words, what defines a first language is the culture and not proficiency. There is a chance that over time however, a second language becomes their first, based on Cultural Frame Switching. When the usage is increased, the person tends to be in the state of a personality switch for a longer time, therefore, the person with time will hold the mentality of a different culture. The mentality therefore changes and so does the language accordingly. One of the major causes of this torn up condition is the relation of languages to situations as described by Gallagher (2011), and the parallelism Arabs in UAE have with the Le Chatelier's principle in chemistry. Arabic is related to identity, tradition, religion, culture and localism, while English is related to internationalism, modernity, economy and business, according to a survey



done by Finlow (2006) as cited in Gallagher (2011) and to Troudi (2009). This could lead to the hypothesis that if Arabs wanted to hold on to their identity, they should hold to Arabic, and consequently let go of modernity and materialistic success in general. On the other hand, those who seek modernity would have to hold firmly to English and let go of Arabic and their identity. This leads to an inner conflict within Arab individuals based on which to choose. Le Chatelier's chemistry principle is defined as when a system tends to oppose change for no apparent reason, and so tends to stay in its current position. The principle applies to Arab individuals as they tend to choose one side, either English and future, or Arabic and past. They are torn up, but do not seek change, that is excluding all other possibilities, such as the possibility of having the best of both worlds. Some Arabs hereafter wrongfully transform the situation into an either-or conflict. Neglecting rationality in solution, where we are supposed to study the context to where we need to apply a solution and create, or combine one.

The same principle could be also dictated by Uncertainty Avoidance, one of Hofstede's cultural dimensions that applies to high context cultures like the Arab culture (Jandt, 2016). Individuals subscribing to high context cultures are reluctant to make any change as they fear the unknown knowing also that the process might need a long chain of command

The idea of the linguistic globalization, localization, and Glocalization as addressed by Martin East (2008) explains the previous idea more clearly. Localization can be interpreted as holding firmly to one's identity without consideration to the harmful factors that accompany such a decision. In the context of UAE, it would be holding on to Arabic alone, thus creating a monolingual Arabic shift. Globalization would relate to seeking modernity and shifting to English monolingually. Glocalization as stated by East (2008, p.162) is a term which acknowledges the "push of globalization and the centrality of English", and at the same time the pull of localization and holding on to one's own culture. It therefore takes into account both extreme sides, and combines the best of both of them. This relates to the combination of best of both worlds mentioned earlier. This combination, in short, is true bilingualism.

7. THE THREE SCENARIOS

In the case of UAE, three scenarios prevail when it comes to language-instruction at schools. The current system represents either a monolingual shift towards Arabic, or a bilingual educational system.

A) *The current system*

The current system consists of private and public schools. Linguistic-wise, private schools have all subjects

taught in English with the exception of Islamic, Arabic and sometimes, social studies. Those private schools follow American, British, Indian curricula among others (ADEC, n.d.). On the other hand, public schools and private schools that follow the ministry's curriculum teach all subjects in Arabic, with English being only a subject and not a medium. Of public schools graduates, 94% require a foundation year before entering university (The Ministry of Education strategy, n.d.). This concludes that public schools graduates are not linguistically proficient in English. Private schools graduates were on the other hand not proficient in Arabic. Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) found that the level of Arabic language in UK, American, Indian, and Iranian systems among others was not acceptable (Francis, May 09, 2012). Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) in its 2009 annual report states in the main findings, that students in both private and public schools are not proficient enough in Arabic and English respectively. The report states that classical Arabic's level in public schools is "weak", in terms of speaking and writing, and Arabic in private schools is even weaker with lower progress (Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau, 2009 p.15). English's standard according to the DSIB report in public schools is lower than that in private schools, in terms of writing and speaking. In addition, Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) test results showed that both public and private school students of the 9th grade had below the international standards in English reading performance, causing UAE to be the 42nd out of 65 countries participating (National Qualifications Authority, 2013). In accordance with the previous statistics, private school graduates are not acceptably proficient in neither Arabic nor English, which means that the current system is not truly bilingual. The language outcomes of the current system are therefore not acceptable. Officials in the UAE did notice that, and proposed two systems, "Madares al Ghad" and the New School Model (NSM), implemented in Dubai and Abu Dhabi respectively, to public schools. Both of which are replicas of the current private schools model in terms of language instruction. Al Najami (October 18, 2007) explains what "Madares Al Ghad" is. She states that it is a project, initiated in 2007, that aims to transform selected public schools to teach math and sciences in English exactly like private schools in terms of the medium of instruction. While Gallagher (2011, p.69) explains the New School Model as a "side-by-side early partial immersion model" where side-by-side means that there are two teachers teaching side by side in each class, for young classes with each teacher using a different language of instruction, Arabic and English mainly. "Early" refers to the time of immersion with a second language, while "partial" refers to degree of immersion, according to Gallagher (2011). The degree of



immersion is partial because students are taught content subjects in English whereas only Arabic, Islamic, and probably social studies are taught in Arabic (Gallagher, 2011). “Early partial immersion” is what current private schools have. Replicating a system that has already proven to fail predicts failure as an outcome.

B) *A monolingual system*

Monolingualism according to Merriam-Webster (n.d) is defined as the ability to understand and use one language only.

A monolingual shift to an Arabic system was proposed in 2014 by the National Federal Council (Salem, O., November 23, 2014). The draft was proposed as a preventive measure to help preserve the Arabic identity of UAE. Considering all the factors described previously and the ones in the following paragraphs, about the unique context of UAE, such a shift becomes irrational. With around 200 nationalities in constant communication, a lingua franca cannot be eradicated or shifted to Arabic suddenly. Monolingualism has negative impacts on learners, such as eradicating minority languages, leading to an eradication of the corresponding multicultural identity and culture.

A monolingual shift to English is on the other hand more damaging to UAE’s culture than is an Arabic shift. On one side, it may be argued that English should not be given equal importance to the official language, with it being a “colonizing” language as described by Gallagher (2011, p.). Secondly, students were initially taught most or all subjects in Arabic, so shifting to a full English monolingual system could cause a cultural shock to some, as languages are not only means of communication but are also related to cultures.

The dominance of English over Arabic would cause identity loss on both national and personal levels. An important point brought up by Hanani (2009) as stated in her thesis is that Arabic plays a crucial role in uniting Arabs. Furthermore AL-Issa and Dahan(2011) mention that the loss of Arabic might lead to less unity with other Arab countries. This is because what unites Arabs, arguably, is their language above anything, as all Arabs are expected to know this language, with few exceptions. As Al Husri describes it, the Arab identity is resembled in the Arabic language (Salameh, 2011; Badry, 2011).

Moreover, language is the largest shared experience between Arabs, relative to other experiences such as dress codes, cuisines and even religions. A lack of unity between Arabs is in effect a decrease in the sense of the Arab identity, as a country no longer identifies with “similar” or same-group countries, so it is on a global level, an identity loss. On a personal level, an English monolingual system leads to an identity loss. The loss of identity does not occur suddenly. Initially, it starts with

the person losing their heritage language, which as time passes, leads to lack of communication, and consequential disconnection from the related culture as stated by Mahendra and Namazi (2014). An understanding of the heritage culture would cease to exist eventually (Mahendra and Namazi, 2014).

Both monolingual shifts have negative effects because they deprive learners of basic linguistic human rights as described by Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), and cited in Habbash & Troudi (2015) and in Troudi (2009), which prevents learners from utilizing their own language to learn.

Identity needs to be preserved, even if it is at the expense of English, mainly because the consequences of losing identity are more damaging than the loss of the language of globalization as described earlier. However, there could be a solution, which preserves identity and does not eradicate the lingua franca. This solution is a true bilingual educational system, the third possible scenario.

C) *Bilingual Education*

Bilingualism in general relates to the study of two languages, or having an individual being able to use two languages (Griffith University, n.d). Hanani (2009, p.6) generally describes bilingual people as “those who use two or more languages in their everyday lives”. However, true bilingualism is strictly having an individual who is equally fluent in both their first and second language (Al-Issa, February 9, 2012, ; Hanani, 2009). True bilingualism can be obtained only from true bilingual education, which is defined as “instruction in two languages and the use of those two languages as medium of instruction for any part, or all, of the school curriculum” Boyer and Andersson as cited in Gallagher (2011), p.63.

As for preserving the native languages, true, balanced bilingual education is a solution. True bilingualism as described above leads to equal proficiency in both languages, Arabic and English. Equal proficiency means that both languages are used and therefore not marginalized, but preserved. A case where a truly bilingual education system has led to preserving a minority native language is the Tapirape School, relating to the Brazilian-Indian tribe in central Brazil. Neto (2008) describes this model to be truly bilingual, whereas the native language is now still used and is alive, the school managed to introduce a strong model with which Portuguese, the majority language, is taught. As described by Neto (2008), the system produced students who are proficient in both languages.



The bilingual educational systems pointed out in this paper, the Tapirape school model, and the Lebanese one, which will be elaborated on in the next section, have proven to be successful. However the most successful model was the El Paso accelerated two-way bilingual school. According to Calderón, M. and Carreón, A. (2000), the outcomes in reading for students in the program were far better than those in other traditional bilingual programs in the district, moreover, it had better results than other bilingual systems. Probably the major success of this program, shown through its students' outcomes, lies behind how it was designed. In the pre-implementation phase, the school staff and officials discussed a "model that would comply with the state regulations" and "utilize best knowledge and practice" among other criteria (Calderón, M. & Carreón, A., 2000. p.10). Therefore, the context to which they needed to apply the solution was before everything, discussed. To come up with a solution that would fit the context, they studied the "latest findings" in bilingual education, and came up with the idea of integrating a two-way bilingual system with an accelerated model developed by Henry Levin (Calderón, M. & Carreón, A., 2000. p.10). To come up with the best possible model, all in all, the context was studied, and accordingly, theories that were seen as a best fit for such a situation were combined and implemented. It is therefore crucial to understand the context before seeking a solution. The case of implementing a bilingual system in UAE should be similar, its unique setting should be taken into account. A proposed bilingual system that takes UAE's setting into account is briefly discussed in the last section of the paper.

8. FEASIBILITY

In this section, the applicability of bilingual education to the UAE context will be discussed with both theoretical and operational approaches

Theoretical

Example of Lebanon

In the theoretical part of this paper that explains how applicable bilingual education implementation would be in the UAE, an analogy is drawn with Lebanon's multilingual situation. Lebanon is a successful case of a bilingual country as will be proven. Lebanon consists of a generally homogeneous society, with the vast majority of citizens being Lebanese (Shoufi, February 11, 2015)). The majority of the minorities residing there are also Arabs (Shoufi, February 11, 2015). So a lingua Franca apart from Arabic is not necessary. UAE conversely is a heterogeneous society. UAE has 200 nationalities residing in the country Boyle (2011). , The major role UAE plays economically necessitates the existence of a lingua franca among its diverse members.

In fact, Lebanon is, not a bilingual, but a multilingual country (Zakharia, 2008) with 55.8% of schools having French as the first foreign language, 21.6% as English and 22.6% both French and English, according to the Lebanese ministry of education (2006) as cited in Bahous, Bacha & Nabhani(2011) . All previously stated first foreign languages are used along with Arabic, Lebanon's official language (Bahous, Bacha & Nabhani, 2011).. A proof that the Lebanese educational system is bilingual is the example of Brevet and Lebanese Baccalaureate exams and their passing rates, brought up by Zakharia (2008) in her dissertation. She states that those exams are bilingual, offered either in Arabic and French or in Arabic and English. The passing rates of those exams are around 75%, and they are taken by students after grades 9 and 12 respectively (Zakharia, 2008). This proves that the Lebanese schooling system is in effect bilingual, because a system is judged based on its outcomes, and a passing rate of 75% is above average, shows a positive outcome. Zakharia also states that other systems such as International Baccalaureate (IB) and the French Baccalaureate produce graduates who will be accepted as freshmen in Lebanese universities, however Lebanese systems produce graduates who are directly sent as sophomores to universities. This proves both, that Arabic is still valued in Lebanon, and held firmly to, because IB and French baccalaureate do not focus on Arabic, and that content-wise, the bilingual system succeeds better.

According to Mahendra and Namazi (2014), there are two types of bilingualism. The first is circumstantial; where a second language is needed because of circumstances, or needed for survival, be it in education, communication or job. The second is elective; where an individual chooses to become bilingual based on personal preference, as to fulfil education or employment goals. Lebanon sets basis for elective bilingualism as foreign languages are not necessary for survival. UAE on the other hand sets basis for both circumstantial and elective bilingualism, based on the unique context discussed previously.

In fact after studying the reasons behind the initial addition of foreign languages, French and English to Lebanon, and English to UAE, it would be noticed that the reasons in UAE are more sustainable. Foreign languages were added to Lebanon as a result of "European colonization", and "educational [...] missionaries" according to Nabhani et al. (2011) as cited in (Bahous, Bacha & Nabhani, 2011 p.739). On the other hand in the UAE, English started prospering after the leave of the British and upon the discovery of oil (Hopkyns, 2014). Therefore in UAE the reasons to introduce foreign language in the curriculum are more related to economy than to colonization, and therefore are more sustainable. That is, as long as UAE continues to



have a good economic position, foreign workers (Hopkins, 2014) will continue to enter the country which would require the usage of English as the lingua franca and make use of bilingualism.

UAE therefore has more potential than Lebanon, to become bilingual, as bilingualism is a matter of necessity, and as UAE sets basis for all types or reasons for one to become bilingual (elective and circumstantial). Yet Lebanon, the country with relatively less potential has managed to become multilingual, and produce linguistically adept school graduates who have not so far lost their native language or identity. It therefore becomes theoretically compulsory, for UAE to succeed in becoming bilingual.

Operational

There are ten types of bilingualism, six of which lead to monolingual or semi-monolingual outcomes (McCarty 2012). According to McCarty, there are four strong types of bilingual programs that lead to bilingual and biliteracy outcomes; Maintenance, Two-way, Immersion and Mainstream. In immersion, students are taught using the language of the majority, with the language emphasized on in classroom being the L2 and the one to be acquired. The program followed by private schools in UAE is partial immersion. Maintenance program targets students with the minority language, with an emphasis on L1 in classroom usage, the language to be maintained/preserved. As much as both immersion and maintenance programs give bilingual and biliteracy outcomes, they only target one type of students, either those with a majority language or those with a minority language. The two systems target homogeneous situations only yet here is where UAE's heterogeneity comes in play. Due to UAE being unique in context, and heterogeneous as described throughout this paper, and due to the fact that minority and majority languages are defined based on the society according to McCarty (2012), which language is the minority and which is the majority becomes not clear. Therefore neither of those programs could be implemented, as neither Arabic nor English could be defined as minority/majority, even when Arabic is UAE's official language, in the UAE. The third program, Two-way bilingual, presents a solution for UAE. The two-way bilingual program as according to McCarty, targets both minority and majority students and uses both languages equally in classroom.

To discuss actual model formulation, the time allocation and language instruction division, should be discussed.

The program implemented by the 'El Paso accelerated two-way bilingual schools' in Texas, USA, with some modification would be successful in UAE. Parallel to the accelerated two-way bilingual school's model the school day should be divided to content

subjects and language arts. Each of those would be taught in a different language for a week. The following week, the syllabi would be continued but in the other language. This is a 50-50 model where instruction is evenly divided throughout the day and the content, from grade one onwards. It ensures that UAE students are fluent in both languages in all contexts, unlike the current immersion model, where students are fluent in Arabic in cultural and Islamic contexts only, while fluent in English in sciences and math only. It also accounts for the minority-majority indecisiveness in the UAE, because instruction is balanced and targets all students, it does not require any of the languages to be the first or the second. L1 and L2 therefore become a personal matter, only related to the students' choice. It also aims to integrate students who are enrolled in higher grades but with no previous experience in the school system or in the second language. As the language instruction is of the same 50-50 ratio since the first grade, there will be no difference between them and students who were based in the system from grade one, apart from the content itself. Languages upon school years do not vary, what varies is the content. Exposure to L2 would also vary but can be accounted for easily by the integration of inter-emotionality. Inter-emotionality facilitates L2 acquisition, if this happens, those students would get the "hang of the language" fast and experience gained by exposure would not be an advantage for other students. If they know the content, they can easily transition to the other language, as the content discussed in previous classes in one language is built up on by the language they know. Students therefore can relate what they know in their L1 to the L2 and become more proficient accordingly. That is where inter-emotionality comes into action again. The same content being built on by different languages means that students strengthen their L2 from what they have acquired in L1 (and in content), material which they are already familiar with. Familiarity builds related emotions, as explained previously in the paper, and introduced by Pishghadam et al (2013) and facilitates second language acquisition.

9. CONCLUSION

This paper suggests that bilingual education could provide a solution to help preserve Arabic, without isolating UAE from the outside world. However not all bilingual programs are beneficial. "True" bilingualism is the program to be sought and implemented. Yet, before implementing an actual solution, the context should be considered. Not any bilingual program can fit any country. The linguistic make-up of that country, its first language, its identity, its status, and the reasons behind the existence of foreign languages, should all be studied before deciding on which program to implement. True bilingualism ensures balanced knowledge in both

languages, L1 and L2. A linguistic balance in the UAE means that Arabic's level would improve to reach to that of English. If Arabic's level rises to that of the lingua franca, Arabic would be of an equal importance to English. This leads to a better perception of Arabic by Arabs. When Arabs start perceiving it as a non-inferior, but an equally important language, Arabic would be revived and the Arabic identity of UAE would not be lost. The enhancement of the native language strengthens the identity that relates to it. This is because a language is related to one's identity, as proven by Cultural Frame Switching and Inter-emotionality. More importantly, true bilingualism does not only ensure linguistic knowledge but also multicultural understanding of the acquired languages, as stated by Calderón and Carreón (2000) and demonstrated throughout this paper

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