

**Perspectives, Factors of Influence, and Previous Experiences Related to Teaching
English in Primary Schools, Inside and Outside Algeria.**

الآراء، العوامل المؤثرة والتجارب السابقة المتعلقة بتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس
الابتدائية، داخل وخارج الجزائر.

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Abstract

In today's Arab world, English has become an indispensable tool for trade and economics. Algeria, as part of the Arab world, has recognized the necessity of cultivating a new generation proficient in the English language to drive the development of various sectors, with education standing out as the primary beneficiary of this proficiency, by the official implementation of English for the first time in primary schools. This comprehensive research paper delves into the multifaceted landscape of English language education in primary schools, both within and beyond the borders of Algeria. It explores a diverse array of perspectives, influential factors, and past experiences related to the teaching of English in primary educational settings. The paper sheds light on the global significance of English as a medium of international communication and opportunity, emphasizing its pivotal role in scientific and technological advancement. Additionally, it investigates the imperative of teaching English in Algeria, examining the perspectives of parents and teachers, as well as the

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readiness of educators to integrate 21st-century skills into English language instruction. Furthermore, the paper explores factors that influence the learning process in primary schools, including students' interest in English learning, family dynamics, and personal qualities. Drawing on previous experiences from diverse educational contexts, the paper offers valuable insights and recommendations for the effective implementation of English language education in primary schools. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with English language education and aims to inform educational policy and practice in Algeria and beyond.

Keywords: English language education, primary schools, global significance, educational policy, 21st-century skills, teachers perspectives.

Résumé

Dans le monde arabe d'aujourd'hui, l'anglais est devenu un outil indispensable pour le commerce et l'économie. L'Algérie, en tant que partie du monde arabe, a reconnu la nécessité de cultiver une nouvelle génération compétente dans la langue anglaise pour stimuler le développement de divers secteurs, l'éducation se démarquant comme le principal bénéficiaire de cette compétence, par la mise en œuvre officielle de l'anglais pour la première fois dans les écoles primaires. Ce document de recherche complet plonge dans le paysage multiforme de l'enseignement de la langue anglaise dans les écoles primaires, tant en Algérie qu'au-delà de ses frontières. Il explore une gamme diversifiée de perspectives, de facteurs influents et d'expériences passées liées à l'enseignement de l'anglais dans les établissements d'enseignement primaire. Le document met en lumière l'importance mondiale de l'anglais en tant que moyen de communication internationale et d'opportunité, soulignant son rôle crucial dans le progrès scientifique et technologique. De plus, il examine l'impératif d'enseigner l'anglais en Algérie, en examinant les perspectives des parents et des enseignants, ainsi que la volonté des éducateurs d'intégrer les compétences du XXI^e siècle

dans l'enseignement de la langue anglaise. En outre, le document explore les facteurs qui influencent le processus d'apprentissage dans les écoles primaires, y compris l'intérêt des élèves pour l'apprentissage de l'anglais, la dynamique familiale et les qualités personnelles. S'appuyant sur des expériences antérieures issues de divers contextes éducatifs, le document offre des idées précieuses et des recommandations pour la mise en œuvre efficace de l'enseignement de la langue anglaise dans les écoles primaires. Cette recherche contribue à une compréhension plus approfondie des défis et des opportunités associés à l'enseignement de la langue anglaise et vise à informer la politique éducative et la pratique en Algérie et au-delà.

Mots-clés: enseignement de la langue anglaise, écoles primaires, importance mondiale, politique éducative, compétences du XXI^e siècle, perspectives des élèves.

ملخص:

في العالم العربي اليوم، أصبحت اللغة الإنجليزية أداة لا غنى عنها للتجارة والاقتصاد. لقد أدركت الجزائر، باعتبارها جزءًا من العالم العربي، الحاجة إلى تنشئة جيل جديد يتقن اللغة الإنجليزية لتعزيز تنمية مختلف القطاعات، حيث يبرز التعليم باعتباره المستفيد الرئيسي من هذه الكفاءة، من خلال التطبيق الرسمي للغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الابتدائية للمرة الأولى. تتعمق هذه الورقة البحثية الشاملة في المشهد المتعدد الأوجه لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الابتدائية، سواء في الجزائر أو خارج حدودها. ويستكشف مجموعة متنوعة من وجهات النظر والعوامل المؤثرة والتجارب السابقة المتعلقة بتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في بيئات التعليم الابتدائي. تسلط الورقة الضوء على الأهمية العالمية للغة الإنجليزية كوسيلة للتواصل والفرص الدولية، مع التركيز على دورها الحاسم في التقدم العلمي والتكنولوجي. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فإنه يبحث في ضرورة تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في الجزائر، ودراسة وجهات نظر الآباء والمعلمين، فضلًا عن رغبة المعلمين في دمج مهارات القرن الحادي والعشرين في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. علاوة على ذلك، تستكشف الورقة العوامل التي تؤثر على عملية التعلم في المدارس الابتدائية، بما في ذلك اهتمام الطلاب بتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية، وديناميكيات الأسرة والصفات الشخصية. وبالاعتماد على التجارب السابقة من سياقات تعليمية مختلفة، تقدم هذه الورقة رؤى وتوصيات قيمة للتنفيذ الفعال

لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الابتدائية. يساهم هذا البحث في فهم أعمق للتحديات والفرص المرتبطة بتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية ويهدف إلى إثراء السياسات والممارسات التعليمية في الجزائر وخارجها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية، المدارس الابتدائية، الأهمية العالمية، سياسة التعليم، مهارات القرن الحادي والعشرين، وجهات نظر الطلاب.

1- Introduction:

The main goal of this research paper is to examine the function of English both inside and outside of Algeria. It starts with an overview of the English language from a worldwide standpoint, emphasizing its importance in cross-border obligations and transactions. The number of native and non-native English speakers is compared with that of speakers of other languages in this paper's comparative analysis of the English-speaking population and speakers of other languages. The study also discusses the value of teaching English in Algeria, highlighting how important it is to the government's plans to improve the country's educational system and provide possibilities for next generations. In order to better understand how important English is to Algerian parents' future, the current research also looks at how they feel about the language being taught in primary schools. The paper delves into the role of teachers in incorporating 21st-century skills into the English language teaching curriculum in primary schools. It also offers insights into the primary factors that may impact the learning process in primary schools, such as students' motivation to learn English, the school environment, parental support, and individual student characteristics. Lastly, a review of the results and a discussion of other nations' experiences implementing English in elementary schools round up the article.

2- World view towards the English language:

It is commonly known that, after World War II, the United States of America emerged as the primary power and the significant winner, so establishing English as the primary language for all international purposes and instantly making it an international language.

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English language gained recognition as a result, and all countries started incorporating it into their cultures. This led to the creation of many monikers for the language, including the language of development and science and technology. This degree of regard and acknowledgment made English a vital tool in the hands of many, if not all, people worldwide, allowing them to plan for a better future and open doors to opportunities.

Furthermore, the teaching of English has broadened to include not only grammar and vocabulary but also other subjects like moral values due to the language's global dissemination and development into a universally necessary skill. Teaching moral principles to elementary school students can help them grow in their moral awareness, knowledge, and sense of self as well as in their ability to behave well and politely (Dewi et al., 2021, p. 11). Thus, the inclusion of English in elementary education might be beneficial for social behavior as well as language acquisition.

3- Comparison study of the population of English language speakers and speakers of other languages:

Without a question, English is the most widely used language in the world for communication and is essential for accessing resources worldwide. English has more non-native speakers than native speakers when compared to other popular languages. The website "Ethnologue," created by Eberhard et al. (2023), acts as a repository for language metadata and offers details on language usage patterns across the globe, including who uses what, where, and why. With over a billion users, the website's data indicates that over 1453 million individuals utilize English globally. Out of them, 1080 million are non-native speakers and only 373 million are native speakers (Yadav, 2023). Hindi has 602 million speakers, Mandarin Chinese has 1118 million, and Spanish has 548 million. Furthermore, as per data on the W3Techs website (2023) regarding "Historical trends in the usage statistics of content languages for websites," the content languages that exhibited over 1% usage

between December 2022 and December 2023 reveal that the majority of content uploaded on the internet was in English (59% - 52%), with the remainder being distributed among other international languages.

4- The necessity of teaching English in Algeria:

The fact that English is the most often used language across a variety of disciplines is demonstrated by the fact that it is the medium for the majority, if not all, of requirements. This includes people looking to market their products internationally, social media influencers, marketers, and even teenagers expressing their feelings and ideas in public. All of these people see English as a successful and dependable way to achieve their goals.

English is now more than just a necessary for getting by because to the growing demand for it across the globe (Kurniasih, 2011, p. 71). Despite the presence of three internationally recognized and extensively spoken languages, English is a necessity for the majority, if not all, job applications in European nations, including France, Germany, and Spain.

A policy that requires the use of English, especially in academic settings, has recently emerged in Algeria. According to A. Djouiba's personal correspondence from December 10, 2022, the Algerian government mandated that all professors of higher education teach English courses at the institutions' Intensive Teaching Center of Languages. They must also utilize English when posting in both Arabic and English on their official social media profiles, conducting events in English, and writing articles about their areas. Given that children practice and become more fluent in English the sooner they acquire it, the government's initiative to introduce English in elementary schools may be a good start in this direction (Kurniasih, 2011, p. 71).

English has always been prioritized in Algerian contexts as a technique to interact with the outside world in all spheres. The government still faces difficulties in spite of

continuous attempts to improve Algeria's educational system, such as the Arabization of education (Ferguson, 2002, p. 12) and the first failed attempt to incorporate English into primary schools.

In order to provide a better future for the upcoming generations, President Abdelmadjid TEBBOUNE is currently attempting once more to integrate the language of science into primary schools (Kurniasih, 2011, p. 71). It's still unclear, though, whether this endeavor is distinct, well-organized, and well-planned, or if it's identical to the last one. There are doubts that call for more study and inquiry, such as whether the Algerian populace is ready for such a step or not.

5- Algerian parents' perceptions and attitudes towards teaching English in primary schools:

Two scholars from Tlemcen University in Algeria, Manseur & Negadi (2019), have carried out a study on the subject of "Parental Perspectives on Introducing English in Algerian Primary Education".

The study's conclusions demonstrated that a sizable segment of Algerian parents, who acknowledge English as a widely used global language of science, are in favor of teaching their kids the language in primary schools ("Algeria's identity debate over adopting French teaching", 2016). They think it's critical that children be exposed to English early on. As a result, social media platforms' growing popularity and technical improvements have brought English's prominence in Algerian society to a wider audience. Algerians of all ages are showing an interest in studying English as they become more aware of its expanding significance and need in a variety of professions (Manseur & Negadi, 2019, p. 147).

Furthermore, many parents feel that exposing their kids to English will help them in the school and keep them up to date on current events because it is the universal language utilized for cross-cultural communication and scientific interactions (ibid.). Their resounding

backing suggests that parents understand the growing significance of English, particularly for the educational and career prospects of their kids.

likewise, a large number of Algerian parents are ardent supporters of making English one of the nation's official languages. This element receives a lot of attention because the primary school curriculum is so thorough. As a result, the overwhelming majority of Algerian parents support the early introduction of English in primary school, acknowledging its influence in a variety of fields, including education, trade, tourism, and communication (ibid. 150).

6- Teachers' readiness in inserting the 21st century skills for teaching English in primary schools:

A research study conducted by Rahmayanti et al. (2020) at the University of Pendidikan Ganesha focused on "teachers' preparedness to incorporate 21st-century skills in teaching English at primary schools." The study's findings indicate that teachers exhibit a strong grasp, familiarity, and readiness for integrating 21st-century skills into their lesson planning, teaching methods, and assessment, attributed to their frequent emphasis on implementation (Rahmayanti et al., 2020).

7- Factors that may affect the learning process in primary schools:

7-1- Pupils' interest in English Learning:

In a study titled "Cultivating Interest in English Among Primary School Students," Yang (2020) from Nanchang Normal University in China found three main influencing elements that have a substantial impact on students' enthusiasm in learning the language. The percentage of children who are interested in learning English in primary schools is largely determined by these and other factors. These encompass the educational setting, the impact of families, and the individual characteristics of the pupils.

7-1-1 School:

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Yang (2020) posits that the utilization of instructional tools, teaching techniques, teacher attitudes, educational materials, and learning assignments can all have an impact on students' passion for learning English in the classroom.

Because it can be difficult to keep the attention of young, energetic, and engaged children in the classroom, using instructional aids like projectors and computer multimedia can be an efficient way to get their attention. Additionally, educators understand that the employment of a variety of teaching instruments can provide very good results, leading to pupils learning English swiftly and cheerfully, based on domestic surveys and teaching experiences (ibid. 1306–1307).

The second is that interactive English teaching activities, such as those that are competitive and game-based, clearly demonstrate teaching strategies. It has been shown that through engaging with teachers, classmates, language materials, and other aspects in the classroom, students actively participate in collaborative learning (ibid. 1307).

The third thing to consider is that teachers' attitudes have a big impact on how interested students are in learning, either favorably or adversely. The teacher's supportive actions, such as helping pupils learn, giving them encouragement and praise, paying attention to them, and providing more opportunities for exercise, can be used to illustrate their positive influence. On the other hand, a teacher who exhibits negative emotional behaviors can be seen to have a negative impact (ibid.).

The final argument is that students' motivation in studying can be directly impacted by assignments and learning resources. Difficult listening exercises and their effects on students' study concepts, teachers' teaching abilities, and the emphasis on grammar and reading, for example, can make students less enthusiastic about learning (ibid.).

7-1-2 Family:

Yang (2020) further states that a parent's attitude toward their child's English language acquisition might either increase or decrease the child's desire to learn the language. Parental involvement in language education, the parents' educational background, their interest in learning a second language, as well as their native tongue, direct communication and interaction with their children, and a supportive home environment can all encourage positive interest. On the other hand, children will unavoidably depreciate English if their parents do not value the language and believe that learning it is pointless (ibid.).

7-1-3 Pupil's Personal Qualities:

The disparities in pupils' levels of interest in learning can be explained by variances in age, gender, and prior knowledge. In terms of age, the third grade in elementary school is the best time to develop a love of learning, with the sixth grade showing the highest level of enthusiasm. However, pupils' attention levels tend to decrease as they move up through the grades. When it comes to gender, female students are more eager to learn English and have a higher level of proficiency in the language than male students do. A researcher shows that motivation and interest are related, implying that motivation is an affirmative reaction that enhances students' prior knowledge and promotes learning. If students genuinely want to study English, they are more likely to be motivated and enjoy their studies (ibid.).

8- Previous experiences of other countries in implementing English into primary schools:

8-1 China:

English plays a major role in international relations and business today. China, a prominent industrial and commercial hub, has shown a great deal of interest in and need for the language, making it an immediate priority. Consequently, more than 100 million Chinese primary schools have implemented the use of English (Haiwen & Fengjuan, 2019). Qi (2016)

found that parents and students agree that "the earlier, the better" when it comes to learning English. The study involved three primary schools in Nanjing, China, and explored the attitudes and perceptions of primary school students regarding the importance of English in primary education (p. 16).

It was found that although English is the most preferred foreign language in society and school, its actual status is unknown. Because it is taught for a shorter period of time than the other two key subjects—Chinese and Mathematics—English is regarded less highly (ibid.). Moreover, "English is not used in domains such as the law courts and has no official status as a language of administration" (Pride & Liu, 1988, as cited in Gil and Adamson, 2011, p. 2). Students did acknowledge, nevertheless, how crucial English is for exams. Furthermore, parents have high expectations and demands about English education. According to every student, their parents want their children to do well in their elementary school English lessons and receive high grades so that they can be admitted to secondary schools (Qi, 2016, pp. 16–17). Consequently, parents have signed up for their kids to attend after-school English tutoring programs.

The status of the English language in Chinese schools has been the subject of countless literary studies, as learning foreign languages has long been a priority in the Chinese educational system (Qi, 2016, p.1). Chen (2011) studied how Taiwanese primary school parents felt about teaching English. According to the findings, parents actively lobbied the government for these changes by pushing for more consistency in English language policies and an earlier start of English education (Yang, 2020, p. 2). Kaplan et al. (2011) stressed the need of community involvement beyond policy-making and the need to investigate the grassroots responses to English language education programs.

It is clear that there is still some ambiguity around the English language's position in China. Although it is a required subject in Chinese schools, there aren't many English classes

offered. Parents and kids, however, are optimistic about the early start of English instruction since they recognize its importance for their future, especially for getting into selective secondary schools. However, English is not only a prerequisite but a necessity for China, which has the greatest population in the world ("Population by country, 2023") and is one of the leading nations in the world in every field.

8-2 Kazakhstan:

In a study by Zhetpisbayeva et al. (2016) titled "Challenges of Introducing English Language into Primary Schools for Multilingual Education Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan," the findings provided important new information about the viewpoints of English teachers regarding the language policy of lowering the age at which English language instruction and learning is taught. The results showed that there was insufficient planning before implementing English. Furthermore, when the policy paper was produced, the nation was entirely unprepared for the widespread promotion of elementary English education. This resulted from the lack of prerequisites in the Kazakhstani setting, including highly qualified teachers with professional training and high levels of English proficiency, appropriate resources, teaching strategies catered to the needs of young learners, and regular, well-organized instruction.

The early introduction in primary school has garnered strong support from the teachers, demonstrating their support for the new curriculum. Their responses are in line with the conclusions of the European Commission, which emphasize the need of beginning foreign language instruction early because young children learn subconsciously at this age.

In addition, it was noted that there is a deficiency of teachers instructing young students in English as well as a lack of retraining and continuous professional development for teachers concerning the techniques and resources employed (p. 70).

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Teachers said that appropriate materials were not easily accessible when talking about the availability of materials. Local textbooks that highlighted Kazakhstani culture were not thought to be an all-inclusive answer. There was also a suggestion to work with textbook authors and publishers, both domestically and abroad.

Lastly, this research study highlighted how teachers' activities are mostly traditional and lack creativity because of a number of reasons, such as the amount of time needed for implementation and assessment and the teachers' neglect of the students' "zone of proximal development" (p. 71).

8-3 Indonesia:

Because it was not a part of the main curriculum, English was once optional in Indonesian schools. The results show that it is unclear if English instruction at the primary school level is required, optional, or centered on local topics. It also reveals that inadequate teacher preparation, irrelevant curricula, and uninteresting teaching strategies contribute to Indonesia's poor English language education practices. Cultural variations and misconceptions among young language learners are noteworthy findings on the subject (Azmy, 2020).

9- Conclusion:

In summary, English has evolved into a global language following its recognition after World War II. It has been identified as the language of science, technology, and development, making it a valuable tool for global communication and resource planning. The inclusion of English in primary school education not only aids children in developing ethical knowledge and awareness but also promotes good behavior and manners. Furthermore, Ethnologue, a website that documents language metadata, reports that 1.453 billion people worldwide use English, with 373 million being native speakers and 1.080 billion non-natives. In comparison, Mandarin Chinese, Hindi, and Spanish have larger

speaker populations. Additionally, W3Techs' website indicates that content languages have experienced over 1% usage between December 2022 and December 2023, with English being the most widely used language for internet content (59%–52%). The remaining percentage is shared by other international languages.

English is still, generally speaking, an essential language for managing resources and international communication. Moreover, English is the language that is most widely utilized in all fields, and Algeria has made English education mandatory due to the language's increasing importance. The Algerian government ordered in 2022 that instructors in higher institutions take English classes, write articles in English about their subjects, plan English-language events, and post in both Arabic and English on their official social media profiles.

English instruction in elementary schools might be beneficial since early exposure to the language improves proficiency. Technological developments and the growing popularity of social media platforms have influenced Algerian parents' views on the use of English in primary education. A large number of Algerians are eager to learn the English language because they understand its increasing significance and need in a variety of professions. The increasing popularity of social media platforms and technical advancements have led to a broader recognition of the role that English plays in Algerian culture. Furthermore, parents in Algeria are firmly in favor of making English an official language in their nation. This is given a lot of attention in the primary school curriculum, with some disciplines being dropped in favor of elementary or secondary schooling.

Parents in Algeria are generally in favor of the early introduction of English into primary schools because the language has had a big impact on many different areas and is now essential for trade, education, communication, and tourism. The readiness of educators to incorporate 21st-century abilities into English instruction at the elementary school level has also been discussed. The Algerian educational system's future is yet unknown, but the

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country's administration is making efforts to guarantee that the populace is ready for this change.

It is recommended that educators, parents, and education authorities acknowledge the importance of English for young learners, beginning in elementary school, based on the previously listed considerations. First and foremost, educators need to take into account the psychological aspects that affect students' motivation, interest, and perception. They should also work to remove any psychological obstacles that stand in the way of students' proper language acquisition. Second, parents need to understand that learning English opens doors to a world of scientific and technological knowledge and is much more than just learning the language. As a result, ongoing supervision and support at home are crucial. Lastly, it is recommended that educational authorities establish a pedagogical atmosphere that is more cozy for both instructors and students. In actuality, it is everyone's duty to make sure that this vital language is taught in this day and age in a seamless and successful manner.

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