



## The Integration of English Language in Algerian Primary Schools after Two Years of Execution: Efficiency and Challenges

### L'intégration de l'anglais dans les écoles primaires algériennes après deux ans d'exécution : efficacité et défis

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**Abstract:** Due to the growing demands from academics, students, and researchers for globalization, the minister of education called for English to be included in the primary school curriculum starting from the new school year, 2022. The current language situation in Algeria involves the simultaneous incorporation of English alongside French as foreign languages for third-year primary school pupils. In this regard, the aim of this paper is to assess the integration of English in primary schools after two years of execution. To reach this aim, a mixed-method research was carried out using teachers' questionnaire and classroom observation during and after the training. Accordingly, the data presented demonstrated that the integration of English in primary schools is an addition to the Algerian education. It has had positive results since its first attempt. Yet, it has some gaps that need to be considered in the upcoming endeavors such as the recruitment criteria, timing and period of training, and supervision sessions that would certainly improve the teaching quality.

**Keywords:** Assessment, English language, integration, primary schools

**Résumé :** Le ministre de l'éducation a appelé à l'inclusion de l'anglais au primaire à partir de la nouvelle année scolaire 2022 vu son importance mondiale. Donc, la situation linguistique actuelle en Algérie implique l'incorporation simultanée de l'anglais et français comme langues étrangères pour les élèves de troisième année primaire. À cet égard, l'objectif de cet article est d'évaluer l'intégration de l'anglais, comme deuxième langue étrangère, à l'école primaire après deux années d'exécution. Pour atteindre cet objectif, une recherche mixte a été menée en utilisant un questionnaire pour les enseignants et une l'observation en classe pendant et après la formation des enseignants nouvellement recrutés. Les données présentées prouvent que l'intégration de l'anglais au primaire est un supplément à l'éducation algérienne. Elle a eu des résultats positifs depuis sa première tentative. Cependant, il y'a quelques lacunes qui doivent être prises en compte tels que les critères de recrutement, le calendrier et la durée de la formation des inspecteurs et d'enseignant qui vont certainement améliorer la qualité d'enseignement.

**Mots-clés :** évaluation, anglais, intégration, primaire



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Looking back at Algerian antiquity, the country is renowned for its rich history, cultural diversity, and multilingualism. The various historical periods, from ancient times to the present, have significantly influenced the development of languages and shaped Algeria's sociolinguistic landscape. The French invasion, which lasted 132 years, had a profound impact on the Algerian society under the guise of what they called a "civilizing mission." The colonizers attempted to erase the Algerian identity and culture, replacing them with French culture (Maamri, 2009), beginning with the language. They sought to displace the native languages—primarily Arabic and Berber—with French. Undoubtedly, English language is playing a steadily significant role across all global domains, as proficiency in English grants access to a wealth of scientific, technological, and academic resources. With the rise of media exposure and the widespread use of social media platforms, where English serves as an international avenue, it is clear that English has gained a significant traction in Algeria, positioning itself as a direct competitor to French (Houichi & Dekhil, 2023). In 1993, English was introduced into the Algerian educational system as a choice in primary schools, allowing parents to choose between French and English for their children. However, this program was eventually discontinued due to a lack of proper planning and pressure from French advocates. According to the Algerian Government and official sources, the goal of the English language syllabuses is to equip Algerian learners with the language skills necessary to communicate effectively in both written and spoken forms within typical social and professional contexts (Marouf, 2017). Additionally, the Algerian government aims to enhance the ability of individuals pursuing higher education to use a foreign language as a tool for expanding their academic knowledge within their field of study, as well as for those entering the workforce (Marouf, 2017). In 2019, the Algerian Higher Education Minister Tayeb Bouzid declared that "the French language does not get us anywhere" and mandated that English must replace French in universities. Nonetheless, due to these swift changes, several tertiary-level students struggled to fully engage with course materials and instruction, largely because of their lack of experience with the newly chosen language.

In 2021, middle school students in Algeria began studying English at the age of fourteen, while French education started at nine years old. However, Algeria has faced challenges in bridging learning gaps from previous efforts to modernize its educational system to better reflect its current national identity. From an educational standpoint, English in Algeria is not recognized as an official or national language (Benrabah M. , 2005); instead, it is considered a second foreign language after French, which is the first foreign language, with Classical Arabic and Berber serving as national languages. In fact, colloquial Arabic and Berber varieties are commonly spoken in daily life, along with French, while English is primarily used only for educational purposes. Due to the growing demands from academics and students, in July, the President Abdelmadjid Tebboune called for English to be included in the primary school curriculum starting from the new school year in 2022-2023. Algerian children are encountering a significant change in the curriculum by studying English as a second foreign language at an early age. Therefore, the current research study aims at evaluating English integration in primary schools after two years of execution and exploring EFL primary school teachers' opinions towards this implementation because it is regarded as a new step in the Algerian educational domain which has further intents that will contribute to the upgrading of the national education. The current investigation raised two main questions:

- How can the integration of English in the primary schools be assessed ?
- What are the further implications behind the implementation of English in the primary educational stage ?

Based on these questions, the following hypotheses are formed:

- The implementation of English in primary schools is still a trial but it is a good step that will realize the objectives set by the ministry of education.
- The further implications are to give more importance to English rather than French because the first is regarded as a key to success and development.

## 1. Literature Review

### 1.1. A Brief History of Languages in Algeria

The linguistic heritage of Algeria is extremely varied and intricate since the country finds itself at the intersection of tensions involving French; the colonial language, with conflicts with Arabic; Classical Arabic versus Algerian Arabic. This linguistic diversity has sparked a crisis that is both political and educational, leading to widespread debates. During the French colonization, Algerians were compelled to learn French as a national language while Arabic was redefined as a foreign language in 1938 (Nadia, 2011), hence, remained a powerful symbol of identity and nationalism. In 1972, the Algerian Ministry of Education first introduced English as a second foreign language. Since then, it has been a compulsory subject in the curriculum, starting from the eighth grade in middle school (Bouhadiba, 2006). During this time, the Algerian government relied on foreign EFL teachers from various countries to address the shortage of qualified local teachers (Bouhadiba, 2006).

The Algerian Ministry of Education, on September 1993, issued a decree (029/M. D/93) asserting that English would be introduced in certain primary schools. Accordingly, fourth-grade students were given the option to choose their first foreign language (Djouimaa, 1999). The decree outlined practical guidelines regarding:

- **Teaching material:** A textbook and a workbook were designed and distributed.
- **Timing:** is the same time allocated for teaching French; that is, five hours a week.
- **Teachers:** those who graduated from the Institut Technologique de l'Éducation (I.T.E).
- **Organizational matters:** each English teacher must work with two or three classes which could be spread across one, two, or even three neighboring primary schools.
- **Supervision and control:** inspectors are responsible for the supervision and control of teachers as well as they are required to organize seminars and training courses for teachers in coordination with the I.T.E.

Unexpectedly, the number of students choosing English was minimal, leading to a situation where French was favored (Benrabah M. , 2014). While there is no clear evidence that this pilot project failed outright, it was challenging to implement it during a period marked by ideological conflicts and political unrest; civil war. In 2002, a national education reform aimed to reintroduce French as a foreign language in the second grade of primary school (Nadia, 2011). One of the key changes in this reform was the decision to begin teaching English in the sixth grade (middle school), two grades earlier than before.

### 1.2. Algerian Educational Reforms

Throughout its history, Algeria has undergone numerous educational reforms that have impacted both the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Education. These changes and reforms were driven by various political, economic, social, and educational reasons and challenges during different periods. The following section will review some of these significant reforms from 1962 to 2022.

### 1.2.1. First Reform: Arabization

After gaining independence, Algeria sought to restore its national identity by implementing the process of Arabization, which was considered the first step toward decolonization after 1962 (Benrabah, 1999). The primary objective of this policy was to eliminate the dominance of the French language. The Algerian government aimed to Arabize the entire Algerian speech community, striving for linguistic unity by promoting the use of a single language. Thus, French was replaced by Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), a language symbolizing Islamic identity, across various domains, including education, media, and legislation. However, this policy faced significant criticism for overlooking the linguistic diversity of the population and the shortage of qualified teaching personnel (Benrabah, 2005). In response to these challenges, the government recruited 1,000 Egyptian teachers as Arabic language instructors in 1964. Despite these efforts, reports indicated issues with these teachers, citing their lack of qualifications, insufficient commitment to their roles, difficulties related to their accents, and their involvement in the country's domestic politics.

### 1.2.2. Second Reform

In 1976, Algeria introduced a new educational system known as the "fundamental school." This reform merged primary and middle school education and established Arabic as the primary language of instruction for most subjects, except foreign languages (Nadia, 2011). Within this system, English was introduced in middle school at the age of 13, a time that various educators found disadvantageous for learners. The Algerian educational community was divided between those who advocated for the use of French, viewed as the language of modernization, especially in scientific subjects and those who insisted on preserving Arabic as a cornerstone of the Algerian identity. In 1985, English was designated as the compulsory foreign language and was introduced in the second year of middle school (the 8th year in the foundation school). This reform intended to curtail the extensive influence of French in Algeria, giving English a more prominent role (Marouf, 2017). By doing so, Algerian students were provided the opportunity to engage with a new foreign language, culture, and ideas, thereby reducing the dominance of French.

### 1.2.3. Third Reform

A few years later, after an unsuccessful attempt to introduce English in the first year of middle school, English was introduced as a foreign language in primary school. In 1993, a new initiative intended at enhancing foreign language education from an early age was launched, offering students the option to choose between French and English. This program was applied under the leadership of Mr. Ali Ben Mohamed, the previous Minister of Education and a supporter of Arabization reforms. Initially, the program was implemented in select primary schools but was soon discontinued as most parents opted for French over English (Nadia, 2011). Despite this, Mr. Ali Ben Mohamed claimed that the program was terminated due to political reasons rather than parental preference. In this situation, introducing English at the age of 9 or 10 proved to be impractical due to the lack of adequate materials and resources in Algerian schools. The core issue lies in the planning and the failure to properly consider key parameters (Marouf, 2017). In 1996, the National Commission responsible for educational reform was tasked with revising the programs in response to growing criticism from education specialists. The Ministry of Education acknowledged that these modifications

were essential. To be effective, the educational system needed to adopt new objectives that would prepare future generations to participate in an increasingly globalized world.

#### **1.2.4. Reform Education policy**

The educational reform announced in 2001 brought significant changes to the teaching of foreign languages in Algeria. French was introduced at the level of the second year of primary school, while English began being taught at the age of eleven, rather than thirteen, meaning it was introduced starting from the first year of middle school. Furthermore, Algerian educational policymakers reformed the curriculum and developed new syllabuses for teaching English in collaboration with the United States and Canada, who pledged to support this educational reform policy in Algeria (Chemami, 2011). Later, the Algerian government further adjusted the curriculum by introducing French in the third year of primary school instead of the second year.

### **1.3. Reasons for English Failure in Algerian Primary Schools**

It can be suggested that the failure of English in Algerian primary schools is due to three main factors. In the first place, the sociolinguistic context in Algeria is heavily influenced by French due to over a century of colonization. Even after the country gained independence, the elite, policymakers, and the general population have struggled to move away from this deeply entrenched language. Given the reasons behind the implementation of this initiative, it was evident that it was not driven by educational objectives but by other considerations from policymakers. In fact, the timing of the project in the 1990s, a period marked by opposition to French due to the Arabization policy, highlights this reality. Hence, it is recognized that French remains difficult to remove from the elementary curriculum.

Additionally, poor planning was a significant factor contributing to the failure of English in primary school. There was a lack of information about the project as well as no clear guidance regarding the students' academic progression in the years to come. The issues previously discussed highlight the flawed planning of the reforms. Algerian policymakers failed to consider various aspects of language in education policy, such as community policy, resource allocation, and other critical elements when implementing the new language-in-education project (Marouf, 2017).

### **1.4. Learning English at an Early Age**

Reflecting on the reasons behind the failure of English in Algerian primary schools, it is worth mentioning that numerous Second Language Acquisition (SLA) studies emphasize the critical impact of age on learning English (Ortega, 2011). Research indicates that children who begin their education around ages the of seven or eight have more receptive minds and can absorb new information more effectively, making it an ideal period for learning and mastering a new language (Krashen, 1981). In addition, teaching English at an early age minimizes interference from the mother tongue, as many SLA researchers suggest (Gawi, 2012). Subsequently, linguists, educators, and policymakers should consider the age factor and implement of English instruction in primary schools, where young children's age is deemed advantageous for acquiring a second or foreign language (Diyanti, 2021).

### **1.5. The Integration of English in Primary Schools in Algeria**

In August 2019, the Ministry of Higher Education conducted a Google poll on its website to gauge support for using English as a teaching language. Out of 94,060 respondents, 94.3% were in favor of the proposal (Fox & Mazzouzi, 2019). Following this, Tayeb Bouzid, the Minister of Higher Education, presented a proposal at the end of a national conference of Algerian universities, advocating for English to become an official language of instruction and administration at the country's universities (Fox & Mazzouzi, 2019). By early October, with the start of the new academic year, the Higher Schools of Artificial Intelligence and Mathematics began transitioning to English for their teaching, replacing French.

In July, the President Tebboune called for English to be included in the primary school curriculum starting from the new school year in 2022. "French is a spoil of war, but English is an international language," President Abdelmadjid Tebboune claimed at a news conference on July 30 (Mazzouzi, 2022). His decree responded to growing demands from academics and students, as discussed during his regular meeting with Algerian media, which was broadcast on various national TV channels. When Algerian children return to primary school for their third year on September 21, 2022, they will encounter a significant change in the curriculum, in addition to French, they will begin studying English as a second foreign language (Mazzouzi, 2022). Abdelmoumen Salami, from the Bureau of Exams and Competitions at Algeria's Ministry of National Education, reported that 11 million students across various grades, including 425,000 new students, would begin school in September. With the country's 20,000 primary schools requiring over 25,000 English teachers (Henache, 2022). The National Education Minister, Abdelhakim Belabed, announced the implementation of the President's decision at the start of the school year. The Ministry of Education subsequently issued a call for contract-based employment for those with bachelor's degrees in English or translation to meet the demand for teachers. Appointing English teachers for 20,000 primary schools proved to be a massive challenge. In the rush to meet the demand, 60,000 applications were submitted in just a few days, but only 5,000 applicants were hired (Henache, 2022). These new teachers, several with little or no classroom experience, received only a few weeks of workshops to prepare for the school year, as noted by Messaoud Amraoui from the National Council of the Union of Education and Training Workers (UNPEF). Just days before classes began, the Ministry of Education released a textbook for third-year primary pupils. This book, developed in a matter of weeks, included basic English, the alphabet, and everyday dialogues relevant to Algeria. The decision to integrate English into primary schools sparked skepticism among educationalists, teachers' unions, and politicians. While there is broad agreement on the importance of making the language accessible to Algerians and its potential for universal engagement, concerns remain (Nasr, 2022). For instance, a political activist named Othman Ben Said advised that the abrupt implementation could lead to chaos, given the academic year was starting the following month. Moreover, eminent sociologist Aissa Kadri, who has authored several books on education in Algeria, argued that schooling is a long-term endeavor that requires planning over 20 or 30 years. Several teachers' unions also expressed that the decision should have been more thoroughly discussed and planned.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Research Design**

This inquiry aims to evaluate the integration of English in primary schools after two years of execution. Besides, investigating EFL primary school teachers' opinions towards this implementation because it is regarded as a new step in the Algerian educational domain

which has further intents that will contribute to the upgrading of the national education. To reach the objective of the study, the researchers employed a mixed method research using an observation during the training and in the classes, after the training, to see if they have applied what they have learned or not and a printed teachers' questionnaire. Mixed methods research includes various mixtures of qualitative (non-numerical data) and quantitative research (numerical data), either at the data collection or analysis levels, according to Dornyei (2007).

## **2.2. Data Collection Instruments**

A research instrument is a scientifically and methodically developed tool for collecting, measuring, and analyzing data linked to research objectives and alignments (Oben, 2021 : 114). The significance of these tools lies in them to collect data, reveal patterns, and advance understanding in the field of study. The researchers used printed questionnaires and an observation.

### **2.2.1. Printed Questionnaire**

The printed questionnaire was administered to 38 EFL primary school teachers from Barika province, Batna, Algeria. The questionnaire was divided into two main sections: the participants' demographical data, which focuses on two important criteria which are age and the academic degree because the recruitment selection was based on the certificate seniority that was on the benefit of the older. The second section was about the integration of English in the primary schools. It contains nine different questions which fit the objectives of the study.

### **2.2.2. Observation**

Observation is one of the data collection tools used in practical research to collect data that cannot be obtained through a questionnaire or interview. It is also an auxiliary and supplementary tool for the questionnaire adopted in the study. In this study, the observation was divided into two phases during the training and in the classes.

## **2.3. Research Sample**

The participants were 38 EFL primary school teachers from Barika-Batna, Algeria. The researchers were trainers in the teachers' training center of Barika, they had direct contact with EFL teachers. Hence, they could gather general data about the first experience of teaching English in primary schools.

## **2.4. Research Context**

The study started directly with the teachers' training in April 2023 and lasted till the first trimester, June 2024 in order to have enough time to observe and see the results of 2 years of English implementation because the first trial was with 3<sup>rd</sup> year pupils, in 2022-2023 to add the fourth year in 2023-2024 and the fifth year will be added in 2024-2025. Hence, this reform will be deeply rooted and efficient after three years of implementation. The research took place at the teacher training center of Barika-Batna city, Algeria.

### 3. Data Analysis

#### 3.1. Teachers' Printed Questionnaire

##### Age

Table 1: Participants' Age

Age	between 21 and 30 years old	between 30 and 40 years old	more than 40 years old
Percentage	07 %	84%	09%

In the present study, age is considered an important factor because the Ministry of Education took the seniority of the diploma into consideration. In this regard, the majority of participants (84%) are between 30 and 40 years old, 09% are more than 40 years old; whereas, only 07% are between 21 and 30 years old.

##### Degree

Table 2: Participants' Academic Degree

Degree	License Classic (BA)	License LMD (BA)		Master (MA)
Percentage	66%	21%		13%

Table two shows the academic degree of EFL primary school teachers, the largest proportion of them have a classical BA/ License degree, exactly about 66%, and 21% have the same diploma with another system (LMD), and the remaining 13% have a Master degree.

##### Question One: what is the importance of teaching English at the primary school?

After the participants' demographical data section, the first question was about the importance of implementing English in the Algerian primary schools; all the participants in this research welcomed this integration and agreed that it is regarded as a new step towards development and globalization. Though English is not a new language, it used to be taught from the first-year middle school, in other words, in the sixth year of the pupils' educational journey. Now, it is taught three years earlier the fact that allows pupils to acquire more. In this regard, participants' answers were as follows:

- To get pupils ready for a better future.
- To improve the level of pupils in primary school and expand the use of English.
- To master the first language of globalization.
- It is the language of science and technology.
- It is recommended to be learnt from a young age.
- It increases the ability of the child to acquire and learn more.
- It helps the pupil to develop literacy skills and increase the desire to acquire languages, additionally, it is the first international language.
- Openness to the world.
- Teaching English at primary schools trains pupils' brains to learn more languages; thus, developing their learning skills.

##### Question Two: do you think that primary school pupils would be overloaded with learning two languages at the same time?

The second question was about pupils' mental ability to acquire two foreign Latin languages at the same time, EFL primary school teachers' answers demonstrate that they can learn

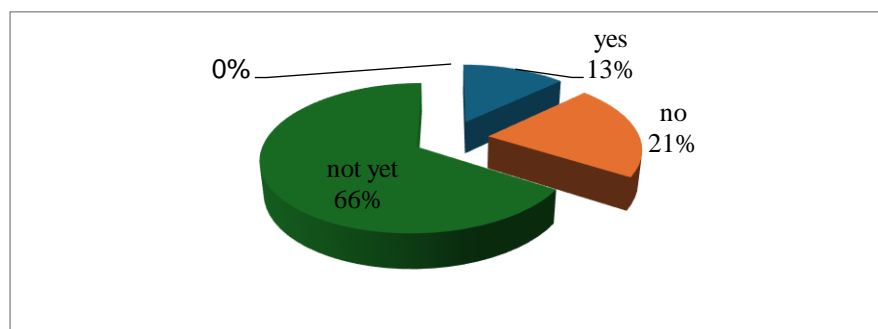


them easily because most differences are only about pronunciation. Teachers' answers are presented in the following lines:

- They have the ability to understand and acquire more than three languages.
- They have the ability to understand more than two foreign languages at this age.
- Their age gives them the ability to learn languages at a faster rate.
- They are confused between two foreign languages (French and English).
- They have fresh brains to learn languages.
- It has been scientifically proven that kids have the ability to acquire seven languages at the same time.
- Based on the given experience, the present results are positive, pupils are enthusiastic and interested during the English sessions, so, they are not overloaded.
- Pupils are not overloaded, as teachers; we need to expose our pupils to native speakers to acquire more through the use of videos and storytelling.

**Question Three: do you think that Algeria has the required means to integrate English at primary schools?**

Figure 1: Availability of Means for English Integration in Primary Schools



In response to question three, 66% of the participants see that the Ministry of Education is not yet ready to implement English since the primary schools because this decision was in a short period of time, they have prepared only the textbook and trained teachers one week before the beginning of the academic year (2022-2023). On the other hand, 13% view that there are the required means for this integration and 21% show the opposite with a negative response.

**Question Four: do you think that you are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to teach English effectively?**

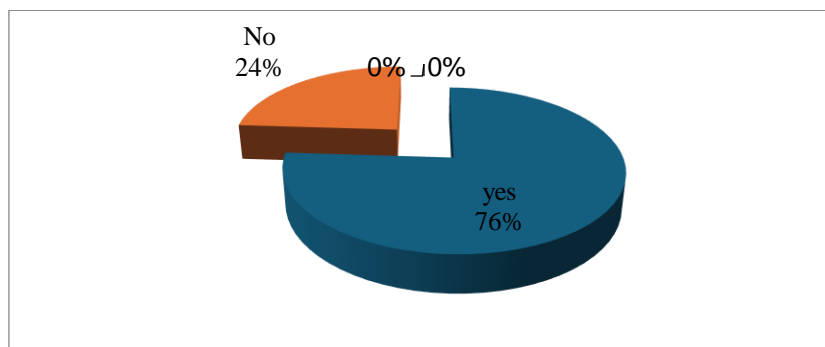
In the same context, we asked the participants another question related to the tools and equipment to express themselves more, their answers are demonstrated below:

- Not yet, we need more training and experience.
- No, we need experience to teach young learners.
- No, I need more training, particularly more experience through training in class and facing difficulties which need to be solved.
- No, we need training courses to get the necessary skills.
- No, it is hard to work as a teacher; I am still learning to be more skilled.
- No, not yet, there are plenty of things to know.
- No, because we do not have an inspector who guides us to teach effectively.
- No, when I was a student, I did my best to learn and acquire as much as I could to master the language but when it comes to be a teacher, I feel that I need to learn more about being an instructor.

- It is my first teaching experience; I did not reach the level of effectiveness yet because it comes with practice.

**Question Five: have you faced any difficulties or obstacles while teaching English at primary school? If yes, what are these difficulties?**

**Figure 2: The Difficulties of Teaching English**



**Table 3: Types of Difficulties Encountered by EFL Primary School Teachers**

Type of difficulty	Lack of materials	Different primary schools	Time constraints	Confusion between English and French	Lack of supervision	Discipline in class
Percentage	08%	16%	33%	24%	12%	07%

Table three demonstrates that EFL teachers are facing some difficulties during their classes such as a lack of materials like computers and data show which are regarded as useful tools that may facilitate their teaching mission because this generation are digital natives, thus, equipping the classes with technological tools is of a great importance (tablets). In addition to that, since it was the first year of experiencing teaching English in primary schools, there is only one EFL teacher per school; they even teach in three or four different primary schools at the same time in order to reach the hourly volume. In this regard, the participants see that teaching English once a week is not sufficient because a foreign language needs time and practice, therefore, the interval between the first and second sessions hinders the learning process and puts teachers in constant need to repeat what they have mentioned in their previous sessions; they may even confuse between English and French words since they are two foreign languages implemented at the same time. Moreover, among the difficulties that teachers face, is the lack or absence of supervision with inspectors except the training sessions. Since teachers are not experienced, some of them have problems with discipline in managing their classes.

**Question Six: According to you, what are the advantages of teaching English?**

In spite of the difficulties encountered by EFL primary school teachers, they see that teaching English has advantages, the most important ones are:

- Keeping pace with development.
- Improving pupils' cognitive abilities.
- The acquisition of a foreign language at an early age.
- To raise a good learner.
- Increasing the ability to store information.
- Building an educated generation.

- Pupils are curious to learn more English words.

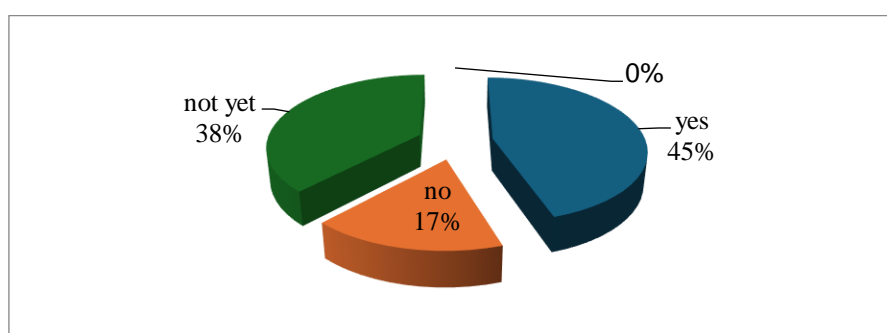
**Question Seven: According to you, what are the disadvantages of teaching English at the primary school?**

On the other hand; there are also disadvantages mentioned by the research participants such as:

- The confusion between English and French.
- Lack of qualified teachers.
- Difficulties to explain to pupils.
- Less support from parents (coordination between parents and teachers).
- Pupils' discipline hinders the flow of the lesson.

**Question Eight: Is Algeria ready to integrate the teaching of English in primary schools? If not, why?**

**Figure 3: Readiness to Integrate English in Primary Schools**



The figure above demonstrates that 45% view Algeria as ready for this new educational step, while 38% see that this integration needs more time and effort to apply on the ground and 17% see that the Ministry is not really ready to teach English in the primary schools since 2022-2023, the last category, those who said no, have justified their answers as follows:

- We need a long time to plan this integration
- Schedule enough time and suitable programs and materials.
- English is still considered to be the second foreign in the Algerian educational system though it has received considerable attention with the educational reform; its integration needs improvements.
- This assessment needs a long period of time.
- There are no primary school inspectors.

**Question Nine: what are the requirements for teaching English as a foreign language at the primary school?**

In relation to the previous question, we asked the participants, mainly those who mentioned that Algeria is not ready or not yet ready to integrate English in the primary schools, in other words, to postpone it from 2022-2023 to 2023-2024 in order to cover all the required elements for this important academic step, they suggest:

- Advanced equipment.
- Improving the curriculum.
- Reducing the subjects being taught and focusing on the most important ones.
- Giving enough time to the teacher.
- Providing the classes with audio-visual aids.

- Efficient training/ enough time.
- Creating an enjoyable and creative learning atmosphere.
- Adopt effective lesson plans that use active learning procedures.

### 3.2. Observation

The observation was conducted in two phases; during the training and after the training.

#### 3.2.1. During the Training Phase

Researchers, who also acted as trainers, observed the trainees closely. The rationale behind this observation is that various trainees had experienced a significant gap between their graduation and their recruitment into teaching positions. Consequently, this extended period away from active teaching may lead to a deterioration in their language skills, resulting in potential gaps in their ability to effectively teach and deliver lessons. By monitoring them, the researchers aimed to identify any deficiencies and weaknesses in their language proficiency and address these issues to enhance their overall teaching efficiency. This included evaluating their ability to select appropriate words, construct meaningful sentences, and convey concepts clearly.

#### 3.2.2. After the Training Phase

Researchers, in the post-training phase, continued their observation to evaluate the impact of the training on the trainees' language skills and overall teaching performance. This phase provided insights into how the training influenced the trainees' ability to utilize and apply language skills in real classroom settings. The researchers assessed improvements in vocabulary usage, teaching delivery, and overall pedagogical effectiveness to determine the effectiveness of the training program in bridging the gap caused by the prolonged period between graduation and recruitment. The following are some key aspects that were examined during observation:

- **Vocabulary Usage:** whether there was an improvement in the trainees' use of vocabulary in their teaching practices. This involved looking at their ability to employ a range of vocabulary effectively and appropriately in lesson delivery.
- **Teaching Effectiveness:** whether they contributed to clearer communication of concepts, better student engagement, and more effective classroom management.
- **Application in Real-World Settings:** whether the improvements noted during the training phase translated into practical benefits in teaching practice.
- **Overall Pedagogical Performance:** whether their pedagogical strategies, lesson planning, and ability to meet educational objectives have been affected positively.

The comprehensive observation across both phases provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the training program and its role in addressing the challenges faced by trainees with gaps in their language skills. It also helped in understanding how well the training prepared the trainees to overcome the effects of their extended absence from teaching and to enhance their overall teaching capabilities.

## 4. Discussion and Interpretation of Data

After analyzing the data obtained, researchers reached the result that implementing English in primary schools is a requirement since it is the language of science and technology. Besides, it has become a competitor to French since it is taught simultaneously with French

and it can even replace it since it has gained more importance later once introduced. Therefore, both teachers and pupils have welcomed this decision and are willing to improve their levels and skills. In this regard, they have mentioned that pupils have positive attitudes towards studying English as several scholars have mentioned that childhood is the ideal age for learning new languages (Krashen, 1981). However, there are some shortcomings that have hindered the mission such as the recruitment criteria that focused on age and diploma seniority rather than competency for the sake of reducing the amount of unemployment or the policy of grading the opportunities between the holders of university certificates in English language. Moreover, the lack of training and supervision prevented teachers from performing their jobs successfully since the implementation did not take enough time and preparation. In relation to this, each teacher was asked to teach in four different schools because the operation was a trial, however, this idea was a burden for teachers because of the long distances between schools.

To conclude, in spite of these negative points, after two years of integrating English in primary schools it is assessed as a good educational step that will bring significant results and therefore, contribute to the upgrading of the national education.

## Conclusion

Algeria is a multilingual country due to the fact that many official languages and varieties overlap in the same society. However, in the last years, both ministries of education and higher education shed light on the teaching of English language due to its global importance. Hence, the first step to giving more importance to English was to include it at universities as a foreign language module in all specialties instead of French, then to force university teachers to teach in English. Yet, it was not a successful step because most teachers and students use French better than English. Thus, it is a project of a whole generation that must be well prepared from the primary phase. In this regard, primary school pupils used to learn two official languages, Modern Standardized Arabic (MSA) as the first official language and French as the first foreign language. In the last two years, due to the educational reforms, English has been integrated as a second foreign language to be taught to third year primary school pupils because of its global and scientific importance. In other words, they start studying two foreign languages simultaneously. Looking further, English was integrated as an attempt during the school year 2022-2023 delivered to third-year primary school pupils to be added to fourth-year pupils in 2023-2024, and generalized to fifth-year pupils in 2024-2025. Therefore, the aim of this paper was to assess this educational operation after two years of execution. The findings discussed above revealed that integrating English in primary schools is an addition to the educational domain; even pupils have positive attitudes towards this language. However, there are some shortcomings such as the recruitment criteria and the short period of training before starting to teach English because most teachers had not enough experience in teaching and practicing the language since they graduated as well as the absence of inspectors who are regarded as guides to teachers. Hence, after two years of teaching English in primary schools, we recommend more training sessions for novice teachers to gain experience and fill the gaps noticed during the past two school academic years.

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## Appendices

Dear Trainees,

Would you answer the following questionnaire. The data will be used for academic purposes.

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Age:

Teaching Experience: .....

Degree:

BA ☐ MA ☐ Doctorat ☐

1. What was your initial training before working as a teacher?  
.....
2. What is the Importance of Teaching English at the Primary School?  
.....
3. Do you think the primary school pupil would be overloaded with learning three languages at the same time?  
Yes ☐ No ☐  
Explain why.....
4. Do you think that Algeria has the required means for the Integration of English at Primary School?  
Yes ☐ No ☐
5. Do you think that English is better taught at an early age?  
Yes ☐ No ☐  
Explain why.....
6. According to you, Is it necessary to Teach English at Primary School?  
Yes ☐ No ☐  
Explain why.....
7. Do you think that you are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to teach English effectively?  
Yes ☐ No ☐  
If no, explain why.....
8. Have you faced any difficulties or obstacles while teaching English at Primary school?  
Yes ☐ No ☐  
If Yes, mention them.....
9. According to you, what are the advantages of teaching English at Primary School?  
.....
10. According to you, what are the disadvantages of teaching English at Primary School?  
.....
11. Is Algeria ready to integrate the teaching of English at Primary School?  
Yes ☐ No ☐  
If not, explain Why.....
12. What are the requirements for teaching English as a Foreign Language at the Primary School?  
.....
13. What kind of challenges primary teachers of English might face?  
.....