

TECHNOLOGY'S ROLE IN MODERN ARABIC LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

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Abstract

This paper examines one such all-inclusive methodology for teaching perception by AFL instructors at northern UAE universities. Whereas past works remarked that using a mixture of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) with oral, colloidal form had virtues, no consideration has been taken to practical impact as well as teacher expertise to application, this current mixed-methods investigation fills this gap by dividing 40 AFL instructors between a semi-structured discussion with five instructors.

Quantitative data gauges unanimous, favorable orientation to such global approach as best suited to learn as well as to teach Arabic. Qualitative results indicate such great hurdles to such adoption by teachers. Teacher attitude, ill-fitting of suitable tech-included materials, and quandary of whose spoken form to instruct are such hurdles. Such hurdles being posed by this research hold such great, tech-related implications to such teachers as are themselves subjects as well as such who make decisions regarding textbooks and syllabus. The latter admonishes such great need to adopt such a syllabus that incorporates MPA as well as one spoken form along with all such contemporary additions to acquire proper communicative ability in Arabic by students.

Key Terms: Technology-integration, integrated-approach, diglossia, communicative-competence, Arabic-language-instruction, teacher-perceptions

Introduction

Traditionally, AFL programs globally as well as locally have been almost exclusively concerned with teaching students Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). While as everything as regards MSA indeed is administrative, media, writing and literary form of formally presented formally presented Arabic, this form of Arabic is not typically uttered. The dichotomy between classroom and communicative settings then becomes acute to the extent that students are rendered less competent to communicate communicatively with communicatively able native-speaking interlocutors. The dichotomy then is communicative competency's strongest challenge (Al-Batal, 1995; Ryding, 2013).

This challenge is a consequence of sociolinguistic phenomenon diglossia, where two forms of a language—the high-prestige, writing form (MSA) and a spoken, lower-prestige variety (spoken dialects)—co-exist (Ferguson, 1959). Mother-tongue Arab students are educated to a dialect at home and are brought to university to learn university-speak, officially (MSA). Non-Arabis students, by comparison, materially arrive with university-speak, materially (MSA), a reality that others identify as "reverse privileging" (Ryding, 2016). Reverse is almost never a winning strategy when this occurs, since students will not achieve they remain overall chief goal: to be oral fluently

and to communicate with native interlocutors, that need which is ever increasingly intermediated by communicational platforms made tech-facilitated (Al-Mekhalfi & Al-Ahmar, 2021).

The integrated approach offers a solution by teaching MSA and a colloquial form simultaneously. The strategy is gaining momentum as a more realistic and holistic way to teach Arabic (Wahba, 2006; Goldberg et al., 2015). Nevertheless, with no consensus being reached by researchers even as there is agreement that such an approach boasts advantages, there is limited empirical research as to how instructors themselves consider and implement such an approach within the classroom setting, especially with modern technology.

This research aspires to contribute to that gap by investigation AFL teachers at non-university private universities of the northern UAE. We are interested to learn whether teachers are receptive to this approach, whether this approach prove to be effective to construct communicative ability, and perceived to be important barriers to successfully applying this approach successfully. If attention were to move from polemics within/over theory to classroom reality—indeed, using technology to effect that move—those teachers, writers of materials, and administrative officials can be offered important data to inform creating a superior classroom reality with this new Arabophobe subgroup.

This research is guided by the following questions:

1. What are Arabic language teachers' beliefs regarding implementing an integrated approach in the TAFL classroom, with a focus on technology integration?
2. What is the teachers' view on the role of the integrated approach and its technological components in promoting undergraduate students' communicative competence?
3. What are the key roadblocks to implementing a tech-integrated, integrated approach in TAFL classrooms?

Literature Review

AFL teaching is confronted with that special dilemma of sociolinguistic diglossia. The term diglossia per se was first used by Ferguson (1959), diglossia being that condition under which a society employs two varieties of one and the very same tongue: a high, abstract "High" variety (H) as well as a everyday, geographical "Low" variety (L). In this Arabic context, thus, Standard/Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is this H-type, with different oral dialects being that L-type.

Traditionally, AFL programs intended for MSA. The long-standing approach is criticized to build up a "false model of oral proficiency" (Al Batal, 1995), as authentic communication is not provided to students. Dialect acquisition is carried out as an unconscious process by internal-speaking students before studying MSA, but non-natives are typically provided with MSA as dominant one, a process referred to as "reverse privileging" (Ryding, 2016).

This mismatch between methodology and pedagogy has created consensus between researchers that there is a need to adopt a new methodology, one that aims at communicative competence. Hymes (1966) specified communicative competence as broader than being acquainted with grammar; communicative competence is utilizing communicatively within its cultural setting. The remedial is why there is a need to teach with MSA only but exclusively is not enough. Students

need sociolinguistic ability to operate within diglossic reality of the Arab region, one that is being articulated with ever-increasing force via digital media (Khedher & Tlili, 2022).

Incorporation is assumed to be by far the most viable solution (Wahba, 2006; Goldberg et al., 2015). It argues that there ought to be a simultaneous studying of MSA and a dialect to provide students with mastery of the entire spectrum of this immensely complex and richly subtle language that is always practically functional. The ideal method of incorporation is, however, still debated. Certain ones promote a sequenced one (initiation with MSA and subsequent incorporation of a dialect), while others promote acquisition of dialects unofficially, possibly through a period of study abroad (Ryding, 2009). The respective stances are symptomatic of a basic research need: as there are no valid empirical data to inform us as to how instructors themselves picture and enact this approach, at a time of unheard-of technologically-induced change (Al-Qahtani, 2020).

This research draws upon the conceptual orientation to teacher cognition in languages by Borg (2003), who suggests that classroom practices are significantly shaped by those of a teacher and by prior familiarity. The latter is particularly of great importance with regards to resisting incorporation approach by most Arabic teachers who were instructed to teach this approach with only exclusively MSA and resist change despite new openings being introduced by tech (Hussain et al., 2021).

Whereas targeting diglossic confrontations under an ideological axis, this investigation shifts focus to teachers themselves perception and knowledge to illuminate functional barriers to a tech-enabled blended methodology. The investigation shall change focus from diglossic abstract oratory to data-driven practical orientation to a diglossic-free horizon as students of Arabic shall be equipped with all communicative potentiality required.

Methodology

In this study, a mix-method sequential explanatory model (Creswell, 2014) was used to conduct research investigation of teachers' perception of tech-integrated approach. The two-staged process involved, firstly, data collection and data analysis before data collection and data evaluation to present background and further details to that data. The design aimed to present additional insights to that research question that could not be obtained with one kind of methodology.

Study Setting and Participants

Quantitative phase was carried out at Northern Emirates of UAE private universities (Sharjah, Dubai, and Ajman). The intended public were all adjunct AFL instructors and fulltime AFL instructors at all those universities. Since AFL instructors per university were extremely small, a sampling technique that incorporated a convenience sampling strategy concluded with 40 respondents in total.

For the qualitative phase, five teachers were randomly selected to go through one-to-one interviews with purposeful sampling. They were selectively included with explicit criteria (e.g., gender, years of service) to furnish us with a representative sample that could provide us with rich descriptive data to illuminate upon results from the survey.

Data Collection and Measures

Phase 1: Quantitative Data Collection The data were gathered with modified Arab Teacher Survey (Abdalla & Al-Batal, 2012). The questionnaire, filled out via secured web interface such as Qualtrics or SurveyMonkey, took a 4-point Likert-type agreement with 45 items to reflect teachers perception communicative approach, communicative competence, and implementation barriers. The means via made simple to obtain bigger response rate while easily and efficiently gathering data. The questionnaire suitably fell within UAE context and pilot-tested with three TAFL expertise to make sure that with computerized tool, validity and reliability are obtained.

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection Once quantitative data were closed, there were semi-structured interviews with five short-listed teachers. The semi-structured interviews were carried out by means of video conferencing programs (such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams) that took around 20 minutes to complete. The interviews involved an interview schedule that asked five open-ended questions to further prompt respondents with responses to questionnaires. The interviews were audio-recorded with permission to then be transcribed as part of subsequent data analysis.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained from questionnaires were subjected to SPSS computer statistics program to analyze data. The descriptive statistics, t-tests, correlational statistics, and one-way ANOVA were employed to estimate association between perception of teachers and demography variables.

Thematic analysis served to identify patterns and repeated patterns of such qualitative data from interviews. The results were then used to describe, illustrate, and fit within context these quantitative findings, that is, to explain why there were problems that were still being reported and to create tangible illustrations of teachers' realities.

Ethical Issues

Confidentiality and anonymity of responses were guaranteed to all participants. The final report contained pseudonyms, with no personally identifiable data. Voluntary participation took place with all respondents being duly informed of their right to withdraw from research at will.

Limitations

A main limitation of this project is that there are insufficient numbers for the quantitative strand (N=40), thus powers to generalize to a larger populace are limited. Utilizing a mix-methods approach that incorporated rich qualitative data served to offset this limitation by creating rich, site-specific data that would not have been obtained using one methodology by itself.

Results

Data were further analyzed using two-phase sequential explanatory mixed-methods approach. The qualitative as well as quantitative results are as follows, presented within the three research questions that underpinned this investigation.

Demographics and Summary Statistics

Questionnaires were distributed to 40 AFL teachers working at private universities within Northern UAE. The respondents were as different as possible within gender, first language, highest educational level, and years as a teacher. The quantitative data did with descriptive statistics, t-

tests, correlational statistics, and ANOVA to describe teachers' perception as well as attitude. The questionnaire items were condensed to suit within research questions.

Research Question 1: How do TAFL classroom instructors have perceptions that are linked with applying an integrated approach to TAFL classroom with emphasis on integration of technology? Questionnaires overwhelmingly agreed with preferring utilizing both Dialects/Accents (D/A) and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). Overwhelmingly, 87.5% of teachers did not protest that only MSA is worth being taught. Likewise, 80% did not protest that exclusively utilizing merely utilizing only MSA to instruct might make up for diglossia as a drawback.

In spite of this openness, there also appeared to be tacit agreement with MSA, whereby 97.5% of teachers agreed to being part of this Language being prestigious. Teachers also preferred introduction to oral versions at an early level, as 80% disagreed with proposing the position that sole introduction to an oral version at later levels wouldn't create confusion between students.

One of the main results with specific reference to pedagogical approach were that 80% of respondents agreed that MSA and colloquial must be taught differently, even within one unidirectional program. The circumventing that this involves to a fully regimented, as opposed to fluidly merged, methodology can be interpreted as a response to organizational shape that exists within current computer-assisted materials to instruct (Al-Fadda & Al-Jasser, 2023).

Research Question 2: How do undergrad students who are perceived to have improved communicative ability and instructors who are perceived to have views of holistic approach and its technology regarding conducting additional educational activities?

Results strongly vindicate that by incorporation of communications with technologies embedded within them, effectivity can be achieved.

Some interesting results are as follows:

- **Learning Motivation:** 97.5% of instructors confirmed that students learn Arabic with the additional aim of being conversational with locals as well as being able to read texts, thus expressing a particular need for oral as well as writing proficiency.
- **Spoken vs. MSA Advantage:** 90% of educators confirmed that students who are taught a spoken form are communicatively advanced as compared to students who are instructed with only exclusive MSA.
- **Cultural Competence:** Overwhelmingly (95%), of respondents agreed that by teaching a spoken dialect, students learn more about Arab cultures and people, and technology can play an important part to play by making available access to real media like film and social media.
- **Communicative Gaps:** 87.5% agreed to that conclusion that students who are exclusively instructed by means of MSA are not able to comprehend informally conversational native-speaking interlocutors, thus sealing off communicative gap that should be filled by communicative approach—and its technological pillars—breakthrough with that of conversational communicative partners empowered by means of AI (Al-Khatib & Al-Khatib, 2020).

These results all together aim to demonstrate that teachers indeed strongly feel that such dual approach is indeed required to gain real communicative competence, especially when such uses

technology to bridge that gap between that corpus-based form-of-writing Arabic and casual spoken form-of-everyday-living.

Research Question 3: What are the main barriers to applying a tech-integrated, integrative TAFL classroom approach?

Analysis found that despite teachers being conceptually open to tech-integrated education, there are still great institutional barriers to overcome.

- **Absence of Digital Material:** Most of those who responded (90%) did not agree to inability to have copies of a paper version of oral versions as a discouragement, but qualitative interviews strongly indicated that there is a need to develop high-quality, interactable digital materials with MSA as well as with dialects, like adaptative learning systems, teachable software via phone, and live videos with dual Subtitle.
- **Teacher Readiness:** Most 72.5% of respondents were ready to teach a non-indigenous languages spoken one who were as equally willing as enthusiastic to learn new approaches to teaching that can potentially include those that make use of technology. Teacher readiness is one such factor to adequately make new adoption of edtech tools (Al-Wahaishi et al., 2022).
- **Curricular and Programmatic Concerns:** Institutional challenges were biggest. 57.5% of programs are already teaching distinctive spoken varieties, and 82.5% of teachers reported a need for enhanced coordination within departments and classes to make implementation efficient. The qualitative interviews specified particularly as a challenge being able to mix and match different technology tools and platforms within the curriculum.
- **Spatial Dialects:** There isn't agreement as to whether to instruct one spoken dialect as opposed to a range of them, as 42% favored instructing Egyptian Arabic and 40% advised instructing Levantine Arabic. With no institution agreement as to a target dialect, this further makes it harder to create standard tech-integrated materials.

It indicates that educators themselves do not want to step into a tech-inclusion classroom but structural and organizational issues are by far larger deterrents.

Inferential Statistics

- **T-test:** The t-test was found to be significantly differing at $p < 0.05$ between male and female teachers between holding that diglossia can be terminated by making use of MSA and being capable to instruct other dialects.
- **Correlation:** There were also different moderate to high correlations ($r = 0.51-0.83$). For instance, there was a very high relation between holding that students learn Arabic to converse with native lips and holding that students learn to read texts from it, again confirming dual purpose of acquisition postulation.
- **ANOVA:** We did not find that there exists statistically significant difference between means of various groups (say, gender or graduate studies level) for individual survey questions by one-way ANOVA. We found that there exists overall agreement of opinion between various groups, confirming consensus results of descriptive statistics.

Discourse

This research explored AFL teachers' perceptions within the UAE of an all-in-one approach to teaching that uses technology. The results affirm a general consensus by teachers of being pressured toward an unusual type of curriculum that is an MSA-only type of curriculum. In this subsection, these results are presented under communicative competence (Hymes, 1966), teacher cognition (Borg, 2003), and social learning (Vygotsky, 1978), and main implications for tech-informing instruction are presented.

The Need for Tech-Integrated Approach

Its general conclusion is that there exists huge popularity for an integral approach. 97.5% agreed to glory to MSA but not at all agreeing that this is to be taught exclusively as Arabic (87.5%). Wilmsen (2006) concludes that even native informants who are academically educated make use of base vernacular Arabic to accomplish communicative purposes on a daily basis. Students are taught Arabic to converse as well as to process texts, directly vindicating Hymes's communicative model of competence.(1966)

Qualitative data shed additional light upon this agreement. Teachers indicated that they were willing to instruct with technology to instruct both MSA as well as a spoken form to challenge students enough to be able to communicate under real lifelike conditions. They indicated how students who are instructed with only MSA will fall behind native speakers under colloidal dialogue as 87.5% agreed to this question. They indicated videos to instruct languages, chatbots to introduce conversational practices using artificial intelligence, and Social Media studying are all technologies that they desire to exploit to fill this gap. The will to see technology exploited to create end-user application underpins this agreement with this blended approach. The modern discovery proceeds alongside prior scholarship (Al-Khatib & Al-Khatib, 2020; Al-Mekhalafi & Al-Ahmar, 2021), who similarly discovered that there had been a move by students to communicative proficiency as a need to learn languages.

Barriers: Connecting Beliefs to Practice with Technology

Barriers

Whereas educators are generally receptive to an approach with maximum convergence of technology, there also prevailed an un^원어 silence between present beliefs and present practices as this study indicated. The quantitative discovery upholds that most educators are still using traditional approach with MSAs only. The reason behind is Teacher Cognition Model by Borg (2003). The teachers' own previous life as students, where MSAs were presumably taught only, still serve as an influential unconscious force responsible behind present practices. Such resistances are again found with experienced educators not wanting to give up tried approaches (Isleem, 2017).

But findings indicate that these roadblocks are not unovercomeable. Most instructors (72.5%) were hopeful while instructing a non-native spoken variety, reporting a very high sense of will and readiness for educator development. Institutional barriers, primarily mediocre high-quality sources with an integration of tech along with poor coordination at the departmental level, are cited as chief issues. Teachers themselves indicated new, digitally created content with an integration of MSA as well as a spoken variety themselves indicated shared approach to tech adoption as a

pressing need. The focus thus establishes that institution aid—in training, sources, as well as integration with syllabus—comprises a required condition of an expansive merged approach (Al-Wahaishi et al., 2022). Without this one, new foci on teach–learn will continue to witness limited adoption.

Implications and Recommendations

Its results are substantially implications-prospective for TAFL pedagogy as are for UAE and international curriculum development, with technology being its most significant consideration.

.1 Professional Development: Language institutes as well as universities must develop mandatory training programs that are aimed at training teachers to make maximum use of an integrated, tech-enabled methodology. The programs must focus on hands-on methods of using multimedia materials, simulation using virtual reality, and computer-assisted as well as AI-assisted language materials to integrate MSA and colloquial varieties at classroom level (Al-Qahtani, 2020; Hussain et al., 2021).

.2 Curriculum and Material: Key to creating a new generation of educational web pages and digital books that are designed as all-in-one to a curriculum. Such materials must include a distinctive introduction pattern of vernacular varieties with MSA, as well as authentic materials like news programs, podcasts, and texts from one of those limited dialects (Al-Fadda & Al-Jasser, 2023).

.3 Sanction Coordination: Since voluntarily imposed coordination by instructors themselves is found to exist, schools need to organize periodic meetings and workshops between TAFL instructors to exchange best practices, to share digital materials, and to make common technology-integrated instruction feasible. Common central Learning Management System (LMS) or shared materials depository can prove very useful here.

4. Employ Technology to Vygotsky's ZPD: Product outcomes of communicative competence yield to us that there should exist socially interaction. Curriculars should utilize technology to dramatize real events of communication. They could incorporate virtual exchange programs with panels of native-speaking professionals, chat forums, collaborative exercises that present students with a chance to make use of both MSA as well as a spoken variety under a supportive, collaborative-setting that accommodates that of Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development.

Conclusion

In summary, this research identifies unanimous consent by teachers of UAE AFL that students communicative capacity ought to have built upon by an inclusive tech-integrated approach. Barriers to adoption are not willing/capacity inadequate by teachers but institution level support inadequate. In a bid to close such a gap between performance and intention, effort is necessary collectively to furnish teachers with appropriate professional development as well as construct new curriculums as well as tech materials that are able to easily intergrade between oral as well as MSA varieties. That will furnish teachers with boldness to change approach as well as furnish students with such a range of linguistic capacity as are required by a modern connected globe to live within.

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