

# Investigating the Attitudes of EFL Libyan Teachers Towards The Use of Arabic in their English Classrooms in Libya: A Case Study

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Received: 14.09.2023

Published: 08.10.2023

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## **Abstract:**

This study aims to examine the EFL (English Foreign Language) Libyan teachers' attitudes towards the utilization of Arabic in their classrooms, and also the advantages and disadvantages of the first language use. In addition, It seeks how it may impact the students' learning abilities for language learning. For this purpose, two research questions were created for this investigation. A questionnaire was used which is adapted from Schweers (1999), to measure the attitudes of the teachers. The findings indicated that the use of Arabic is beneficial and useful for school students in Libya, and that Arabic plays a significant pedagogical and psychological roles in teaching and learning English. However, some limitations of Arabic use are desirable. Also, the findings revealed that the use of Arabic has positively affected Libyan learners. Based on this research, Libyan learners who are taught by employing Arabic in their classrooms appear to be more motivated, confident, less stressed and are becoming autonomous learners.

**Keywords:** Mother tongue, second language, attitudes, Arabic, English foreign language.

## تحقيق آراء معلمي مادة اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الليبية فيما يخص

### ظاهرة الاستعانة باللغة العربية في تعليم المادة: دراسة حالة

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#### الملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن مواقف المعلمين الليبيين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تجاه استخدام اللغة العربية وعن مزايا وعيوب استخدامها في صفوفهم، بالإضافة أنها تسعى لفهم كيفية تأثير استخدامها على قدرات الطلاب في تعلم اللغة. لهذا الغرض، تم إعداد سؤالين بحثيين لهذا الاستقصاء. تم استخدام استبيان معدل من استبيان شويز (1999) لقياس مواقف المعلمين. أظهرت النتائج أن استخدام اللغة العربية مفيد لطلاب المدارس في ليبيا، وأن اللغة العربية تلعب دوراً تربوياً ونفسياً مهماً في تعليم وتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. ومع ذلك، هناك بعض القيود المرغوب فيها في استخدام اللغة العربية. كما كشفت النتائج أن استخدام اللغة العربية أثر إيجابياً على المتعلمين الليبيين. استناداً إلى هذا البحث، يبدو أن المتعلمين الليبيين الذين يتم تعليمهم عن طريق استخدام اللغة العربية في صفوفهم يكونون أقوى استجابة وأكثر تفاعلاً من غيرهم، مما شجعهم على اكتساب مهارة التعلم الذاتي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** اللغة الأم، اللغة الثانية، مواقف، اللغة العربية، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة

أجنبية.

#### 1. Introduction:

The current study aims to discover the integration of Arabic in the classroom where English is being taught. It particularly surveys the attitudes of Libyan teachers toward employing Arabic in their classrooms, as well as the possible benefits and drawbacks related to the use of the first language (L1) and its impact on English language learners.

Mainly, Arabic is commonly used in most of the classrooms where English is being taught in Libya (Orafi and Borg, 2009). Likewise, other Arabic researchers (Aqel, 2006; Al-Nofaie, 2010; Al-Jadidi, 2009; Al-Hadrami, 2008) shed light on the predicted negatives and positives that may appear in bilingual classrooms. Their studies show that Arab teachers tend to use Arabic rather than English, especially when they are dealing with new vocabulary, expressions and grammar points.

**1.1 The research questions:**

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1- Is the use of Arabic beneficial and useful for Libyan students in English language classrooms?

2- How does the use of their mother tongue affect them?

**1.2 The objectives of the study:**

The study aims to discover what attitudes Libyan teachers hold about the use of Arabic when teaching English, in addition to their views about what influence the use of Arabic has on their students.

**1.3 Literature Review:**

The role of the mother tongue in the acquisition of a second language has been the centre of much discussion and controversy (Al- Nofaie, 2010). Consequently, several supporting and opposing arguments have been raised. A widely popular belief has been raised by advocates of the Direct Method, the Audio-lingual Method and the Communicative Approach, who argue that using L1 may prevent learners from learning the new language (Khassawneh, 2011: 592). There have been many studies which have been conducted to discuss this debate. According to Mouhanna (2009), there have been various shifts to and from the utilization of the first language in EFL over the past few decades, depending on the accompanying political contexts and trends in EFL methods.

Recently, the restrictions against using the L1 in EFL classrooms have been removed. According to Ross (2000), this attitude towards the use of L1 has been changed because of a recent shift in the prominence of using L1 as a resource for the support of language learning. Some researches discussed below, showed the positive effects of the use of L1 in language classes. There has been recent recognition that some learners use their mother tongue as a communicative strategy to learn and use the foreign language (Cook 2001, cited in Khassawneh, 2011:593).

The use of the mother tongue in EFL classrooms has been banned for many years (Mahmoud, 2006). Nevertheless, 'by excluding the use of our students' first language in our lessons we are ignoring one of the most important resources learners have for language learning' (Deller and Rinvoluceri, 2002: 25) According to Macaro (2001, cited in Al- Nofaie, 2010: 68) the arguments against the use of L1 in L2 classrooms have not provided strong evidence to avoid the use of L1, nor have they given clear reasons for prohibiting the use of L1. Accordingly, teaching methods supporting the use of L1 as a helpful teaching and learning tool have been declared (Al- Nofaie, 2010). Moreover, Deller and Rinvoluceri (2002) maintain that the use of the mother tongue in EFL classrooms can help and create a safe environment for the learners. Cummins (2001) adds that maintaining the first language is not a disadvantage when

learning another language. In fact, its constant development provides many intellectual and social benefits to the learners while learning English. Deller (2003) asserts that L1 has a place in second language learning, because of its pedagogic importance in second language learning. Deller and Rinvoluceri (2002), Widdowson (2003), Harbord (1992), Macaro (2001) and Atkinson (1997) maintain that L1 presents a powerful source that can be used to enhance FL learning, but it should be used in a judicious way. Macaro (2001) argues that it is difficult to exclude the L1 from the classroom. Aurbuch (1998, cited in Sharma, 2006: 81) believes that the mother tongue has a positive role in language analysis, class management, presenting grammar rules, giving instructions or prompts, explaining errors and checking for comprehension.

Moreover, translation gives the learners the opportunity to draw attention to similarities and differences between the forms of both languages (Mahmoud, 2006). Swain & Lapkins' (2000) findings show that students' translation in the L1 can support the comprehension and memorization of L2 vocabulary. Equally, students can benefit from using the L1 to highlight and communicate grammar points, in particular when working in groups. Actually, it allows them to focus on vocabulary and grammatical items by giving foundations on which to build L2 structures (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003). We could claim as does Cook (2001) that L1 provides scaffolding for the students to help each other. In addition, Stern (1992) emphasizes that L1 is a facilitator for learning L2, declaring that comparing the two languages possibly will sustain the learning processes. According to Stern (1992), the L1-L2 connection is an undisputable fact of life, whether we like it or not the new knowledge is learnt on the basis of the previously acquired language.

Despite the advantages discussed above of using the L1 as a resource, instructors are nonetheless influenced by other L2 research which insists that the L1 must be avoided at all costs. In the past, most methods in L2 language pedagogy dictated that L1 should be excluded in the classroom. Cook (2001) believes that L1 does not play an essential role in EFL classrooms. L1 use is something that should never happen in today's modern and communicative classrooms. Mattioli (2004) and Tang (2002) doubt that students can actually retain target language exchanges if they are constantly relying on their mother tongue. Some research has shown that 'the transfer of patterns from the native language is undoubtedly one of the major sources of errors in learner language' (Lightbown & Spada, 1999: 165). Cook (2001) draws attention to arguments against the use of L1 in L2 classrooms. The main argument is about the way in which monolingual children acquire their first language and L2 learners acquire the target language. Krashen (1981: 1) claims that adults learn the L2 similarly to the way children acquire their mother tongue. He argues that both L1 children

and L2 learners do not have any previous knowledge about the new language. The justification behind this claim is that L2 should be built on the features of L1 acquisition, because monolingual L1 children do not know another language to use as a base, teaching L2 should be founded on the features of L1 acquisition. In this regard, supremacy of L2 may point toward elimination L1 in the classroom (Macaro, 1997). Halliwell and Jones (1991) assert the possibility of using L2 as a realistic and natural means of communication. They state that to attain successful second language learning, learners should be promoted and motivated to practice both understanding and speaking in L2. In fact, The two researchers believe that Learners are able to recognize the message even when they do not know the exact meaning of vocabulary or structures; this confirms that learners do not require to understand every word they hear as long as they can understand the message.

Some researches draw on another negative aspect of using L1. Cook (2001) highlighted that successful second language acquisition depends on maintaining the separation of L2 from the L1. In other words, L2 learning should take place only through the L2 instead of being linked to the L1. According to Weinreich, (1953, cited in Cook, 2001: 406), the principle of separation of L1 from L2 is similar to bilingualism in which the two languages construct separate systems in the mind rather than compound bilingualism in which the mind produces a single compound system. The belief of Language Compartmentalization has led to removing the L1 from L2 learning, arguing that L1 is a hindrance towards the second language acquisition. Therefore, teachers attempt to teach meaning without referring to the first language. They explain the L2 word, describe or mime its meaning, show pictures, 'in the long-term they hope that this builds up the L2 as a separate system' (Cook, 2001: 406).

In contrast with the views of Ross (2000) and Swain & Lapkin (2000), translation may lead to intrusion of the L1 leading to errors. Cook (2002) reports that translation promotes a sense of bogus similarity between L1 and L2 formed in the inter-language errors. By using translation, learners can negatively become over-reliant on translation. Therefore, they will not be capable of learning new vocabulary in the target language unless they translate it, this means those learners will become reliant on translation. As a result, they will not even attempt to recognize the meaning they need from the context or explanation. The most common argument supported by the belief that in order for learners to acquire another language is that they require extreme amounts of that language input (Turnbull, 2001; Ellis, 2005). For that reason, Atkinson (1993) notes that teachers should not waste this important classroom time using L1. 'every second spent using the L1 is a second not spent using English! – And every second counts!' (p.12).

#### **1.4 Related Studies of Using Arabic Language:**

In order to investigate the effects of using L1 on Libyan students, studies examining Arab students in Jordan and Kuwait will be utilized. Damra and Al Qudah (2012) investigated the effects of using Arabic as the language in the classroom on progression with grammar, and the students' attitudes towards using Arabic in learning English grammar. The participants of the study were 80 female students from the ninth grade at Eskan Al Jubaiha school in Jordan. They were divided into two groups; an experimental group (1) and control group (2). All learners were pre-tested in order to measure their potential differences in their achievement in grammar. Group (1) was taught grammar for six weeks, combining English and Arabic in particular situations which included explaining language rules and complex exercises and interpreting difficult English words. Group (2) were taught the same material for six weeks using the English language only. An assessment was made to measure the differences in student achievement and also to measure their attitudes towards using Arabic when learning English grammar rules. The assessments showed that there were significant differences between the two groups. The experimental group achieved better results than the control group. Damra and Al Qudah (2012) concluded that 'the overall findings showed that the majority of both groups (experimental and control) were encouraged to use their mother tongue in learning English grammar rules, and they believed in the effectiveness and importance of L1 use' (Damra and Al Qudah, 2012: 305).

Another study conducted by Alenezi (2010) was carried out in Kuwait to investigate 17 students' attitudes towards Arabic and English code switching. Code switching is 'the use of two language varieties in the same conversation' (Alenezi, 2010). His research findings clearly indicate students' strong preference toward a specific medium of instruction which is Arabic/English code switching.

#### **2. Research Methodology:**

The participants are twenty English language teachers at secondary schools in Libya to whom the English teachers' questionnaire was addressed. They are between 23 – 39 years of age. All the teachers are Libyans. A questionnaire survey was used to collect data. The questionnaire (see appendix 1) consisted of 32 questions divided into three parts, (A, B, C). Part (A) with 7 question items is about the teachers' backgrounds. In part (B), some question items were adapted from Schweers (1999) to achieve the goal of the study. This part of the questionnaire consists of a mixture of 15 question items; dichotomous questions (simple questions answered by yes or no) and multiple choice questions. The last part of the questionnaire is (C), and it deals with 10 items of 5 point Likert scale questions (from strongly agree through to strongly disagree).

### 3. The Research Findings:

The responses about the respondents' background and experience of teaching English as a foreign language (questions from 1 to 7) show that all the teachers who participated in the study have a good knowledge of the two languages; Arabic and English. *Their ages are from 24 – 39 years old and their years of teaching experience ranged from 2 to 17 years.* All of the teachers are Libyan, including 14 females and 6 males. In part (B) of the questionnaire, the participants were asked about the use of Arabic in EFL classrooms. Twelve teachers accepted that 'English teachers should use the mother tongue in the classroom' (Q8, see appendix 1). Conversely, six respondents did not agree to its use in the classroom, while the other two respondents were not sure. The responses to Q9, revealed that fourteen out of twenty respondents used Arabic language in teaching English, whereas, six respondents did not use it. The teachers who responded 'yes' in Q9, were asked how frequently they used Arabic in their classes. Nine of them claimed that they did 'sometimes', while four said they did 'often'. No one responded 'seldom'. Subsequently, the majority of the participants 70% use Arabic language in teaching English. In Q13, the majority of respondents (17) answered that their students use Arabic language in their classrooms. Only three respondents said 'no'. When asked in Q14 about the frequency of students' use of Arabic, the questionnaire revealed that eleven of the seventeen respondents responded 'always', whereas five respondents responded with 'sometimes' and one respondent chose 'usually'. Table 1 reviews the responses to questions (8, 9, 10, 13, 14).

**Table 1:** Teachers' Views on Using Arabic in EFL Classrooms

Question no.	The question	Options	Per.
Q8	Should English teachers use the mother tongue in the classroom?	yes no not sure	60% 30% 10%
Q9	Do you use Arabic in your class?	yes no	70% 30%
Q10	If Yes in <b>9</b> , how frequently do you use Arabic in the class?	often sometimes seldom	25% 45% 0%
Q13	Do your students use Arabic language in your classroom?	yes no	85% 15%
Q14	If Yes in <b>13</b> , how often do they use it?	always sometimes usually	55% 25% 5%

The table illustrated the distribution of the participants' attitudes towards using Arabic based on yes/ no questions and questions about 'how frequently do you use Arabic in the class?'. It is clear that the teachers who participated in this study mostly held positive attitudes towards employing Arabic in English teaching; however, 30% of them held negative attitudes. These findings are in line with Orafi and Borg (2009) whose findings show that Arabic language is widely used in the English language classrooms in Libya.

In responses to the four questions (11, 12, 15, 16, see appendix 1) regarding the reasons of using and not using Arabic either by teachers or students from the teachers' point of view. Those questions will be stated in the table 2 below.

**Table 2:** Teachers' Views on Reasons for Employing and not Employing Arabic

Question no.	The statement	Value	Per.
Q11	it saves time and effort	6	30%
	it is more helpful and successful	7	35%
	I do not have enough ability to speak English	1	5%
Q12	to provide learners with efficient exposure to English	6	30%
	to avoid interference from Arabic	0	0%
Q15	they do not have the ability to use English	15	75%
	they like to use Arabic	3	15%
Q16	my students do not like to use it	0	0%
	I discourage using it	3	15%

For this set of questions, the respondents were asked to provide their opinions on nine statements about using Arabic in their classrooms. For Q11, the teachers who said they employed Arabic in the classroom were then asked to highlight the reasons behind its use. As can be seen, 30% of the teachers attributed their use of Arabic to the first option 'it saves time and effort'. 35% of the responses agreed that Arabic 'it is more helpful and successful' to use, but one teacher (KA) declared that 'I do not have enough ability to speak English'.

Question 12 asked the respondents who claimed that they did not use Arabic language about the reasons which led them to ban Arabic and use English instead. According to the replies given in the table above, all the six teachers attribute the ban of Arabic in their classrooms to 'provide learners with efficient exposure to English'.

In response to Q15, the seventeen teachers who asserted that their students use Arabic (stated above), 75% of them ascribed the reason for students not using English to the weakness of the students' ability 'they do not have the



ability to use English', while 15% claimed 'they like to use Arabic'. On the other hand, all the teachers who maintained that their students did not use Arabic, selected 'I discourage using it' for Q16, when they were asked why their learners tend to use Arabic in the classroom.

This section of the results characterizes the responses to the questions Q21 'When do you think it is useful to use Arabic in the English classroom?', and Q22 'When do you think it is not useful to use Arabic in the English classroom?'. The following table 3 summarizes the respondents' responses to Q21 and Q22.

**Table 3:** Situations in Which Teachers Prefer and Do not Prefer to Use Arabic

Question no.	The statement	value	Per.
Q21	To describe some new vocabulary items especially abstract items.	8	40%
	to translate phrases and expressions	0	0%
	to clarify complicated grammar points and complex ideas	10	50%
	to give instructions and suggestions	2	10%
Q22	to translate vocabulary items	7	35%
	to explain the lessons	1	5%
	to interact with students	12	60%

The percentages above reflect the participants' responses to the situations in which Arabic is useful/ not useful to use in the classroom. They reflect that half of the teachers 50% in this research were of the view that Arabic is useful 'to clarify complicated grammar points and complex ideas'. While 40% of the responses agreed with 'to describe some new vocabulary items especially abstract items', whereas only 10% agreed with 'to give instructions and suggestions'. As for Q 22, it is clear that the majority of the teachers 60% do not prefer to use Arabic for class interaction. The other 40% is divided into two percentages; 35% selected 'to translate vocabulary items', while the remaining 5% agreed with 'to explain the lessons'. In Q21, It is observed that the least percentage 0% reflected the teachers views about the situations in which Arabic is considered as a useful tool, it was for 'to translate phrases and expressions'. Minimizing the importance of translation in the classroom was also supported by 35% of responses in Q22 which went for the option 'to translate vocabulary items' as an answer for the question 'When do you think it is not useful to use Arabic in the English classroom?'. This contradicts the assertion of Ross (2000), as reported in chapter 2, when he considered translation as the fifth skill

and the most important means in communication and understanding. Consequently, the questionnaire addressed a series of questions (17, 18, 19, 20) with the direct purpose that the answers would provide the research with the knowledge about the potential positive/ negative impacts on the Libyan students. Table 4 below recapitulates the related responses.

**Table 4:** Teachers' Views on The Impact of the Arabic Language

Question no.	The question	Options	Per.
Q17	Do you think that the use of Arabic positively affected Libyan students?	yes no not sure	65% 30% 5%
Q18	If yes in 17, how did Arabic affected them?	increased students' comprehension of lessons increased the students' motivation for learning English created an atmosphere for students to be autonomous	5% 30% 30%
Q19	Do you think that the use of Arabic negatively affected Libyan students?	yes no not sure	35% 65% 0%
Q20	If yes in 19, how did Arabic affected them?	decreased students' listening and speaking skills decreased the students' motivation for learning English	35% 0%

Table (4) showed the responses for the four questions. Responses to Q17 indicated that thirteen respondents believed that Arabic positively affected their learners; nevertheless, six responses held negative beliefs about effect of Arabic. On the other hand one teacher was neutral. According to the question 18 which was addressed to teachers who answered 'yes' in Q17, equal percentages were recorded for both 'increased the students' motivation for learning English' and 'created an atmosphere for students to be autonomous', while the least percentage 5% was for 'increased students' comprehension of lessons'.

Question 19 confirmed that 35% of the respondents thought that Arabic language negatively affected Libyan students, whereas 65% did not agree. As for Q20, all the teachers (the 35% to whom the question was directed) agreed unanimously that Arabic 'decreased students' listening and speaking skills'.

Finally, part (C) assessed the teachers' views about some points raised in the literature review. They were asked to respond using the 5 point Likert scale to questions about ten items (23- 32). The findings are given in table 5 below, condensed into five categories.

**Table 5: Teachers' Attitudes Towards Using the Mother Tongue**

	Statements	Strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
23	Mother tongue use in EFL is a waste of time.	0	3	3	3	11
24	Mother tongue can be a facilitator and contributor to learning another language.	14	0	1	5	0
25	Arabic language use in the English classroom has a positive impact on the Libyan students.	9	5	0	5	1
26	Arabic language use in the English classroom has a negative impact on the Libyan students.	2	4	0	11	3
27	Adults learn the L2 similarly to the way children acquire their mother tongue.	0	2	2	13	3
28	Arabic use in the EFL classrooms deprives students from efficient exposure to English language.	5	3	0	12	0
29	There should not be any links between L1 and L2 in the L2 classroom.	0	4	2	14	0
30	Overuse of Arabic hinders communication in English and makes learners entirely depend on it.	6	6	3	5	0
31	There should be some limitations for using Arabic in the English classroom.	6	14	0	0	0
32	Learners will grasp L2 better if the teacher uses L2 only.	2	4	0	2	12

As can be seen, in Q27, the majority of the respondents (65% 'disagree', 5 'strongly disagree') opposed the concept of Krashen (1981) who believes that adults learn the L2 similarly to the way children acquire their mother tongue. It would seem that respondents continued to express their negative attitudes as 70% of them disagreed that 'there should not be any links between L1 and L2 in the L2 classroom' Q29. While 60% did not agree with item (28). The next item

looked at whether or not overuse of Arabic led to a weakness in English. The participants displayed almost an even spread of percentages: 30% strongly agreed and 30% agreed. However, 25% disagreed and 15% neither agreed nor disagreed. For Q31, all the respondents accepted that 'there should be some limitations for using Arabic in the English classroom'. But only 60% of the teachers strongly disagreed that learners will grasp English better if only the teacher uses it.

#### **4. Conclusion.**

Based on a questionnaire, the findings of this study have clearly shown that using Arabic is desirable in teaching English in Libya. It was discovered that many Libyan teachers held positive attitudes towards Arabic use in their classrooms. Nevertheless, there were a small number of cases which they did not favour the use of Arabic. As the research findings revealed, Arabic is believed to occupy a beneficial and useful pedagogical and psychological role that should not be ignored in second language classrooms. According to the findings, there are many reasons for employing Arabic: It is natural to use because it is easier and more effective. It can save time and teachers' efforts. In other words, the suitable use of Arabic in English classrooms is perceived in saving class time. As an alternative of going through time-consuming explanations in English it is sometimes easier and more effective to use the L1 to explain vocabulary items or clarify grammar points. On this point, despite monolingual teachers' belief in the need to avoid or minimize the use of Arabic, they acknowledged that Arabic can facilitate English learning in terms of saving class time. Moreover, speaking English can sometimes be an embarrassment for some Libyan students who think they are not capable or skillful in English. In this case, Arabic use would be a useful teaching aid and feasible for such an occasion. On the other hand, the recommended and preferable use of Arabic was mostly in clarifying complicated grammar points and complex ideas and then in describing new vocabulary items, particularly abstract items. However, actual direct translation seemed to be rejected by those teachers. In spite of the positive attitudes stated above, the results of this study have also shown that participants were aware and restricted the overuse of Arabic in order to create a space, even if limited to, L2 exposure.

According to this research findings, one of the core beliefs the majority of the participants hold is that Arabic use has positively affected Libyan learners. Those teachers have observed that since Arabic use created a safe environment in the classroom, it has produced motivated, more activated, confident and less hesitant learners. Accordingly, as the participants expressed, Arabic could effectively help learners to understand and realize L2 features and improve their understanding in English. Alternatively, a few teachers believed that Arabic has

badly affected Libyan learners. They claimed that Arabic has influenced learners who are over-reliant on Arabic and unable to listen or speak the English language. The overall findings showed that many Libyan English teachers hold positive attitudes toward Arabic use in English classrooms; therefore, Arabic is widely used in the Libyan classroom. The findings indicate that the use of Arabic is beneficial and useful for secondary school students in Libya, and that Arabic plays significant pedagogical and psychological roles in teaching and learning English. These findings showed similar results to the previously conducted studies such as: Deller (2003), Deller and Rinvoluceri (2002), Widdowson (2003), Harbord (1992), Macaro (2001), Swain & Lapkin (2000), and Schweers (1999). Also, the findings revealed that Arabic use can positively affect Libyan learners. These findings agree with Damra and Al Qudahs' (2012) research study conducted to investigate the influence of Arabic use in teaching English. Based on the present research study, it is demonstrated that Libyan learners who are taught by employing Arabic in their classrooms seem more motivated, more confident, less stressed and more autonomous.

#### **5. Recommendations for Further Studies:**

In the light of the research study and in order to help and facilitate English language learning with the assistance of Arabic, some recommendations for English teachers should be presented:

- 1- English teachers should manage with their learners' requirements and attempt to use Arabic language only when it is necessary.
- 2- Using Arabic in the classroom should not deprive learners of exposure to the English language.
- 3- Libyan English teachers should be aware of areas of similarities and differences between Arabic and English avoiding the areas of differences and improve their teaching by using areas which are similar and with which they are familiar.

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**Appendix**  
**The Questionnaire**

**A: Information about you.**

- 1- Your name: .....
- 2- Your age: 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60 and over .
- 3- Your gender (male/female): Male  Female
- 4- Nationality: .....
- 5- Qualifications: .....
- 6- Years of English teaching experience: .....
- 7- Languages you speak: .....

**B: Tick () the one that applies.**

8. Should English teachers use our mother tongue in the classroom?  
a.  yes                      b.  no                      c.  not sure
9. Do you use Arabic in your class?  
a.  yes                              b.  no
10. If you say yes in 9, how frequently do you use Arabic in the class?  
a.  often                              b.  sometimes                      c.  seldom
11. If you say yes in 9, why do you use it in your classroom?  
a.  it saves time and effort.  
b.  it is more helpful and successful.  
c.  I do not have enough ability to speak English.  
d.  other, please specify.
12. If you say no in 9, why do not you use it in your classroom?  
a.  to provide learners with efficient exposure to English.  
b.  to avoid interference from Arabic.  
c.  other, please specify.
13. Do your students use Arabic language in your classroom?  
a.  yes                              b.  no
14. If you say yes in 13, how often do they use it?  
a.  always                              b.  sometimes                      c.  usually
15. If you say yes in 13, in your opinion, what are the reasons behind that? (You may choose more than one)  
a.  they do not have the ability to use English.  
b.  they like to use Arabic.  
c.  other, please specify.
16. If you say no in 13, in your opinion, what are the reasons behind that? (You may choose more than one)  
a.  my students do not like to use it.  
b.  I discourage using it.  
c.  other, please specify.
17. Do you think that the use of Arabic positively affected your students?



- a.  yes                      b.  no                      c.  not sure
18. If you say yes in 17, how did using Arabic affect them? (You may choose more than one)
- a.  increased students' comprehension of lessons  
b.  increased the students' motivation for learning English  
c.  created an atmosphere for students to be autonomous  
d.  other, please specify
19. Do you think that the use of Arabic negatively affected your students? (You may choose more than one)
- a.  yes                      b.  no                      c.  not sure
20. If you say yes in 19, how did Arabic affected them?
- a.  decreased students' listening and speaking skills  
b.  decreased the students' motivation for learning English  
c.  other, please specify
21. When do you think it is useful to use Arabic in the English classroom? (You may choose more than one)
- a.  to describe some new vocabulary items especially abstract items.  
b.  to translate phrases and expressions.  
c.  to clarify complicated grammar points and complex ideas.  
d.  to give instructions and suggestions.  
e.  other, please specify.
22. When do you think it is not useful to use Arabic in the English classroom? (You may choose more than one)
- a.  to translate vocabulary items.  
b.  to explain the lessons.  
c.  to interact with students.  
d.  other, please specify

**C: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?**

Please Tick only one of the boxes to answer.

23. Mother tongue use in EFL is a waste of time.
- strongly agree.  
 agree.  
 neither agree nor disagree.  
 disagree.  
 strongly disagree.
24. Mother tongue can be a facilitator and contributor to learning another language.
- strongly agree.  
 agree.  
 neither agree nor disagree.  
 disagree.  
 strongly disagree.

- 25.** From your teaching experience, Arabic language use in the English classroom has a positive impact on the Libyan students.
- strongly agree.
  - agree.
  - neither agree nor disagree.
  - disagree.
  - strongly disagree.
- 26.** From your teaching experience, Arabic language use in the English classroom has a negative impact on the Libyan students.
- strongly agree.
  - agree.
  - neither agree nor disagree.
  - disagree.
  - strongly disagree.
- 27.** Adults learn the L2 similarly to the way children acquire their mother tongue.
- strongly agree.
  - agree.
  - neither agree nor disagree.
  - disagree.
  - strongly disagree.
- 28.** Arabic use in the EFL classrooms deprives students from efficient exposure to English language.
- strongly agree.
  - agree.
  - neither agree nor disagree.
  - disagree.
  - strongly disagree.
- 29.** There should not be any links between L1 and L2 in the L2 classroom.
- strongly agree.
  - agree.
  - neither agree nor disagree.
  - disagree.
  - strongly disagree.
- 30.** Overuse of Arabic hinders communication in English and makes learners entirely depend on it.
- strongly agree.
  - agree.
  - neither agree nor disagree.
  - disagree.
  - strongly disagree.
- 31.** There should be some limitations for using Arabic in the English classroom.
- strongly agree.

- agree.
- neither agree nor disagree.
- disagree.
- strongly disagree.

**32.** Learners will grasp L2 better if the teacher uses L2 only.

- strongly agree
- agree.
- neither agree nor disagree.
- disagree.
- strongly disagree.