

## **A Case Study on the Effectiveness of Bilingual Instructors Compared with Monolingual Instructors at a Private University in Saudi Arabia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the study was to compare the instructional effectiveness of bilingual instructors compared to monolingual instructors. The case study design was non-experimental using a mixed methods approach. The data was collected from surveys, interviews, and classroom observations of monolingual and bilingual instructors (n=120) at a private university in Saudi Arabia. The survey and interview results showed bilingual instructors in favor of the bilingual method while monolingual instructors were not. Classroom observational data showed more incidents of student engagement recorded in the bilingual instruction compared to the classrooms where monolingual instruction took place. The implications of the study demonstrate the need for a policy change to allow bilingual instruction in the classroom and for preference given to the hiring of bilingual instructors as a means to facilitate student understanding of concepts in the classroom and in empowering second language acquisition of native Arabic speaking students.

**Key words:** bilingual and monolingual instructors, bilingual education, classroom observations, Arab Gulf universities, faculty recruitment

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

Globalization has advanced English language as a dominant language in the world since the end of the Cold War, this has resulted in a preference for the use of the English language in society, in the workplace, and in educational institutions. In countries that are not native speakers of English this has manifested itself clearly in the introduction of English as the dominant language of instruction in many educational institutions whether at the K-12 level or in higher education. In the case of the Arab world, this has been seen clearly in the increased number of K-12 private schools (or international schools as they are commonly known) spreading across the Arab homeland alongside private universities that offer instruction in the English language.

These schools and universities especially popular in the Arab gulf region offer students instruction based on the American, Canadian, or British educational system with English being the primary language of instruction. There is a weakened focus on literacy in Arab language and the valuable interrelationship of varying literacies among bilingual learners.

On one hand parents, private college school administrators, and hiring companies have been emphasizing the need for proficient English language graduates. They are strong supporters of instruction in the English language as they see

this as a way for their children to be better prepared for job prospects and the global economy or to continue in their postgraduate studies to universities abroad particularly in the United States, Canada, Australia, or the United Kingdom.

On the other hand, globalization has presented a serious dilemma in the Arab region. Some fear the weakening or demise of the Arab language while others fear the loss of culture and national identity. Many see it as a form of colonial domination and suppression of the native language, culture, and people (Weber, 2011). However, in Saudi Arabia there has been research advocating more English being taught at public schools in the early years (Al-Mansour, 2009).

In the Arab Gulf and from a pedagogical point of view this has presented yet another problem; on one hand instructional resources at private universities are in the English language (including assessments), and instructors are hired with the intent to teach in English, yet in our experience teaching many of the students are weak in their English language ability and struggle to cope with the demands of an English only curriculum. We believe this can be applied to the majority of students-as the case may be in Saudi Arabia- that come from K-12 schools which predominately instruct in Arabic.

### **Current Learning Situation**

One way around this problem has been to mandate a preparatory year of intensive English language instruction for

students who score low on their English college admission exams, ahead of them joining their four years of undergraduate study at the university. Yet because of the strong deficiency of English language in the students who take a minimal number of English language classes in their K-12 public schools, we have found through our experience that this one year preparatory year may prove to be insufficient for many.

Many struggle even after completing their one year of preparatory school instruction as their undergraduate courses become more challenging and the expectation for them to read and write in English becomes more accelerated as they advance through their four years of study. This continues although students are directed further to undergo a general education program (as the case was in the group of students that are part of this study) ahead of their specialization courses; a general education program where more English language courses are offered to students, and yet many still struggled in completing their undergraduate years of study to the quality expected by their education program.

One solution we have been investigating is in the use of bilingual instruction in the classroom through the recruitment of bilingual instructors that can teach in both Arabic and English. Bilingualism has been reported to have favorable effects on students' understanding in the literature. Zelasko and Antunez (2000) have argued that bilingualism has cognitive benefits, but also extends to social-emotional, and learning benefits.

Bilingual students tend to perform higher than the performance of a monolingual student in terms of logic and decision making since their brain is more active. Success in a familiar language aids second language acquisition and further literacy in new languages (Benson, 2004; Eisenchlas et al., 2015). It also facilitates the student to find his/her own identity and strengthens their relationship with family, culture, and community.

On one hand the students are allowed to strengthen their English language through the use of English in the classroom by the bilingual instructor, yet in order to drive their conceptual understanding and when needed the instructor can explain difficult concepts using the students' native language, or translate difficult terms or vocabulary, or allow peer tutoring when students in the classroom are allowed to explain to one another using the Arabic language.

All these instances we have witnessed in this study in our observations of classrooms and are being used by instructors and students alike in practice inside the classroom. We hope in doing so that instructors would avoid failing their students in their coursework for not understanding the concepts being taught, but rather recognize that their students may suffer from English language deficiency.

### **Purpose of the Research**

The main research question of this study was: are bilingual instructors more effective than monolingual instructors in the classroom? Hence to gauge the level of effectiveness of both types of instructors, the main purpose of this study was to conduct observations of student engagement in classrooms where bilingual instructors used Arabic and English in their

instruction, and to compare them to monolingual instructors who used only English in their instruction.

This was a significant aspect of this study since-as we will talk about in the literature review- we have not found references where instructors were observed in undergraduate university classrooms to compare their effectiveness in using the bilingual versus monolingual approach during classroom instruction.

Thus, the need for this study in part is to understand-through classroom observations- how the bilingual approach can be effective inside the classroom. Last of all, we also surveyed and interviewed both bilingual and monolingual instructors to see if they are in favor of the bilingual instructional approach or not.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Literature Overview**

Most of the debate for or against bilingual education we found in the literature comes from the USA. The arguments for or against bilingual education started in the 1970's with increasing number of Latino immigrants coming into the US. This necessitated adjustments being made in the public school sector to facilitate the learning of immigrant children whose native language was Spanish not English. English Second Language programs were instilled in public schools as mandated by new enacted government legislation (*Aspira of New York City vs. Board of Education of the City of New York case, 1972*). More recently, studies have pointed to the need for protecting bilingual education and the increased need for bilingual instructors (Teliez & Varghese, 2013).

This literature review focused on presenting the evidence found in the literature for or against bilingual education. Moreover, we looked at observational studies that looked at the effectiveness of bilingual education as compared to monolingual education, we were especially interested in any studies done at the undergraduate level and more so interested on a focus on the Arab Gulf region. In this literature review we will present the findings of the literature we found against bilingual education, for bilingual education, and studies done to observe bilingual instruction in the classroom.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this paper relied on the scientific evidence presented on bilingualism as strengthening second language acquisition (Cummins, 2009) or its positive effect on the cognitive, social, and cultural well-being of students (Zelasko & Antunez, 2000).

Another theoretical reference to take into account is Ecological Systems Theory (EST) (Ettetal & Mahoney, 2017). If we consider that the best learning for students takes place within the context of a healthy and positive ecological learning setting. Then we can see that university administrators by allowing instruction of Arab Gulf university students to take place in their mother tongue, is a way to facilitate their learning and to empower them.

On one hand, learning is facilitated by creating a comfortable and less restrictive classroom environment where the mother tongue enables communication between instructor and student. In the Vygotskian sense, it allows language to facilitate communication in a healthy social interaction. On the other hand it empowers both instructor and student in the Freirian sense of power education.

### **The Case Against Bilingual Education**

Studies reporting against bilingual education argue that learning in two languages weakens students' ability to learn the target language mainly English (Porter, 1998). Rossell and Baker, (1996) looked at research published before 1996 and found evidence not in support of bilingual education as a transitional method for instructing dual language students.

The references against bilingual education we found tend to be older and also come from the USA, where the emphasis on students is for learning the language of the country which is English. However, more recent research (Cummins, 2009) has shown that second language acquisition is in fact supported by the use of the native language. Even the debate in the USA has not been one sided. Those in the USA -and since the 1990's- have argued for bilingual instruction reporting that bilingual instruction helps protect the culture of the student (Loar, 1996).

This more recent evidence showing the benefits of bilingual education has also come from countries outside the USA where the native language is not English as in the case with Arab Gulf countries. We will show the findings of those studies next.

### **The Case for Bilingual Education**

There has been recent general support for bi-lingual education as a way of enhancing student language acquisition and understanding in the classroom. For instance we used Cummins' (2009) "developmental interdependence" hypothesis that suggested that children's achievement in the second language depends on the level of their mastery of their native language. This has been further supported by work on multi-lingual literacies and the interdependence of language learning between languages (Baker, 2011; Schalley et al., 2016). In relation to this, Zelasko and Antunez's (2000) paper also showed that bilingualism has not only cognitive benefits, but also extends to social-emotional, and learning benefits.

With regards to international support, historical evidence from Canada shows that bilingually educated children were equal or ahead of their English educated peers (Barik & Swain, 1978). Also, we found evidence from China showing student enthusiasm and course satisfaction for courses taught in a bilingual approach (Li & Wang, 2010) although the findings also mention that there were challenges to overcome such as availability of textbooks and other teaching resources. Even when English language instructors who are cautious about using the native classroom in an English language instruction class, in practice have been reported as using the native language to facilitate understanding of concepts (Hashemi & Sabet, 2013).

Al-Amri (2013) in reviewing the literature of the Arab Gulf region had found that the evidence tips in favor of bilingualism (2013). Al-Enezi (2010) reported in a study done in Kuwait, that code switching in between Arabic and English has a positive effect and that universities should revise their policies on strict English language instruction. He found that in practice teachers code switch in the example of the college of health sciences class he investigated.

Further evidence has been presented by Al-Nofaie (2010) that reported favorably on students and instructors at a Saudi Arabia intermediate school using Arabic in an English language class. Particularly students indicated their preference for using Arabic in instructions on exams, peer teaching, translating words, and contrasting Arabic and English in learning the English language. Evidence in support of bilingual instruction has also been reported for students' and instructors' preferences in Qatar (Taha, 2006) especially as it was reported that the use of the native language facilitates the learning of the target language.

Similarly, Jadallah and Hassan (2011) reported instructor support for using the bilingual approach in an English language class. At the undergraduate college level in Saudi Arabia where our study was conducted, the bilingual approach was found to be an effective method of instructing mathematics students especially in the use of a translation of important mathematical terms at the outset of the semester (Yushau & Bokhari, 2005).

### **Observational Studies of Bilingual Education**

We found little observational studies found at the college level. The research found on observing bilingual instruction comes from K-12 schools. Research using video recordings of grade seven students' collaboratively translating text from English to Spanish demonstrated benefits to student understanding (Puzio et al., 2013). Research using audio-taped dialogue and written recalls of students done with fourth grade classrooms advocated student access to their native language while learning Hopewell (2011). Jacobs and Friedman (1988) showed that students performed just as well on their final exams in the *post-secondary* context whether they were instructed by a native or non-native speaking instructor.

In the Arab Gulf context, Al-Jadidi (2009) is one observational study we found done in Oman, where monolingual and bilingual instructors were observed at the university level. The findings of the study indicated unique characteristics inherent to each that distinguishes their teaching methods. Although the study reported students evenly divided in preference for each type of instructor, the study indicated preference for use of the bilingual approach in the early years of tertiary undergraduate study over the later years.

In conclusion, overall we have found support for the bilingual approach as an effective means of teaching students. On the other-hand we have found little studies done to observe the effectiveness of bilingual instructors in the classroom versus those that use monolingual instruction especially at the undergraduate college level. Thus the need for this study comes from gathering a large enough size of observational data comparing bilingual instructors against

monolingual instructors to gain an understanding of the pedagogical method used by each in their teaching style and to investigate whether there is any advantage to the use of the bilingual teaching method over the monolingual teaching method for native Arabic speaking undergraduate students.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Background

Over the last few years our research team has gathered data in the form of surveys, interviews, and classroom observations of the major stakeholders (both students and instructors) involved in the private university where we have conducted our research and we have reported our findings in several conferences and publications. We found students to be in favor of using bilingual instructors in the classroom (ElJishi-Shaker et al., 2015). On the other hand we had previously found faculty undecided: we reported them being not in favor in 2014 (ElJishi-Shaker et al., 2014). Now we present in this study an explanation that the decision to support bilingual instruction or not may depend on the faculty member being bilingual or not him or herself.

Next, we moved to collection of classroom observational data of bilingual and monolingual instructors. Our study was a pilot study, observing how bilingual instructors were compared to monolingual instructors in their classroom instruction. The results of our pilot study (ElJishi-Shaker et al., 2016) showed documented instances where Arabic was being used by bilingual instructors in the classroom either in explaining difficult concepts or in translating difficult terms and vocabulary; as well there were incidents where students were using Arabic in peer tutoring instances explaining concepts or words to one another using their native Arabic language.

In this study we conducted classroom observations of a large sample size of instructors (n=120) comparing bilingual instructors and monolingual instructors in order to gauge the level of student engagement in their classrooms. Last of all, this study also provided a classroom observational method that can be used to gauge the level of effectiveness of classroom instructors.

### Research Design and Type

The research design for this study was non-experimental case study and the type of study was descriptive. It was a case study because the sample chosen was a convenience non-random sample of undergraduate female students studying at a private university where we were allowed permission to gather data from. Thus the results of this study were limited to females, undergraduates that were studying at a private university in Saudi Arabia, hence the results of our study cannot be generalized to students that are either male, or studying at a public university, or are outside of Saudi Arabia.

Since the study used a variety of instruments (observations, survey, and interviews) it is considered a case study rather than an observational study. It is descriptive because

it uses a mixed methods approach with quantitative data collected from the surveys and qualitative data from interviews and observations.

### Data Collection and Analysis

Students enrolled in our research methods classes were trained on how to conduct the surveys, interviews, and collect the observational data; and the qualitative data was analyzed using a thematic content analysis approach. Critical incidents showing engagement of students with the bilingual and monolingual instructors in the observational data were highlighted, discussed, and collected in tables for analysis (see Appendices A and B). Similarly interview responses of instructors were coded using a thematic content analysis approach.

### Sampling, Participants, Research Setting, Instruments, and Methodology

In all, a convenience non-random sample of 120 faculty (59 bilingual faculty and 61 monolingual faculty) at a private university in Saudi Arabia were visited. The instructors were divided into two groups: those who instruct only in English were classified as monolingual instructors, and those who instruct in English but occasionally use Arabic in their classrooms were classified as bilingual instructors. The instruments used were survey, interview, and observation. Three classroom observations of each faculty were done on three separate occasions.

The methodology was mixed methods and involved gathering quantitative data from the single question survey and qualitative data from the interviews and observations. The single question survey questionnaire asked faculty to indicate whether they were in favor, not in favor, (or both) of having bilingual instructors in the classroom. The interview open-ended question asked faculty to indicate their reasons behind their response to the survey question. Out of the 59 bilingual instructors 38 were available for the interviews and out of 61 monolingual instructors 37 were available. Only percentages for the major reasons of the total number of responses cited in the interviews were presented in the results tables.

Last of all, as part of the IRB approval process we were instructed by the university not to disclose the name of the university where we collected the data from.

### Observation Methods

The observations used a two-column approach to each observation. One column was the *descriptive* column and the second was the *reflective* column. The analysis focused on identifying critical incidents in the bilingual and monolingual instructed classrooms in both columns. For the bilingual instructed classrooms, identifying the critical incidents for the use of Arabic by students or faculty in the classroom. Second, the level of engagement or disengagement of the students.

For the monolingual instructed classrooms, identifying critical incidents of the use of Arabic in the classroom.

Second, the level of engagement or disengagement of the students. The critical incidents were coded into themes and the thematic approach was used to identify common incidents recorded for the faculty.

Next the demographic table gathered information on whether the instructor was a native speaker of Arabic or not and the number of years they have taught at this particular university. All participants signed an informed consent form ahead of joining the project.

**RESULTS**

**Demographics**

The results of the demographic information gathered (Table 1) showed that the teaching experience at the university is comparable for bilingual and monolingual instructors at around 3 years. Moreover, the percentage of monolingual instructors who speak Arabic was 43%. This indicated that even within the monolingual instructors hired by the university a good number of instructors could fall back on their native Arabic language if the need for that should arise in the classroom.

**The Bilingual Instructor**

*Survey and interview results*

The survey results for 59 bilingual instructors showed that 65% of faculty were in favor of using bilingual instruction in the classroom (Table 2). Interviews with the 38 bilingual faculty (Table 3) who were in favor of the bilingual approach indicated that the major reason for their support is due to the bilingual approach improving students’ understanding of the concepts (31% of total responses). This was followed by the fact that students were deficient in the English language

**Table 1.** Instructor demographics n=120

	<b>Bilingual</b>	<b>Monolingual</b>
Native Arab Speakers	100%	43%
Average number of years teaching at the university	3.1	2.9

**Table 2.** Bilingual instructor survey results n=59

<b>In favor</b>	<b>65%</b>
Not in Favor	10%
Both	25%

**Table 3.** Bilingual teacher interview results for those in favor of bilingual instruction n=38

<b>% responses*</b>	
31	The bilingual approach leads to better understanding of students
21	Due to student lack of English proficiency
17	Translating difficult words

\* Only percentages for the major reasons of the total number of responses cited in the interviews were presented in the tables.

(21% of total responses) and that students could benefit from translation of difficult words (17% of total responses).

**Observational data**

Observational data collected for 59 bilingual faculty show that 61% of the faculty observed used Arabic in their explanations. Overall, the two most frequent critical incidents recorded in the observations in which Arabic was used in the classroom was when the teacher explained a concept or introduced a lesson and when students asked questions of the teacher they asked using Arabic. Other instances of using Arabic are indicated in Appendix A, the teacher translated some difficult terms in Arabic, peer tutoring where students asked one another or explained to one another in Arabic, students offered their explanations in Arabic.

Also, we tried to gauge the level of engagement of the students or lack of, overall we recorded 23 incidents where students seemed to be engaged in the lesson compared to 8 incidents where they were not (Appendix A). The first five columns (Appendix A) and the first six columns (Appendix B) describe instances where we observed the use of Arabic in the classroom by either the instructor or students. The last two columns is where we counted instances where students showed engagement with the lesson or were dis-engaged.

Examples of engagement were students actively working on an activity that the instructor asked the students to do, or asking questions. Dis-engagement examples might be students involved in side talks or not working on an activity the instructor prompted them to do.

**Monolingual Instructors**

*Survey and interview results*

The survey results for 61 monolingual instructors showed 60% were against using bilingual instruction in the classroom, 30% were both in favor and not in favor, and only 10% were in favor (Table 4). Interview results of the 37 monolingual faculty that were not in favor of the bilingual approach (Table 5) indicated their reasons as: the students need to learn the English language and that relying on Arabic will make the students deficient in the English language (37% of total responses). Also, that instructing in Arabic goes against university policy which directs instructors to teach in the English language (19% of total responses).

**Table 4.** Monolingual instructor survey results n=61

<b>In favor</b>	<b>10%</b>
Not in Favor	59%
Both	30%

\*Percentage does not add to 100% due to rounding

**Table 5.** Monolingual instructor interview results for those not in favor of bilingual instruction n=37

<b>% responses*</b>	
37	Students must learn English and using Arabic will make them deficient in English
19	It’s against university policy

### **Observational data**

Observational data collected for 61 monolingual faculty showed that the most frequent use of Arabic in the classroom was when the students -asked/discussed/explained- to one another difficult concepts or words in Arabic (see Appendix B).

Also, we tried to gauge the level of engagement of the students or lack of. Overall we recorded 34 incidents where students seemed to be dis-engaged in the classroom compared to 9 incidents where they were engaged. This result is almost the opposite of what took place in the bilingual instructed classroom.

We recorded incidents where students looked confused, were involved in side talks outside classroom content, or lacked participation in the classroom. Also, we noticed, monolingual instructors were asked to repeat their explanations more than once, students relied on other students to translate or explain difficult concepts or words using Arabic, and that students on some instances asked in Arabic (for those monolingual instructors who understood Arabic, but did not use Arabic in their lecturing) or asked for translations of difficult words into Arabic.

On the other hand, the strategies adopted by monolingual instructors to help students' understanding were in using examples, use of simpler English language, or asking students to explain or translate into Arabic to one another. There were also instances where students used online translator engines such as google translate to translate difficult words they encountered or hand-wrote translations of concepts or words into their notes during lecture.

### **DISCUSSION**

The literature review we conducted with regards to the Arab Gulf seems to indicate a preference for students and faculty for the bilingual method in teaching (Taha, 2006) and even in English language classes (Jadallah and Hassan, 2011). However, according to our survey results this depended on whether the instructors were bilingual or monolingual themselves. In the case of bilingual instructors, the majority (67%) were in favor of using both Arabic and English in their instruction. However, in the case of monolingual instructors the majority of faculty surveyed (60%) were against using Arabic and English in their classrooms.

The reasons for supporting the bilingual method in the case of the bilingual instructors were explained in the interviews. The main reasons given for supporting the bilingual method were: that it leads to improved understanding of concepts. The instructors recognized that many of their students had deficiencies in the English language and could use the help of instructors in using Arabic to help advance their understanding as well as in translating difficult words that they may encounter. Whereas the reasons given for not supporting the bilingual method given by monolingual instructors were: that it weakens students' mastery of the English language. Another reason for their opposition cited by the instructors was that the university mandates instruction in the English language and that using Arabic would go against the policies of the university.

The observational data we collected revolved around recording when Arabic was being used by the instructor and examined the level of engagement by students in the respective bilingual and monolingual instructions. Bilingual instructed classrooms were those where the instructor instructed students in both English and Arabic, whereas monolingual instructed classrooms were those where the instructor instructed only in English. In the case of bilingual instructors based on our observations the majority of instructors (61%) in practice used Arabic in their instruction. The incidents where Arabic was most often used were mainly in introducing a lesson or explaining concepts. Also, the students used Arabic when asking the instructor questions. This indicated that a language barrier exists as an obstacle to conceptual understanding. That if the language barrier is overcome by explaining the concept using the native language of the student (Arabic) conceptual understanding is facilitated. This finding supports the finding reported in the literature (Alenezi, 2010). Moreover, we noted that students resorted to one another and used Arabic when they struggled to understand a particular concept, or in that they offered their explanations in Arabic to the instructor. This showed that students utilized their native Arabic language as a means to enable their understanding of concepts and to express their own explanations.

In the case of the monolingual instructor, students used Arabic mostly amongst themselves or if they knew the teacher understood Arabic offered their explanations to the instructor in Arabic. In addition just as in the case of the bilingual instruction students when struggling to understand a concept the teacher explained in English, resorted to their peers and used Arabic to facilitate their understanding of the concept. On other occasions students asked the teacher to re-explain or used Arabic words in taking notes in class. These observations support the evidence of a language barrier standing in the way of conceptual understanding. This is supported by the concept of the interdependence of multilingual learning where literacy is generally a transferable skill from one language to another (Schalley et al. 2015).

Coping methods to overcome this language barrier by monolingual instructors were also noted. Re-explaining the concept using simpler English language or using examples was one strategy. Another was relying on peer tutoring asking one student to explain to another using Arabic. Yet another is asking students to use online translation tools such as google translate to translate difficult terms or concepts.

With regards to the level of engagement or disengagement observed in the bilingual instruction as compared to the monolingual instruction. We recorded more levels of engagement and less levels of disengagement in the bilingual instruction as compared to the monolingual instruction. As to levels of engagement we noted more incidents of student participation in the classroom, less side talks outside of class content, and more answers offered by students when Arabic was used by the instructor. The opposite was noted for incidents of disengagement with looks of student confusion noted, more side talks in and outside of the lesson content of the classroom, and less answers being offered by students when only English was being used. Side talks were particularly interesting to look at.

They came in two forms. One was when students asked one another an explanation of content using Arabic and another were when students talked about topics outside classroom content. They both indicated disengagement. When the side talks were about topics outside the class content they clearly showed students were not engaged in the lesson. On the other hand, when they represented students asking one another explanations in Arabic about the lesson content they indicated the existence of a language barrier to student understanding.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

### Conclusion

In conclusion our findings conducted through classroom observations indicated that bilingual instructors were more effective than monolingual instructors as they had more incidents of student engagement. That the survey and interview results indicated that bilingual instructors are more in favor of using the bilingual method of instruction than monolingual instructors.

We believe that a language barrier exists as an obstacle to conceptual understanding in the classrooms we investigated. This language barrier comes from the fact that many of the students enrolled in Arab Gulf universities that instruct in English suffer from poor English language skills upon entering their colleges of undergraduate study. One way to overcome this is by allowing the use of their native language (Arabic) in classroom instruction. This not only facilitates understanding of concepts and increases student engagement, but also strengthens English language acquisition and literacy as the literature has indicated (Baker, 2011; Cummins, 2009).

Last of all, we found through our survey results that there is support for the bilingual approach amongst bilingual faculty, and that there is support for the bilingual approach amongst undergraduate students as we have previously reported (ElJishi, et al., 2015, February).

### Implications

The implications of this study in the short term are in recommending a policy change for undergraduate institutes of education in the Arab Gulf who instruct in English, to allow use of Arabic alongside English in the instruction of students. This would be especially of benefit for first and second year college undergraduate students who may still be learning the English language (Al-Jadidi, 2009). This study also informs on recruitment practices for Arab Gulf universities giving preference for the hiring of bilingual instructors.

A more long-term solution would be to Arabize the university curriculum as a whole but that would have to wait until the Arabizing of instructional content and resources is made possible by an overall governmental educational Arabization strategy initiative.

### Limitations of the Study and Future Research Suggestions

A limitation of this study has to do with the overall comparability of effectiveness of the bilingual and monolingual

instructors. To address this limitation, a future research study may look at two instructors who teach the same course and that are noted for their high effectiveness in teaching (they have high scores in their department evaluation of their teaching, comparable years of teaching experience, and enjoy high student evaluation scores). The observational study would compare the level of engagement in their respective classrooms when one instructs in English only while the other instructs in both Arabic and English using the bilingual instruction approach. Another future research suggestion would be to carry out the same study at a public university involving Arab Gulf students inside or outside of Saudi Arabia. Lastly, researchers can utilize new methods for analyzing the data by using Online Photovoice (OPV) techniques to conduct this same study (Tanhan et al., 2020).

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APPENDIX

Appendix A. Bilingual teacher observational data

Instructor	Instructor explains using Arabic	Instructor translates terms	Student Peer teaching/ asking in Arabic	Instructor ask in Arabic	Instructor explains in Arabic	Incidents of engagement	Incidents of disengagement
1				1			
2		1			1		
3						1	
4	1	1			1	1	
5	1						
6							1 when English is used
7	1			1			1 students ask each other in Arabic and look confused
8	1	1					
9			1			1 when Arabic is used	1 students seem to be not understanding when English is used
10				1			
11	1	1	1	1		1 students interact more when Arabic is used	
12	1					1 students interact more when teacher explains in Arabic	
13	1			1	1		
14		1		1			
15			1		1		
16		1					
17	1					1 students listening attentively no side talks	
18	1	1					
19	1	1		1		1 students understand better when teacher drew diagrams and explained in Arabic	
20			1	1		1 students more engaged when Arabic is used	
21	1					1 All students participating	
22			1		1	1 high level of engagement between students More than half of students participating <i>11 out of 13 students</i> share their opinions with a high level of confidence.	
23	1		1				
24	1						

(Contd...)

## Appendix A. (Continued)

Instructor	Instructor explains using Arabic	Instructor translates terms	Student Peer teaching/ asking in Arabic	Instructor ask in Arabic	Instructor explains in Arabic	Incidents of engagement	Incidents of disengagement
25	1						1 students struggle to finish their assignment
26	1	1		1	1		
27	1		1				
28					1	1 all the students interact with the teacher	
29	1		1	1		1 most students interacting in the classroom	
30				1			
31		1					
32	1			1		1 Students participate and share information	
33				1	1	1 students understand faster	
34				1			
35				1		1 students get engaged when an Arabic word is used	
36	1			1		1 high participation in the classroom	
37	1			1			
38	1	1	1	1		1 students engage with one another	
39					1		
40	1					1 more understandable for students weak in English	
41	1			1			
42	1					1 students are more engaged, more motivated, a lot of students try to answer when the teacher asks	
43	1			1	1		
44	1		1				1 Looked confused when English is used and asked each other in Arabic
45	1	1			1		
46	1						1 Little interaction with the teacher
47	1						
48			1	1			

(Contd...)

**Appendix A. (Continued)**

<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Instructor explains using Arabic</b>	<b>Instructor translates terms</b>	<b>Student Peer teaching/ asking in Arabic</b>	<b>Instructor ask in Arabic</b>	<b>Instructor explains in Arabic</b>	<b>Incidents of engagement</b>	<b>Incidents of disengagement</b>
49	1						
50	1				1		
51							1 Students disengaged when English is used
52							1 students quiet when English is used by the instructor
53	1			1	1		
54	1		1			1 instructor uses Arabic words to attract students' attention	
55		1		1	1	1 students excited and more active involved in the discussion	
56	1			1		1 students are engaged and quiet	
57				1	1	1 students understand better when Arabic is used	
58	1	1					
59	1						
Frequency Total	36	14	12	25	15	23	8

**Appendix B. Monolingual instructor observational data**

<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Instructor Explains using Case studies or real life examples so students can understand</b>	<b>Instructor Asks students to share their experiences</b>	<b>Instructor asks student to explain in Arabic or translate to other students</b>	<b>Students ask in Arabic or ask for translation of words into Arabic</b>	<b>Students ask/ discuss/ explain to each other or to instructor in Arabic</b>	<b>Students use online translators to translate (such as google translate)</b>	<b>Incidents of engagement</b>	<b>Incidents of disengagement</b>
1	1	1					1 students engaged	
2			1					
3				1				1 look confused and not engaged in the classroom
4						1		1 students look confused because they didn't understand what the instructor was explaining
5			1					

(Contd...)

## Appendix B. (Continued)

Instructor	Instructor Explains using Case studies or real life examples so students can understand	Instructor Asks students to share their experiences	Instructor asks student to explain in Arabic or translate to other students	Students ask in Arabic or ask for translation of words into Arabic	Students ask/ discuss/ explain to each other or to instructor in Arabic	Students use online translators to translate (such as google translate)	Incidents of engagement	Incidents of disengagement
6								1 students confused for not understanding some words in the lecture
7			1					
8			1			1		1 some words are not understood by the students
9			1					1 students side talks outside class content and lack engagement with the instructor
10			1					
11	1		1	1			1 Students active with the instructor	
12			1		1	1		
13					1			1 no respect for instructor chatting on topics outside the classroom
14		1						1 half of students show no understanding
15				1	1			
16						1		
17								1 some listen attentively and some are chatting on their phone, side talks outside of class content
18								1 students looked confused
19	1		1		1			
20								1 students look confused and ask the professor to explain again the concept. Students side talk in Arabic. Students sit in the back and use their phones.

(Contd...)

**Appendix B. (Continued)**

<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Instructor Explains using Case studies or real life examples so students can understand</b>	<b>Instructor Asks students to share their experiences</b>	<b>Instructor asks student to explain in Arabic or translate to other students</b>	<b>Students ask in Arabic or translation of words into Arabic</b>	<b>Students ask/ discuss/ explain to each other or to instructor in Arabic</b>	<b>Students use online translators to translate (such as google translate)</b>	<b>Incidents of engagement</b>	<b>Incidents of disengagement</b>
21					1			1 those not good in English do not participate in the discussions. About half of the students participating in the classroom. Students look confused.
22					1			
23				1	1			1 students look like they don't understand and look to each other.
24					1			1 students look confused because they don't understand the lecture terminology. Student side talk in Arabic.
25							1 students listening attentively, engaged and participating	
26				1	1			1 some students are not understanding
27					1	1		1 not all students are interacting
28					1			
29								1 Students look confused when the word "dynamic" was introduced.
30							1 Senior students perfectly understanding the lecture in English	
31				1	1			
32					1	1		1 Students still don't understand

*(Contd...)*

## Appendix B. (Continued)

Instructor	Instructor Explains using Case studies or real life examples so students can understand	Instructor Asks students to share their experiences	Instructor asks student to explain in Arabic or translate to other students	Students ask in Arabic or ask for translation of words into Arabic	Students ask/ discuss/ explain to each other or to instructor in Arabic	Students use online translators to translate (such as google translate)	Incidents of engagement	Incidents of disengagement
33			1	1	1			
34					1			
35				1	1			1 low participation in the classroom
36				1	1			
37				1	1			1 Students don't understand and look confused
38								1 Asks teacher to explain again
39			1					1 Students have difficulty understanding. Students distracted and using their phones in class.
40					1			
41								1 students look confused. Two girls on their phone and show lack of motivation. Instructor needs to re-explains something that was explained earlier.
42								1 teacher explains the same point more than once.
43								1 Over half of students seem to not understand the new words.
44					1	1		1 Students look confused. Student asks for meaning of a word.
45								1 Little interaction in the class.
46						1		

(Contd...)

**Appendix B. (Continued)**

<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Instructor Explains using Case studies or real life examples so students can understand</b>	<b>Instructor Asks students to share their experiences</b>	<b>Instructor asks student to explain in Arabic or translate to other students</b>	<b>Students ask in Arabic or ask for translation of words into Arabic</b>	<b>Students ask/ discuss/ explain to each other or to instructor in Arabic</b>	<b>Students use online translators to translate (such as google translate)</b>	<b>Incidents of engagement</b>	<b>Incidents of disengagement</b>
47					1	1		1 Students look confused
48			1					
49								1 Student misbehavior. Side talks outside the content
50					1			1 Students seem confused
51					1		1 students engaged with their work and interactive advanced class of juniors	
52					1			
53					1			1 Students disengaged and not focusing on the instructor.
54					1			1 Students ask for repetition of explanation.
55			1	1	1		1 students engaged	
56								1 lack of student participation
57							1 students engaged with the instructor	
58			1		1		1 Students are engaged	
59					1			1 Students not engaged
60					1		1 Students engaged	
61	1				1			1 students not engaged
Frequency Total	4	2	14	11	31	9	9	34