

THE USE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN TEACHING ARABIC IN ISLAMIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GHANA

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to explore the use of English language in teaching Arabic in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana. Two (2) research questions were raised and answered with 2 hypotheses in the study. A descriptive research design is used. The population comprises Arabic teachers in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana. The study utilizes a quantitative method of data collection and the data collected is analyzed using percentage and t-tests. A questionnaire was used for data collection with a reliability value of 0.87. The results showed that the use of the English language in teaching Arabic is low, and obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in using English to teach Arabic are high. Also, there was no significant difference in the use of English language in teaching Arabic and in the obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in using English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools on the basis of gender. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the Arabic teachers need more capacity building in finding a remedy to the problems faced by students for quality Arabic language acquisition in Ghana.

Keywords: English language, Gender, Teaching, Arabic and Islamic secondary schools, Ghana.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Arabic is the language of the glorious Qur'ān as mentioned by Allāh The Almighty when He said: *يَتَعَلَّمُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ عَرَبِيًّا قُرْءَانًا جَعَلْنَاهُ إِنَّا: الْقُرْآنَ يُسْرِنَا وَلَقَدْ مُدَكِّرٌ مِنْ فَهْلٍ لِلذِّكْرِ*, which means: ***“Certainly, We have made it a Qur'ān in Arabic so perhaps you will understand”*** (Qur'ān 43:3). That implies Allāh chose Arabic for ease of understanding to all human and jinn kind. The same can be deduced from His saying: *الْقُرْآنَ يُسْرِنَا وَلَقَدْ مُدَكِّرٌ مِنْ فَهْلٍ لِلذِّكْرِ*, which means: ***“And We have certainly made the Qur'ān easy to remember. So, is there anyone who will be mindful?”*** (Qur'ān 54:32). Those verses connote that learning Arabic is as essential to understanding Islam and practicing its teachings. This is because understanding Arabic is necessary to understand what the Qur'ān says. However, most Muslim parents who send their children to *makaranta* (i.e., Islamic and Arabic schools) do not appreciate this reality. They instead place a lot of emphasis on their children being able to read the beautiful Qur'ān and understand the fundamentals of Islam, period. They believe that a *makaranta* is only a place to learn “how to read”, which is – ironically – what the word *makaranta* literally means in the Hausa language. In its etymological composition “*ma*” is a prefix that means “a place of” and “*karanta*” means “read”. Therefore, *ma-karanta* means a place for reading.

The importance of Arabic language to the life of a Muslim cannot be over-emphasized. The Qur'ān was revealed to prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in Arabic. Therefore, Arabic is an undeniable factor in planning a comprehensive education for Muslims. According to Wheeler (2006) four (4) out of the twenty (25) messengers and prophets of Allāh mentioned in the Qur'ān were Arabs. They spoke Arabic because it is the

language that their people understood. The others spoke Syriac, Hebrew, Aramaic, etc. (Wheeler 2006). Furthermore, the Qur'ān states: *لَهُمْ لَيِّبِينَ قَوْمَهُ بِلِسَانٍ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَرْسَلْنَا وَمَا*..., meaning: ***"We did not send any messenger except [speaking] in the language of his people to state clearly for them....,"*** (Qur'ān 14:4). This attests to the universal rule of communicating with people in their own

language. The prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) also said: "It is the case that you do not relate to the people a narration which their minds cannot grasp except that it becomes a Fitnah for some of them (Sahih Muslim Introduction 14, Narration 13).

The spread of Islam from the northern part of the African continent had an impact on Muslims in Ghana and other West African nations that were formerly referred to as the Guinea States. As a result, they valued their children learning Arabic because of the connection between the language and a correct understanding of the Glorious Qur'ān, and by extension, Islam (Silverman & Owusu-Ansah, 1989). According to Owusu-Ansah, Iddrisu, and Sey (2013), Muslims infiltrated and influenced many coastal states, including those of the Akans of Ghana.

The use of "Ajami" Arabic text (i.e., using the Arabic alphabet to inscribe other languages) was common in West Africa before the 17th century (Van de Vlies, 2010). Muslim academicians use the 28 Arabic alphabets – with little modifications – in writing their own language, which was known to be 'Ajamization' (Ngom & Kurfi, 2017). There are certain semi-official indigenous languages Akan, Bambara, Fulfulde, Hausa, Igbo, Lingala, Swahili, and Yoruba; in addition to Arabic, which is the language used by the Afro-Arabs (Bari, 2009).

Before Ghana switched to the senior secondary school certificate Examination (SSCE) system, Arabic was made examinable at both the GCE Ordinary and Advanced Levels with the creation of the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and the General Certificate Examinations (GCE). Since then, according to Mohammed (2016) the Muslim leadership in the nation as well as many private Islamic senior high schools in Ghana have worked to reintroduce Arabic into the SSCE and later into the West Africa Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). For Muslims, every Islamic school that is established must provide a chance for their children to learn the language to increase their linguistic versatility and to advance their Islamic spirituality (Mohammed, 2016). In the year 2015, the efforts of the advocacy groups, especially that of a think tank organization based in the capital city, Accra, the Baraka Policy Institute yielded positive results, and Arabic was made an examinable subject in the WASSCE.

Over 66% of Ghanaians understand English, with the Akan indigenous language being the most widely spoken (worldmeters.info, 2021), even though Hausa is the most prominently used in teaching Arabic in the Zongo communities. The *makaranta* system is mainly meant for students who attend secular schools during the weekdays where English is the instructional language, so they also get the chance to attend the former on weekends. Additionally, unlike a few decades ago, many of the Arabic teachers in Islamic secondary schools today are literates in both spoken and written English. Some are even university graduates from public institutions like the university of Ghana (Legon).

The primary use of local languages or attempts to teach concepts of Arabic in Ghana's Islamic secondary schools using classical Arabic has not been very successful over the years. The researcher wants to investigate the effectiveness of teaching topics like *naḥw* (Grammar), *ṣarf* (Morphology), and *tafsīr* (Quranic Exegesis) using English language instead of the Ghanaian Indigenous languages like Hausa, Twi, and Dagbani. This is to take advantage of the fact that current Arabic teachers are proficient in English language. Learners may find it easier to understand the Arabic teacher's explanation and jot it down for further revision and assignments.

It is important to note, however, over the years numerous attempts have been made to adopt a number of approaches to make the teaching of Arabic more effective. It included using the whiteboard marker instead of the blackboard and chalk. These days one can find some makarantas that have modern technology features like a well-furnished ICT lab with qualified teachers who are well-trained to use the facilities to teach Arabic.

Studies have shown most of the Islamic secondary schools are prepared with the requisite Arabic teachers to take advantage of the recent inclusion of Arabic into the WASSCE (BPI Research Report, 2016), however, not much attention has been given to the language of instruction used to teach Arabic.

This study investigates the viability of employing English—a language shared by both instructors and students—as the medium for elucidating concepts and intricacies of the Arabic language. This approach stands in contrast to utilizing either

unwritten local languages such as Hausa or Arabic itself, which is typically confined to classroom environments.

On the basis of the above-mentioned suppositions, the researcher seeks to assess the use of English language in teaching Arabic in Islamic schools in Ghana.

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the use of English language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana. It also aims to: 1) To examine the differences in the use of English language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools on the basis of gender; and 2) To examine the differences in the obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in using English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools based on gender.

1. On the other hand, the current study answers the following questions: What is the extent to which English language is used to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools?
2. What are the obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in using English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools?

Additionally, the following null hypotheses were formulated at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the use of English language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools based on gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in using English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools on the basis of gender.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The history of the Arabic language in Ghana is intertwined with Muslim education and the Islamic faith. Islam was brought to Ghana by traders. Traditional Quranic schools then started teaching Muslim children to read the Qur'ān, practice religious rituals, and master the Arabic language (Mohammed, 2016). Dumbe (2013) however, stated that Arabic has a history that predates the spread of Islam to Ghana, formerly the Gold Coast. It is generally accepted that Mande or Dyula (also known as Wangara) traders from Mali brought Islam to Ghana around 1700 CE. It had a significant impact in the northern part of the country among the Dagombas and Mamprugu Kingdoms by the end of the eighteenth century. Later, Islam and Arabic language migrated to the Asante Kingdom and other regions of Southern Ghana (Dumbe, 2013). Galadant (1982) also dated the influx of trading activities between the Maghrib nations and West Africa to the 17th century B.C.

Despite the diversity of languages, according to Mohammed (2016), Arabic continues to have the highest potential for promoting regional, national, international, and global unity and understanding. In addition to its historical contributions to human civilization and education, Arabic is now a widely used international language for official engagements in international and global organizations like the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN), and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

According to recent population projections by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, the global population of Muslims keeps on increasing day-by-day and is expected to grow by 70% by the year 2060 (Lugo, Cooperman,

O'Connell & Stencel, 2011). Muslim population in Ghana stands at 19.9% (Ghana Statistical Service, 2022). Muslim-dominated areas in Ghana are popularly known as the *Zongos*. That is where the majority of the teachers of Arabic were produced through the *Makaranta* system of education. The *Zongo* communities harbor underprivileged Muslims who are sometimes associated with all kinds of wrongdoings, even though other religious affiliates also reside there (Brady & Hooper, 2019).

There are general concerns about the idea of Arabic teachers using foreign-authored classical Arabic books to teach Arabic in Ghana. According to Osman (2003), language proficiency is acquired by listening to native speakers and exerting unceasing effort to mimic, practice, and later apply what is learned in daily life. The steps in learning a language are to amass sufficient vocabulary and sentences, improve understanding of their meanings, and then apply them in practical situations (Osman, 2003).

However, the above-mentioned strategy can only apply when there is an opportunity for the learner to directly interact with the teacher through a language that is conversant to the teacher and the learner. Some professional Arabic teachers have developed effective methods of teaching Arabic with less hustle on the part of the learner and the teacher. They use a well-structured curriculum that provides learning materials with English content, which makes it easy for the learner to understand. Grasping the fundamentals of Arabic language according to the context words are expressed (Bayyinah TV, 2016). The researcher's brief experience with the above

methodology reaffirms his resolve to explore the use of English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design of the study utilized a survey questionnaire to collect primary data from the participants. The approach helped the researcher to administer a questionnaire and test the variables for quantitative collating of the data to understand how the variables are related (Creswell, 2003). The research sought to investigate the use of English language to teach Arabic by measuring certain variables in quantifiable terms to arrive at findings. It allowed the researcher to achieve a complete, relatively valid, and quality data output in this explorative research. The study also explored other factors that hinder the performance of Arabic teachers to use English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools. The impacts of contributing factors such as the method(s) of teaching, textbooks, and curriculum were also examined. The reason for choosing this method was to give the researcher the liberty to do straightforward measurements of the dependent and independent variables and find the cause and effect between them.

3.1 Population and Sampling

It is posited by Shively (2011) that collecting data with the desired properties requires that the researcher: defines a target population and sample; decides on how to draw the sample; and identifies a sample size. This paper gathered responses from two hundred (200) respondents made up of Arabic teachers from fifteen (15) selected Islamic secondary schools in eight (8)

of the sixteen (16) regions of Ghana. Respondents were deliberately sampled from both public and private Islamic secondary schools under the Ghana Education Service (GES). The reason for choosing such a sample was to allow for broader inputs from relevant stakeholders, in addition to the researcher's familiarity with the actors in the field as well as their accessibility. Non-probability sample design is used for this study to draw on the purposive selection of a target sample to represent the population.

Much of the researcher's sense of judgement was used in determining the target universe. For instance, the researcher's inability to visit the whole of the country – for lack of time and financial reasons – as well as the limited personnel with the requisite experience in the subject matter of the research led to a careful selection of the population. However, the data gathering, compilation, cleaning up and validation took one month fifteen days to complete. The quality of plan put in place and the hard work exhibited by the research assistant - who assisted in moving around with the hard copies of the questionnaires- resulted in all the questionnaire data recorded being relevant and fit for diagnostic purposes (Harvey & Green).

3.2 Data Collection

The study utilized a quantitative method of data collection which was analyzed using a t-test and Analysis of Variance. The researcher deployed 200 copies of questionnaires as instruments for the study. The instrument contained ten (10) items with a 0.87 correlation coefficient. Two of the items are related to the characteristics of the population of study (i.e., gender and age). The rest of the eight (8) items underpin the

research questions: (i.e., use of English to teach Arabic, obstacles faced, method(s) used in teaching Arabic, the content language of textbooks, the language used in teaching Arabic, as well as experience, professionalism, and qualification of Arabic teachers.

3.3 Reliability

The reliability of the instrument was ascertained with the use of test-retest technique. The instrument was administered twice to the same set of thirty (30) respondents outside the study area at intervals of two (2) weeks. Copies of the data in the instrument were given identification numbers for ease of pairing and matching of two sets and analyzed with the use of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation.

Data presented in Table 1 shows that all instruments are reliable with the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient ranging between 0.999 and 0.862. Again, a very good level of significance is indicated by its p-value being <0.01 (two-tailed).

Table 1. Result of Reliability Test (Test-Retest)

<i>Section of Research Instrument</i>	<i>Coefficient (r)</i>	<i>p-val.</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Use of English in teaching Arabic	0.862	0.000	Sig. (<0.01)
Method(s) applied in teaching Arabic	0.977	0.000	Sig. (<0.01)
Used of the approved Arabic curriculum	0.999	0.000	Sig. (<0.01)

Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha was employed to ascertain the internal consistency which implied the extent to which all the items in the test measure the same construct and interrelatedness of the items within the text. Two (2) parameters were tested at a 5 percent level of probability: the demographic characteristics ($\alpha=0.823$), and the Use of English and other items ($\alpha=0.709$). The results in Table 2 revealed that the internal consistency of the item constructed was at an acceptable range of high.

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha Result Showing the Interrelatedness of Items in the Research Instrument

<i>Items</i>	<i>No. of Instruments</i>	<i>Alpha (95%)</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Demographic characteristics	2	0.823	High
Use of English and other items	8	0.709	High

Economy, convenience, and interpretability are three factors that can be used to evaluate a measuring instrument's practicality (Kothari, 2004). In this study, the relatively small size of the finite universe sample used, in addition to the ease and accessibility with which the respondents were located makes the response to the questionnaire and interview interpretable.

3.4 Validity Test

The data in Table 3 revealed that the majority of the instruments used in this study are valid as well as significant. This is because the N value is 200 (i.e., $Df = 200 - 2 = 198$). Considering the closest lower figure on the critical values of the

Pearson correlation coefficient r table, 0.147 is the study's critical value at 198 Df.

Regarding items on the demography of the respondents, the table showed that the two (2) items related to the characteristics of the respondents had a mean ranging of 2.00 and 1.12, a standard deviation (SD) of between 0.020 and 0.000, and a p -value of 0.000, respectively. Therefore, the construct is valid and significant at 0.05 (two-tailed)

Regarding the items underpinning the research questions, the table revealed that: (1) all eight (8) items had a mean ranging between 1.99 and 1.07, SD ranging between 0.57 and 0.33 as well as a p -value ranging from 0.676 and 0.000, therefore the construct is to be valid and highly significant at 0.05 (2-tailed).

This further meant that the instruments administered to assess the utilization of English language to teach in Ghana are valid and highly significant to the study.

Table 3. Results of Validity Test from SPSS

Item	N	Df	Mean	SD	p -val.	Cor. (2-T)	Remarks
Gender	200	198	1.21	0.41	0.020	0.165*	Sig. (<.05)
Age			2.00	0.57	0.000	0.530**	Sig. (<.01)
Use of English			1.63	0.52	0.000	0.345**	Sig. (<.01)
Obstacle Using Eng.			1.07	0.34	0.000	0.389**	Sig. (<.01)
Methods Applied			1.33	0.50	0.676	0.030	NS
Approved Curriculum			2.00	.24	.043	0.143*	Sig. (<.05)

Textbook Content	1.13	0.33	0.197	0.092	NS
Years Teaching Arabic	1.93	0.52	0.000	0.559**	Sig. (<.01)
Professionalism	1.78	0.45	0.002	0.215**	Sig. (<.01)
Qualification	1.78	0.50	0.229	0.086	NS

4. Analysis

The data received from the 200 respondents were collected and cleaned up to ensure accuracy and quality. This involved detecting and correcting missing, duplicated, miss-typed, and outlier data which might have happened because of human or electronic errors.

The instrument was analyzed in line with an instrument development model adapted from Olanrewaju and Adeyinka (2020) which assessed life satisfaction among retired Kwara state of Nigeria civil servants amidst the covid-19 pandemic lockdown. However, this study differed in the questionnaire type used. Whereas the authors used a Likert scale to set their questionnaire, this study used a multiple-choice and open questionnaire type to gather data. A questionnaire was used for data collection with a reliability value of 0.87 and a significance of <0.01 (two-tailed). The 200 instruments were collected and analyzed using frequency and descriptive statistical methods at a 0.05 level of significance.

The response formats for items identified for the study have different cut-off points according to the number of response options (i.e., 1.5 for two, 2.0 for three & 2.5 for four response

options). Therefore, the researcher took the average of the three (3) cut-off points as the limit point (i.e., $(1.5+2.5+2.0)/3=2.0$) for the calculation of the low or high level of difference between the items.

Again, the overall items showed the grand mean which is divided by the total sum of items. It was calculated by dividing the total sum of the mean by the total sum of items (i.e., $30.61/10=3.10$). The same format was used to get the grand average of the standard deviation (i.e., $7.20/10=0.72$).

The 10 items contained in the questionnaire underpinned the main research questions of seeking to explore the extent to which English language is used to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana as well as related obstacles.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 18.0) was used to run a t-test on the variables to get a descriptive analysis that shows the frequency, mean, standard deviation, p-value, and Cronbach's alpha values. The outputs were explained, and inferences were made accordingly.

4.1 Hypothesis Testing

The study used an independent samples t-test to compare the means of the dependent and independent variables and interpret the results based on set values. The study tested and found out that the questionnaire data is not normally distributed. Therefore, a two-tailed t-test analysis was run on the items to get the p-value and make statements of either rejecting or accepting the null hypothesis.

The two (2) hypothesis tests are: (a) Testing to know if there is a significant difference in the use of English language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools based on gender, or not. (b) Testing to find out if there is a significant difference in the obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in using English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools based on gender, or not.

A significance level of alpha (0.05) was set as the limit point. However, it is worth noting that:

- a. Means in the output are averages of the coded variables and do not represent the exact responses, because the responses are not interval or ratio.
- b. If the significance value is less than alpha (0.05), then unequal variances are assumed, otherwise, equal variances are assumed according to the Levene's test for equality of variances because questionnaire data are not normally distributed so we cannot assume the variances are equal.

The following comprised the items from the primary data used for the t-test:

Hypothesis 1: there is no significant difference in the use of English language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools based on gender.

- i. Dependent variable: Do you use English language in teaching Arabic?
- ii. Independent variable: What is your gender?

Hypothesis 2: there are no significant differences in the obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in using English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools based on gender.

- i. Dependent variable: Do you face obstacles using English language to teach Arabic?
- ii. Independent variable: What is your gender?

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Demographics

Results from the frequency analysis in Table 3 and Figures 1 and 2 below reveal that most of the Arabic teachers are males between the ages of 21 and 30. The descriptive analysis shows that the demographic characteristics of the Arabic teachers had a mean rating between 2.00 and 1.21, which is below the cut-off point with a grand mean of 3.10. Therefore, the demographic of Arabic teachers is identified as low required for the use of English in teaching Arabic language in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana. The scores of standard deviation range from 0.57 – 0.41 which is lower than a limit point of 0.72, indicating that the Arabic teachers are homogeneous in their characteristics for the use of English language in teaching Arabic in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana. The very high Pearson's correlation coefficient scores ranging from 0.020 – 0.000 (two-tailed) show that the demographic characteristics of the Arabic teachers are highly significant to the use of English language in teaching Arabic language in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana.

It could therefore be inferred there is gender imbalance and youthful dominance in the field of teaching Arabic in Islamic

secondary schools. The study shows that though the required response option of the Arabic teachers' demography is low, they are homogeneous in their traits and highly significant to the use of English language in teaching Arabic language in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana.

Table 4. Results on the Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

<i>Item</i>	<i>Option</i>	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>%age</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>p-val.</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Gender	Male	158	79.0	1.21	0.41	0.020	Low but Sig, (<.05)
	Female	42	21.0				
Age	10-20yrs	22	11.0	2.00	0.57	0.000	Low and Sig. (<.01)
	21-30yrs	149	74.5				
	31-40yrs	24	12.0				
	> 41yrs	5	2.5				
Grand Average mean				3.10	0.72		Low but Sig.

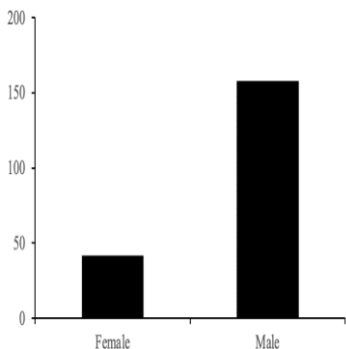


Figure 1. What is your gender?

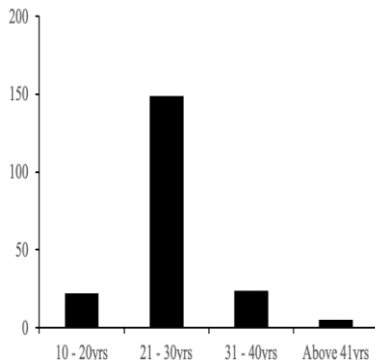


Figure 2. What is your age?

5.2 Research Question One (1): What is the extent to which English language is used to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools?

The following items underpin the question to assess the extent to which English language is used in teaching Arabic language in Islamic secondary schools.

5.2.1 Frequency and Percentage Results

Regarding the use of English language to teach Arabic, results in Table 5 and Figures 3 show that most of the Arabic teachers do not use English language in teaching Arabic: 78 of the respondents, representing 39% use English language in teaching Arabic, 119 respondents, representing 59.5% do not use English language in teaching Arabic, and 3 respondents, representing 1.5% partially use English language in teaching Arabic.

Regarding the method(s) used in teaching Arabic, the results in Table 5 and Figure 5 show that majority of the respondents use memorization as the main method of teaching Arabic: 137 of the respondents, representing 68.5% use memorization as a method of teaching Arabic, 60 respondents, representing 30% use demonstration as a method of teaching Arabic, while 3 respondents representing 1.5% use assignment as a method of teaching Arabic in Islamic secondary schools.

Regarding the availability of approved curriculum for use in teaching Arabic, the results in Table 5 and Figure 6 reveal that the overwhelming majority of Arabic teachers do not use curriculum for teaching Arabic: 5 respondents representing 2.5% teach Arabic with approved Arabic curricula, 189 respondents, representing 94.5% do not teach Arabic with and approved Arabic curricula, and 6 respondents, representing 3% partially use approved Arabic curricula to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools.

Regarding the preferred content language of Arabic textbooks, results in Table 5 and Figure 7 show that majority of the Arabic teachers prefer to have Arabic textbooks in Arabic language: 175 respondents representing 87.5% prefer to use Arabic textbooks in teaching Arabic, and 25 respondents, representing 12.5% prefer to use English content textbooks in teaching Arabic in Islamic secondary schools.

Regarding Arabic teachers' experience in teaching Arabic, results in Table 5 and Figure 8 indicate that the majority of Arabic teachers have teaching experience of between five (5) and ten (10) years: 29 respondents representing 14.5% have teaching experience of between 0 and 4 years, 161

respondents, representing 80.5% have teaching experience of between 5 and 10 years, 5 respondents, representing 2.5% have teaching experience of between 11 and 15 years, and 5 respondents, representing 5% have teaching experience of above 15 years in teaching Arabic in Islamic secondary schools.

Regarding the professionalism of Arabic teachers, results in Table 5 and Figure 9 reveal that the majority of Arabic teachers are not professional Arabic teachers: 47 respondents, representing 23.5% are professional Arabic teachers, 150 respondents, representing 75% are not professional Arabic teachers, while 3 respondents, representing 1.5% are not sure.

Regarding the academic qualification of Arabic teachers, results in Table 5 and Figure 10 indicate that most of the Arabic teachers hold a B.A. in Arabic studies: 52 respondents, representing 26% hold a B.A. in Islamic studies, 140 respondents, representing 70% hold a B.A. in Arabic studies, while 8 respondents, representing 4% hold certificates from other disciplines.

5.2.2 Descriptive Statistical Results

The statistical data presented in Table 5 and Figures 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 illustrate that all items underpinning the use of English language in teaching Arabic scored a mean rating between 2.00 and 0.52, which is below the limit point average of 2.0 with a grand mean of 3.10 which fall below the response option. The result reveals that all the eight items identified are low required for the use of English language in teaching Arabic in Islamic secondary schools. The values of standard deviation which range between 1.63 to 0.24 are majorly lower than 0.72

and reveal that Arabic teachers are homogeneous in their choice of language of instruction to teach Arabic. However, the partially good rating of Pearson's correlation coefficient score ranging between 0.676 and 0.000 (2-tailed) indicates that the items identified are moderately significant to the use of English language in teaching Arabic in Islamic secondary schools.

Therefore, it could be inferred that most Arabic teachers do not use English in teaching Arabic, and they prefer using Arabic textbooks. Again, memorization is the main method of teaching Arabic as opined by Mohammed (2016) with little to no idea about the existence of an approved curriculum. Furthermore, most of the Arabic teachers lack the professional and educational background required to teach Arabic, though they have been teaching for periods between 5 and 10 years. Furthermore, though the items underpinning research question one (1) have been found to fall below the required response option, and the Arabic teachers are similar in the trait, the instrument used for this research question is moderately significant to the use of English language in teaching Arabic in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana.

5.3 Research Question Two (2): What are the obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in using English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools?

5.3.1 Frequency and Percentage Results

Regarding the obstacles faced in using English language to teach Arabic, the results in Table 5 and Figure 4 indicate that the overwhelming majority of Arabic teachers face obstacles in using English to teach Arabic: 191 respondents, representing

95.5% of Arabic teachers face obstacles using English language in teaching Arabic, 4 respondents, representing 2% do not face obstacles using English language in teaching Arabic and, 5 respondents, representing 2.5% sometimes face obstacles in using English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools.

5.3.2 Descriptive Statistical Results

The statistical data presented in Table 5 and Figure 4 reveal that the above item scored a mean of 0.34, which is below the limit point average of 2.0 with a grand mean of 3.10. The result shows that the item is required for the use of English language in teaching Arabic in Islamic secondary schools. The rating value of standard deviation is 1.07, which is higher than 0.72 and shows that Arabic teachers are heterogeneous in the obstacles faced in the use of English language to teach Arabic. However, the very good rating of the Pearson's correlation coefficient score of 0.000 (2-tailed) reveals that the obstacles faced by Arabic teachers are highly significant to the use of English language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools.

Therefore, it could be deduced that both male and females of many Arabic teachers face obstacles in using English to teach Arabic. Furthermore, though the required response option of the item above is required, and the Arabic teachers are not similar in the challenges faced, the obstacles faced by Arabic teachers are found to be highly significant to the use English language in teaching Arabic in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana.

Table 5. Results on Main Research Instrument

<i>Item</i>	<i>Option</i>	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>%age</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>p-val.</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Do you use English to teach Arabic?	Yes	78	39.0	0.52	1.63	0.000	Low but Highly Sig. (<.01)
	No	119	59.5				
	Somehow	3	1.5				
Do you face obstacles?	Yes	191	95.5	0.34	1.07	0.000	Low but Highly Sig. (<.01)
	No	4	2.0				
	Somehow	5	2.5				
What method do you use to teach Arabic?	Somehow	5	2.5	1.33	0.51	0.676	Low and NS (<.5)
	Memorization	137	68.5				
	Demonstration	60	30.0				
Do you use the approved curriculum?	Yes	5	2.5	2.00	0.24	0.043	Low but Sig. (<.05)
	No	189	94.5				
	Somehow	6	3.0				
Textbook content language?	Arabic	175	87.5	1.13	0.33	0.197	Low but NS (<.5)
	English	25	12.5				
	0-4yrs	29	14.5				
How long have you been teaching Arabic?	5-10yrs	161	80.5	1.93	0.52	0.000	Low but Highly Sig. (<.01)
	11-15yrs	5	2.5				
	> 15yrs	5	2.5				
	Yes	47	23.5	1.78	0.45	0.002	
	No	150	75.0				

Are you a professional Arabic teacher?	Somehow	3	1.5					Low but Highly Sig. (<.01)
Which of these qualifications do you hold?	B.A. Islamic	52	26.0					
	B.A. Arabic	140	70.0	1.78	0.50	0.229		Low and NS (<.05)
	Other	8	4.0					
Grand Average mean				3.10	0.72			Low but V. Sig.

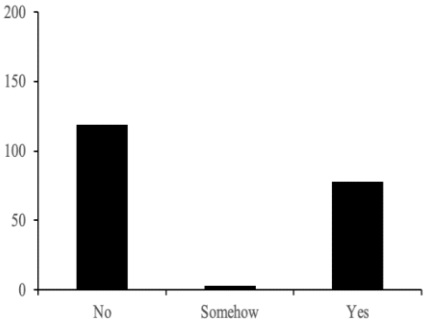


Figure 3. Do you use English to teach Arabic?

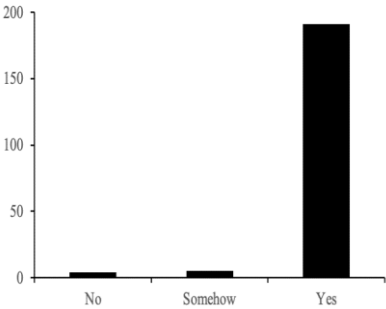


Figure 4. Do you face obstacles using English to teach Arabic?

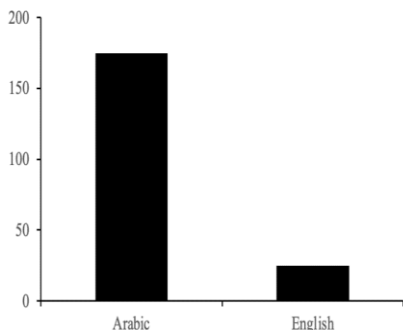


Figure 7. What is the content language of your textbooks?

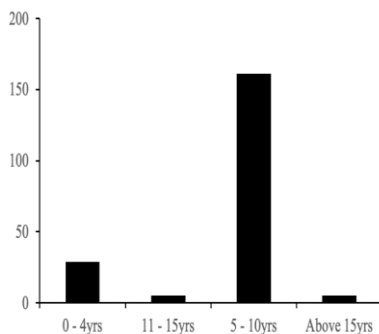


Figure 8. How long have you been teaching Arabic?

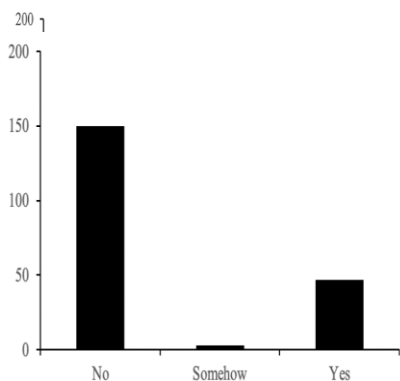


Figure 9. Are you a professional Arabic teacher?

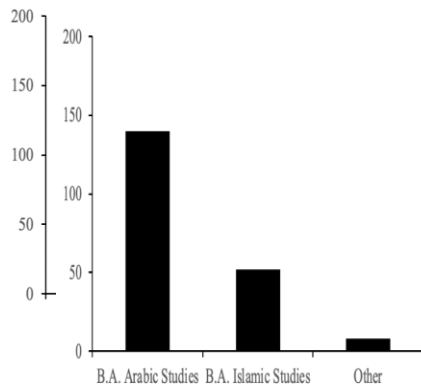


Figure 10. What is your academic qualification?

5.4 Results of Hypothesis Testing

The raw data from responses to the questionnaire was used to test the hypotheses and revealed the following:

5.4.1 Hypothesis One (1): Related to differences in the use of the English language to teach Arabic based on gender.

It is hypothesized that,

H₀: there is no significant difference in the use of English language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools on the basis of gender.

H₁: there is a significant difference in the use of English language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools based on gender.

Data presented in Table 6 below reveals that the mean values of 1.58 - 1.81 and the standard deviation of 0.54 - 0.40, respectively, show that there is no significant difference in the trait between the male and female Arabic teachers. However, not assuming equal variances because of the notification mentioned in 4.1(b) above, the two-sided P-value is 0.002. Therefore, the statistics derived from the sample proportion with a 0.05 alpha level have succeeded in rejecting the null hypothesis.

It could then be inferred that the trait of using English to teach Arabic is homogeneous among the Arabic teachers. Furthermore, the use of English language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools on the basis of gender is statistically significant at 0.05 alpha level.

Table 6. T-test Results for Hypothesis One (1): Differences in the Use of English to Teach Arabic

Item	Option	N	Df	Mean	SD	(<0.05)	Remarks
Use of English based on gender	Male	158	198	1.58	0.54	<0.002	Rejected H_0
	Female	42		1.81	0.40		

Therefore, based on the outcome of hypothesis one (1) of this study, the researcher is convinced that raising the level of proficiency of Arabic teachers may add to the quality of learning toward achieving set goals as propounded by Silverman and Owusu-Ansah (1989).

5.4.2 Hypothesis Two (2): Related to differences in the use of English language to teach Arabic on the basis of gender

It is hypothesized that,

H_0 : there is no significant difference in the obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in using English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools on the basis of gender.

H_1 : there is a significant difference in the obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in using English to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools based on gender.

Data presented in Table 7 below shows that the mean of 1.04 - 1.17 and the standard deviation of 0.26 - 0.54, respectively, show that there is a significant difference in the trait between the male and female Arabic teachers. However, not assuming equal variances because of the notification mentioned in 4.1(b)

above, the two-sided P-value is 0.159. Therefore, the statistics derived from the sample proportion with 0.05 alpha level have failed to reject the null hypothesis.

It could therefore be deduced that the trait of facing obstacles in using English to teach Arabic is heterogeneous among Arabic teachers; However, the obstacles faced by Arabic in the use of English language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools based on gender are not statistically significant at 0.05 alpha level.

Table 7. T-Test Results for Hypothesis Two (2): Differences in the Obstacles Faced

Item	Option	N	Df	Mean	SD	(<0.05)	Remarks
Obstacles faced based on gender	Male	158	198	1.04	0.26	<0.159	Failed to reject H ₀
	Female	42		1.17	0.54		

Therefore, regardless of hypothesis two (2) of this study, the researcher maintains that the current outcome of Arabic learning calls for removing all impediments that curtail the achievement of quality Arabic education in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana. This substantiates the call for Arabic education in Ghana (BPI Research Report, 2016).

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that Arabic language is of vital significance to the Ghanaian Muslims (Mohammed, 2016). The role played by the Arabic language in world affairs cannot be overemphasized. The ever-rising population of Muslims in Ghana and the world as a whole means quality Arabic education is inevitable. Ghana is an English-speaking country and most of its citizens are capable of using the language for educational, commercial, and other purposes. The Muslim population is about 20% of the approximately thirty-three (33) million inhabitants. Teaching of high standard Arabic in Ghana is becoming critical because – after a lot of clamoring by various stakeholders – Arabic language has become an examinable subject in the senior secondary school and WAEC.

This study reveals that despite Ghana being an English-speaking country where most citizens possess some degree of English proficiency, the majority of Arabic teachers in Islamic secondary schools (59.5%) do not use English as a medium of instruction for teaching Arabic. The findings indicate a significant gender disparity among Arabic teachers, with males forming the predominant group, though gender does not significantly influence the choice to avoid English instruction. The research further demonstrates that 95.5% of Arabic teachers face substantial obstacles in using English to teach Arabic, with most preferring Arabic-content textbooks (87.5%) and relying heavily on memorization techniques (68.5%) rather than modern pedagogical approaches. These findings align with Mohammed's (2016) observations regarding the prevalence of memorization in Arabic instruction in Ghana, while contrasting with the recommendations of the Baraka Policy Institute

(2016), which advocated for enhanced quality in Arabic education following its inclusion in the WASSCE. The results also reflect Osman's (2003) assertion about language acquisition requiring direct teacher-learner interaction through a shared conversant language—a condition that appears unfulfilled in the current educational landscape of Islamic secondary schools in Ghana, where approved curricula are largely absent (94.5% reporting no use of approved curricula) and professional qualifications among Arabic teachers remain limited (75% lacking professional training).

According to the analysis done, the results of the statistical data, and the researcher's observations in this study, using English language to teach Arabic is not preferred by most of the Arabic teachers in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana. The reason for this phenomenon may vary from historical antecedents to the content language of the Arabic textbooks. Additionally, there are obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in the use of English to teach Arabic, which may be a result of limitations in capacity building for Arabic teachers. However, the study has statistically proven that even though the majority of Arabic teachers in Islamic secondary schools in Ghana are males, there is no significant difference in the trait of not using English to teach Arabic based on gender, but the use of English language to teach Arabic is found to be significant. Nevertheless, the study has shown that obstacles faced by Arabic teachers in using English to teach Arabic based on gender vary, and are not statistically significant. The study has also revealed that age sometimes plays a role in the choice of language of instruction. The young age of the majority of Arabic teachers points to a potential to improve Arabic learning

outcomes by modifying the language of instruction used in teaching the Arabic language. That is by leveraging the youthful exuberance, enthusiasm, and English language proficiency of the younger Arabic teachers who are predominantly graduates of various national and international Universities.

The study has shown that even though Ghana is an officially English-speaking country and most of the people understand English, the majority of Arabic teachers in Islamic secondary schools prefer to use other than English to teach Arabic. On this basis, the study recommends the following:

1. The government to restrengthen its agencies such as NaCCA to re-examine the effectiveness of using other than English language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools.
2. Researchers in Ghana to re-investigate the various types of obstacles that prevent Arabic teachers from using the official language to teach Arabic in Islamic secondary schools.
3. Muslim stakeholders in education to leverage on government's policy on inclusive education to ensure learning of Arabic is given the needed attention.
4. The GES through the IEU increases the number of learning and development programs that enhance the skill set and capacity of Arabic teachers in Islamic secondary schools.
5. Muslim businessmen, local and international philanthropical organizations, benevolent individuals,

and old students of the *makaranta* system of learning need to come to its rescue because it seems to be the inevitable source for breeding quality Arabic teachers in Ghana.

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