A CASE STUDY OF ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATIONS OF STUDENTS AND LECTURERS TOWARD LANGUAGE-IN-EDUCATION POLICIES IN AL-AQSA UNIVERSITY, PALESTINE

by

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Last but not least, I was told that feeling at home and indigenous in a foreign country is rare. To me, and after I have socialized with the people in Malaysia, I really felt at home. Thanks to the people of Malaysia.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

LPP   Language Policy and Planning

EDSP   Education Development Strategic Plan

PNA   Palestinian National Authority

CDA   Critical Discourse Analysis

EMI   English Medium Instruction

ESP   English for specific Purposes

FL   Foreign Language

AMIDEAST   America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc.

MOEHE   Ministry of Education and Higher Education

MOI   Medium of Instruction

L1   First language (native language)

L2   Second Language

KAJIAN KES TERHADAP SIKAP DAN MOTIVASI PELAJAR DAN PENSYARAH TERHADAP DASAR BAHASA DALAM PENDIDIKAN DI UNIVERSITI AL-AQSA, PALESTIN

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan sikap para pensyarah dan pelajar di atas dasar pendidikan Bahasa Inggeris dan peranannya di Fakulti Sains, Universiti Al-Aqsa. Kajian ini telah menganalisis data yang diperoleh daripada empat instrumen yang diguna pakai untuk mengesan sikap para pensyarah dan pelajar terhadap polisi kerajaan di dalam bidang bahasa dan juga bidang pendidikan semasa. Di samping itu, tujuan kajian ini juga untuk mengenal pasti sikap para pensyarah dan pelajar terhadap Bahasa Inggeris di fakulti sains. Sampel kajian ini terdiri daripada 400 pelajar dan pensyarah. Seramai dua puluh orang pelajar, dua puluh orang pensyarah dan dua puluh empat orang pegawai pendidikan kerajaan telah ditemu bual. Empat instrumen yang berbeza telah digunakan untuk pengumpulan data iaitu; analisis dokumen, skala Likert, soalan temubual berstruktur dan pemerhatian. Dapatan menunjukkan bahawa pelajar dan pensyarah tidak gemar akan sesi pengajaran dan pembelajaran dalam Bahasa Inggeris di peringkat pengajian tinggi walaupun sikap mereka terhadap Bahasa Inggeris agak positif. Responden menekankan bahawa mereka menghadapi masalah dalam sesi pembelajaran melalui Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa pengantar. Keputusan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa semua kumpulan melihat Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa asing. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa pelajar lebih senang menerima penggunaan Bahasa Inggeris daripada pensyarah kerana ramai pensyarah di Universiti Al-Aqsa ialah lulusan dari negara-negara Arab. Para pensyarah lulusan dari negara-negara Arab hanya mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris di sekolah rendah sahaja. Sebaliknya, pensyarah

mempelajari Bahasa Ibrani sebagai bahasa yang wajib. Oleh kerana Universiti Al-Aqsa adalah satu-satunya universiti awam di Gaza dan Tebing Barat, pembuat dasar di Kementerian Pendidikan Palestin harus mengalihkan perhatian mereka kepada suara pelajar di pengajian tinggi untuk mengubah dasar polisi semasa. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa pelajar lebih tertarik kepada dua sumber motivasi iaitu sumber integratif dan sumber instrumental. Justeru itu, pelajar perlu menghadiri kursus-kursus pemantapan Bahasa Inggeris sebelum memasuki universiti tetapi ada kemungkinan ianya tidak dapat menampung keupayaan Bahasa Inggeris para pelajar. Ianya penting bagi para pensyarah menggunakan program-program saintifik di dalam Bahasa Inggeris dan Bahasa Arab untuk menjelaskan beberapa topik dalam kursus yang diberikan oleh mereka di fakulti Sains. Akhirnya, para pensyarah lebih cenderung untuk memperbaiki kualiti kursus di fakulti sains, atau sekurang-kurangnya Bahasa Inggeris sewajibnya dijadikan bahasa pengantar di sekolah-sekolah menengah.

A CASE STUDY OF ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATIONS OF STUDENTS AND LECTURERS TOWARD LANGUAGE-IN-EDUCATION POLICIES IN AL-AQSA UNIVERSITY, PALESTINE

ABSTRACT

The overreaching aim of this research is to determine students` and lecturers` attitudes and motivation towards the current English education policies and the role of English in science faculties in Al-Aqsa University. Accordingly, this research intended to analyze the data collected from the four instruments utilized in this study to detect the attitudes towards current language policy in education, and attitudes towards English in science faculties. The sample for the survey consisted of 400 students, and lecturers. The participants of the interviews were twenty students, twenty lecturers and four government educational officers. Four different instruments were used for data collection. These are critical document analysis, a survey questionnaire, a semi-structured interviews, and observation. Results indicated that students and lecturers do not favor English-medium instruction at the tertiary level regardless of their high attitudes towards English, participants underscored problems studying through English as a medium of instruction in science faculties. Results also showed that all groups perceive English positively as a foreign language, and support the teaching and learning of English. The results also showed that the attitudes of students are higher than lecturers, and this is due to fact that most of lecturers in Al-Aqsa University graduated from Arab countries. Also those lecturers study English in grade seven of primary school. Finally most of them study Hebrew as a compulsory language in schools. Therefore, and since Al-Aqsa University is the only governmental University in Gaza and West Bank, policy makers at the Ministry of Education in Palestine should direct

their attention to the students' voices at the tertiary level to change the current apparent language policy. The result also showed that students are most strongly attracted to two sources of motivation the integrative and instrumental sources. So, students should attend English training courses before enrolling to the university. However, it might not be enough to help the student understand courses. Also it is essential for lecturers to use scientific programmes in English and Arabic to clarify some topics in the given courses in science faculties. Finally lecturers highly prefer to refine the nature and quality of science courses in science faculties or at least English should be the medium of instruction at the secondary schools.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

This chapter lays the foundation and builds up a case for the reasons concerning the importance of the current research. It provides a brief overview of the field of the study, the constructs involved, the problems encountered in past research and how far the current study addresses these problems.

The global demand for English in education needs levels of competency that surpass the existing institutional capacity of many universities and institutions. English language proficiency is important for the education of science students, because many international scientific books, journals and information resources require the knowledge of English.

Recognizing this need, the interest in English by many countries has a significant influence on the language policy-making and practices regarding the language. In these nations, one of the most significant educational trends, world-wide, is the teaching of a growing number of courses in universities through the medium of English (Nunan, 2003; Carroll-Boegh, 2005)

Language planning in Palestine is of vital importance, especially in educational settings. Sullivan, (1991) submits that language planning in Palestine takes place involving different factors. These factors include multilingualism, occupations and the responsibility of instruction as an agent of social change, international integration and development. Amara (2003) added, in developing a Palestinian language education policy, especially English, following the Oslo agreements, the Palestinians have

responsibility to supervise education after many years based on the Jordanian and Egyptian curricula. Therefore, the new Palestinian curriculum shows an international orientation, which is clearly part of the language policy in education. Accordingly, the learning and teaching of languages are of primary concern in state creation. He further argued that the recent history of Palestine, after 1993, at the different school and tertiary levels, shows an international orientation, which is obviously a part of the language policy (both foreign languages and the Arabic language); accordingly, the learning and teaching of languages are key concerns in identity construction. Through Arabic, good relations with the Arab countries in the region can be maintained. However, Hebrew and English also serve as media of communication in Palestine. Also, the knowledge of learning the English language is needed to maintain contact with other parts of the world. For historical reasons, Palestine has been in touch with many different countries all over the world. (Amara, 2003)

The literature in linguistic research defines language policy in education as a set of procedures, regulations, laws and decisions laid down by the empowered and powerful, which aim at affecting the status of a specific language and the linguistic behavior of those who employ that language. Such a policy is seen in different forms: official discourses, constitutions, laws, administrative amendments, directives, etc… (Spolsky and Shohamy, 1999). Thus, this study will discuss the increasing use of English at the tertiary level, particularly in the science faculties in Palestine, arguing that the apparent language policy at the tertiary level and its practice needs to be investigated for future changes.

A number of applied linguists have begun to redefine the boundaries of English language teaching, arguing that the language is taught, both nationally and internationally, in a social, economic, political and cultural context that must be taken into account and studied if we are to understand second language learning and teaching (Auerbach, 1986, 1995; Phillipson, 1992). An aspect of this larger social and political context that is particularly relevant to the second language classroom is the development and implementation of language policies that address the learning and teaching of additional languages. Although the relationship between language policy and language education seems obvious, there has been, as Tollefson (1995) argues, a failure to explore that relationship. Auerbach (1995) notes that, "although issues of power and politics are generally seen as essential in language policy and planning on a macro level, classrooms themselves may be seen as self-contained, autonomous systems, isolated from external political concerns."

One of the main issues to be addressed is how the classroom teacher understands and implements language policy. Although, as Ricento and Hornberger (1996) state, classroom practitioners are "at the heart of language policy" (p. 417), in Palestine, we know very little about how teachers view and implement the language policies. Consequently, attitude and motivation are the key words: in the form of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English language teaching and learning become highly motivating for the students, because the students gain the ability to apply what they learn in their English classes to their field of study. It is equally motivating for the students to learn the specific part of the language they need in their future professions. Students in Palestine at the tertiary level come to the universities after already being

exposed to general English courses in schools. Nevertheless, they have not already become effective users of English in their majors. Students involved in science faculties and mathematics must be able to use English to perform specific functions and activities in their subjects: like writing a lab report, reading authentic material in their majors, doing scientific research, writing sales promotional letters and the like. Thus, this is another important reason why ESP should be sought.

One of the chief issues that needs to be addressed in classes is the medium of instruction has firmly established that English-medium programs offer some benefits for students. Learning through English at the undergraduate level might help students get admission into post-graduate education more easily or find better work in the market (Gao, 2008); but to what extent the instructors and student incorporate the requirements of the English-medium courses is controversial. Despite its benefits, there is a growing consensus among the educators that English as a medium of instruction (EMI) increases the workload of students and affects the quality of education negatively (Gao, 2008).

Tollefson and Tsui (2004) point out that, "although decisions about medium of instruction are often justified with pedagogical rationales, medium-of-instruction policies are not formed in isolation, but rather emerge in the context of powerful social and political forces, including globalization, migration and demographic changes, political conflict, changes in government, shifts in the structure of local economies, and the elite competition"; therefore, social attitudes play an important role in institutional contexts where language policy is to be adopted. Many researchers have stressed that the attitudes and motivations of students might affect the mastery of language and the successful implementation of language policy in education. Therefore, research in this

area would lead to the development of language policies (Snow, 2007; Young, 2006). In this regard, the findings become important for the language education policy makers and administrators, as well as the language lecturers at the tertiary level. Although it is argued that mother tongue education is more effective than foreign language medium of instruction (Heugh, 2002), English as a foreign language has become the dominant medium of instruction in Palestine. This study examines the role of English in the instructional design decisions and processes of classroom activities from the viewpoints of the course instructors in Al-Aqsa University in Palestine.

By investigating language policy in education in the Palestinian context, English has been the dominant foreign language in the universities as a medium of instruction for more than four decades. English has also been introduced as a compulsory subject in Grade 1, in almost all elementary schools (Mazawi, 2000). Moreover, as of September 2001, all colleges and universities under the control of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Palestine were instructed to use English as the main language of instruction in courses such as information technology, finance, foreign trade, economics and the sciences (Amara, 1987). Therefore, English learning has become *de facto* as an attempt through nationwide college curriculum. Content-based English instruction was introduced as bilingual education in the science faculties. Al-Aqsa University is the only Palestinian government institution of higher education, which aims at preparing a student, by equipping him with knowledge, skills and values and the ability of continuing education and utilizing information technology through capacity-building programs, university education, scientific research and community development and service.

There is a current interest in learning or enhancing English among the different sectors of Palestinians for different purposes, including job promotion. Secondly, even during the current period of great interest in English language learning, the policies and practices involved in moving towards the implementation of the English Medium Instruction in Palestinian universities have been unclear and probably delay better foreign language acquisition (USAID report, 2009). However, the potential advantages can be obtained only when suitable conditions prevail. These conditions include a perceived need for English as the medium of instruction, professionally trained teachers, and well-designed learning materials. Therefore, Palestinian educational authorities could be well advised to review the policy to use English as the medium of instruction in some faculties besides Arabic and to take great caution in its promotion (AMIDEAST report, 2009).

1.2. Background of the Recent Socio-Historical Context of Gaza

To give a relevant background for the present study, the researcher presents a summary of the background of the recent socio-historical context of Gaza as a part that will give a broader context and better understanding of the current foreign language policies. Arabic, English, and Hebrew were mentioned in that order, as the languages of individuals in the Gaza Strip, of which English is the only foreign language, taught in the government schools. The Jordanian and Egyptian curricula were in effect in the West Bank and Gaza, respectively, during the Israeli occupation of these areas from 1967 till 1994. It is important to note that during the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, English served as the '*lingua franca' or* bridge language between the

Palestinians who did not know Hebrew and Israelis who did not know Arabic. English is viewed as a neutral language (Al-Masri, 1988).

With the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority in Gaza and Jericho in 1994, and in 1995 and 1996 in the West Bank cities, the situation remained essentially unchanged. However, some changes in relation to teaching English, Hebrew and other European languages were observed (Sullivan, 1994).

In brief, the existence of so many diverse linguistic levels in the Palestinian linguistic repertoire is due to several factors such as political developments, studying abroad, immigration and resettlement, trade, tourism, travel and the founding of several religious missionaries and institutions (Amara, 1987).

A. Arabic

Palestine is a fruitful land for the study of Palestinian multilingualism, which until now has not received interest from sociolinguistic researchers. In addition to Arabic, the mother tongue of the Palestinian, English is known and used by a large section of the Palestinians, especially the younger students; the Palestinian linguistic selection includes Hebrew and various European languages such as French, Spanish, German and Italian. Different factors contributed to the building of this rich linguistic variety in Palestine. These factors contain the rich ethnic and cultural heritage of Palestine, educational institutions, mostly private, contact with tourists and visitors, immigration and travel (Amara, 1987).

Although the Palestinian National Authority has recently shown an interest in promoting Palestinian multilingualism with the goal of teaching French in addition to English in public schools in the West Bank and Gaza, the PA have practiced a policy of

control, which has allowed Arabic to become the only dominant official language in Palestine.

The description of language in education shows that while there is a promotion of foreign languages, there are still significant problems. The plans for the new curriculum aim at solving most of these problems, but this will require effort, both financially and in terms of investment in time and energy on the part of the teachers.

It is obvious that language policy plays a role in the development of the identities of the people in Palestine, more generally, and that it will also play a role as an instrument in the development of a new Palestinian identity that is emerging with independence. That new identity will be clearly seen in the New Curriculum that shows an international orientation is definitely a part of it and, accordingly, the learning and teaching of languages are the main concern in that process. The Palestinian Authority has made a policy of control, which has allowed Arabic to become the only dominant official language.

B. English

English is by far the most widely known and used foreign language among the Palestinians in Gaza. The ever-increasing demand for individuals who are adequately proficient in English makes the issue more strongly felt. The importance of English in the lives of individuals, groups and institutions in our region hardly needs to be underscored. Knowledge of English is a powerful status symbol (Sullivan, 1994).

Presently, English enjoys the status of being the main language of international communication and of overcoming barriers to the flow of information and goods, to people across national boundaries, and is the language having the strongest local

demand. By the early 1970s, the effects of the process of globalization were obvious. The demand for English has continued to grow: it serves as a language for access to business, science, education and travel (Spolsky, 1996, 1997).

English, today, is the first foreign language of the Palestinians. It is taught in the public, private and UNRWA schools, as well as in the universities and educational centers throughout Gaza. English is a means of promoting relations, understanding and cooperation between Palestinians and the world. Knowledge of English for a large sector of the Jordanians is essential to the economic, educational and technological development of the country.

C. Hebrew

Hebrew is an important language in the Palestinian linguistic selection; the language is mainly learned informally from direct contact with Israeli Jews, mainly at work, in commercial business and in prisons. Its formal learning is extremely limited and confined to basic courses in Palestinian universities and other institutions. Some older Palestinians had learned Hebrew during the British Mandate through contacts with the Jews. The spread of Hebrew among the Palestinians has mainly been instrumentally motivated, according to Spolsky and Cooper (1991). They explain that the knowledge of Hebrew in Jerusalem was acquired by those who were willing to work in hotels and restaurants, in the building industry, and in the marketplace. Educated Arabs who worked within their own community in professional roles were able to continue to function effectively without Hebrew.

In Gaza, Hebrew was also introduced through instructions from the Palestinian National Authority. The rationale for teaching Hebrew is that it is used in business and

politics with the Israelis, as well as for coexistence between the Arabs and Jews. The effectiveness of teaching Hebrew at the university level was criticized by Hamed (1995). He claimed that although the students learned the basics of Hebrew, they could not speak it well. In fact, the Palestinian worker who experiences life in Israeli society can speak Hebrew much better than the student who learns Hebrew at the University.

1.3. Context of the Study Al-Aqsa University, Palestine

Al-Aqsa University was established in 2000 under the Higher Education Act (No.11, 1988) as an expansion of the College of Education. The University has been a member of the Arab Universities Union as well as of the Palestinian Higher Education Council since 2003. Al-Aqsa University is striving to be distinguished among Palestinian and regional universities in all the fields of academic studies, scientific research and community service based on the comprehensive high quality culture. It is a Palestinian government institution of higher education which aims at preparing the students and equipping them with knowledge, skills and values and having the ability of continuing education and utilizing information technology through capacity-building programs, university education, scientific research and community development and service. In the course of achieving its goals, Al-Aqsa University is truly committed to Arabic and Islamic culture and the principles of human rights, which include responsibility, compliance with the rule of law, transparency, respect, tolerance, justice, equality, consolidation and participation of all the parties concerned.

1.4. Rationale of the Study

Cook (1996) argued that the medium of instruction should be able to serve the requirements of the nation in local and global trade and commerce and the nation`s desire to expand its commercial ties would result in a need for individuals capable of communicating in the new trade partner's language. Kaplan & Baldauf (1997) added that "the education system is seen as the place to produce these persons."

Success in reforming the language policy will depend on an investigation into the attitude and motivation towards the languages used. Ricento and Hornberger (1996) asserted that social attitudes play an important role in institutional contexts where language policy is to be adopted. Many researchers have stressed that the attitudes and motivations of the students might affect the mastery of language and the successful implementation of language policy in education (Snow, 2007; Young, 2006). Therefore, research in this area would lead to the development of language policies. In this regard, the findings are important for the language education policy makers and administrators, as well as the language teachers at the tertiary level.

This study attempts to investigate the attitude and motivation of the students and lecturers in the science faculties, and to detect whether they have positive or negative motivation towards the medium of instruction. Hence, the researcher's interest in this field is to explore the lecturers' and students' preferred languages such as EMI, as well as their attitudes towards English as the medium of instruction in the science faculties within the Palestinian context, and the impact of the attitudes and motivation on their performance in studying the science courses.

Language policy and planning is a long process that requires constant and continuous hard work. It also takes a very long time to learn a language and to understand a culture and, certainly, considerably more amount of time to influence behaviors and attitude (Hornberger, 1998). Ingram (1994) strongly stated that Language Planning should be "a careful and rational process, leading to logical, comprehensive and informed policy and implementation with continuous evaluation being a basic part, leading to policy change in the light of new insights and changing needs"; therefore, it is essential to understand the changing nature of the linguistic needs and aspirations of individuals and groups.

In this study, the medium of instruction is also investigated within the frame of reference to bilingual education. In general, the choice of the medium of instruction is the means to educational value, which makes the best use of L1 (Arabic) growth and, therefore, has the greatest possibility to improve English as a Foreign Language (EFL) for advanced and content learning.

1.5. Statement of the Problem

Although the Ministry of Education and Higher Education strongly encourages students to learn in English, in the science faculties at the tertiary level, the choices of the students have not been examined. By providing insights into the attitudes of the Palestinian students towards the language of instruction, their purposes for learning in English and the language education policies, this study contributes towards an understanding of the use of languages as the media of instruction at the tertiary level in Palestine. Furthermore, this study aims at offering insights into attitude, motivation of

the students and teachers towards English language, and the main factors that may explain the variability of their attitudes and motivation at the tertiary level.

In the form of English for specific purposes (ESP), English language teaching and learning become highly motivating for the students; because students become capable of applying what they learn in their English classes to their field of study. It is equally motivating for the students to learn the part of the language they need in their future professions. Students in Palestine, at the tertiary level, come to the universities after already being exposed to general English courses at schools. Nevertheless, they have not become effective users of English in their majors. Students are involved in science faculties and mathematics. Therefore, they must be able to use English to perform specific functions and activities in their subject areas, like writing a lab report, reading authentic material in their majors, doing scientific research, writing sales promotional letters and the like.

Thus, the study will seek to understand the attitudes of the learners, and how their attitudes are formed towards the language of instruction in terms of possible variables affecting the creation of their attitudes and motivation. It has been established that the attitudes and motivation of students might affect their language proficiency and the successful implementation of language education policies (Snow, 2007; Young, 2006); hence, research in this area becomes quite important. The current study is the first attempt to find out the attitudes and responses of both lecturers and students at the Al-Aqsa University regarding the medium of instruction in the science faculties.

As language choice in education is essentially a political matter, and closely related to the sociolinguistic phenomena (Beukes, 2009; Luke, 2011), with the new

socio-political and sociolinguistic changes in Palestine, foreign language education and hence English-Medium Instruction (EMI), has been a matter of societal and political concern for the Palestinians. Despite the acceptance of English-medium, universities with science faculties probably appear to be unsatisfied to some degree. In fact, "EMI" receives a great deal of criticism from a variety of researchers focusing on English as Foreign Language (EFL) students and on pedagogical grounds in education in Gaza as part of Palestine.

The big controversy over foreign language medium-instruction flared up when the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) strongly encouraged the students to learn through the medium of English, because the views of the students had not been examined. The language policy that encouraged the use of English in the science faculties at the tertiary level has not been developing through the years; the biggest problem being its weak effectiveness, which is an especially clear phenomenon in the universities where the students are weak in English, although most Palestinian students have had eight years of English learning experience during their basic and secondary education phases before they enter the universities.

The undergraduate students and lecturers of the Al-Aqsa University study compulsory English language as part of the education policy of MOEHE. Besides, they learn the sciences and mathematics through the medium of the English language. Their attitudes and motivation for using English and the probabilities of their success in the language education policy implementation may be influenced to a great extent by the preference of the students and lecturers towards languages. But a bulk of the educators recommends that the attitudes of the students and lecturers towards English, in the Al-

Aqsa University, have not been studied prior. Thus, it is important in investigating the attitudes of the students and lecturers towards the English language.

With the new National Policy on Palestinian Education, Palestine is increasingly opening its doors to reform the old curricula, with noticeable reforms in language empowerment and implementation. To make the Palestinian students come up to the international education system, and enhance the cultural, social, economic and political developments, the education system has been highly dependent on other countries, such as Egypt and Jordan.

The first attempt to reform the curriculum in the education system in Palestine was in 1998. Almost ten years ago MOEHE introduced English besides Arabic, as the second language in all Palestinian schools; but no attempt had been made to reform the language policy at the tertiary level, where English is important as the medium of instruction, especially for the science faculties. As a result of the strong feelings towards English, they failed to support the change of language policy at the tertiary level. This episode, and the reactions and responses to it, are traced by Sullivan (1991) and Andre Elias Mazawi (2000).

The language policy that encouraged bilingual instruction at the tertiary level has not been developing through the years; the biggest problem being its weak effectiveness, which is a clear phenomenon, especially in those universities where the students are weak in English. Although most Palestinian students have had eight years of English learning experience during their basic and secondary education phases before they enter universities, some of them even have had even longer English learning experience starting from the first grade of primary school.

Although major courses such as information technology, bio-technology, new materials technology and medicine are still given in English, the instructors in the Palestinian universities often complain that the level of English proficiency among the college students is constantly "intermediate" for foreign language learners. Both students and faculty are set back by the general weakness in English, as evidenced by the performance of both groups on the ITP TOEFL (USAID report, 2009). Despite the fact that these students study English for eight years at public schools, some of them show a strong desire to learn this global language, which has become an essential requirement for all types of jobs in the fast changing Palestinian conditions. This situation is commonly found at the tertiary level and across scientific faculties, where all the scientific courses are taught in English and are of high quality (Sartawi, 2003). This means the faculties of sciences use bilingual instruction. Bilingual instruction has a great advantage, and it can do much better; but the biggest problem, in the researcher's view is, there are Limited-English-proficient, English-speaking students, in the Palestinian universities.

In the Palestinian context, there is an urgent need to recognize the reason for the students` intermediate level in English. The students` insufficient knowledge may contribute to the interest of many faculties in introducing more courses in English and developing specializations in the sciences (USAID), 2009. Unlike the faculties of the humanities, the material for these specializations is available largely in Arabic or the faculties of the university might not pay attention to examining and refining the nature and quality of the English instruction. Moreover, instruction in English for many courses has not been improved; the Sciences, Pharmacy, Engineering, Administration

and Medicine faculties were unable to translate the English materials into Arabic. It would be better to translate them rather than to expect the university students with their feeble English skills to pay great effort through courses they lack the capacity to master. The need to reform the language policy at the tertiary level should be identified as the key goal by all decision-makers in Palestine, which implies the status planning, acquisition, curriculum and materials with reference to Arabic and English need to be reviewed.

It is noted that a majority of professors themselves are not fluent in English (USAID report 2009); many faculty members have conducted their entire academic studies in a non-English background. Additionally, there is a lack of interest for more "competency based instruction" whereby instruction is measured by what the students have learned. It was, therefore, acknowledged that it would be a healthier way to meet the real language needs of the students, especially for those students with very weak skills in the English language. Although there is no stated language policy for the university, the need for improving the language of instruction within the faculties in the universities was recognized as an important goal by all decision-makers. The quality of the English medium is dependent on the hard work of all those who use English in courses and it is not just the responsibility of the English foreign language faculty alone (USAID report 2009).

1.6. Objectives of the study

This study examines the field of language policy and planning in Palestine with the focus on English as the language of instruction and activities in tertiary education.

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the attitude and motivation of the students and lecturers towards English and Arabic as the media of instruction at the tertiary level. Also, the teaching and learning process is investigated to determine the problems with the use of English and Arabic in lectures, tutorials and instructional materials. Thus, the possibility of bilingualism in the use of both Arabic and English is also investigated in the science faculties of Al-Aqsa University.

Specifically, the main objectives include:

1- To investigate the role of English and Arabic in the education policy as used in the discourses created by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Palestine.

2- To examine the attitudes of the students and lecturers of the science faculties towards the current English education policies of MOEHE in Palestine.

3- To investigate the preferred choice of the students and lecturers of the science faculties towards the use of the languages (Arabic and English) as the medium of instruction in education.

4- To investigate the integrative and instrumental motivation of the students and lecturers of the science faculties towards English language at the tertiary level.

5- To examine the problems that those students experienced while studying in the medium of English, and the possible solutions.

6- To investigate factors that may explain the variability of their attitudes and motivation.

7- To investigate the extent of satisfaction in teaching science courses through the medium of English.

1.7. Research Questions

While recognizing the broader topics of language policy and planning and Palestinian bilingualism, this study will focus mainly on the context of instruction language, and more specifically on language policy and planning at the tertiary level of education. The primary goal will be to explore the attitudes of both learners and teachers about language of instruction, and how motivation/ attitudes impacted their products on the activities during learning.

Using the context of the Al-Aqsa University, the main research questions address the goals of this study.

1- What is the role of English and Arabic in the education policy as used in the discourses created by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Palestine?

2- What are the attitudes of the students and lecturers of the science faculties towards the current English education policies of MOEHE in Palestine?

3- What is the preferred choice of the students and lecturers of the science faculties preferred choice towards the use of Arabic and English as EMI?

4- What is the integrative and instrumental motivation of the students of the science faculties towards English language at the tertiary level?

5- What are the problems that those students experienced while studying in the medium of English, and the possible solution?

6- What are the factors that may explain the variability of their attitudes and motivation?

7- What is the extent of satisfaction in teaching science courses through the medium of English?

1.8. Significance of study

As language choice in education is essentially a political matter, and closely related to the sociolinguistic phenomena, with the new socio-political and sociolinguistic changes in Palestine, foreign languages education and, hence, English-Medium Instruction (EMI) has been a matter of societal and political concern of the Palestinians. Despite the acceptance of English as the medium, universities with science faculties probably appear to be unsatisfied to some degree. In fact, "EMI" receives a great deal of criticism from a varied array of researchers focusing on English as Foreign Language (EFL) students, and pedagogical grounds in education in Gaza as part of Palestine.

The big controversy over foreign language medium-instruction flared up when the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) strongly encouraged students to learn through the medium of English, without assessing the viewpoints of the students. The language policy that encouraged the use of English in the science faculties at the tertiary level has not been developing through years; the biggest problem is its weak effectiveness, which is an especially clear phenomenon in the universities where the students are weak in English, although most Palestinian students have had

eight years of English learning experience during their basic and secondary education phases before they enter universities.

Apparently, there is a conflict between the attitudes of the politicians and educators and the preferences of the students and other stake-holders because the number of these faculties is increasing rather than decreasing. Lecturers and students are the groups who are directly involved in the foreign language medium of instruction. However, it is not known what position they hold regarding EMI and how they perceive it. There is limited academic work that presents the attitudes of the students, lecturers. Most of what is available is the opinions of the educators and politicians expressed via the print and visual media.

By providing insights into the attitudes of the Palestinian students at the tertiary level towards the medium of English language, language policies in education, and their purposes for learning English, this study contributes to an understanding of English learning and teaching in Palestine and adds to the growing body of studies on Attitude and Motivation.

Attitude and Motivation are the key words in this study: in the form of ESP, English language teaching and learning become highly motivating for the students; because students are enabled to apply what they learn in their English classes to their fields of study. It is equally motivating for the students to learn the specific part of the language they need for their future professions. Students in Palestine at the tertiary level come to universities having already been exposed to general English courses at schools. However, they have not already become effective users of English in their majors as the students who are involved in the science faculties and mathematics. Therefore, they

must be able to use English to perform specific functions and activities in their subject areas: like writing a lab report, reading authentic material in their majors, doing a scientific research and the like.

This study provides a more comprehensive picture of the attitudes of the Palestinian students towards the medium of English language learning in terms of the possible variables affecting the construction of their attitudes. As discussed earlier, the attitudes of language learners may affect their language learning proficiency and the successful implementation of the language policies in education (Snow, 2007; Young, 2006). In this regard, the findings are valuable for the English education syllabus designers and administrators, as well as lecturers, by illuminating the different affective variables involved in language learning of the Palestinian students.

Moreover this study will be of great significance for lecturers as a crucial factor affecting LPP in choosing the language of instruction, where the teachers can take part, to a great extent, in raising the learners' positive attitude towards a specific language. They can increase their awareness to the meaning of the language and the part it plays in society. Thus, the success in reforming and implementing the language policy will depend on the stakeholders' attitude and motivation toward the languages used.

This study will provide the recommendations to syllabus designers in Palestine in sequencing the students' attitude towards the language of instruction, where their positive attitudes could be beneficial. Language policy makers, too, can take advantage of this study because no previous research on LPP at the tertiary level of education in Gaza has been reported.

Last, this study is significant with respect to its mixed research methods. Although questionnaires are widely used in the survey research, the information is limited, as the researchers can recognize from the items in the questionnaire. Furthermore, as Matsuda (2000) indicated, in the studies on the questionnaire, each respondent's experiences are lost as they are reduced to numbers. Interviews provide an effective way of gathering information about why learners have certain attitudes, which could be complementary to the questionnaire data. In addition, because attitudes are such a complex construct to explore, qualitative data contributes towards contextualizing the quantitative findings, which could pave the way for a deeper understanding of the attitudes of the learners and how their attitudes are formed.

1.9. Limitations of the study

There are four limitations in this study, as discussed below:

1. Although this study is concerned with the attitudes of students and lecturers towards language education policy reforms in Palestine, it is limited to the Al-Aqsa University. It involved four departments randomly selected from the science faculties with 350 questionnaires for students, and 50 for lecturers that were distributed in the Al-Aqsa University. This is because the time and resource had to be situated in a place where that time and resource were manageable. Similar studies on the attitudes towards the Palestinian curriculum would have been done in other private University/Governmental schools in Palestine to ensure a more conclusive result.

2. Results from case studies cannot create unexpected implications, because we cannot rule out alternative explanations. A case study involves the behavior of the

individual, group or institution. The behavior of the respondents may or may not reflect the behavior of similar respondents. Therefore, case study A may be suggestive of what may be found in similar organizations, although further investigations would be necessary to validate whether the findings from one study could be generalized.

3. Generalization of the survey results beyond the participants should always be made with great caution. This study provides some general information on the attitudes of the students from the science faculties of the Al-Aqsa University towards English and Arabic in Palestine. However, due to the imbalanced development within education, these participants cannot represent all the Palestinian science faculty students. The science faculty students particularly those involved in these interviews have done so on a voluntary basis; therefore, it will be difficult to make generalizations beyond the participants themselves.

4. The sampled faculties are all present in Al-Aqsa University; the present study excludes private universities at the tertiary level that also offer English medium instruction.

1.10. Operational Definitions of Terms

1.10.1. Language

Language is understood in this thesis as 'A medium of instruction which is a language used in teaching. It may or may not be the official language of the country or territory. Where the first language of the students is different from the official language, it may be used as the medium of instruction for part or all of schooling.'