

# OBJECTIVES OF LEARNING ENGLISH IN SAUDI ARABIA

The primary objective of the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is to reduce illiteracy. In this case, it is tailored to ensure that it fulfills the religious, social and economic targets of the country. Also, the system has been customized to enhance integration,

not only with Islamic nations, but also the rest of the world. Informed by these objectives, the government of Saudi Arabia has introduced English as a compulsory subject from class seven, though it is yet to gain momentum. It is also notable that the official language in Saudi Arabia is Arabic, hence it is the medium of instruction in colleges. English is only taught as an international language; consequently, little importance is attached to it in the country's education system. To make it more interesting, the Saudi government has identified specific objectives to be achieved in the teaching of English. This paper evaluates some of the objectives teachers must have in mind when teaching English in Saudi Arabia.

One of the objectives is to enable the student to attain the necessary language skills in English. In this case, by the end of a student's English course, it is expected that he/she will have acquired distinguishable skills in both the spoken and written language. Skills in this area include speaking, reading, listening, and writing (Elyas, 2008). Similarly, this objective will allow English learners to attain the necessary linguistic competence essential in various life situations. Additionally, taking such a course will help students develop the essential linguistic competence required in diverse professions. It is therefore crucial for every scholar and every other person to be interested in the English language.

Another primary purpose of teaching English as a subject in Saudi schools is to help students develop the linguistic proficiency that will allow them to explain Islamic concepts, as well as participate in spreading Islam

(Elyas, 2008). It is notable that Saudi is an Islamic state and therefore most of the decisions are motivated and informed by religion. In this case, English is an instrumental language as it has been accepted as a universal language in the world. Therefore, when Islamic students are thoroughly conversant with the language, they will become helpful in teaching Islamic concepts, as well as articulating the religion to the whole world.

Another objective is to enhance international cooperation in science and technology. As such, learning the English language provides learners with linguistic skills that will enable them to participate in the transferal of scientific and technological knowledge to their home countries (Faruk, 2014). Therefore, learning English in Saudi Arabia is instrumental in advancing and enhancing progress in the country. Additionally, proficiency in English will make the state benefit from other professionals around the world as they will come and teach in this country.

## Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated the importance of learning a language, and emphasized the potential of international languages to connect Saudi Arabia to the rest of the world through exchange programs. Apart from acquiring communication skills required in various professions, as well as in solving daily problems, learning English will open Saudi Arabia to professional and scientific exchanges that are beneficial to the country as far as science and technology are concerned. In conclusion, the government needs to develop a curriculum that aligns with that of other nations whose first language is English.

## References

- Elyas, T.(2008).The attitude and the impact of American English as a global language within the Saudi education system. *Novitas-Royal*, 2(1): 28-48
- Faruk, S. M. G. (2014). Saudis' attitude towards English: trend and rationale. *PCTS Proceedings (Professional Communication & Translation Studies)*, 7(1/2), 173-180.