

## Digital Resources and Pedagogical Limitations in Arabic Language Teaching of English-Medium Schools in Bangladesh

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**ABSTRACT:** The growth of English-based education in Bangladesh, specifically on Cambridge and Oxford models, has restructured linguistic hierarchies and teaching interests in formal education. Here, the teaching of Arabic language is peripheral and is mostly only restricted to a few Islamic-oriented English-language schools. Meanwhile, online materials are popularly marketed as means of updating programmes in language teaching and overcoming the limitations of instruction. The paper is a critical study of the pedagogical constraints that are related to the application of digital resources in the teaching of Arabic in English-media schools in Bangladesh. The qualitative research design is based on critical pedagogy and sociocultural theory policies which provides in-depth interviews with teachers, students, alumni, and experts of Arabic language education and is supported by document analysis. The results show that despite the rise in the use of digital tools in Arabic classrooms, there is a lack of integration, under-theorised and often unrelated to the linguistic peculiarities of Arabic. Further, the use of English as a mediating language, teacher training, and the peripheral position of Arabic in the school curriculum inhibit the transformative opportunity of digitalization. Technology instead of changing pedagogy significantly tends to replicate the current constraints of instructions and the superficial approaches to learning. The research claims that the effective integration of digital materials presupposes the critical interaction between the ideologies of language, professional growth of teachers, and curriculum coherence.

**KEYWORDS:** Arabic language education; English-medium schools; Digital resources; Pedagogical limitations; Language ideology; Bangladesh

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The strongly growing English- based education in Bangladesh throughout the last three decades has significantly transformed the language and education situation in the country. These institutions have a significant proportion of international examination systems, most prominently the Cambridge and the Oxford (Edexcel/Pearson) systems, which are commonly viewed as the means of entry to international academic mobility and socioeconomic development. What started as a niche market to cater to a small city elite has gradually evolved into a mass educational goal of middle classes. In this changing educational economy, English has gained an extraordinary symbolic and material power, not just as a means of instruction, but also as a prevailing epistemological system that determines the priorities of the curriculum, assessment practices, and standards of pedagogy.

This dominance has augmented language stratifications in education. The languages that are not directly related to the global market worth or international certification are often marginalized or made optional. This tension in structure is manifested in Arabic language teaching in Bangladeshi English-mediated schools. Although most English-medium schools in the Cambridge- and Oxford-curriculum do not teach Arabic as a formal subject, a small number of Islamic-oriented schools with English-medium programs do include the subject of Arabic in their school curriculum, due to the religious, cultural, and moral values. Even here Arabic is usually taught with a peripheral curricular role, with limited instructional time, a low assessment score and an enduring tendency to use English as the major language of instructional explanation.

Arabic in the sociolinguistic context of the Bangladeshi has a slender and ambiguous status. It is profoundly symbolically as a result of its core place in the life of Islamic religion, scriptural literacy, historical scholarly discourse, but it is not an everyday communication language or a mainstream scholarly production medium. Therefore, in the English medium schools Arabic is not often presented as a subject of intellectual or communicative interaction, but as a secondary subject, which is explained mainly by religious reasons. There are considerable pedagogical effects of this framing: the teaching is often focused on memorization,

## **Digital Resources and Pedagogical Limitations in Arabic Language Teaching of English-Medium Schools in Bangladesh**

translating, and learning the rules, which strengthens reliance on English instead of promoting the long-term interaction with Arabic as an independent language system.

Together with the growth in the English-medium schooling, Bangladesh has also been facing an increased push towards educational digitalization, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Digital technologies have been advocated by both the state and the non-state actors as solutions to access, quality and pedagogical modernization challenges. Digital resources in language teaching have been popularly promoted as means of motivating learners, presenting them with authentic resources and counteracting lack of trained teachers and teaching time. Based on this, Arabic classes in Islamic oriented English-based schools have been embracing the use of mobile application, internet-based tools, audio-visual media, and learning management systems with a view of modernizing their teaching and dealing with the long-running learning challenges.

Nevertheless, these interventions have a lopsided pedagogical effect and are under-theorized. Practically, digital tools have been presented in piecemeal and instrumental forms mostly by institutional pressures to be technologically modern than by a coherent curricular planning. In addition, the greater number of commercially available digital language-learning resources in Bangladesh are made in English and only partially modified to Arabic. Consequently, they often overlook important linguistic aspects of the Arabic language such as its diglossic nature, complicated morphology as well as script-based orthography. Such tools, when used in classrooms teaching in English, are likely to favor shallow forms of interaction as, e.g., word recognition and meaningless drills, instead of a deeper approach to textual interpretation, grammatical thinking, and communicative efficacy.

These limitations cannot be perceived as technical, as well as methodological issues, in pure critical sociocultural terms. The English-based education in Bangladesh works within a wider political economy of language where English is brought to be the main language of knowledge, development, and the world. The ideological structure determines the design of the curriculum, the power of teachers, and the interaction in the classroom, which systematically places the Arabic language as a secondary and complimentary subject. The digital technologies the environment is introduced to are not pedagogically neutral their interface languages, logic of instruction, pattern of use tend to recreate the linguistic hierarchies existing before them. In most of the instances, digital tools reinforce the superiority of English further by depending on English as a medium to explain Arabic grammar and vocabulary and close the possibilities of immersive or meaning-based interaction with the Arabic language.

Other limitations are the teacher preparation and institutional capacity. The accessibility of the specific professional development in the domain of digital pedagogy and Arabic-specific instructional technologies is restricted by many Arabic teachers working in the English-based schools, especially in the institutions with Islam orientation. In situations where instructional time is limited, graduation emphasis is present and curriculum marginalization is experienced, digital resources tend to be used as either an extra or a motivational tool, as opposed to being a part of a coordinately planned system of scaffolding instruction. This helps in creating a pedagogical ecology that emphasizes on short-term achievement, memorization instead of long-term literacy development and linguistic criticality.

Although there is an increasing world literature related to digital language learning, the literature in Bangladesh has been dominated with English language and to a smaller degree, the Bengali language. Systematic investigations into the Arabic language education- particularly in the curriculum-based English-mediated schools in Cambridge and Oxford- are few. There are even fewer studies that critically look at the interaction of digitalization with language ideology, curriculum chain of command and institutional power to influence the Arabic pedagogy. The lack is a considerable gap in empirical and theoretical comprehension especially due to the growing role of English medium teaching and digital technologies within the Bangladeshi educational system.

This paper covers this gap by critically reviewing the pedagogical constraints of the use of online materials in the teaching of Arabic in English medium schools of Bangladesh. The research centers on the English-medium institutions that are oriented towards Islam, placing digital pedagogy in the context of its institutions, ideologies and language. It attempts to explore the use of digital tools by examining classroom practices, teacher attitudes and curriculum designs to understand why so much of the pedagogical potential of digital tools is frequently not realized. Finally, the research proposes that digital resources cannot solve the structural issues facing the teaching and learning of Arabic language in English-medium schools in Bangladesh without long-term critical interest in language ideology, teacher training, and curricular coherence.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Digital Technology in Arabic Language Instruction**

The role of digital technologies in language teaching and learning is gaining more recognition in the recent research on the Arabic language education. Research has recorded that online platforms, digital tools, and interactive applications can be used to increase engagement of the learners, learn vocabulary and access real Arabic language content. To use an example, digital technologies, including Zoom, Google Classroom, and LMS platforms, proved to be helpful in remote learning, enhance learner autonomy, and provide the opportunity to provide multimodal input that may be missing in traditional textbooks (Munapi, et., al. 2025). On the same note, research also indicates that effectively used gamified learning platforms are able to contribute to an increase in student

## **Digital Resources and Pedagogical Limitations in Arabic Language Teaching of English-Medium Schools in Bangladesh**

motivation, critical thinking, and communicative practice (Almelhes, 2024). These results are in line with other literature that places digital resources as potentially disruptive in language education, especially within a situation whereby physical resources or exposure to native language are scarce.

Nevertheless, the usefulness of the implementation of these resources is still dependent on pedagogical integration and not just access. It has been proposed through research that technology does not ensure better learning outcomes in absence of the instructional alignment, teacher capacity and contextual adjustments. The new agreement is that the implementation of technology should be presented as an expression of a coherent pedagogical approach to meet the linguistic and cultural requirements of the Arabic language with complex morphological and script peculiarities (Al-Mansouri, 2024; Ritonga et al., 2025).

### **Pedagogical Challenges in Technology Integration**

Much of the existing literature highlights the consistent pedagogical issues that present themselves in the context of including digital resources into the teaching of the Arabic language. The lack of teacher training in educational technology is one such repetitive result. Several Arabic educators are said to possess neither technical skills nor pedagogical methods of proper digital tools usage, causing them to underuse or develop shallow orientation of existing technologies (Haron et al., 2025). This is in accordance with other studies that have revealed that teachers usually adopt the conventional classroom practices despite having access to computer-assisted technologies because of lack of confidence, inadequate professional development, and lack of support at the institutional level.

Studies of technology in language classes also bring the issue of language of operation and the interface design of technological applications. Most popular platforms and applications are written in English as the default lingual form, which generates an extra load of cognitive burden to both learners and teachers at English-based settings. Such dependency on English as a medium of pedagogy may inhibit the assimilation of Arabic in students and, therefore, defeat the very results which the digital resources are supposed to promote (Ritonga et al., 2025).

Additionally, gamification and multimedia learning research also states that a great number of online strategies fail to provide adequate support to high-order language proficiency in grammar mastery, syntactic comprehension, and critical literacy (Almelhes, 2024). Even though gamified applications might enhance short-term engagement, systematic language progress, extensive feedback and contextualized language use that is central to higher proficiency is lacking in many cases.

### **Contextual Constraints in English-Medium Settings**

Despite the general advantages of digital technology, researchers underline that it should be integrated considering the limitations peculiar to the English-mediated education settings. English as the dominant language of instruction, institutional prestige, and curricular priorities often functions in such settings to marginalize Arabic and restrict the use of instructional time, resources and teacher agency. However, although students are interested in digital learning, the conflict between the cultures of English dominant pedagogies and the adoption of Arabic technological solutions is not the most studied area in the literature. In particular, it has been observed that students tend to view English learning as technologically advanced compared to the Arabic one, which strengthens linguistic stratification, which influences the motivation of learners and their level of resource provision (Mutthahirah and Ghani, 2025).

Also, numerous literature sources indicate the infrastructural and socio-economic obstacles of unequal access to digital equipment, unreliable internet connectivity, and administrative support in that non-Arabophone situations present disproportional impacts on the Arabic programs (Munapi, et., al. 2025). Al-Abdullatif & Alsubaie, 2022). Such obstacles may lead to the disjointed adoption of digital solutions and enhance disparities in the English-based schooling systems.

### **Digital Technology in Arabic Language Instruction**

The new studies in the field of the Arabic language education begin to appreciate the impact of digital technologies in teaching and learning of a language. Research has reported that online tools, digital platforms, and interactive applications may be used to improve the engagement of learners, gain vocabulary, and access to authentic Arabic language content (Universitas Islam Internas Darullughah Wadda'wah Pasuruan Indonesia et al., 2025). To illustrate, digital media like Zoom, Google Classroom, and LMS platforms were identified to enable online learning, enhance learner independence, and provide a platform of multimodal input more than conventional textbooks ((Munapi, et., al. 2025). Equally, research indicates that gamified learning environments have the potential to contribute to increased student motivation, critical thinking, and communicative activity in case of their successful application (Almelhes, 2024). Such results are consistent with the larger literature that identifies digital resources as potentially revolutionary within the context of language education, especially where there is a shortage of physical resources or examples of the native language.

Nevertheless, the proper application of these resources cannot be realized without pedagogical integration not just access. According to research, technology alone cannot do much in enhancing learning outcomes where there is lack of instructional alignment, teacher capacity, and contextual adaptation. With the growing agreement is that technology should be implemented as

## Digital Resources and Pedagogical Limitations in Arabic Language Teaching of English-Medium Schools in Bangladesh

an element of a consistent pedagogical approach that suits the linguistic and cultural needs of Arabic with its complex morphological and writing properties (Al-Mansouri, 2024; Ritonga et al., 2025).

### Pedagogical Challenges in Technology Integration

A considerable literature focuses on ongoing pedagogical issues in the process of incorporating digital resources into learning Arabic. The insufficiency of teacher training in the area of educational technology is one such reoccurring result. It was also mentioned that many Arabic educators do not have technical competence as well as pedagogic approaches to the effective use of digital tools, and they underuse or use the offered technologies shallowly (Haron et al., 2025). This is in line with bigger studies that found out that teachers tend to use the traditional classroom techniques even when digital resources exist and they lack confidence, access to professional growth, and are not supported by institutions.

The use of technology in language classrooms also makes the use of language of operation and the interface design of digital tools to be a source of concern in research. Most of the popular platforms and applications are written in English as the standard linguistic form of expression, which presents an extra cognitive burden to learners and educators who operate in English-speaking settings. Such use of English as a pedagogical mediator may hinder the student immersion in the Arabic language, which essential results of using digital resources are expected to promote (Ritonga et al., 2025).

In addition, gamification and multimedia learning research observe that most of the digital methods fail to adequately support the higher-order language development skills of grammar mastery, syntactic comprehension, and critical literacy (Almelhes, 2024). Although gamified applications can enhance short-term activity, some of them do not have a system of systematic language development, a holistic feedback system, or situational language use that are essential to higher proficiency.

### Contextual Constraints in English-Medium Settings

Despite the overall positive sides of digital technology, researchers mention that it should be incorporated keeping in mind the peculiarities of the English-medium school setting. In these environments, English is often used as a medium of instruction, institutional prestige and curriculum priorities which may marginalize Arabic and restrict the resources, time and agency of teachers. Although the use of digital learning is of interest to students, the potential tensions between pedagogical cultures that are dominated by English language and the introduction of Arabic technological solution is under-studied in the literature. As an illustration, comparative data have indicated that students tend to view English language teaching as technologically advanced as compared to Arabic language teaching, which consolidate linguistic hierarchies that influence the motivation of learners and resources distribution (Mutthahirah and Ghani, 2025).

Also, a significant amount of literature indicates infrastructural and socio-economic constraints, including uneven access to digital devices, unstable internet connections, and lack of administrative support, as disproportionately impacting Arabic programs in non-Arabophone settings (Munapi, et., al. 2025). Such obstacles may lead to the partial adoption of digital solutions, as well as inequalities in English-medium schooling systems.

Overall, although digital resources hold a promise of improving the learning of the Arabic language because it provides more access, interaction, and multimodality, its educational effects are limited due to teacher readiness, curriculum mismatch, practices dominant in English classrooms, and infrastructure. Despite the international literature of concern over these matters, a gap in contextual research is evident in Bangladesh with a paucity of studies within English medium institutions using Cambridge and Oxford Curricula and Islamic oriented institutions. Current literature tends to record the application of technologies without delving into critical analysis of interactions between digital tools and the restrictions of the curriculum, the practice of the teachers and the deep-seated hierarchies in language usage. Furthermore, the contribution of language ideology, especially the dominance of the English language to the success of digital instruction of Arabic are still under-researched. It is against these gaps that the current research paper critically examines the pedagogical constraints of digital resources in the teaching of Arabic in the English-medium based schools in Bangladesh with a view to the interactions between technology, teachers, curricular and institutional ideologies of language.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### Research Design and Rationale

The research design to be used in this study is the qualitative critical research design to explore the pedagogical constraints of using digital resources to teach Arabic in English-mediated schools in Bangladesh. Since the study aims at not only analyzing classroom practices but also the ideological, institutional, and policy contexts that influence the Arabic instruction, a qualitative and critically oriented research design is the most methodologically suitable. The study does not aspire to quantify the results of learning or efficiency of the technology, but to question the conceptualization, adoption, and limitation of digital resources in English-dominant educational settings and the influence of these processes on the Arabic language learning.

The Bangladeshi English-medium education sector presents a specifically valuable location to be used in this inquiry. Schools in Bangladesh that use English as a medium of instructions are researching in a stratified linguistic economy where English is highly

## Digital Resources and Pedagogical Limitations in Arabic Language Teaching of English-Medium Schools in Bangladesh

symbolically, economically, and academically endowed with capital and Arabic is usually placed as a marginal or religious course. It is against this background that policies of digitalization are commonly presented as an indicator of modernization, but their effects regarding pedagogies of marginalized subjects like Arabic are less explored. This paper then assumes Bangladesh as a case of critical interest in terms of the relationship that exists between digitalization, hierarchy of language, and pedagogy.

### Research Paradigm and Theoretical Orientation

It is a critical interpretivist study that is based on the critical pedagogy, sociocultural theory and existing literature about language policy and English-medium instruction. In this light, educational practices are perceived as socially constructed, historically-situated, and ideologically embedded instead of neutral and technical-only. The policies of language-in-education and classroom practices are considered as the place of power relations, cultural capital, and institutional priorities negotiation and reproduction. Digital tools can be understood through the sociocultural theory that enables the interpretation of digital tools as the mediational means of pedagogical importance, which relies on the instructional design, scaffolding, and social interaction. Critical pedagogy, in its turn, anticipates structural marginalization of non-dominant languages and highlights the ways in which technology will be used to reproduce the pre-existing existing inequalities in education or disrupt them. This theoretical orientation in combination provides the study with the conceptualization of digitalization not as an impartial innovation but as a socio-pedagogical and ideological process that is functioning within the political economy of English-media education in Bangladesh.

### Data Sources and Research Strategy

To ensure both empirical depth and contextual breadth, the study employs a **dual-source qualitative strategy**, combining **primary interview data** with **secondary documentary and literature-based data**. This design enables the study to connect lived classroom experiences with broader institutional, policy, and scholarly discourses.

#### Primary Data: In-Depth Interviews

The primary data consist of **semi-structured, in-depth interviews** with a purposive sample of **21 participants** drawn from the English-medium education sector in Bangladesh:

- **6 Arabic language teachers** currently teaching in English-medium schools
- **6 students** enrolled in Arabic language courses
- **6 alumni** who completed Arabic studies in English-medium schools
- **3 Arabic language education experts**, including curriculum specialists and teacher educators

The sample was chosen by means of purposive and criterion-based sampling in order to guarantee maximum variability in terms of experience, institutional background, and pedagogical perspective. This stratified participant grouping has allowed the research to include the perception and experience of digital resources and pedagogical constraints through various positionalities in the educational system.

The interview guide was aimed at the experiences of participants with digital technologies, classroom activities, curriculum limitations, language-of-instruction challenges, institutional interests, assessment pressure, and understanding of the position of Arabic in English-medium education. The semi-structured design was used to facilitate consistency in terms of interviews but it was flexible in terms of enabling participants to provide more information on issues context-specific.

#### Secondary Data: Documentary and Scholarly Sources

The paper also relies on the systematic developed corpus of secondary qualitative data that is based on four categories:

- Journal articles that are peer-reviewed on the teaching of Arabic language, technology-based language learning, English-medium, and instructional development of teachers.
- Edited volumes and academic books dealing with critical pedagogy, sociolinguistics, language ideology, and digital education.
- Credible media and education related publications on digitalization, English-based schooling and language education reforms in Bangladesh.

The selection of these sources was done using the criteria of relevancy, academic integrity, and contextual relevancy. Preference was given to publications within the past 10 years to come up with modern relevance, although where needed there was inclusion of seminal theoretical works.

### Data Analysis and Analytical Framework

All interviews were sent verbatim and, along with the body of secondary data, a thematic analysis methodology using a critical analytical prism, were performed. The analysis was done in several iterative steps.

First, close and repeated reading was performed on all the materials to recognize similar patterns, discourses, and tensions as applied to using digital resources, hierarchy of languages, curriculum, and pedagogical practice. Inductive coding was used initially, with the opportunity to recognize the themes in the data and not apply them predetermined.

## Digital Resources and Pedagogical Limitations in Arabic Language Teaching of English-Medium Schools in Bangladesh

Second, the codes were narrowed, cross-source compared and clustered into broader analysis categories. Emphasis was specifically placed on the overlap of digital technologies with institutional priorities, ideology of language, teacher agency, and assessment regimes.

Third, a **critical thematic framework** was constructed, organizing the analysis around recurrent and theoretically significant themes, including:

- The dominance of English as the mediating language of instruction
- Pedagogical misalignment between digital tools and Arabic curricular objectives
- Teacher preparedness and professional development constraints
- Institutional marginalization of Arabic and symbolic versus substantive digital integration

Finally, an **interpretive-explanatory analysis** was conducted in which these themes were examined in relation to the study's theoretical framework. This stage emphasized explanation rather than description, linking classroom-level experiences to broader sociopolitical and institutional dynamics within English-medium education in Bangladesh.

### Trustworthiness, Validity, and Analytical Rigor

In order to build the methodological rigor, the research has used data triangulation in the form of interviews, academic literature, policy documents, and media texts. The perspective triangulation was ensured through the use of voices of teachers, students, alumni, and professionals. Such multi-source, multi-perspective design makes the findings more credible and multi-faceted.

Reflexivity was upheld in the course of the research and the interpretive position of the researcher and normative assumptions in language education discourse were recognized. There was no statistical generalizability but analytical trustworthiness was ensured by thick description, contextualization, and theory-directed interpretation.

### Ethical Considerations

All participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their rights, including voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality. Pseudonyms were used in all transcripts and reporting, and identifying institutional details were removed to protect participants and schools.

### Methodological Limitations

The research is a qualitative critical study, so it is not focused on statistical generalization. The size of the sample is small and analytical on purpose. Although inclusion of secondary data helps in increasing the analytical scope, the findings are only interpretive but not predictive. However, these shortcomings do not contradict the purpose of the study to develop theoretically based, context-sensitive and policy-relevant information regarding the Arabic language teaching in English-speaking schools in Bangladesh.

## 4. FINDINGS

The analysis of in-depth interviews with teachers, students, alumni, and Arabic language experts revealed four overarching themes reflecting the pedagogical limitations and systemic challenges associated with digital resources in Arabic instruction within English-medium schools in Bangladesh. Each theme encompasses several subthemes, highlighting the complex interaction between institutional structures, teacher practices, curriculum design, and technology-mediated instruction.

### Theme 1: Curriculum Constraints and Marginalization of Arabic

#### Subtheme 1.1: Peripheral Position in English-Medium Schools

Participants have always mentioned that Arabic is given a marginal status in the curriculum especially in schools that use the Cambridge and Oxford curriculum. The teachers and alumni also cited short teaching hours and institutional under-emphasis, which inhibits meaningful learning.

*"We are given only two periods a week for Arabic, while English dominates everything else. It's very difficult to develop fluency under these constraints."* — Teacher 3

Students echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the perception of Arabic as a supplementary subject rather than a core academic discipline.

*"In my school, Arabic feels optional. Most students don't take it seriously because it doesn't affect the main exams."* — Student 5

#### Subtheme 1.2: Curriculum-Centered Assessment Pressures

Alumni and professionals pointed out that Arabic evaluation is mostly test-oriented with a focus on memorization and rote learning as opposed to communicative proficiency and ability to analyze.

*"Assessment focuses on vocabulary lists and translation exercises. There is little room for conversation or contextual understanding."* — Curriculum Expert 2

# Digital Resources and Pedagogical Limitations in Arabic Language Teaching of English-Medium Schools in Bangladesh

## Theme 2: Digital Resource Integration and Pedagogical Challenges

### Subtheme 2.1: Fragmented and Instrumental Use of Technology

Teachers reported that digital tools are often used inconsistently and primarily as motivational or auxiliary aids rather than as integral components of lesson planning.

*"We have apps and online videos, but we mostly show them for five minutes to motivate students. They are not embedded into the lesson sequence."* — Teacher 1

Experts noted that this reflects a broader lack of instructional design tailored to Arabic learning.

*"Most digital tools available were created for English or general language learners. They do not address Arabic's script, morphology, or diglossia."* — Arabic Education Expert 1

### Subtheme 2.2: Misalignment with Linguistic Features of Arabic

A number of participants highlighted that the online materials that are presently available cannot support the structural peculiarities of Arabic. Educators said they had difficulties when teaching grammar, script, and pronunciation using general applications.

*"Apps simplify Arabic grammar too much. They don't teach the differences between classical and colloquial forms, which confuses students."* — Teacher 5

Students echoed this concern, noting that technology often prioritizes visual or interactive content over meaningful linguistic engagement.

*"Some games and videos are fun, but they don't really help me read or write properly."* — Student 2

## Theme 3: Teacher Preparedness and Professional Development

### Subtheme 3.1: Limited Training in Digital Pedagogy

The teacher respondents indicated that there is poor professional development with regard to effective integration of digital tools. Most of them used the trial and error techniques, with not much guide on pedagogical alignment.

*"I learned to use apps on my own. There is no training offered by the school for Arabic digital teaching."* — Teacher 4

### Subtheme 3.2: Challenges in Balancing Pedagogy and Technology

Teachers expressed tension between curriculum demands, assessment requirements, and using digital resources meaningfully. Experts noted that insufficient training and support exacerbate these challenges.

*"Even motivated teachers struggle to align technology with curricular objectives. Without systemic support, digital resources often remain superficial."* — Arabic Education Expert 3

## Theme 4: Language Ideology and English Dominance

### Subtheme 4.1: English as the Primary Medium of Instruction

Participants consistently highlighted the mediating role of English in Arabic teaching, noting that explanations, instructions, and even digital resources are largely English-based.

*"Most apps are in English, and I end up translating Arabic concepts into English. Students learn words but not how to think in Arabic."* — Teacher 2

Students and alumni reported that this approach limits immersion and inhibits critical language development.

*"I know words, but I cannot express myself in Arabic because I always think in English first."* — Alumni 6

### Subtheme 4.2: Reproduction of Hierarchical Language Practices

Experts stressed that the prevailing nature of the English language is not just practical but ideological, which determines the priorities of the curriculum and the practice in classrooms, which limits the transformational nature of digital resources.

*"English is positioned as the language of success, while Arabic is symbolic or ritualistic. Technology cannot change this hierarchy unless systemic ideologies are addressed."* — Curriculum Expert 1

## 4. DISCUSSION

The research results can shed some light on the complicated and overlapping issues related to the implementation of digital resources in the Arabic language teaching of English-mediated schools in Bangladesh. Although digital tools have been used and grew and are likely to assist in making learning more engaging, delivering multiple modal input, and enabling flexible pedagogical processes, their influence is still limited by the structural, institutional, and ideological factors. The discussion frames the findings in sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Tzuriel, 2013), critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970; Kincheloe, 2008), and Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) theory (Stockwell, 2010) with the emphasis placed on effect of technology, curriculum, teacher agency, and language ideology.

## **Digital Resources and Pedagogical Limitations in Arabic Language Teaching of English-Medium Schools in Bangladesh**

### **Curriculum Marginalization and the Peripheral Status of Arabic**

One of the main results of the study is that the Arabic language is being relegated to the periphery of English-based curriculum even in schools following the Cambridge and Oxford-curriculum and Islamic oriented ones. The participants repeatedly indicated that Arabic is seen as an extracurricular course with few teaching hours, low grades, and institutions do not pay significant attention to it. This marginal position corresponds to the international literature on minority and heritage language education with its focus on the role of the curricular design in reproducing sociolinguistic inequalities that prioritize international languages including English over cultures and religiously important languages (Al-Busaidi, 2015).

In the critical pedagogy approach, the sidelining of Arabic is institutionalized injustice. According to Freire (1970), education is political in nature: it supports the status quo or asks questions (Bello, 2023). In Bangladesh, English as the medium of instruction is dominant and this makes it the path to social mobility and academic legitimacy and Arabic has been pushed to the periphery as a symbolic or secondary language. Thus, even properly designed digital tools are limited by curricula that makes Arabic have minimal substantive appreciation.

Sociocultural theory gives further knowledge. Vygotsky (1978) states that social interaction and cultural instruments mediate language learning. In the cases of Arabic instruction, which are few and mediated with the use of English, the learners have fewer opportunities to be scaffolded, internalize, and engage in meaningful cognitive processes. Digital resources, where they exist, tend to be used in a disjointed manner, that is, not in a way that can support the development of literacy over time and more profound linguistic competence.

### **Fragmented Integration of Digital Resources**

The research revealed that the digital resources are mostly used instrumentally or sporadically and mainly as extra or motivational tools and not as part of the pedagogical planning. Educators said that they used apps, online video, and gamified systems irregularly, and in many cases, unrelated to curriculum goals and assessment models. According to experts, the majority of commercially offered materials are oriented to general learning of languages or teaching English, but they do not address the peculiarities of Arabic as the language of diglossia, the complexity of scripts, and the complexity of morphological features (Rani et al., 2023); Haron et al., 2025).

Such fragmented integration is consistent with critical digital pedagogy that states that technology does not necessarily democratize learning, it can replicate the existing disparities unless it is deliberately introduced in pedagogical practices (Selwyn, 2016). The superficial use of technology in Bangladesh English- medium schools focuses on vocabulary awareness or mechanistic drills as opposed to communicative competence or critical literacy. This was supported by students who said that digital tools are interesting but not effective in developing real language skills.

The sociocultural theory also emphasizes the relevance of scaffolding. Teachers play the role of mediators and they direct the learners through more and more difficult tasks. Students find it difficult to build complex linguistic knowledge when digital resources are not used regularly, and they are not supported or even integrated into the curriculum. Integrated literacy of disjointed digital activity and peripheral stature in a curriculum adds to hindrances of significant learning in Arabic.

### **Teacher Preparedness and Professional Development**

Teacher competence has also become one of the essential elements that affect the efficacy of digital tools. Through interviews, it was found that Arabic teachers are not always trained in using technology-based pedagogy in Arabic instruction, and they have to resort to trial and error methods. Schools also have a low professional development, which restricts the ability of teachers to create lessons that can effectively use digital resources.

In the critical pedagogical perspective of educational experiences, the agency of the teacher is critical in mediating them (Freire, 1970; Bello, 2023). Teachers who are unprepared, who are pressured by the curriculum and the institution, might use tools of digital technology in a superficial manner, focusing on engagement over the language. The sociocultural theory supports this opinion by taking into consideration the role of the teacher as mediator who helps the learners through their zones of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). In the absence of structured training, teachers are unable to scaffold the learning process, as well as to guarantee that the digital tools can be used to improve the acquisition of the Arabic language.

The relevance of alignment is also emphasized by TELL theory: digital tools, curriculum goals, and assessment plans have to be coherent to efficiently integrate the technology (Stockwell, 2010). Misalignment lowers the effectiveness of pedagogical methods and results in the consumption of gamified platforms or applications as an entertainment device instead of a useful skill development tool.

### **Language Ideology and English Dominance**

One common theme was the mediating analytical English in training of Arabic. The English-mediated lessons, explanations, and digital tools are representative of more comprehensive ideological hierarchy with English as the legitimate language of knowledge, academic success and global mobility (Canagarajah, 2006).

## Digital Resources and Pedagogical Limitations in Arabic Language Teaching of English-Medium Schools in Bangladesh

The critical theory emphasizes the role of such hierarchies in determining the curriculum as well as pedagogy. Unless purposefully designed, digital resources will only serve to increase the dominance of the English language, where the interfaces, instructions, and explanations will be in English. Students have indicated that they utilized English to decode Arabic material, and it shows that technology cannot be used altogether to eliminate systemic inequalities.

The sociocultural theory has stressed that language is learned in the context of social interaction with the aid of culturally enshrined tools. By making English the dominant language in mediation, the capacity of learners to internalize Arabic well is limited and this limits the possible opportunities that digital tools can create towards encouraging communicative competence or deep literacy.

### Institutional Constraints and Resource Limitations

Introduction of digital tools in instruction is limited due to the persistence of structural and institutional constraints, such as the lack of time to teach, exam-based curriculum and poor technological infrastructure. The pressures of time and the preeminence of high-stakes testing limit the flexibility of the pedagogue and minimise the possibility of meaningful digital integration (Abildinova et al., 2024). An inadequate infrastructure (such as unstable internet access, unreachability of devices, and lack of professional training of educators) adds to these challenges and hinders the successful and continuous deployment of digital resources in classrooms (Hernandez et al., 2025; Kulev, 2025).

As a result, the use of digital resources is used symbolically but not substantively, and it is out of line with pedagogical purposes (Santoso, 2024). This shallow application weakens cognitive and interaction learning and supports rote learning. To respond to the challenges, the institutional support is necessary, and it should be constant, continuous professional development and agreement of digital tools, curriculum, and assessment (Huang and Sun, 2023).

### Opportunities for Transformative Digital Pedagogy

Under these limitations, the research finds mutual prospects of exploiting digital resources in an effective manner. In cases when teachers undergo specific training, the digital tools are oriented on the linguistic peculiarities of the Arabic language, and lessons are scaffolded with purpose, the participants mentioned increased engagement and script literacy levels, as well as vocabulary retention.

Critical pedagogy emphasizes how teacher empowerment and system support play a key role in changing the instruction (Freire, 1970). Electronic resources are not supposed to act as appendices but are supposed to be part of a coherent and context-sensitive pedagogical approach. Sociocultural views point out that mediation of interaction and scaffolding play an important role in enabling internalization of complex linguistic skills.

The TELL theory points out that learning outcomes can be improved greatly through the use of technology in the curriculum especially in language education, which is a strategic requirement. The study shows that technology can facilitate cognitive development, metacognitive development as well as encourage interaction and critical thinking in students. Various skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and sub-skills (grammar and vocabulary acquisition) can be improved with the help of the effective use of technology in the language learning environment (Ghanizadeh et al., 2015; Iberahim et al., 2023). Thoughtfully developed online interventions have the potential to mediate such complex areas of Arabic as diglossia, script comprehension, and morphology and to promote communicative competence. The alignment of the curriculum, professional development and structural support can help English-medium schools in Bangladesh go beyond symbolic inclusion to substantive language development.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This research paper has critically looked at the pedagogical constraints of online materials in teaching of the Arabic language in English-speaking schools in Bangladesh, especially in Cambridge- and Oxford-curriculum schools and Islamic-oriented schools. The results show that structural, pedagogical, and ideological aspects limit the usefulness of digital tools. The Arabic language has a peripheral role in the school curriculum, less instructional hours and less emphasis in assessment, which supports shallow and memorization-based learning. Although they are becoming increasingly more available, digital resources are typically fragmented, do not correspond to the language characteristics of Arabic, and are mediated mostly via English. Lack of professional development and institutional support to teachers also makes them challenged in addition to limiting the potential of technology in improving communicative competence. Also, the English hegemony in English-based education supports the hierarchies in language systems and limits the student interaction and the pedagogical usefulness of the digital resources.

Irrespective of these, the study finds prospects of ensuring valuable incorporation of technology where it is coupled with constructive curricula, teacher preparation and the use of pedagogical approaches that preempt Arabic as a both an academically and a culturally viable language. This study highlights that technology in itself will never revolutionize Arabic language teaching, structural and ideological changes are needed to ensure a favorable environment to the teachers and learners. These interdependent

## **Digital Resources and Pedagogical Limitations in Arabic Language Teaching of English-Medium Schools in Bangladesh**

constraints can be overcome by English-medium schools to shift to a period of symbolic inclusion to the development of language in a substantive sense.

### **6. ACTIONABLE PEDAGOGICAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed for practitioners, curriculum developers, and policymakers:

#### **1. Curriculum Alignment and Integration**

The Arabic curricula must be redesigned in a systematic way so as to provide enough time of instruction and to utilize digital resources in a well-organized and pedagogical sound way. The integration should be directed by well-articulated linguistic goals, such as script literacy, morphological consciousness and communicative proficiency and not as a supplementary or ad-hoc addition to the instructions. In addition, the assessment practices must shift towards the overreliance on the traditional examination formats in themselves and introduce the formative and communicative assessment strategies, thus, leading to increased learner engagement, facilitation of the unending learning, and more meaningful and lasting language development.

#### **2. Teacher Professional Development**

Digital Arabic pedagogy should be enhanced by special training programs on instructor preparation and professional development, specifically with the focus on the active pedagogical application of applications, online platforms, and multimedia resources. Moreover, it is necessary to encourage the formation and institutionalization of professional communities of practice so that teachers are able to gain experiences, share best practices and mutually develop strategies on how technology can be integrated in the Arabic teaching process. Systematic instructions on pedagogical scaffolding and facilitating learner-centered approaches should be supplemented by such initiatives in order to make sure that digital resources are exploited in a manner that is both instructionally meaningful, pedagogically consistent and sensitive to the linguistic and developmental requirements of learners.

#### **3. Contextualized Digital Resource Development**

The necessity to create Arabic-specific digital instruments contextually adjusted to the environment of Bangladeshi English-based educational institutions, with special focus on the issues of diglossia, nature of Arabic orthography as script-based, and needs of the current curricula. Moreover, the design of such tools must be oriented to maximizing the limited dependency on the English language in terms of user interfaces, instructional guidance and content delivery to create more immersive, linguistically relevant and pedagogically productive Arabic language learning spaces.

#### **4. Addressing Language Ideology**

The cultural, religious and academic importance of Arabic should be sensitized to institutional level stakeholders such as school administrators, teachers, and students through a prolonged awareness-creating program. Schools ought to also have at the policy and institutional levels, comprehensive school-wide approaches, which place Arabic on an equal standing as English as a language of learning, and thus more linguistic equity and diminishing the symbolic and structural marginalization of the Arabic language within English-language educational settings.

#### **5. Institutional Support and Infrastructure**

The educational centers are supposed to make sure that they provide sufficient technological resources such as good audiovisual facilities, a good internet connection, and constant access to moderated educational sources. Parallel to this, institutional policies are to be formulated and implemented to facilitate the systematic, organized incorporation of digital resources in the Arabic Curriculum as opposed to optional, incidental or ad hoc use, thus granting achievement of coherence, consistency and pedagogical responsibility in the technology-mediated instruction of Arabic language.

#### **6. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The education authorities and institutions ought to initiate regular and systematic assessment systems of digital Arabic language programs to determine the learning outcomes of the students, their degree of involvement, and the satisfaction of the teachers. The data produced by these assessments is to be subsequently employed in modifying digital pedagogical practices in an iterative manner so that they can be made to remain effective and be highly consistent with the curricular objectives and teaching priorities. These recommendations would help the stakeholders to gain the maximum of the pedagogical potential of the digital resources and to overcome the structural, professional, and ideological limitations. Eventually, this practice has the potential to improve communicative competence, literacy, and continued participation in learning Arabic language in the English medium schools in Bangladesh.

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