

DESIGNING AN INQUIRY-BASED AND PROJECT-BASED LEARNING MODEL WITH ASSESSMENT MECHANISMS ALIGNED WITH THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CURRICULUM IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MISAN GOVERNORATE

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Abstract:

The education system faces numerous challenges that affect its outcomes, leading to a decline in educational standards. This is clearly reflected in the system's outputs, negatively impacting society. The Iraqi education system was once among the best in the region, but due to the circumstances it has endured since the 1980s, it has not reached a level that would allow it to keep pace with scientifically and economically advanced nations.

Since the demands of modern life no longer require merely acquiring knowledge or possessing academic skills, but have extended to actively dealing with the evolving environment and performing efficiently, it has been placed upon education officials worldwide to reconsider programs that are compatible with developments and changes.

Despite this, the development and improvement committees in Iraq began their role in presenting ideas to improve the English language curriculum to help students keep up with current and future developments by proposing the idea of integrated curricula, which calls for synergy, integration and cooperation to lead to psychological stability with others and the individual's successful adaptation to his environment (Janet, 2001).

Although the curriculum has been revised several times to keep pace with developments and incorporate modern vocabulary, it has faced numerous obstacles related to printing, the lack of audio materials, wall charts, and other resources. Despite the financial support allocated by the Iraqi government since 2003 to cover operational and investment expenses for building schools and kindergartens, schools still share buildings with other schools, resulting in a decline in student enrollment and negatively impacting the quality of education (Iraqi Network, 2023). The majority of classrooms are ill-equipped for teaching English due to the lack of audio labs, and teaching methods remain traditional and fail to incorporate modern teaching approaches.

Introduction:

The truth discovered is that over the years of study, from elementary through middle school and high school to university, the person who graduates is unable to speak and communicate. This is evidence that the educational system in Iraq, especially the English language system, needs redevelopment and rehabilitation.

One of the reasons for the deterioration of the education system is the failure to create an encouraging and productive educational environment that achieves results and develops education. Another reason for the deterioration is the politicization of education. Al-Rubaie stressed that a sound education system is necessary for every country in the world, and every country develops its people on the basis of active training and education, and on economic, social, political, cultural, and moral foundations (Al-Rubaie, 2021).

Previous studies have confirmed the necessity of using instructional design models and applying them in order to present content in an organized manner, and the necessity of directing the attention of those in charge of development and using instructional design models in the teaching and learning process to address educational problems (Al-Hafizi, 2020, p. 1277).

The researcher also confirmed that the Iraqi system is weak and unable to develop its students and that it lacks a sound educational method to refine thinking, inquiry and creativity, and that the continuous series of improvement and development of the curriculum is still not suitable for the requirements of the twenty-first century. On this basis, there has become an urgent need to design an educational model for the English language curriculum in the primary stage because it is concerned with the complete education of the individual morally, psychologically, socially and culturally, and it is the language that has always called for understanding and linking cultures around the world for the purpose of communication.

The researcher pointed out that despite the development in the current educational system, it lacks sound educational objectives that meet the demands of the current era, which is based on technology and data. The curricula remain traditional and outdated, relying on memorization and repetition without focusing on the psychological foundations of the learner. Despite the development and improvement of this curriculum, learners do not engage with it through research, inquiry, project-based learning, or even individual or collaborative work, resulting in very weak outcomes. While international literature indicates the effectiveness of inquiry-based and project-based learning models in enhancing all skills, their implementation in the primary school environment of Misan Governorate faces challenges related to resource provision, teacher training, curriculum adaptation, and appropriate assessment mechanisms.

In light of global educational transformations and the increasing demand for skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, inquiry-based learning, and project-based learning, the need to develop inquiry-based and project-based learning systems in primary schools has become urgent. Inquiry-based and project-based learning relies on actively engaging students in discovering and constructing knowledge through authentic tasks, thereby enhancing their learning motivation and developing their ability to apply knowledge in real-life contexts. However, the implementation of this educational model in schools in Maysan Governorate still requires scientific documentation and operational planning to ensure integration with the curriculum, assessment methods, and the local school environment.

Objectives

The current study aims to:

- Design an inquiry-based, project-based model for the English language curriculum in the primary stage in Misan Governorate, with appropriate assessment mechanisms that enable the measurement and development of diverse skills (critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, creativity, etc.).
- Link the design and implementation to local school planning and available resources.
- Create a school environment that supports teachers, students, and the school community through a clear framework for implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement.

The Importance of study

The importance of this study stems from:

- Providing support to decision-makers in enhancing the quality of primary education and reducing educational opportunity gaps.
- Building a solid foundation for youth that aligns with local and regional development aspirations.
- Providing schools and teachers with a phased development plan, training procedures, educational resources, and assessment mechanisms that support the integration of inquiry-based learning, projects, and the local curriculum in Maysan.
- Adding a practical framework and applicable model that helps in understanding the impact of implementing inquiry-based learning and projects in an Iraqi primary school setting, with assessment criteria that meet 21st-century standards.
- The importance of education as a dynamic force that empowers all individuals to achieve national goals (Al-Rubaie, 2021).
- The importance of the English language as a global language with widespread use.
- The educational model keeps pace with educational developments that emphasize the development of intellectual competencies and skills to meet the challenges of the future.

Research Questions

- What is the optimal model for inquiry-based and project-based instructional design in English language teaching that is applicable within primary schools in Misan Governorate?
- What are the proposed assessment mechanisms that ensure the alignment of results with local curriculum standards and the needs of the school community?
- What organizational and educational challenges might teachers, school administrations, and local institutions face in successfully implementing the proposed system?
- What learning outcomes and skills are students expected to achieve through this system?

Scope:

The research was conducted in primary schools under the General Directorate of Misan Governorate for the academic year 2025/2026.

Methodology:

The research employs a descriptive approach, reviewing literature and previous studies that have addressed inquiry-based and project-based learning.

Terminology:

Designing an Educational Model:

This involves conceptualizing and planning a set of steps and procedures that facilitate the teaching and learning process and achieve the desired objectives using inquiry-based learning and projects, in accordance with mechanisms aligned with the curriculum.

Inquiry: A set of steps and procedures undertaken by a group of students after topics are presented as real-life problems that they must solve (Al-Samman, 2017, p. 186).

Gathering information related to a specific topic, classifying it, analyzing it, interpreting it, reaching a conclusion, and generating solutions with the aim of developing students' scientific writing skills and awareness.

Projects: A set of activities that reflect various types of learning where students work together towards a single goal. As they move towards this goal, they demonstrate communication and presentation skills, along with organizational skills such as time management, research, evaluation, participation, and critical thinking (Stivers, 2010, p. 33). It is also defined as web-based collaborative learning that utilizes all electronic tools and services to enable students to share, interact, gain experience, and produce enthusiastic and creative group projects.

Evaluation Mechanisms:

A set of specific methods, mechanisms, criteria, and procedures, such as observation tests, questionnaires, case studies, interviews, self-reports, and others, used to evaluate and identify shortcomings and deficiencies in the curriculum or educational topics presented to the student (Al-Laqani, 1995, p. 228).

A set of criteria for diagnosing strengths and weaknesses, addressing them, and overcoming them (Abdul Qader et al., 2010, p. 138).

Alignment:

This refers to a framework that integrates instructional components and general communication strategies into a representation of effective teaching and recommends that teachers be effective in achieving learning (Wolff, 2007, p. 36). It also involves students engaging in the educational process to align the content, and themselves through a process of aligning communication strategies across broad categories to achieve engagement and interaction.

English Language Curriculum:

This is defined as the curriculum taught in primary school, using a communicative approach based on communication and interaction among a group of students in the same school.

Scientific Background and Previous Studies

First Axis:

Designing an Educational Model:

Conceiving and planning the components of educational content by following a set of steps and procedures that facilitate the learning process and achieve desired goals.

It is also defined as "an applied framework for learning theories within the classroom," meaning that it is "a guiding plan based on a specific learning theory," and it proposes a set of organized procedures that direct the implementation of the activity in a way that facilitates the educational process to achieve its goals (Hassan Al-Khalifa, 2007, p. 16).

The concept of an instructional model:

Many Arabic and foreign literature and studies have pointed to a set of concepts, including Instructional design is the process of defining the conditions of education. Its goal is to create strategies and products at a comprehensive level. Instructional design is a science and technology that explores and describes the best educational methods that achieve the desired learning outcomes and develops them according to specific conditions. Or it is a process that represents one of the functions of scientific development in educational technology.

The concept of a model is a modern one that has gained prominence in scientific language. This term has been widely used in educational literature, and a model is designed to achieve a specific learning objective (Salah al-Din Mahmoud, 2002, p. 120). A model is defined as an abstract mental representation of real-world objects, events, or processes, presented in a simplified manner, either verbally, graphically, or both (Adel Saraya, 2008, p. 73).

The theoretical foundations upon which the model design is based are:

- 1- Behavioral Theory: This refers to changes and modifications in the learner's observable and measurable behavior. It aims to provide the necessary support and reinforcement to help the learner move closer to the desired behavior.
- 2- Constructivism: This view the learning process as a series of guided activities. When the learner encounters a problem or a real-life task, they reconstruct their knowledge and engage in social negotiation with others. This approach encourages flexible use of information and multimedia.
- 3- Information Processing: This focuses on how learners pay attention to environmental events, encode information, link it to existing knowledge in memory, and retrieve it when needed. This is achieved by presenting concise content, dividing information into appropriate amounts, and minimizing repetition.
- 4- Cognitive Load: This theory posits that the brain has short-term memory, which can only receive and process a limited amount of information, and long-term memory, which has an unlimited capacity for storing information. If short-term memory receives too much information, it leads to mental overload, thus hindering learning. The theory's application involves reducing unnecessary details, repetition, and information to increase memory capacity.
- 5- Dual Encoding: This theory includes two types: one for representing verbal information and the other for representing non-visual information. Dual encoding leads to better recall.

Advantages of Instructional Design:

Instructional design provides teachers and learners with a learning environment built on advanced technological foundations, enabling teachers to perform their tasks successfully. It also reveals areas of weakness in the curriculum to curriculum designers, allowing for its

reformulation according to more effective instructional designs. This is achieved through the following:

- Bridging the gap between theoretical principles and their applications in the learning situation.
- Optimizing the use of various educational tools, materials, and equipment.
- Saving time and effort by eliminating weak alternatives and actively participating in achieving learning objectives.
- The teacher's role as organizer of the learning environment that facilitates learning.
- Understanding learning needs and objectives, learner characteristics, and desired learning outcomes.
- Selecting appropriate teaching strategies and technologies (Zayer & Gary, 2020, p. 38).

The Importance of Instructional Design:

- For the Teacher: Instructional design increases the likelihood of a teacher's success in teaching the subject matter. It anticipates problems that may arise from implementing educational programs. Design is a process of studying, critiquing, modifying, and developing programs, and it provides the teacher with visuals and frameworks to guide them on how to conduct business in the classroom. It also provides the teacher with lesson plans for daily lessons or units and effective teaching methods.
- For the Learner: It emphasizes the necessity of the learner's interaction and participation in achieving the highest level of learning mastery.
- For the educational process: It leads to attention towards educational goals from the first steps in designing education, identifying the general educational goals and the specific behavioral goals for the material to be learned. This step helps the designer to distinguish valuable goals from secondary goals or applied and theoretical goals (Muhammad, 2021, p. 643).

Instructional Design Models:

- 1- Extended Linear Diagrams: This is one of the simplest program design methods, but it requires all learners to follow the same steps in the program in the same order.
- 2- Ring Diagrams: These are oval, rectangular, or other shapes connected by curved lines or two-way arrows. Information is gathered at the end of the steps, and then a review of the initial design steps begins.
- 3- Overlapping Diagrams: These diagrams illustrate the non-linear nature of the design process, presenting specific design elements as smaller shapes within larger, more comprehensive ones. This suggests that certain aspects of the design process may occur simultaneously, rather than in a fixed sequence. The simultaneous repetition in this model is evident.
- 4- Parallel Diagrams: These diagrams treat the design phase as a series of overlapping rectangles. This format is useful in situations where the design process is rapid and where the main stages occur concurrently (Azmi, 2017, p. 8).

Types of Educational Models

- 1- Product Development Models. This model assumes that a specific product, the use of which takes hours or days, will be developed. It also assumes the existence of a multidisciplinary team that will produce original materials, which may then be commercially marketed.

2- Classroom Learning Development Models. This model assumes that a specific time will be allocated for a comprehensive initial analysis and that the learning environment will be relatively limited in its technical resources.

3- Systems Development Models. This model assumes that an entire course or curriculum is developed with ample resources available to instructional developers and experts in the subject area.

Elements of an educational model:

1. Specific models and requirements for educational activities.
2. Guidelines for developing limited learning experiences.
3. Assumptions about learner characteristics and teaching and learning processes. (Sulaiman, 2011, p. 12).

Model Building Stages:

This stage involves:

- 1- Identifying the most important topics and key aspects that learners should know.
- 2- Identifying the most important information and skills that learners should acquire.
- 3- Developing learners' ability to understand and interpret scientifically (Hala Abdullah, p. 67).

Emile Hanna indicates that model building involves three basic stages:

- 1- The variable identification stage: This stage is called the model planning stage, where variables are introduced into the model and the relationships between them are defined.
- 2- The specification stage: This stage involves deepening the model by defining it and testing it practically.
- 3- The model verification and sustainability stage: This stage involves establishing methods to ensure the model's preservation and continuity.

Characteristics of the proposed educational model:

- Sequencing: The steps are linked to each other, so that the outputs of each step represent the inputs of the next step.
- Comprehensiveness: It includes inputs, processes, outputs, procedures, and skills, and addresses the largest number of elements of the educational process, and is suitable for the characteristics of children and their learning styles (Al-Abadi, 2006, p. 180).
- Applicability: The model specifies the required inputs and the method of processing these inputs to produce the desired outcomes.

The second axis:

Inquiry-based learning:

The inquiry-based method is one of the oldest teaching and learning methods. The Greek philosopher Socrates was the first to use it, and he also employed the inquiry-based approach in teaching. He believed that every person possesses certain knowledge in various fields of life, but this knowledge may be confused, and his role as a teacher lies in correcting the information.

Furthermore, inquiry-based learning is an important and effective teaching method in various sciences to increase learning outcomes, and it is used for all age groups (Abu Hatab, 2001).

It is also the most effective method in teaching science (Zaitoun, 2001, p. 136) by involving the learner in activities that lead to acquiring knowledge and make him active, thus making him a thinker who uses his information in mental processes that end with reaching results (Al-Hilah, 1999, p. 373).

The Importance of Inquiry-Based Learning:

- Developing self-learning skills: This skill reinforces self-directed learning and fosters self-confidence.
- Cultivating exploration in students by familiarizing them with diverse sources such as periodicals, documents, books, and more.
- Developing the ability to gather information.
- Training learners in decision-making and judgment. (Awad, 2006).

The teacher's role in inquiry:

The teacher announces the work presented by each group, provides appropriate reinforcement, encourages them to exert effort, and offers feedback to the learner (Khalil, 2019, p. 248).

Steps of Inquiry-Based Learning:

Inquiry-based learning is both a teaching method and an assessment technique, and it involves several steps:

- 1- Problem Identification: The teacher poses questions covering various aspects of the lesson, and the student then poses their own questions.
- 2- Situation Analysis: The student gathers information about the problem and explores potential solutions.
- 3- Information Consolidation: The teacher summarizes the main ideas of the lesson, assigns homework, corrects the assignments, and provides feedback.
- 4- Conclusions, Recommendations, and Suggestions: The teacher presents the most important problems, the most prominent solutions, and the necessary steps for the student to take.

Although the process is inquiry-based and learner-centered, this does not mean that the teacher leaves his students to discover on their own without guidance. Rather, he has a fundamental role in the process of inquiry, problem planning, and formulating questions with multiple answers. He helps them to search and explore. (Zaitoun, 2001, pp. 137-147)

Inquiry in learning English: It allows the use of language as a tool for research, acquaintance, and communication, and promotes critical thinking and organized expression in the target language.

Principles of Inquiry-Based Learning in English:

- A central inquiry question related to the content, for example, reading a text or oral communication.

- Research/inquiry activities that combine reading, writing, listening, and speaking in a realistic language task.

- Feedback that supports language development. We conclude from this that inquiry encourages students to think like creative scientists to arrive at solutions, as motivation stimulates their activity and energy to engage. The teacher should strengthen their engagement and avoid isolation and passive observation (Qatami, 2004, p. 89).

Third Axis

Projects:

The Concept of Project-Based Learning

A project relies on students performing major educational tasks in real-life situations. It requires students to work on the project with their peers, in addition to planning, implementing, and evaluating it to achieve the desired results (GOKHAN, 2011, p. 3). This method differs from traditional methods, guiding students to solve real-life issues and problems, and working in small groups to complete the project (Anna, 2012, p. 22). Fares defines it as learning based on teamwork, employing all tools and services that allow students to participate, interact, and work together to accomplish educational tasks (Fares, 2018, p. 648).

The Importance of Project-Based Learning:

- It develops higher-order thinking skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, creative learning abilities, logical reasoning, and social and emotional skills.
- It enhances students' ability to interact with teachers and peers when exchanging information.
- It fosters teamwork, allowing for the formation of social relationships and increasing motivation to learn (Jamal, Essawi, & Tilchin, 2014, p. 93).

Project Steps

- 1- Project Selection: This involves selecting a project that engages and interests the learner.
- 2- Project Foundations (Project Plan): This includes the objective, the learner's interests, and their social characteristics. The plan should be flexible and incorporate collaborative learning activities.
- 3- Project Implementation: This includes discussion, fieldwork, a trip, follow-up, expert consultations, description and demonstration, research, and presentation.
- 4- Project Planning: This includes:
 - Clearly defining the project objectives to facilitate the selection of activities and resources that will help achieve them.
 - Identifying the items and materials needed for the project
 - Defining the project's work steps
 - Identifying the necessary activities and developing a plan for their implementation
 - Defining the role of each group according to their abilities and readiness (Khalil, 2019, pp. 253-255)

Here, the learner documents the collected images and artwork. Then comes the project development phase through interaction among themselves, keeping them engaged in finding answers to their questions.

- **Project conclusion:** This marks the end of the activities and the beginning of the learners' focus, as they begin to discuss their work.

Advantages of Project-Based Learning:

- The teacher's role is that of a partner in education.
- The chosen topic should be relevant to the child learner.
- Collaboration between the teacher, student, and parents.
- Showcasing experiences in local media.
- Repeating activities as they serve different purposes.

The project's connection to the English language curriculum:

- The content's relevance to local context and student interests.
- Integration of the four language skills with digital and collaborative skills.
- Participatory assessment evident throughout the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases.

Fourth Axis

The Concept of Evaluation

A set of procedures by which data is collected about an individual or phenomenon and this data is studied scientifically to ascertain the extent to which predetermined objectives have been achieved in order to make specific decisions (Ta'imah, 2004, p. 163).

Types of Evaluation

- **Pre-evaluation:** This aims to obtain a complete picture of the situation before implementing the curriculum, such as determining the learners' level.
- **Continuous evaluation:** This is ongoing evaluation conducted during implementation to enable the teacher to know the progress of their students and contribute to improving education and the learner.
- **Diagnostic evaluation:** This is used to identify the difficulties that learners are experiencing.
- **Summative evaluation:** This takes place at the end of the semester.
- **Follow-up evaluation:** This aims to measure the effects of the educational process and its results in the long term (Al-Fatlawi, p. 107).

Areas of Evaluation

1- **Curriculum Evaluation:** This includes assessing the extent to which the curriculum aligns with the educational objectives and takes into account students' learning experiences, readiness, abilities, and interests. It also includes evaluating curriculum elements such as objectives, content, activities, and teaching methods, as well as evaluating the evaluation process itself in terms of its tools, timing, and effectiveness in measuring the achievement of the desired goals (Al-Hashemi & Atiya, 2009, pp. 294-297).

2- Teacher and Learner Evaluation: This involves assessing the extent of their learning in personal, cognitive, affective, and skill-based aspects, and identifying areas of weakness in order to develop them.

3. Textbook Evaluation: Establishing specific criteria to assess its suitability and need for improvement.

4. Evaluation of Teaching Methods and the Effectiveness of Educational Resources: To determine the effectiveness of the teaching methods and resources used by teachers in teaching a specific subject and a particular level of learners.

Participatory assessment is the process that the teacher resorts to in order to know the extent of his success in achieving the goals, using types of tools such as achievement tests, attitude and inclination scales, values scales, observations, personal interviews, content analysis and other scales.

Performance-based assessment strategies:

These are among the most prominent authentic assessment strategies that require the learner to demonstrate their learning through work that provides indicators of their acquisition of those skills. Performance provides the learner with the opportunity to use sensory materials such as sports equipment, visual aids, clothing, printing, computer use, plant cultivation, maps, tables, models, and samples (National Assessment Team, 2004). Authentic assessment includes two main elements: performance tasks, which consist of learning processes and outcomes, and performance evaluation criteria. These criteria refer to the aspects that the learner performs in order to execute a task correctly.

The researcher believes that this type of assessment helps in learning higher-order thinking skills and reconciles a wide range of knowledge to formulate judgments, make decisions, and solve real life problems that they experience, and builds self-confidence and self-esteem, as it strengthens the link between learning and the learner (Asha and Abu Awad, 2008, pp. 9-28).

The Relationship Between Assessment and Curriculum Development:

Towards a Realistic Alignment

The relationship between assessment and development is a necessary and complementary one. Assessment is a process aimed at gathering information to improve the curriculum, making it more effective in achieving its objectives, keeping pace with reality, and diagnosing strengths and weaknesses in order to develop it in a way that ensures its alignment with the learner's needs and the requirements of society. Assessment is considered:

1- As a diagnostic tool for understanding reality.

2- As a driver for curriculum development, which includes modifying the content, adding new activities, or improving assessment methods.

3- Aligning the curriculum with reality: making it more suitable for learners' needs and keeping pace with scientific and technological developments.

4- Continuous assessment: which helps in tracking developments and provides the necessary information for better alignment with the desired objectives.

English Language Curriculum Evaluation:

The curriculum is a set of intentional educational activities and processes that can be identified and repeated as experiences, and which can positively influence a group of individuals and extend its impact to the educational system. It is one of the most important elements of the teaching system.

The English language curriculum consists of:

1- Objectives: To achieve good performance or a specific behavioral pattern that keeps pace with modern trends.

2- Content: An element of the curriculum, representing the knowledge presented to the learner according to specific objectives. It must be sensitive to individual differences and relevant to the cultural context, while also considering modernity, quality, and comprehensiveness to achieve the holistic development of the student's personality.

3- Teaching methods and tools: These must consider the learner's level of readiness, stimulate their interest, and cultivate their positive inclinations.

4- Evaluation: A crucial element, it is a process based on measurement. The results of this measurement are used to make judgments about the characteristics of the learner, the teacher, the content, activities, and teaching methods, and to measure the degree of change in behavior (Al-Laqani, 1995, p. 228).

The best methods for learning English:

Interactive approach: This relies on direct interaction with the teacher and peers and includes collaborative activities that stimulate critical thinking.

Content-based learning: This aims to learn the language through content and enhances language skills through engaging contexts that go beyond grammar and vocabulary.

Inferential learning: This focuses on inferring new grammar rules and vocabulary through exposure to content and aims to promote a natural understanding of the language.

Systematic learning: This involves introducing vocabulary in a structured and organized way and relies on presenting concepts to ensure correct understanding and avoid confusion.

Integrated learning: This approach relies on reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Task-based learning: Teaching students tasks that simulate real-life situations fosters deep understanding, skill development, and problem-solving.

Learner-centered learning: This approach focuses on the individual needs of learners, allowing for the design of personalized learning experiences. It increases motivation and engagement, and supports self-directed learning, skill development, and problem-solving.

Language immersion: This approach relies on intensive exposure to language through environmental or cultural contexts.

Cooperative learning: This approach involves teamwork and the sharing of knowledge and experiences among learners, contributing to the development of group communication skills (Hamed Academic, 2024).

Indicators of Curriculum Alignment with 21st Century Skills:

Most educators agree on classifying 21st-century skills to meet societal needs and achieve educational goals as follows:

- 1- Learning and Creativity Skills, including (critical thinking and problem-solving, communication and collaboration, innovation and creativity)
- 2- Digital Literacy Skills, including (information literacy, media literacy, information and communication literacy)
- 3- Career and Life Skills, including (resilience and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social interaction and understanding multiple relationships, productivity and accountability, leadership and responsibility) (Al-Sayed, 2019, p. 366). These are further classified into key areas, which are:

Knowledge of human cultures and the natural world, practical and intellectual skills such as inquiry, analysis, critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork (Wagner, 2020, p. 20). This refers to the student's participation to master basic skills within the context of inquiry and the project. The criteria are based on three dimensions: language performance, the content of the inquiry and the project, and feedback and collaboration.

Linking the four elements to inquiry and the project:

- 1- Listening: This includes listening outputs: the student's ability to understand questions and audio sources related to the topic.
- 2- Project outputs: Listening to presentations from friends, recording audio notes.
- 3- Suggested assessment: This includes gathering and recording basic information, asking questions, and extracting information from primary sources.
- 4- Reading: This includes: Inquiry outputs: measuring the student's ability to extract main ideas from texts related to the project and identify vocabulary.
- 5- Project activities: extracting information and creating summaries, maps, and concept maps.
- 6- Suggested assessment: The student participates by providing simple answers and limited expression or by introducing new vocabulary related to the topic.
- 7- Speaking: This includes the outputs of an inquiry: The student participates in a dialogue that includes questions and answers and gives an oral presentation, assessing their ability to participate.
- 8- Project Activities: Presentations, meetings, role-playing.
- 9- Suggested Assessment: Participation with simple answers and limited expression, or the use of meaningful sentences and clear expression.
- 10- Writing: This includes survey outputs such as summarizing written work and documenting sources, writing longer paragraphs with proper organization, and documenting sources.
- 11- Project Activities: Using short reports/notebooks, project profiles, audio/text recordings.
- 12- Suggested Assessment: Writing a short paragraph with clear sentence structure or a longer paragraph with proper organization and source documentation.

Mechanisms for Evaluating the Alignment of the English Language Curriculum:

Alignment is a constantly changing and dynamic relationship, unlike something fixed and static. It focuses on the fundamental components of the educational process, employing basic

communication strategies to develop relationships between these components. These components are the environment, the teacher, the student, the content, and the learning process. If the teacher exerts efforts to align these components—efforts such as structure, engagement, interaction, and communication—then the alignment will be successful.

Steps to create mechanisms for adapting the English language curriculum:

- Establishing a connection by creating a respectful environment and helping learners feel comfortable interacting with the teacher within a framework of collaborative learning. This involves using strategies to strengthen the bond between teacher and learner, which is considered alignment between student and teacher.

- Structure: Continuous efforts to gather, clarify, synthesize, and monitor results. Teachers create a guide for the day by providing a brief outline of the program prepared for the class. Teachers use data with objectives and daily summaries. Data guides the student to follow a direction of thinking, such as saying, for example, "Let's think about what might happen if..." They point to the ideas and clarify them on the board or computer. Using structure is considered a strategy in adaptation because it incorporates the human dimensions of the teacher and student and their interactions with the content. The idea of adaptation allows for precise planning (Pastic, 2002).

- Engagement: A strategy designed to stimulate thinking, motivate students, and keep them occupied in the learning process. It sometimes uses engaging examples, especially those related to humanistic values, as these help students apply them to issues and matters that concern them. For example, the teacher provides primary sources from which students can choose compelling information that engages them in the work. Engagement is considered an important strategy that sends messages to students about the importance of their involvement in the courses, research, or projects they are working on.

- Interaction involves strategies related to reciprocal and multidirectional communication, rather than linear, one-way communication, where the teacher is the primary source of information. This method involves the teacher listening to questions and discussions taking place in the classroom during the lesson. This strategy encourages a series of behaviors that include asking questions, listening, and answering. Alignment means:

- No single component can determine teaching and learning decisions: the environment, content, students, and teacher are all components of the educational process.

- I mean focusing on the interrelationships between the basic educational components: we mean the interactions that exist between the components, for example, what happens when a teacher meets with a certain group of students and what happens between them. These questions focus on the essence of teaching and learning. (Diamond, 1999).

- Alignment means there is no single right way: The alignment framework suggests that effective teaching is a complex process that can have guidelines. Teaching is not simply a series of behaviors that must or must not be present for a teacher to be effective, but rather the methods that offer the most effective balance between content, teacher, and learner to achieve learning objectives. It means that all strategies should offer the best alignment of the essential components of the educational process.

- Alignment means communicating effectively: This means that teachers should engage and interact to determine the best ways to communicate with the student to clarify what they are doing.

- Alignment means maintaining a focus on student learning.

- It means engaging in ongoing reflective practice. Alignment is a matter of continuous evaluation, reflection, and communication about what works and what does not (Nyquist & Wolf, 2001, pp. 45-62).

Challenges of Implementing Active Learning Methods in English Language Curricula:

- Harumi indicated that the most significant challenges facing English language teaching are the lack of resources that stimulate learning and help ignite the imagination from the learners' perspective, and the lack of appropriate educational resources, which negatively impacts learning (Harumi, 2011).

- The lack of absolute commitment and attitudes toward understanding English on the part of both learners and teachers affects the effectiveness of English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers (Pande, 2013).

- Most learners mistakenly believe that English is difficult and lack confidence.

- Limited or almost nonexistent interaction with native English speakers.

- Lack of a diverse range of teaching methods, techniques, experiences, and approaches for teaching English as a Second Language (Davila, 2019).

- Overcrowded classrooms. However, effective learning occurs when the teacher provides individualized instruction or facilitates small group discussions, such as project-based and inquiry-based learning.

Arab experiences in developing English language teaching in the early stages:

When the researcher reviewed the literature and previous studies, she found that the majority of experiences in developing English language teaching used innovative methods based on active learning, such as inquiry-based learning and projects. The most important experiences in developing English language teaching in the primary stage included the use of diverse teaching methods, with a focus on making learning fun and interactive. These experiences include the use of interactive activities to increase interaction and make learning more enjoyable, and the use of games and technology such as educational videos, providing a stimulating learning environment, space for play and extracurricular activities, and encouraging students to interact with each other, focusing on basic skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), developing teachers' skills, for example, providing training opportunities for teachers to develop their skills, and regularly evaluating performance using diagnostic tests and continuous assessments to identify students' strengths and weaknesses.

Previous Studies:

Kropakkak's Study (2007):

Kropakkak's study confirmed that project-based learning via the web contributed to improving students' critical thinking and making learning more memorable. This type of learning develops their ability to construct new meanings and achieve more effective learning outcomes.

Stivers' 2010 study:

The Stivers study confirmed that project-based learning is more effective than traditional learning, such as in achieving academic success in economics and science. It contributes to student and teacher satisfaction and the mastery of 21st-century skills such as critical and creative thinking, communication, and collaboration.

Jad Al-Rab's Study (2023):

This research aimed to present a proposed instructional design model for microlearning elements within a personalized learning environment. It provided a detailed description of the model's stages, which consisted of six phases. These phases included analyzing learner characteristics, analyzing learning objectives and tasks, defining environment design criteria, and identifying learning strategies. The study recommended the necessity of using instructional design models and developing learning curricula.

Similarly, several studies have recommended the need for design models, such as Afifi's study (2016), which emphasized the importance of using instructional design models to promote quality and excellence in education.

Al-Adawi's study (2017) indicates:

That using instructional design for educational courses in e-learning environments leads to the transformation of the subject matter from a mere presentation of content into an educational program that achieves learning objectives and the acquisition of skills within the learning situation.

Badr's study (2022):

The research aimed to design a proposed educational model based on Gardner's Five Minds theory to develop invention skills in kindergarten children. The design process involved several steps: defining the objective of the model, analyzing literature and previous studies, and recommended that curriculum and educational program designers in the kindergarten stage should include invention education. It also recommended redesigning educational environments and their components to align with the guidelines of the proposed model for developing invention skills.

Abu Qamar's study (1996):

This study aimed to determine the effect of using the inquiry method on the achievement of eighth-grade students in science and their attitudes towards it. The results showed that there were no statistically significant differences between male and female students in their understanding of scientific concepts.

Al-Ubaidi's Study (2005):

This study aimed to determine the effect of using the guided inquiry method on the acquisition of scientific concepts among fifth-grade elementary school students in science. The results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in acquiring scientific concepts such as definition, differentiation, and application. The study also recommended several practices for teaching the subject using the inquiry method, noting that it aligns with the demands of modern practical development and helps achieve a key trend in educational thought.

Mohammed Jawad's Study (2013):

This study aimed to identify the effect of the guided inquiry method on the achievement and motivation of fourth-grade elementary school students to learn science. It recommended the use of the guided inquiry method, which helped increase learners' ability to store and retrieve information and added dynamism and engagement to the lesson.

The current study is consistent with Badr's study (2022) "Designing a proposed educational model based on the theory of the five minds." The research also went through defining the goal of designing the model and analyzing the literature and previous studies. The researcher also included two skills, which are inquiry and searching for solutions through the school and local environment and establishing projects to promote cooperative learning. It also promotes producing a generation capable of relying on itself in facing life's difficulties through interaction with the surroundings and the school environment.

Methodological Framework and Research Findings

To answer the first question, what is the optimal model for designing an inquiry-based and project-based educational model in English language teaching that is applicable within primary schools in Maysan Governorate?

First: Background and Justification for the Selection

- The optimal model is based on a fundamental idea that integrates inquiry based on real questions with projects that promote the use of English in real communicative situations.
- It integrates applied research and educational development with an attempt at gradual generalization through real school environments, which is suitable for Misan primary schools that may need solutions that are adaptable to a local context, limited resources, and tangible language needs.
- Enhancing the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) through real-world projects that enable students to communicate effectively and improve their confidence in using the language.
- Adopting cooperative learning strategies to achieve overall objectives and employing brainstorming strategies to generate ideas and foster creativity.
- Shifting from teacher-student learning to multidimensional learning by utilizing the learner's surrounding social environment and relying on diverse sources of information, such as online research, community resources, and illustrated or digital books.

Second: Essential Components

1- Design and Planning: Formulating a central inquiry question related to everyday life methodologies in English, for example (How can a health awareness campaign be designed in English within the school?)

- Setting clear and measurable learning objectives in the four language skills.
- Preparing collaborative projects to assess performance (oral expression, interaction, vocabulary, ability to cooperate, document quality).
- Selecting appropriate resources and materials for the elementary level, taking into account the varying skill levels.
- Developing a timeline and learning units linked to small projects.

2- Implementation and Application

- Implementing activities in short, time-bound phases, guiding students in structured teams at varying levels.
- Integrating authentic language activities such as: project presentations, role-playing everyday situations, writing short reports, and producing simple audio or video materials.
- Documenting the work, including an electronic learning notebook, audio recordings, and short videos.

3- Collection and Evaluation:

- Collecting student outputs, including presentations, reports, oral feedback, recordings, and written work.
- Conducting participatory assessments where students evaluate themselves and their peers.
- Receiving constructive feedback from teachers, students, and parents, if appropriate.
- Analyzing the initial data to identify strengths and weaknesses in language, interaction, and collaboration.

4- Analysis and Modification:

- Analyze the results in comparison with the defined objectives, identify gaps in vocabulary, grammar, and communication, and determine appropriate methods to address them.
- Modify the design based on the data, reformulate the questions, adjust project activities, and enhance supporting resources.

5- Institutional Expansion and Documentation:

- Documenting the process and disseminating it within and outside the school as a transferable reference, along with training teachers in other primary schools in Misan; establishing a library of reusable educational resources; and strengthening inclusivity and diversity in student teams to ensure equal opportunities.

Third: Basic Assumptions:

Students at this age group show a good readiness to learn English through inquiry-based learning and practical applications. However, given that digital resources may be limited, the model relies on local resources, inter-school collaboration, and the use of simple tools (such as stationery and basic audio recordings).

Potential Limitations: Variations in English language proficiency among students, resource availability, limited school time, and the limited time available to students during the school day for learning through extended projects.

The assumptions on which the proposed model is based:

It also assumes that there are cognitive, performance and human skills in the student, the acquisition of which leads to the quality of the educational process. There is also a knowledge gap in a specific area that can be bridged through projects and research to improve the educational situation, and the final product is subject to testing or evaluation by the teacher or parents.

To answer the second question: What are the proposed assessment mechanisms that ensure the alignment of results with local curriculum standards and the needs of the school community?

Upon reviewing the literature and studies, the researcher found that:

First: The mechanisms must be based on fundamental principles to ensure alignment, including:

1- Consistency with local curriculum standards: This involves ensuring that performance levels and outcomes correspond to (listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar, and communication skills).

2- Alignment with the needs of the school community: This includes incorporating indicators related to the local environment, such as community participation and participatory assessment, which ensures the voice of supported students and parents.

3. Multidimensional assessment: Balancing formative and summative assessment.

4. Developmental assessment: Monitoring improvement over time, not just a single measurement point, to capture development in language skills, thinking, and collaboration.

5. Fairness and inclusiveness: Designing assessment tools that consider the diversity of students' abilities and support learning from mistakes as part of the educational process.

Second: The mechanisms should be based on proposed assessment tools, a checklist to ensure the alignment of learning objectives with local curriculum standards, an evaluation of resource planning and availability to support the diverse needs of students, and a questionnaire on the school community's needs regarding educational outcomes to determine the correlation between project objectives and school needs.

- Implementation procedures: Review the unit design with an administrative evaluation committee or English language committees, educational committees, and develop measurable and revisable learning performance indicators.

The researcher developed suggested assessment tools, including a rubric specific to the four English language skills with clear performance criteria, field observations from the teacher during class with analysis of linguistic and collaborative interaction, and simple audio-visual recordings to document language performance.

Implementation Procedures: Participatory assessment during activities: Students participate in evaluating themselves and their peers using specific rubrics. Sessions are held with parents to discuss their children's progress and how the project reflects community needs.

- Project evaluation tools include: written reports, presentations, booklets, publications, and audio recordings.

- Participatory assessment of outcomes: Students are invited to evaluate their language proficiency, communication skills, and collaboration.

- Language acquisition assessment tools: Short tests aligned with the curriculum framework, such as listening/reading passages based on established criteria.

- Student data collection procedures: A monthly and termly progress report is provided to monitor language proficiency. Data is analyzed to identify areas of weakness requiring additional educational intervention.

To answer the third question: What organizational and educational challenges might teachers, school administrations, and local institutions face in successfully implementing the proposed system?

Based on literature and studies, several organizational and educational challenges may arise for school administrations and local educational institutions regarding inquiry-based and project-based English language teaching.

1- General organizational challenges include:

- **Administrative burden:** Teachers face a backlog of tasks between daily teaching, project planning, documentation, and evaluation. To overcome this challenge, administrative support should be provided, such as allocating specific hours for planning project lessons, documenting results, and assigning project coordinators within the school.
- **Limited resources and budget:** This refers to the limited material and technical resources needed to support language projects (educational materials, audio-visual equipment, internet access, development of an open digital resource library, and obtaining support from local institutions).
- **Reducing other class hours, rescheduling activities, and allocating specific days for evaluation and documentation.**

2- Educational and Assessment Challenges, including:

- **The varying abilities and needs of students to learn English due to differences in language levels, linguistic awareness, and communication skills, making it difficult to set specific standards.** This obstacle can be overcome by designing a reproximity that is applicable across multiple levels and providing blended learning pathways for the most challenging students.
- **Teachers' commitment to methodological change:** We observe resistance to change or difficulty in implementing a new approach compared to the traditional one. This can be overcome with support, training, and follow-up programs, along with providing real-world examples and a successful model. This requires allocating time for development and data analysis, and necessitates a technical research support team within the school to assist in data collection and analysis.
- **Inconsistencies between assessment results and the local curriculum, or difficulties in achieving alignment if assessment tools are not precisely designed, necessitate support managers and educational supervisors to monitor performance across schools.**
- **Collaboration with the local community:** Engaging parents and the local community can be challenging and unreliable. To address this, local seminars or effective communication channels via WhatsApp or email should be established to involve parents in proposing appropriate survey questions aligned with the curriculum.

To answer the fourth question, which is: What are the learning outcomes related to the skills that students acquire through this system?

1- **The main outcome:** Enhancing students' overall English language proficiency through using the language in real-world situations and tangible projects, while developing their critical thinking and self-directed learning abilities.

2- Targeted learning areas include: listening, speaking, reading, writing, language skills, social interaction, teamwork, organization and planning, research and inquiry, and self-assessment.

- **Listening:** Expected learning outcomes include understanding audio materials related to the project, such as a health or cultural project. Students will be able to identify the main idea from a short audio clip. Assessments will include project-based learning, participation in listening exercises with peers, and oral summaries.

- **Speaking:** The ability to conduct a communicative dialogue with peers, express ideas, and present simple arguments supported by examples, using vocabulary related to the work project. The assessment involves the student giving a 3-minute oral presentation and being able to conduct questions and answers with his colleague during a role-playing activity.

- **Reading:** The student will be able to understand short texts related to English language projects and supporting materials, identify paragraphs and headings during assessment, and read two short paragraphs and summarize them in three sentences using their own words and new vocabulary.

- **Writing:** Through writing, the student will be able to produce well-organized written texts that describe the steps of the project.

Recommendations and Suggestions

Recommendations:

1- Curriculum designers at the primary level should ensure the inclusion of projects and inquiry-based learning.

2- A joint cooperation protocol should be established between local institutions and the school community to support inquiry-based learning by providing resources and materials for project development and training teachers on the proposed model for developing basic teaching skills.

Recommendations:

1- Design educational programs based on the proposed model and measure their effectiveness in developing basic skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening).

2- Design a learning environment based on inquiry-based and project-based learning of English, as these support educational thinking and build the student's character.

Advantages of the proposed model:

1- It considers the development of the four basic skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) in addition to situational skills such as building self-confidence, self-development, teamwork with peers, and research and inquiry.

2- It combines educational activities with a student-centered learning environment where the student plays the most significant role in classroom activities.

3- It defines the roles of the teacher and the student and provides support to the community and local educational institutions to supply all necessary resources, including libraries, books, and other knowledge, to ensure the learning environment is implemented effectively.

- 4- The model is based on internal consistency, comprehensiveness, and flexibility, allowing for modifications and additions.

procedures	Basic components
<p>Design and planning require the following procedures:</p> <p>First: A supportive learning environment:</p> <p>The learning process cannot occur without a stimulating learning environment. This environment should focus on the ideas and interests of elementary school students to motivate them to learn. The supportive environment consists of visual, auditory, and audio aids appropriate to the school curriculum, along with available resources such as laboratory equipment, recordings, and modern technologies like virtual whiteboards and internet-connected tablets to facilitate the learning process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The model gives students complete freedom to explore and investigate digital resources such as books and electronic magazines, either by searching online or using materials stored in a dedicated library called the school library. They are also given the space to independently find solutions to the questions posed. • Developing collaborative projects to assess performance (oral expression, interaction, vocabulary, ability to collaborate, document quality) <p>Some advantages of this design include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete freedom: All student ideas and discussions are welcome. - Identifying strengths to reinforce them and weaknesses to address them, but without dismissing them, as the student is still learning. - Flexibility in organizing educational activities to achieve the desired objectives. - Allowing students freedom of movement, exploration, and the use of tools. <p>Second: Modern adaptation mechanisms within the learning environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using digital and interactive tools (English language applications). • Training teachers in data-driven learning strategies. • Designing activities aligned with the European CEFR framework and digital curricula. <p>Third: Teachers:</p> <p>Competent teachers knowledgeable in designing the educational model, oriented towards nurturing a generation capable of finding solutions through research, discovery, and teamwork. Without a competent teacher, the educational process cannot be completed, and a teacher lacking certain knowledge in this area is ineffective. This model will not be effective. The teacher must possess knowledge of learning skills and a pedagogical background, and must be creative, intelligent, and dedicated to their work to ensure quality.</p> <p>Fourth: School Support:</p> <p>Support is provided through the provision of learning resources and materials appropriate for the primary level, taking into account the varying skill levels.</p> <p>Selection should be made from other institutions, whether schools or departments, to ensure the continuity of learning. Any deficiency in any resource or element will affect students' motivation to learn. Furthermore, students need reinforcement and support for their strengths.</p>	<p>Inputs</p>

<p>Fifth: Parental Support:</p> <p>One of the most important factors in helping students bridge their cognitive and emotional gaps is the continuous support and assistance from parents and the school environment. This support is crucial for facilitating learning and integrating the content into their daily lives and work, so that students understand the true purpose behind learning.</p> <p>The design and planning must be aligned with the philosophy, needs, and foundations of the community to ensure its effectiveness. This is achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Positive, thought-provoking questions that encourage the discovery of new solutions to specific topics or problems presented in the learning situation. This stimulates and motivates the student's mind.- Bridging the student's knowledge gap. When a question is posed, the student will compare it with their existing knowledge and solutions related to the question or problem, and seek further information to address the issue. The gap may represent a problem requiring a solution or modification.- This model incorporates cooperative learning, involving small or large groups to learn teamwork. This is considered a project-based learning strategy. <p>Sixth: Performance Evaluation Measures: These are conducted in stages:</p> <p>1- Initial Assessment: This occurs before the learning process and aims to identify the student's existing knowledge and connect it with new information to acquire additional skills.</p> <p>2- Formative Assessment: This takes place after the completion of each activity, whether it's solving a research problem or completing a project. Its purpose is to build upon existing knowledge, overcome challenges, and find solutions.</p> <p>3- Summative Assessment: This takes place after the completion of all activities and is conducted through a test that measures the student's mastery of the skill and their acquisition of the cognitive and affective aspects.</p> <p>Observation cards are developed to measure the student's acquisition of the interpersonal, affective, and cognitive aspects.</p> <p>Clear and measurable learning objectives are also established for the four language skills.</p>	
<p>This includes:</p> <p>First: Implementation and Application:</p> <p>Information is gathered through digital books and online audio searches. Students should also consult their teacher or ask family members for information. Activities are implemented in short, time-bound phases, with students working in teams at various levels. For example, cooperative learning strategies and project-based learning are used, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrating authentic language activities such as: presenting projects, acting out daily routines from the curriculum, writing short reports about a specific family within the curriculum or in real life. Students can also create and produce simple audio or visual materials on paper or other materials to develop their skills.• Documenting the work: an electronic learning notebook, audio recordings, and short videos. To provide feedback to family members or peers	Operations

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The process also involves stimulating the student with an inquiry-based question that generates brainstorming. The result of acquiring this skill is to discard old ideas and think outside the box. <p>Secondly: Activating modern adaptation mechanisms during the implementation of activities and projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employing technological tools such as interactive whiteboards or augmented reality to expand inquiry.• Using digital simulation activities to develop communication skills.• Applying the "flipped classroom" model in conversation and listening lessons.	
<p>This includes:</p> <p>The student will be able to create a project they envision and represent on paper, such as an educational poster or flashcard. They will also be able to develop a product or invent something new that facilitates the educational process. Furthermore, the use of audio labs will enable them to pronounce letters and words correctly, thus supporting their communicative skills.</p> <p>They will be able to find solutions to difficult situations and problems encountered in real life through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presenting projects and acting out everyday situations, writing short reports, and producing simple audio or video materials.• Documenting the work, including an electronic learning notebook and short audio and video recordings. These materials can be reviewed to facilitate the learning process.• Expected learning outcomes include understanding audio materials related to the project, such as a health or cultural project. For example, the student can identify the main idea from a short audio clip.• Assessments will be based on projects, participation in listening exercises with peers, and oral summaries.• The ability to engage in communicative dialogue with friends or family, express ideas, and present simple arguments supported by examples.• Using vocabulary relevant to the project.• Enhancing students' English language proficiency through use in real-life situations and tangible projects, while developing critical thinking and self-learning skills. <p>Digital Learning Products and Modern Assessment Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Production of digital projects such as interactive presentations, short podcasts, and simple educational videos.• Digital learning reports for students.• AI-powered assessment tools to determine language proficiency levels.	Outputs

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