



HAMILTON
International School



Part of
iSP International
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Partnership



The Hamilton International School, Doha, Qatar

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To what extent does access to daily
Ed-Tech contribute to English Academic progress in
Arabic A students who use main language of education
(English) predominantly in school only?



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Introduction

Hamilton International School is a diverse international school in Qatar with students from over 90 nationalities. As part of International Schools Partnership (ISP), the school has a core pillar of **Multilingualism** and supports English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners through a three-tiered approach: universal classroom support, regular intervention groups, and intensive small-group intervention.

A growing challenge has been identified for many mother tongue Arabic-speaking students. Due to the Qatar Ministry of Education requirement for students with Arabic passports to attend additional Arabic lessons, these students often have reduced opportunities for additional English language support and exposure. This has contributed to a widening gap in English language development and academic progress compared to peers who use more English in daily communication in and out of school.

This action research project was developed to explore how the school can better support mother tongue Arabic-speaking multilingual learners, reduce barriers to progress, and improve both academic achievement and social integration.



Literature Review

- Research on learners with English as an additional language highlights the importance of targeted intervention, consistent support, and opportunities for meaningful language practice. In *BICS and CALP: Empirical and Theoretical Status of the Distinction*, Jim Cummins explains that students develop academic language proficiency more effectively when language support is embedded across all areas of learning.
- Research into educational technology suggests that digital tools can positively support English language acquisition by increasing engagement and opportunities for independent practice. The study *The Effectiveness of Technology on English Language Learning: A Meta-Analysis* found that technology-supported instruction had a significant positive effect on vocabulary development, reading, and communication skills. Similarly, *Effects of Technology-Based Educational Programs on English Learners' Achievement* reported improvements in both English proficiency and academic achievement when students regularly accessed technology-based language programmes.
- Studies also show that regular intervention and sustained support are key factors in accelerating English proficiency. The article *English Language Learners' Academic Progress and Language Development* found that students who received consistent language support and increased exposure to English made stronger progress over time than students with limited opportunities for intervention.
- Research specifically focused on Arabic-speaking learners identifies additional barriers due to differences between Arabic and English language structures and writing systems. The study *Challenges Faced by Arabic-Speaking Learners in Learning English* highlighted that limited exposure to English outside school can further slow language development for Arabic-speaking learners.
- However, research also suggests that valuing students' first language can positively support second-language acquisition. The study *The Impact of Translanguaging on the EFL Competence Development of Arabic Speaking Learners* found that allowing Arabic-speaking students to use both Arabic and English during learning improved understanding, confidence, and participation in English learning environments.



ACTION RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Exploring the impact of additional EdTech support for Arabic A speaking students to develop English acquisition in school through daily intervention and support.



Students at the centre



Data informed



Reflect – Adapt – Improve



Collaborate – Support – Succeed

Starting Point Parental Context

Parents of students involved in the trial joined a webinar and completed a pre-trial survey to gather their perspectives on their child's English language acquisition, confidence, and experiences in an international school where English is the main language of instruction.

Most parents recognised that their child mainly speaks Arabic outside of school, acknowledged the need to develop English acquisition, and supported the intervention. However, only some felt their child experienced difficulty switching between Arabic and English. While this supports the view that both languages can develop alongside one another, the academic data suggests there is still a gap between proficiency in the two languages.



Supporting The Learning Journey Together



Tes Awards for International Schools 2025
Shortlisted
Best Use of Technology



Initial assessment will identify proficiency bands for students.



Then, they will access Flash Academy in school with targeted materials to support their progress.



We will monitor their learning and complete assessments once a month to check progress



We will track progress in the assessments and look at the impact this is having with their MAP scores.

Next Steps

- Complete the consent form.
- Complete the parent survey based on your child.
- Students to complete their forms and assessment in school before the winter break.
- January morning provision will begin.
- Celebrate success with your child.
- Allow your child to practice at home if you wish.



What does the research tell us?

Explore key evidence and insight from researchers in the EAL space, highlighting that the link between EAL and wellbeing is a recognised issue, and not just our perspective. These research findings underscore the need for effective EAL support to drive academic success, positive mental health and sense of belonging.



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Parents were invited to an online coffee morning to explain the purpose of the trial, the process involved, and the support required from them throughout the intervention.



Arabic A Parent Perspectives on English Language Development

Strong Support for English Programs

Parents strongly support English intervention programs.
Families believe extra English practice improves confidence.

Speaking and Communication Confidence

Many children lack confidence speaking English in class.
Parents want more opportunities for speaking and communication practice.

Reading and Writing Challenges

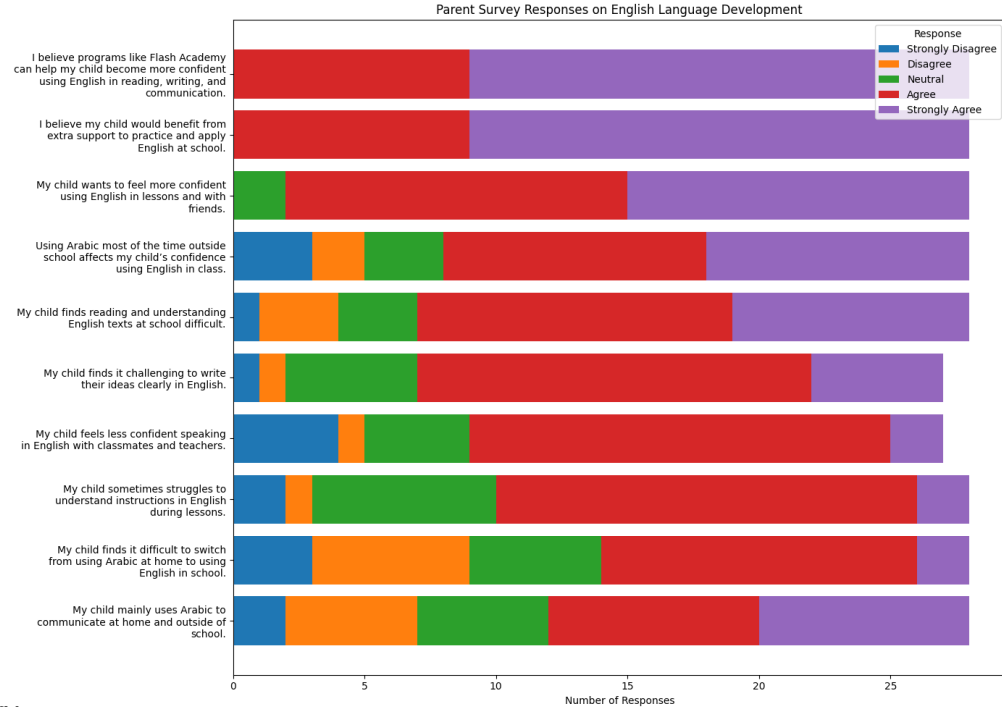
Parents report challenges with reading comprehension in English.
Writing clearly in English is a major concern for families.

Impact of Home Language

Using Arabic mainly at home can affect English confidence.
Switching between Arabic and English can be difficult for students.

Need for Continued Support

Families value continued support in reading, writing, and vocabulary.
Parents support stronger home-school collaboration for English development.





Raw Data Findings

Grade	Consent	Baseline Band Jan/Feb	Flash Acadmey Log in	Email Sen Teacher	Fall Reading RIT	Fall Language RIT	Spring Reading RI	Spring Language R	Flash March/April
G2	yes	Band A+	nk02	23/11/25 James Grogan	161	155	149	161	Band B-
G2	yes	Band B	ka02	23/11/25 James Grogan	161	162	163	173	Band C-
G2	yes	Band B-	ma16	23/11/25 James Grogan	160	162	173	172	B+
G2	yes	Band B-	ha02	23/11/25 James Grogan	170	167	163	169	not complete
G2	yes	Band B-	nb02	23/11/25 James Grogan	162	163	165	176	not complete
G2	yes	Band A	aa32	14/1/26 James Grogan	165	155	163	157	Band B
G2	yes	Band A	aa33	14/1/26 James Grogan	N/A	N/A	159	176	Band B
G2	yes	Band B	ta02	23/11/25 James Grogan	167	166	174	185	not complete
G2	yes	Band B	la05	23/11/25 James Grogan	164	162	178	177	not complete
G2	yes	Band B	ta03	23/11/25 Sophie McLean	180	160	193	188	Band B+
G2	yes	Band A	ke01	23/11/25 Sophie McLean	157	149	180	167	Band B
G3	yes	Band B-	ra04	23/11/25 Rushna Choudhury	172	175	180	183	Band B+
G3	yes	Band B-	ja10	23/11/25 Rushna Choudhury	172	178	181	187	Band B+
G3	yes	Band A	fm01	23/11/25 Ellen Sasha Boden	160	155	174	173	Band B-
G3	yes	Band A+	aa03	23/11/25 Ellen Sasha Boden	160	151	176	168	Band B-
G3	yes	Band A+	aa26	Ellen Sasha Boden	151	153	170	162	Band B-
G3	Yes	Band C-	sa03	23/11/25 Sean McDonnell	162	160	193	189	Band C
G4	yes	Band B	la03	23/11/25 Meral Karakas	170	163	176	173	Band B+

Data was collected on student proficiency baselines prior to the research project, including MAP RIT scores before the intervention and results following a period of intensive support.

Unfortunately, conflict in the Middle East disrupted in-person learning during the project period. Students were therefore supported in accessing the platform from home, allowing them to continue using the daily educational technology during online learning with parental support. However, this situation reduced students' access to face-to-face instruction and direct support from their class teachers.



New to
English



Early
Acquisition



Development
Competence



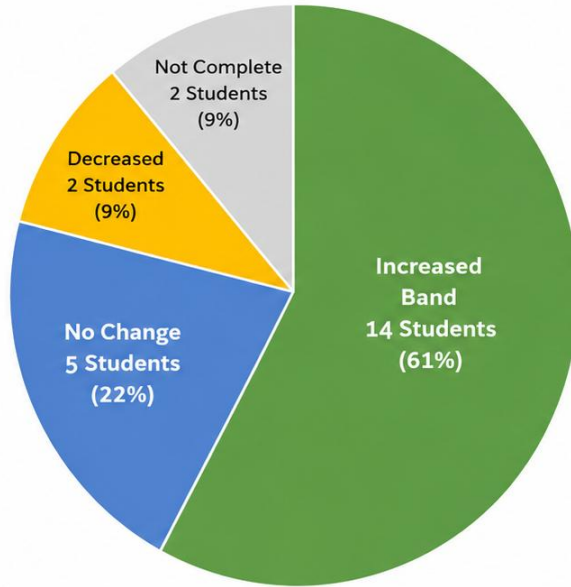
Competent



Fluent



Language Proficiency Band Findings



PROGRESS SUMMARY		
	Increased Band (Moved up alphabetically)	14 Students (61%)
	No Change (Same band)	5 Students (22%)
	Decreased Band (Moved down alphabetically)	2 Students (9%)
	Not Complete (Insufficient data)	2 Students (9%)
TOTAL STUDENTS		23 Students (100%)



Key Takeaway: 61% of students (14 out of 23) increased their proficiency band level following the intervention and support.



*New to
English*



*Early
Acquisition*



*Development
Competence*



Competent



Fluent

MAP Data Findings

Key cohort averages (all grades combined)

Reading: 164.35 → 173.59 (+9.23 RIT growth)

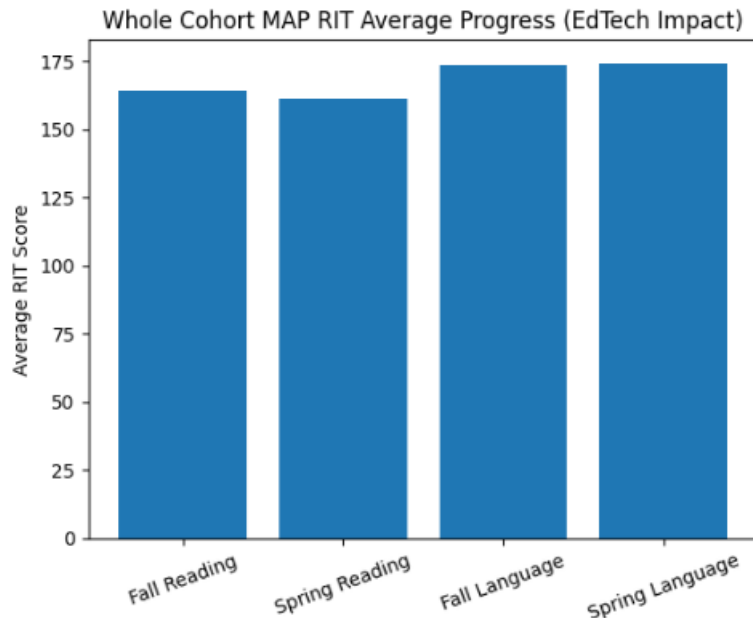
Language Usage: 160.94 → 174.12 (+13.18 RIT growth)

What this shows for EdTech impact

Stronger growth in Language Usage (+13.18) suggests higher impact in writing/grammar/usage skills.

Reading also shows solid growth (+9.23) across the cohort.

Overall pattern indicates consistent upward progress from Fall to Spring, which supports the argument that the daily EdTech intervention contributed positively to learning gains.



Overall Findings

- Average proficiency bands improved overall from baseline to the end of the intervention.
- Students showed stronger gains in MAP Reading and Language RIT scores between Fall and Spring.
- Several students moved from B-/B bands to B+ bands, suggesting increased academic language proficiency.
- Reading RIT scores showed consistent growth across most students, indicating positive literacy development.
- Language RIT scores also increased, supporting the impact of daily EdTech-supported intervention.

Teacher Survey Findings

Survey Statement	Yes (out of 6)	Percentage
Students seemed more confident in class	6/6	100%
Ed tech worked well within daily timetable	5/6	83%
Students improved in confidence	5/6	83%
Students contributed more positively in language lessons compared to pre-trial	5/6	83%
Parents engaged and supported well	4/6	67%
Ed tech content supported growth and aligned with curriculum learning	4/6	67%
Teachers would continue the trial / repeat it at larger scale	6/6	100%
Students were comfortable continuing the trial during online learning	6/6	100%



Impact of Ed-Tech on Language Development

The data suggests that regular, structured use of educational technology contributed positively to students' English language development, including improvements in language band outcomes post-baseline. This aligns with research indicating that well-integrated digital learning tools can support second language acquisition by providing increased exposure, repetition, and interactive language *practice* (e.g., *Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning* and studies on *CALL – Computer Assisted Language Learning*).

Contribution to Measured Progress (MAP Data)

There was positive growth observed in MAP assessment outcomes across the trial period. While this improvement may be partly attributed to the daily use of ed-tech interventions, it is important to note that external contextual factors, such as reduced face-to-face instructional time due to regional instability may also have influenced learning conditions. As a result, a direct causal relationship cannot be definitively established; however, the improvement remains a positive indicator of overall student progress during the intervention period.

Attribution of Language Gains

It is not possible within this study design to isolate the specific impact of ed-tech from that of high-quality classroom teaching and teacher-led instruction. However, the combined approach appears to have had a cumulative positive effect on English language development. This reflects wider research suggesting that blended learning environments often enhance language acquisition through both structured teacher input and technology-supported practice.



Student Confidence, Engagement, and Language Use

Teacher feedback indicated a consistent increase in student confidence, classroom participation, and active use of English across lessons. This supports established research in language acquisition which highlights affective factors; such as confidence and reduced anxiety as key contributors to language learning success (*e.g., Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis*). The ed-tech intervention may have supported these outcomes by providing low-risk, repetitive practice opportunities.

Implementation, Engagement, and Curriculum Fit

Teachers reported that the ed-tech intervention integrated effectively into the timetable and aligned well with curriculum objectives. Student engagement with the programme was positive, and learners were able to participate consistently throughout the trial. This supports wider findings that successful ed-tech implementation depends not only on the tool itself but also on ease of integration into existing instructional routines and curriculum coherence.



Reflections About Research & Looking Forward

A wider-scale, longer-term implementation of action research should now take place to better identify its true impact. Further improvements could include targeted pre-teaching of ed-tech tools to better support in-class learning, alongside progressive opportunities aligned with proficiency band development.

Students should be introduced to and consistently use the technology from the beginning of the academic year in order to generate more reliable and clearly measurable evidence of their growth in technology-related skills.

Students, teachers, and families should continue to collaborate closely to support improvements in students' proficiency and overall development in English.

A further review involving parents would be beneficial to gather post-assessment feedback and their perspectives on student progress.

Future research should also consider a wider cohort of students to improve the reliability and generalisability of findings. Additionally, the timing and location of student access to ed-tech tools should be more carefully controlled to strengthen the validity of the results.