

مراحل تعليم الكتابة المسمارية والمعاجم اللغوية المدرسية في العصر البابلي القديم: في مدينتي نيبور وأور

Stages of Teaching Cuneiform Writing and School Language Dictionaries in the Old Babylonian Period: In the Cities of Nippur and Ur

علي ياسين الجبوري*

Abstract

Thousands of textbooks left by students in their schools were found in the cities of Nippur, Ur, Isin, Uruk, and Larsa. Being the primary reference for identifying these stages, some of those textbooks were written in Sumerian and others in both Sumerian and Akkadian, indicating that the Sumerian language continued to be used in subsequent centuries despite the demise of the political Sumerian rule. The textbooks included lists of names of animals, plants, birds, and so forth. At that time, students had to undertake four stages: the first of which was learning cuneiform glyphs. In the second stage, they copied words and terms written by their teachers on the left side of the clay tablet on the right side of the tablet. After those practices, they started copying some royal and literary texts. In the third stage, they learned mathematics, including multiplication, division, algebra, and so on, in addition to writing economic documents. The fourth stage included learning the language used in legal cases and court procedures, as well as writing personal and royal letters. After completing the curriculum of each stage, students had to sit for an exam. According to school heritage, students apparently started their education at an early age until adolescence. They stayed away from their families for long durations. There are also indications of the presence of females in those schools. Moreover, education was most likely restricted to well-off people. Models of those school buildings were found either attached to temples or in the houses of some teachers.