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*Guest Editors*

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## Arabic Language and Literature; A critical study

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**Introduction:-** The religious need of Indian Muslims to learn Arabic gave rise over the centuries to a large number of religious schools catering only to Muslim students, called maktab and madrasa. (The terms are somewhat fluid, the word *madrasa* sometimes being used to denote a maktab; other terms used are *hifz-khāna* for Qur'an memorization schools, and *jāmi'a* or *dar al- 'ulum* for higher education institutes. In premodern times, the term madrasa was also used for secular schools with both Muslim and Hindu students.) Maktab imparted primary learning, focusing on Qur'an recitation and memorization of suras, and, by extension, a basic knowledge of the Arabic language, particularly the script. They also taught Sharī'a precepts, particularly those relating to the ritual prayer (*salah*), the ritual purification (*wuḍū'a*), the two calls to prayer (*adhān* and *iqāma*), and formulae recited within the ritual prayer. At more advanced levels, they taught some Qur'an interpretation and prophetic Traditions (Hadīth). Maktab continue to flourish in India today, in masjids or independent institutions, with the inclusion in modern times of a rudimentary secular component, comprising basic arithmetic and elementary literacy in the local vernacular.

The purpose of this study was to review the core Arabic curriculum in higher education at four-year colleges and language institutions in the United States to find the extent to which these institutions are preparing their students to communicate effectively in the Arabic-speaking world after completing the equivalent of six semesters of Arabic or achieving high-intermediate proficiency. This study investigated students' perceptions and learning preferences for spoken Arabic. It also examined instructors' perceptions on teaching preferences of spoken Arabic. The students interviewed for this research had all traveled to the Arabic-speaking world for language immersion study, and were considered to have acquired high-intermediate proficiency. The primary countries of destination were Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.

The rationale for this study is based upon the need to understand how students who have lived in the Arabic-speaking world perceive the function of spoken Arabic. Did the students feel that knowing spoken Arabic provided any benefit in the Arabic speaking world? Did they feel that not knowing spoken Arabic was a problem? Did the students wish they had studied spoken Arabic before traveling to the Arabic-speaking world? Qualitative data was elicited in the questionnaire.

Up to the 1990s, poetry was used as a basic form of expression to create, construct, and question nationalist paradigms as well as consciousness of and

loyalty to the homeland. Yet nowadays, many Arab critics and authors consider the novel and drama to be better suited than poetry to tackling contemporary societal problems<sup>1</sup>. The potential of the novel to elucidate, narrate and expose the psychological dimensions of the individual and connect them to social dynamics as well as to political events and developments has gained particular importance. This might explain the tendency among Arab poets to stop writing poetry for the sake of prose literature, a trend which has created a severe crisis for Arabic poetry today, as some critics and writers argue.

**Discussion:-** Teacher assumption of student understanding of features that do not seem particularly technical has been noticed in English-speaking technical contexts (Mudraya, 2006) and something similar may well be happening in these Saudi physics classrooms, where it probably compounds existing problems. Current research into language difficulties in Arabic seems to focus on broader issues of readability as mentioned earlier. The students in this study seemed to be also having difficulty with the more 'grammatical' features of this school physics text in Arabic. Figure 1 indicates that the students got almost half of the deleted pronouns wrong and were unable to provide conceptually correct replacements for more than half of the adverbs, verbs, adjectives and conjunctions. These difficulties were identified through more precise analysis of cloze results and they go beyond broad concerns with readability. The problems with pronouns deserve further investigation as they suggest student difficulties with text cohesion<sup>2</sup>.

**New needs and trends in the language professions:-** The rapid changes in the professional environment are clearly reflected in the growing demand for cross-disciplinary, non-linguistic skills suggesting that the job profile of the traditional language specialist is undergoing substantial changes. While data were collected separately from employers and employees in the language professions, the input from the two groups of respondents does not show any significant differences or major discrepancies. Consequently, the trends and needs reflected in the data material are grouped according to type of required competences rather than type of respondent. It is worthwhile noticing, however, that the needs and requirements listed as personal competences (cf. section 2.2.5 below) rely on observations and input from employers only.

**Core linguistic competences are still an issue:-** Although a vast majority of respondents stress the need for skills of a cross disciplinary and non-linguistic nature, one should not jump to the conclusion that core linguistic competences are no longer necessary or no longer valued in the language professions. Both



employers and employees are acutely aware of the need for both oral and written language proficiency, preferably in more than one foreign language. While English is still recognised as the global *lingua franca* by respondents, the data indicate a growing awareness of the importance of non-European languages, especially Japanese, Mandarin, Arabic languages and, to a lesser extent, some less-studied European languages, cf. also Fjord *et al.* 2007. The situation of the classical European languages such as German, French, and Italian is less certain, although some data indicate a moderate, but fairly steady demand for highly specialised terminological skills in translation of professional texts, especially highly specialised domains such as technology, law, or finance, and for experts in related areas of technical writing.<sup>3)</sup>

#### The Art of Arabic Playwriting In Nigeria:-

Since the emergence of literary drama in Nigeria, there have been avalanche of plays written in the English language. However, recently Arabic playwrights students seek recourse of the state security service that get the lecturer arrested. The second published Arabic play is *Ustadh Ragima Anfih* (A Teacher in Deviance of him) by Shaykh Mas'ud Abdulganiyi Adebayo. Oseni has also published two other plays captioned *Al-Tajir wa – Sahibu al-mat'am* (The Trader and the Restaurateur). In 2005 and *Al- Tabaqat Al-ulya* (The Upper Class) in 2006. Dr. Abdulbarri Adetunji also published a play title *Baqau – Muqaddar* (Born to Survive) in 2005 which is the paradigm of this study. Also, is Abdulganiyi Alabi Adebayo who published a play with the title, *Qad Gharat al- Nujum* (The Stars had Ser) in 2005. There is another play recently published by the same author titled *Al-Mutaba'tu Wal-itiihad* (Continuation and the Consortium) other plays are *Jallatarul Qadi* (The Mighty Judge) by Saeed Ahmed Gambari and *Atalibul- Mugtarri* (The Deceived Student) in 2009 by Ibrahim Lanre Amin.

However, all these Nigeria Arabic playwrights in Nigeria deserve commendation and encouragement for not allowing this aspect of Nigeria drama in Arabic to go into extinct on the surface of Nigeria academic research, and for their effort in educating the society through their plays, because all these have socio-ethical themes rooted in Islamic cosmology.<sup>4)</sup>

**Arabic Religious Vocabulary Incorporated And Interjected Into Indian Languages:-** Much of the Arabic vocabulary that has been incorporated into Indian languages over the centuries has to do with religion, moral values, and issues discussed extensively in the Qur'an.<sup>5)</sup> Heaviest absorption appears to be into languages used to a great extent by Muslims, in particular Urdu. The following sample Arabic terms have been simultaneously assimilated into four Indian languages, Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, and Marathi: *din* (religion), *hajj* (the Hajj pilgrimage), *hajib* (one who has made the *hajj* pilgrimage), *imân* (belief), *jannat* (heaven), *jahannam* (hell), *haqlqat* (reality), *haqq* (right), *hikmat* (wisdom), *dunyâ* (this world), *risâla* (message), *salam* (greeting), *shaytân* (satân), *sadaqa* (alms), *zulm* (oppression), *'adâlat* (justice), *ghusl* ([ritual] *hath*), *fasâd* (corruption), *qabr* (grave), *qalam*

(pen), *kafan* (shroud), *ladhdhat* (pleasure), *mütam* (mourning), *maqâm* (station), *mawr* (death), *wafâ'* (loyalty), *wâjib* (mandatory), *wa'da* (promise), *yaqln* (certainty)<sup>5)</sup>.

Persian religious vocabulary of non-Arabic origin has also been incorporated into Indian languages (such as *roza*, fasting, and *namâz*, ritual prayer) as well as a large number of secular Persian words (such as *dehât*, villages, and *gul*, rose). Moreover, because all official correspondence in Mughal times was in Persian, people learned the polite forms of address and phrases used in that language, and soon these Persian forms, whether in the original or translated, came to be used in Punjabi, Gujarati, and other regional languages.<sup>6)</sup>

**Studies in modern Arabic literature:-** The literary spaces in both poetry and narrative Arabic literature have implicitly or explicitly been linked to notions of masculinity and femininity. Studies in modern Arabic literature have revealed that each country has its own very individual tradition and practice of 'gendering' private and public spaces, thereby shaping, or reformulating, notions of the homeland or the nation. Moreover, the specific roles and functions of the feminine and the masculine in the construction of homeland/nationhood have been elucidated. Another essential element that has influenced the form and content of depictions of the homeland/nation in modern Arabic literature has been the often ambivalent relationship to the cultural other, mainly Europe, America and Russia. The two dimensions of the gendered conceptions of nation and the ambiguous relationship with the 'West' very often intermingled and mutually influenced each other. Since borders were shaped and reshaped by colonial and post-colonial politics, and Arab-Muslim identity was constantly questioned and devalued by the normative power of the European model and western political interventions, modern Arabic literature began to perform a 'geo-poetical' function, creating alternative spatial realities in order to contest and challenge the spatial facts on the ground that were produced by a complex—and in hindsight—fatal concoction of foreign intervention and domestic politics.<sup>7)</sup>

**Science Education in Saudi Schools:-** The Saudi Ministry of Education administers a centralised education system. Schools are gender segregated (Reda & Hamdan, 2015) and the twelve years of Saudi schooling are organised into three levels: six years in Elementary, three years in Intermediate and three years in Secondary level. General science is included in the Elementary and Intermediate levels and students study chemistry, biology and physics separately at the Secondary school level. Students in the first Secondary year (usually 15-16 years of age) study each discipline for two periods per week. The most recent reform of secondary schooling provided Year 11 and 12 students with three options after they finish Year 10 (Ministry of Education, 2015). They may choose between Literary, Scientific, or Administrative streams. All students in the science stream study biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics. Arabic is the medium of instruction (Ministry of Education, 2006).<sup>8)</sup>



**Conclusion:-** Having presented the research in summary form, it is possible now to elaborate further and draw some conclusions on the basis of this study. It seems clear now that Arabic as a mother tongue should and cannot be neglected in the process of learning a foreign language. There is evidence from research that use of L1 in the EFL classroom by both teachers and students can be useful in the language learning process and may even be essential to increase learners' comprehension as suggested by Alshammari, (2011).

Arabs view classic Arabic – the language of the *Qur'an* – as a sacred language. Modern Standard Arabic is the formal version of the tongue used in schools, newscasts, and in documents. But throughout the Arabic world, a range of colloquial dialects dominates everyday speech. Convincing college educators there is value in something other than the traditional approach can be a difficult task, but is necessary in order to deal with the linguistic reality of the Arabic language and teach it as a whole. In this way, many students receive more of what they need when they wish to speak the Arabic language in its natural context. Many involved in teaching Arabic believe that Modern Standard Arabic should be the primary focus of Arabic language teaching in the first two to three years, leaving the learning of the everyday colloquial speech to a later point in time, if at all.

In view of the current dramatic developments in Syria, Yemen, and other countries of the Near and Middle East, "homeland", "exile" and "migration" will remain key topics in Arabic literary writing. Irrespective of whether Simone Weil's observation that "to be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human sou

#### References:-

1. A case in point is the frequent use of different forms of the dramatic poem by a number of Arab poets (e.g. Sa'dī Yūsuf, Nizār Qabbānī, Muḥammad al-Māghūl, and Adonis) that lends modern Arabic poetry a particularly polyphonic, dialogical, and dramatic character.
2. Atiefa, H. & Souror, A. (2011). *Teaching science in terms of quality education objectives and strategies*. Cairo: Publishing House for universities. (in Arabic).
3. Fjord, M., M. Balslev & M. Nielsen (eds) (2007) *Mere end sprog*. København: Dansk Industri.
4. Odiri, S. E. (2006). Theatre in Nigeria and national development. *African arts and National development* (pp.251-260). Sam Ukala ed Ibadan: Kraft Books.
5. A modified pronunciation frequently accompanies the assimilation, often with the addition of vowels between two consecutive consonants, or with doubled consonants (in Gujarati: 'aql → akkat; 'unir → umar).
6. *K.a.ur, Madrasa Education*. 161.
7. The role models for this new type of leader are, according to Sharabi, Nasser and Ben Bella. Sharabi, *Nationalism* 88.
8. Al-Hammad, K. (2015). A conceptual framework for re-shaping science education in Saudi Arabia. In N. Mansour & S. Al-Shamrani (Eds.), *Science education in the Arab Gulf States* (pp. 121-136). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6300-049-9\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6300-049-9_6)

