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Arabic in Educational Institutions: Reality and Prospects – A Field Study

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Abstract

This field study investigates the current state and future prospects of the Arabic language within educational institutions across several Arab countries, including Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. Recognizing language as a reflection of national identity and civilization, the research highlights the deteriorating condition of Arabic despite its historical and religious significance. Through a structured questionnaire distributed across diverse educational contexts, the study explores key challenges, such as diglossia, dominance of foreign languages, limited familiarity with Arabic's linguistic features, outdated pedagogical methods, and institutional negligence. The study critically examines the role of educators, policymakers, and social attitudes in the decline of Arabic language usage and instruction. It concludes with recommendations aimed at revitalizing Arabic, including curriculum reform, teacher training, Arabization of scientific disciplines, and promoting linguistic pride among learners. The findings call for a coordinated and strategic intervention to safeguard the status and functionality of Arabic in the educational sphere.

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Introduction

Language is the mirror of nations, as it translates its social, religious, political and economic path, as well as reflects its sophistication and civilizational progress. Has it not been said that strong nations are characterized by their languages?

The Arabic language is the language of the statement, and it is the language in which the Qur'an was revealed. However, if we look at the reality of this language, we find that it is going to retreat, and the danger began to stare at it in its vicinity, for many reasons, including the obvious and the hidden.

We may blame a journalist if he makes a grammatical error, and we canceled if we read in some administrative documents issued by a university unforgivable errors. However, what do we say if the source of the error is its people: researchers in the Arabic language, heads of departments, those in charge of studies, heads of research laboratories in the Arabic language, doctors and professors of higher education...

From here, our start will be, and from what has previously emerged the problem of our research, to shed light on the reality of the Arabic language, which is now lamenting itself as long as its specialists, and its speakers are not good at expressing it.

Our study will be in the field, as a questionnaire will be distributed that includes the most important points related to the research, to many educational institutions at various levels, from different states in Algeria, and different Arab countries: Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, in order to monitor the current reality of the Arabic language among its people, and answer the following problems:

- What is the reality of the Arabic language in Arab educational institutions?
- Where to in Arabic? A bitter reality and a bitter future.
- Does the ruling regime have a hand in all the structures of the Arabic language?
- How can the heads of the Arabic language accept for themselves a precious waste that they possess? Have they annihilated the age in researching it, and then in the councils of science they perform it?
- What are the difficulties that stand in the way of a person who is able to speak the Arabic language, to be able to pronounce it correctly or constructively?
- What solutions can be offered to get the language of the Qur'an out of retreat? and keep it from getting lost?

1. Arabic Language

Language is a social phenomenon used to achieve understanding between people¹, and it is, according to Ibn Jinni, voices through which every people expresses their purposes. It has great merit over man, as it is what allows members of society to communicate, carry their ideas and visions, and express themselves. It is the foundation of societies and the pillar of its civilization. It "serves as the vessel that contained that civilization, and so language, society, and civilization are interdependent and complementary phenomena."²

Arabic is distinguished from other languages by characteristics that made it unique, as it is the language of manifestation and miracle.

These characteristics include: derivation, synonymy, shared verbalization, diversity of styles, antithesis, conciseness, and parsing/syntax.

2. Arabic Language in Educational Institutions³:

Turning to the subject of the reality of the Arabic language is not new; it has preoccupied many researchers of different disciplines, but as Professor Muhammad Saleh bin Omar said: "It is not acceptable rationally and logically to continue watching the disease as it develops without moving a person to reduce its danger and prevent its exacerbation, but it is imperative to raise the problem and present it to discussion and study in every field that is allowed, and at every opportunity available, and collect the proposals submitted to solve it, criticize them and compare them..."⁴

The Arabic language in educational institutions in the Arab world suffers from regression, as the axis of the educational-learning process tended to disregard some of its rules, and not to assign oneself to change the style or pronunciation in the event that an idea is not communicated.

3. Reasons for the deterioration of the Arabic language in educational institutions:

The reasons for the deterioration of the Arabic language varied according to the questionnaires distributed⁵, which we will monitor in the following points:

¹. Taha Ali Hussein Al-Dailmi, Suad Abdul Karim Abbas Al-Waeli: Arabic Language, its Curricula and Teaching Methods, Dar Al-Shorouk Publishing and Distribution, Amman, Jordan, 1st Edition, 2003, p. 57.

². Muhammad Ali Abdul Karim Al-Radini: Chapters in General Linguistics, Dar Al-Huda, Algeria, 1st Edition, 2007, p. 7.

³. We selected a number of different institutions to monitor the reality of the Arabic language by professors and learners, where we distributed questionnaires to two institutions from each of the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

⁴. Mohammed Saleh bin Omar: Arabic and the Revolution of Modern Methods, Dar Al-Rayah Al-Rabaa Publishing House, Tunis, 1986, p. 11.

⁵. Relevant educational institutions: From Jordan: Umm Habiba(basic), Umm Attia Al-Ansariya (basic and intermediate), and from Egypt: Abu Bakr Al-Sadiq Primary School (in Miniat Al-Nasr Province, Dakahlia Governorate), and Sheikh Mohammed

- Vulgarity is established in the minds, which prevents the acquisition of the Arabic language, because Arabic in our societies is learned as a second language rather than a mother tongue, and this establishment is difficult to dispense with.

The Brothers of Serenity have referred to this matter when they talk about the importance of education in imprinting souls on the faith, especially before previous knowledge occurs, because this leads to the occupation of the place, and it becomes difficult to erase and remove it. It applies to the acquisition of language, as the child is saturated with the vernacular language, which is his first gain, and when facing the doors of the school, he stands helpless without giving up this entrenched increase.

The Brothers of Serenity say: "And know that like the thoughts of souls before science and the belief of opinions take place, like pure white paper in which nothing is written. If something is written in it, whether it is true or false, it occupies the place and prevents something else from being written in it, and it is difficult to decipher and erase it¹."

- **Duplication :**

The phenomenon of bilingualism does not belong to one country without another, but it is a natural sociocultural phenomenon that is hardly lacking in any country in the world, but the unity of the national and official language does not contradict the existence of many dialects, or regional local languages (written or spoken), and it does not contradict - as Dr. Ahmed bin Numan says - even with its teaching, not its teaching, "because the official national language serves as the queen on the national throne, and the various local dialects remain as princesses who help the queen in some matters without in any way analyzing her place."²

Many researchers have refused to use the term dualism, which many linguists use to denote the two forms of the Arabic language: classical and colloquial, as colloquialism and classical are two types of the same language.³

This means that the duality is between two languages, such as Arabic and French, or Arabic and Spanish, and French and English.

Most Arab countries are currently suffering from duplication, such as Algeria's suffering from the dominance of the French language in most regions, and this phenomenon has become a curse and epidemic that threatened the entity of the Arabic language, due to the inability of learners or teachers in many times to dispense with it, they must inject a French word into their speech, and it is difficult for them to come up with its Arabic equivalent, despite the richness of the Arabic language.

- **Lack of familiarity with the characteristics and characteristics of the Arabic language:**

The ignorance of many professors of the characteristics of the Arabic language, and its inability to have its belongings, will of course be an obstacle without advancing it, so it is not possible to communicate it to learners in the best way that will make its reception amputated by them, so "researching the teaching of the Arabic language, and developing a curriculum for it, calls for researching its most important characteristics and foundations, because understanding the language and understanding its system is accurate only achieved by knowing its characteristics on which it is built, so that the proposed solutions are feasible and not intercalated."⁴

Moroccan Preparatory School in Al-Nasr Governorate. As for the selected institutions from Algeria: Waaz Al-Eid Betting School, Souk Ahras Governorate (primary), Hawari Boumediene Intermediate School (Wanzeh, Tabassah Governorate), and St. Augustine High School (Annaba), as for the universities, questionnaires were not sent to them, but it was a real-time study through conferences and seminars in different countries.

¹ . Brothers of Serenity, vol. 4, p. 114, quoting: Bashir Ebrer: Evidence of Language Acquisition in the Arabic Linguistic Heritage, Publications of the Laboratory of Linguistics and Arabic Language, Annaba, Algeria, 2007, p. 84.

² . Aliya Marhoum: Language, Thought and Duality in Expression in the Algerian Cultural Reality, Forum of Literature Problems in Algeria, 26-28 April 2005, Publications of the Laboratory of General and Comparative Literature, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba, Algeria, 2006, p. 330, 331.

³ . The Supreme Council of the Arabic Language, Linguistic Pluralism and the Universal Language, Algeria, 2014, p. 53.

⁴ . Khalifa Sahraoui: Characteristics of the Arabic language and its impact on its education, p. 35.

- ¹ The general underdevelopment suffered by Arabs in general at the level of the individual, society and the state. Ali Abdul Wahid Wafi says: "The wider the civilization of the nation, the greater its needs and facilities of life, the better its thinking, and the refinement of its psychological attitudes, the more its language will rise."²

This means that the relationship is direct between the renaissance of language and the development of thinking and psychological attitudes among its people, which calls for diagnosing the structure of the Arab collective mind and discovering the manifestations of underdevelopment in it so that it is possible to search for scientific foundations that are the starting point for a satisfactory linguistic renaissance.³

- The failure of Arabic language teachers to develop their methods and curricula, to modernize their methods and means⁴, and to adopt traditional curricula.
- Failure to formulate accurate evaluation criteria and methods.
- The lack of seriousness of many teachers in performing the teaching⁵ process. We find professors inside the classrooms resorting to colloquialism to communicate information, although the Arabic language is rich in its words and meanings.

Conclusion and recommendations

The following are some suggested solutions for the advancement of the Arabic language in educational institutions:

- The language teacher should have increased knowledge of the characteristics of the Arabic language.
- The use of language is the best use in both speech and writing.
- Redouble the effort by the lords of the Arabic language so that it can regain its position by sitting on the throne of all educational institutions, by Arabizing the scientific branches because "Arabizing science is Arabizing thought."⁶
- Renewal of the means used in teaching Arabic in various educational institutions.⁷
- Calling on educational institutions to achieve a natural balance between thought and tongue. Between knowledge and language, so that what the learner acquires is representation, creativity, not a metaphor. The Arab man should be aware of himself, and his awareness of his language is only awareness of himself, as the Arabic language is the body that connects between specialized learners and other members of society.⁸
- Reconsider the content of the course, and Dr. Khalifa Sahrawi elaborated on this aspect. He says: "A number of elements are synergistic and complementary to build a scientific basis for language education, and it seems that the most influential among them is choosing or building the content of the course⁹."

¹ . Muhammad Muhammad Yunus Ali simplified this point. For expansion, his book looks at: Issues in Language, Linguistics and Discourse Analysis, New Book House United, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st Edition, 2013, p. 9.

² . Ali Abdel Wahed Wafi: Language and Society, Dar Nahdet Misr for Printing and Publishing, 1971, p. 10, 11.

³ . Muhammad Muhammad Yunus Ali: Issues in Language, Linguistics and Discourse Analysis, p. 10.

⁴ . Dr. Muhammad Saleh bin Omar referred to this point, and elaborated on it, paving the way for a desired and effective way. See his book: Arabic and the Revolution of Modern Curricula, p. 11.

⁵ . Muhammad Muhammad Yunus Ali: Issues in Language, Linguistics and Discourse Analysis, p. 38.

⁶ . Alajia Marhoum: Language, Thought and Duality in Expression in the Algerian Cultural Reality, p. 338.

⁷ . Professor Mohammed Saleh bin Omar suggested that the means should be renewed a long time ago, but it is a proposal that, although some worked on it, it remained locked in the author's rudder, and this is for different reasons.

One of the means he suggested was video and the microcomputer, because they are among the most exciting audiovisual means at the present time, as they are the most accurate electronic innovations in this field.

See his book: Arabic and the Revolution of Modern Curricula, p. 15.

⁸ . Shehadeh Al-Khoury: Studies in Translation, Terminology and Arabization, Dar Tlass for Studies, Translation and Publishing, Damascus, Syria, 1st Edition, 1989, p. 147.

⁹ . Khalifa Sahraoui: Features of the Arabic language and its impact on its education, Journal of Linguistics and Arabic Language, University of Baji Mokhtar Annaba - Algeria, Issue 8, March 2012, p. 34.

- Conducting sensitization seminars for teachers and learners that highlight the need to find solutions to the problem of teaching the Arabic language.

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