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SOME LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL PROBLEMS

OF ENGLISH-ARABIC TRANSLATION AND

THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR A STRATEGY

OF ARABIZATION

BY

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF ARTS OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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TO EMAN, A WIFE AND A FRIEND

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KEY TO TRANSCRIPTION SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following symbols are employed for transcribing Arabic words in this study.

a. The Consonants:

ARABIC COUNTERPART	PHONETIC DESCRIPTION	SYMBOLS EMPLOYED
/hamzah/ ء	glottal stop	'(i.e. apostrophe)
ب	voiced bilabial stop	b
ت	voiceless dental stop	t
ث	voiceless interdental fricative	<u>th</u>
ج	voiced palato-alveolar affricate	j
ح	voiceless pharyngeal fricative	h
خ	voiceless velar fricative	<u>kh</u>
د	voiced dental stop	d
ذ	voiced interdental fricative	<u>dh</u>
ر	voiced alveolar trill	r
ز	voiced alveolar fricative	z
س	voiceless alveolar fricative	s
ش	voiceless palato-alveolar fricative	<u>sh</u>
ص	voiceless emphatic alveolar fricative	s
ض	voiced emphatic dental stop	d
ط	voiceless emphatic dental stop	t
ظ	voiced emphatic interdental fricative	z
ع	voiced pharyngeal fricative	ʕ
غ	voiced uvular fricative	<u>gh</u>
ف	voiceless labiodental fricative	f
ق	voiceless uvular stop	q
ك	voiceless velar stop	k
ل	voiced dental lateral	L
م	voiced bilabial nasal	m
ن	voiced dental nasal	n
هـ	voiceless glottal fricative	h
و	voiced labio-velar approximant	w
ي	voiced palatal approximant	y

b. The Diacritic Marks and the Vowels:

ARABIC COUNTERPART	PHONETIC DESCRIPTION	SYMBOLS EMPLOYED
/fathah/ َ	short open central unrounded	a
/'alif/ ا	long open back unrounded	ā
/dammah/ ُ	short close back rounded	u
و	long close back rounded	ū
/kasrah/ ِ	short close front unrounded	i
ـِ	long close front unrounded	ī

Remarks:

1. The precise quality of the vowel sounds may depend on the quality of the preceding consonants, being relatively retracted after an emphatic consonant, /kh/, uvulars and pharyngeals.
2. Accentuated Arabic consonants marked by the /shaddah/ ( ّ ) are indicated by a pair of adjacent identical symbols e.g.  
 يَسْخَرُ /yusakhkhir/ 'to subjugate or utilize'
3. In very rare cases, some phonetic symbols such as /g/ are employed to indicate a dialectal pronunciation of a given Arabic letter, e.g. the Egyptian pronunciation of the word /burj/ 'tower' as /burg/.
4. In transcribing proper names and other common nouns we have adopted the following rules:
  - 4.1 Proper names which have a current English spelling (e.g. Islam, Arab) are reproduced unchanged or with very minor modifications, e.g. 'Ahmad instead of Ahmad.



4.2 Names of authors who have published works in English are adopted as they appear in the works cited.

4.3 The first symbol in all proper names is capitalized unless it is a glottal stop /hamzah/ or a voiced pharyngeal fricative /ʕ/. In such cases, the following vowel is capitalized, e.g. 'Ash9ab, 9Umar.

4.4 Proper names and other common nouns which are preceded by a preposition or a conjunction are transcribed in the following manner:

e.g. /bi-Misr/ 'in Egypt', /wa-baytuhu/ 'and his house'  
but /fī Misr/ 'in Egypt' and /fī baytihi/ since  
/fī/ is an independent word.

4.5 Proper names beginning with the definite article are hyphenated with only the first symbol of the actual name being capitalized.

e.g. /al-Mansūr/ , /al-Shihābī/ .

4.6 Other definite (non-proper) nouns are transcribed in the following manner: /al-lughah/ 'the language' ,  
/at-talifūn/ 'the telephone'.

4.7 In the event of the definite article being preceded by a preposition or a conjunction, it is transcribed in the following manner: /bil-Basrah/ 'in Basrah', /wal-Tha9ālibī/  
'and al-Tha9ālibī' /bil-madrasah/ 'in the school' /wat-talifūn/  
'and the telephone'.

4.8 Proper names beginning with /'Abū/ and /9Abd/ are transcribed in the following manner:

e.g. /'Abū-Nuwās/ , /9Abd-al-Malik/.

## SIGNS AND ABBREVIATIONS:

In addition to the transcription symbols, the following abbreviations are used in the text:

/ / solidi: enclosing phonetic transcription. However, proper names will be normalized within the text without these lines.

' ' single inverted commas: enclosing English translations

\* asterisk: indicating ungrammaticality, unacceptable usages or inaccurate (literal) translations.

CA	:	Classical Arabic
MSA	:	Modern Standard Arabic
COA	:	Colloquial Arabic
SL	:	Source Language
TL	:	Target Language
MT	:	Machine Translation
TFL	:	Teaching Foreign Languages

## ABSTRACT

The present study consists of eight chapters. Chapter One serves as an introduction to the entire work including brief discussions related to some broad aspects of translation in general and Arabization in particular. It also specifies the nature and scope of the problems being investigated and outlines the research approach. Brief accounts of each topic to be dealt with in later chapters are provided at the end of this chapter.

The first pages of Chapter Two examine some linguistic features of Arabic along with its relation to other members of the Semitic family. The rest of the chapter furnishes a historical background to the origin, efflorescence, stagnation and revival of Arabic. This is a necessary step since it serves as a preliminary stage to what will be discussed later on.

Chapter Three deals with spectrogllossia, the first of a series of problems which jeopardise the current efforts aimed at reinstating Arabic as a workable modern language. The origins and the consequences of the problem are brought into focus. The second part of the chapter examines some features of modern standard Arabic (MSA) and the need to disseminate its usage as a possible pragmatic solution for bridging the gap between Classical Arabic and the regional dialects.

Chapters Four and Five are dedicated to the discussion of the traditional and in fact most serious problem of Arabization, namely lexical deficiency and the problems of adopting foreign terminology. Chapter Four begins by analysing some of the major problems of Arabic terminology such as non-standardization, the neglect of the proposals of the language academies and the hasty adoption of foreign words. The chapter proceeds to

review some useful methodologies of lexical enrichment such as the revival of obsolete terms, derivation and semantic extension. On the other hand, Chapter Five, which is, in fact, an extension of Chapter Four examines some of the difficulties associated with the assimilation of foreign words into Arabic and the problems of transliteration.

In Chapter Six some cultural and stylistic disparities between English and Arabic are reviewed so that difficulties and possible translation errors may be identified. Points of similarity and difference between some cultural and stylistic features of both languages are described and proposals for a successful transfer between them are formulated.

Both Chapter Seven and Chapter Eight introduce further issues of a new dimension. For instance, Chapter Seven discusses some of the problems involved in Arabizing the educational system in the Arab world as an example of a real-life situation where, for the most part, Arabization, particularly at the higher level of scientific education, is still an ideal. On the other hand, Chapter Eight, the final chapter in this thesis endeavours to evaluate some programmes of teaching foreign languages (TFL) in the Arab world and the position given to translator-training in such programmes.

Clearly, the present study could not have been written in vacuo. It is indebted to all previous scholarship in the fields of translation, Arabization and English-Arabic contrastive linguistics. Yet some contributions in arrangements and detail may be claimed for it, along with some specific analysis of certain problems of Arabization such as in Chapter Eight on the need to improve on the current TFL programmes as well as the upgrading of translator-training courses as a pre-condition for a more efficient execution of any future strategy of Arabization, is prominent among the other contributions of this study.

Finally, a major characteristic of the present work is its attempt to encompass within a somewhat abridged form a variety of problems that have always been treated as separate areas of research.



## CHAPTER ONE

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Present Import of Translation:

The rapid growth in the past few decades of scientific inventions, the proliferation of international organizations, the unprecedented expansion in international travel and communication media as well as the emergence of many newly-independent countries have together made people more aware of their differences, particularly language differences. In consequence, people have come to realize the vital need to overcome these differences by promoting world understanding.

Whereas in the age of colonialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, trade, administration and education were conducted in the language of the dominant nation, nowadays agreements among governments and international organizations are translated for all concerned parties irrespective of whether or not the signatories understand one another's languages. It is not surprising, therefore, that UNESCO, which up to 1970 published an Index Translationum, recorded a  $4\frac{1}{2}$  fold increase in the number of translated publications since 1948.<sup>(1)</sup> Similarly, a UNESCO study (1977) estimated that approximately two million scientific articles, technical reports, patents and books were translated annually.<sup>(2)</sup>

## 1.2. What is Translation?

"If it were possible accurately to define ... or describe what is meant by a good translation, it is evident that a considerable progress would be made towards establishing the rules of the Art. But there is no subject of criticism on which there has been so much difference of opinion" (3)

Alexander F. Tytler (1791)

The nature of translation is a topic that tends to lead to extreme points of view. This is attested to by the traditional controversies that centred on the definition of translation, probably since the Romans. There is a tendency on the one hand to emphasize the role of language to the exclusion of everything else (i.e. verbal reproduction of the original text) and on the other to neglect the role of the linguistic elements and to concentrate on the conceptual content (i.e. the transmission of data).

### 1.2.1 Translation as Code-Switching:

The notion that translation involves merely the replacement of words in one language with words of another is probably the most common one held by the general public. A good example of definitions under this approach is Oetteinger's definition of translation as, "the process of transforming signs or representation into another sign or representation". (4)

### 1.2.2 Translation As Transference of Meaning:

According to Nabokov, translation is "rendering as closely as the associative and syntactic capacities of another language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original" (5) Another definition of translation under this concept is that of Dostert who defines translation as "the transference of meaning from one set of symbols ... into another set of patterned symbols." (6)

Despite the difference in focus between those who think of translation as code-switching and those who consider it to be the transference of meaning, the keystone in any definition of translation is the word 'equivalence'. It is around the meaning of equivalence that the battle is often waged between those who assume that translation is a neutral verbal representation of the source text and those who take it to be an interpretative recreation of the original or as it is put by St. Jerome, "the transference of meaning into one's own language by right of conquest." (7) The main question that is yet to be answered is: can a translated text really stand in place of the original text, expressing its content, connotations, emotions and style, or must it remain but a shadow of its alter ego? (8)

### 1.2.3 Translation as Communication:

As will be discussed later on (see p.p. 9ff), this concept of translation is the result of modern theories of communication which helped in developing a theory of translation based not only on the transposing of texts from one language into another, but also on communicating as truly and as clearly as possible the intentions of the original author. Within this framework, the relation between the source language (SL) text and the target language (TL) text should not be one of replication but a dynamic one whereby "the merit of the original work is so completely transfused into another language as to be distinctly apprehended and as strongly felt by a native of the country to which that language belongs, as it is by those who speak the language of the original work." (9) This can be described in terms of the translated text achieving the same effect on the TL reader as would be achieved if he were able to read the original SL text. Thus, according to Nida the process of translation "consists in reproducing in the receptor language, the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style" (10) By 'natural' Nida means that a good translation should not reveal itself as coming from a non-native



source either in form or in meaning. In other words, the translator should studiously avoid translationese and give priority to contextual consistency over verbal fidelity. Moreover, the translator should attempt to reproduce the meaning of the SL text as intended by the original author and as expected to be understood by a native of the source language. Finally, a natural translation should be able to achieve the principle of dynamic equivalence, i.e. the TL receptors should respond to the message in substantially the same manner as the SL receptors to whom the message was originally intended. (11)

### 1.3 TRANSLATION IN ANTIQUITY:

The interest in translation as a medium of achieving communication among linguistically heterogeneous societies is nothing new. In fact, the first records of translation date back to the Egyptian Old Kingdom (3000 B.C.) and the kingdom of the Assyrian king Sargon (3000 B.C.). Similarly during the reign of Hammurabi (around 2100 B.C.), it is claimed that Babylon was a kind of multilingual nation which encompassed several officially recognised languages to the extent that governmental circulars were translated in order to ensure wide understanding. (12) However, the oldest and most complete document of translation is the famous Rosetta stone (now in the British Museum) which was discovered by the Napoleonic expedition in 1799 in the village of Rashid in the Western Delta of the River Nile. The stone contains three inscriptions in respectively Egyptian Hieroglyphic, Demotic Egyptian and Classical Greek. The text is a copy of a decree passed by a council of priests at the first anniversary of the coronation of Ptolemy V in 196 B.C. (13) Nevertheless, translation must go back in antiquity to times for which historical records have not been found and indeed to eras before there was any writing. Undoubtedly, men have speculated on the nature of this art since time immemorial.

The first ever recorded reflections on the techniques of translating are those of Cicero (106-43 B.C.) and Horace (65-8 B.C.). Both believed that the duty of the translator consisted in the judicious interpretation of the SL text so as to produce a TL

version based on the principle "non verbum de verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu", i.e. of expressing not word-for word but sense-for-sense. The translator should strike a balance between the servile path of literal imitation and the excessive freedom which may lead to a misrepresentation of the SL text. In the words of Cicero, "if I render word-for-word, the result will sound uncouth, and if I alter anything in the order of wording, I shall seem to have departed from the function of the translator." (14)

Until the early years of the twentieth century, the crux of the discussions and debates on translation centred on the controversial issues of whether:

- a. A translation should give the words or the ideas of the original.
- b. A translation should read like an original work or like a translation.
- c. A translation should reflect the style of the original or that of the translator.
- d. A translation should read like a text contemporary with the original or like a modern one.
- e. A translation may add or omit on the one hand or on the other be an exact (faithful) reproduction. (15)

In other words, whether translation is a transparent transference or hermeneutic re-creation. Nevertheless, most of the views expressed during this pre-linguistic period were the result of impressionistic and evaluative projections which lacked any scientifically sound judgements. The only, and in fact the first, book of significance during this period is that of Alexander Fraser Tytler (1747-1814) Essay on the Principles of Translation which was published around the year 1790. Despite the fact that this book is often referred to as the first work of its kind to be dedicated entirely to the issue of translation, Tytler lacked the scientific approach. The book is entirely composed of personal prescriptive views on the appropriate methods of translating. For example, concerning the traditional controversy on the translator's freedom to alter the original, he advocates that the translator must always present his author in the best light even if this involves alteration of the language or the style of the original. As he puts it,

"It is the duty of the poetical translator never to suffer his original to fall .... When he sees a drooping wing he must raise him on his own pinions .... A vulgar error in translating poetry is to affect being fidus interpres. Let that care be with them who deal in matters of faith" (16)

With the advent of the twentieth century and with the development of modern linguistics, a more scientific approach was brought to bear on translation. Likewise, the somewhat recent developments in sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, anthropological linguistics, contrastive analysis and the theory of communication were eventually reflected in a more scientific analysis of the process of translating. Thus instead of the traditional dichotomy of literal versus free translation, a new criterion was brought into focus. The new emphasis, supported by communication theorists, has been placed on the reader, under what has been termed as the 'dynamic equivalent-effect principle'. (17) This new focus which has also been called 'communicative translation' (18) is defined as the process of producing an effect on the TL reader close to the effect of the original on the SL reader. (19) The emphasis, here, is on the 'impact' rather than the actual 'content' of the message. This can be described in terms of the sender achieving the same effect on the reader with the TL text as would be achieved if the reader were able to read the original SL text. As such, the translation process is considered to be taking place within a situational-cultural context that is in itself an integral part of the process of transfer.

From this point of view, correctness of translation must be determined by the extent to which the average reader for whom a translation is intended is likely to understand it correctly and to react in the same manner as an SL reader. This response can never be expected to be identical with that of the TL reader, for the historical and cultural settings are not the same. Yet there should be a high degree of equivalence of response. When a high

percentage of TL people misunderstand a rendering it cannot be regarded as a legitimate translation and consequently this leads to the conclusion that the meaning of the message which was originally intended by the source author has been distorted. (20) In other words, testing the translation does not consist of merely comparing the SL and TL texts to see the extent of verbal consistency or conformity, but rather in determining how the potential receptors of the translation would react to it. As might be expected, this principle calls for a considerable imaginative and intuitive effort on the part of the translator, since he must not only identify himself with the SL reader, but must also empathize with him, recognising that he may have conventions and sympathies alien to his own.

The equivalent-effect principle in translation is becoming generally superordinate both in translation theory and practice to the principles of primacy of form and primacy of content. It bypasses and supersedes the traditional controversy about whether a translation should incline towards the source or the target language and the consequent faithful or beautiful and literal or free controversies.

#### 1.4. Translation: Science or Art?

As a result of the growing interests of linguists and translators in formulating rules and setting fixed criteria for judging the quality of translations, there arose one of the most crucial questions about the nature of translation: "Is translation a science or an art?" This is a controversial issue. There are many scholars who are sceptical about considering translation as a science. They regard translation as an art and only as an art although no attempt has been made to define what is meant by art. For example, in After Babel, Steiner suggests that translation is a futile effort and no matter what, we will never be able to produce an adequate translation for after all, "ninety percent, no doubt, of all translation since Babel is inadequate and will continue to be so." (21) In consequence, he sees translation as "a new field in the theory of literature" and not as part of applied linguistics. (22)

Nevertheless, there are other linguists such as Nida (23) and Harris (24), who regard translation as a science affiliated to applied linguistics. However, translation is not an exact science on a par with, say, physics, chemistry or mathematics, and perhaps will never be. The obvious reason for this is that there can be no laws for translating, for laws, such as the law of gravity, have no exceptions. In translation or linguistics, in general, there is hardly a rule which does not admit any exception. Linguistic and, in effect, translational rules are quite flexible. As Hockett has put it, "all constraints in a language are more or less rubbery". (25) Nevertheless, the translator is required to find a solution even to the most daunting of problems and in this, he is left on his own to make his own choice among a multitude of options, the majority of which are of a prescriptive rather than objective nature.

In this study, a few rules have been formulated to help translate certain constructions from English into Arabic. Nonetheless, these rules are tentative and explanatory in nature. They may give some guidance to the would-be translator to the options which he could choose from and help him to identify the situations in which each could be used.

#### 1.5 Translation and Other Disciplines; Prospects for MT:

Translation is by no means a single, well-integrated discipline. It is, and perhaps will remain, a discipline which borders on many other disciplines. To claim autonomy for translation is something which may impede our attempt to develop it into a scientific study. (26)

Translating is a complex operation involving various problems which are not only a challenge to linguists but also to many scholars working in other fields. The lexicographer, the literary critic, the anthropologist, the psychologist and recently the information scientist and the communication engineer are all interested in and

have contributed in one way or another to translation. There is no doubt that our understanding of the nature of translation is influenced by the attitudes and achievements of all these scholars towards the problems involved. For example, anthropological linguistics has contributed a great deal to the theory of translation since both the anthropological linguist and the translator have to deal with the same issues, particularly in regard to the function of language in the various contexts in which it is used. To the anthropological studies we owe the following concepts which are of a great value to translating and to linguistics in general:

a. As a communication system, every language is complex enough to cater for the needs of the people using it. However, addition to the vocabulary and adjustment of collocability may be required in order that what is said in one language may be said in another. Thus, untranslatability need not ensue from the absence of a given lexical or grammatical category from the TL. (27)

b. Language is embedded in the life and culture of the people. Hence, non-equivalence of culture may perhaps make translation more difficult than non-equivalence of grammatical elements. In other words, contextual correspondence is far more difficult to effect than structural correspondence.

To the information scientist and the communication engineer who may think of language as a code, translating will be a process of encoding and decoding information from one language into another in a systematic manner. It is not surprising, therefore, that machine translation (MT) originated in World War II work on code-breaking. (28) One of the leading proponents of using the computer to translate natural languages was Warren Weaver, <sup>once</sup> Secretary of the Rockefeller Foundation. Believing that the multiplicity of languages impeded cultural interchange and international understanding, he proposed that mechanical techniques analogous to those used in breaking the German High Command code during the Second World War might have a peacetime application in decoding natural languages. (29)

Nevertheless, the interest in developing MT projects appears to have started in the late thirties when the Russian, Smirnov Troyansky, claimed to have invented a machine that would replace human translators. Thereafter in the middle fifties and early sixties a number of experiments such as the Georgetown IBM experiment which took place in 1954 at Georgetown University under Leon Dostert and the American Project of translating extracts from Pravda in 1960, announced fundamental breakthroughs in producing workable MT systems. (30) However, difficulties began to arise almost immediately and even the most optimistic cries were muffled particularly after the publication of the ALPAC (Automatic Language Processing Advisory Committee, Washington D.C.) report in 1966. After a two-year study of the field of MT the committee produced the following findings:

- a. The raw machine output was of such low quality as to be of very limited value without extensive human editing.
- b. Post-editing was as time consuming as conventional human translation and resulted in somewhat inferior products.
- c. Because of the added input keyboarding and machine-processing steps, post-edited MT was both more costly and slower than conventional translation. (31)

Nowadays, almost two decades after the ALPAC report, one of the best MT systems in use is the one called SYSTRAN which became operational in 1970. It was developed in California and has been used for some years by NASA during the Apollo-Soyuz space project, to translate from Russian into English. In 1976, the Commission of the European Communities bought an English-French version and have since added French-English and English-Italian versions. (32) SYSTRAN was first employed to produce pre-translations of routine day-to-day material which can be post-edited by human translators.

However, despite the considerable amounts of money spent to improve the quality of SYSTRAN output over the years, the Commission has decided that the potential gains in overall efficiency are not sufficient to outweigh the considerable amount of post-editing especially when most translators find it psychologically irksome to revise machine output. Therefore, work has started on producing a more sophisticated system called EUROTRA which is expected to be operational within this decade. However, a less ambitious system is the one developed by the University of Montreal and which is appropriately called METEO. This system can only translate meteorological texts from English into French for broadcast to the Canadian general public. However, its field is very limited and the output cannot escape a certain amount of human post-editing. In a way, the output-quality of METEO can be compared to that of pocket translation mini computers which are produced (mostly in Japan) to help tourists communicate - within a limited number of basic sentences - with other people in foreign countries.

The success of MT depends on the possibility of codifying language in a systematic way. However, natural languages, unlike computer-languages (e.g. FORTRAN, BASIC, ALGOL), are full of inconsistencies and idiosyncracies, whether lexical, grammatical or stylistic. In other words, human languages are not closed systems; they are context-bound. "Unfortunately," to quote THE TIMES (7th August 1984) "computers handle exceptions badly and language is filled with exceptions. Even in technical texts, about one sentence in five will not fit given patterns, or will include words with several definitions or implied meanings. Idiomatic phrases have been known to drive computers into frenzies of literal translation. In one computer system, the aphorism 'out of sight out of mind' became 'blind maniac' in Russian."

Therefore, a new and more practical approach to MT is what can be called the 'machine-aided translation approach'. The central aim of this approach is not to replace the human translator during the actual translation process but rather to increase his productivity



by providing him with computer aids which can assist in carrying out some of the routine but time-consuming parts of his job. For example, translators, particularly technical translators often spend a considerable proportion of their time hunting in dictionaries for translation equivalents of terminology which is constantly changing and proliferating in many scientific areas. Such researching is inefficient and, in any case, printed dictionaries are simply unable to keep abreast of terminological developments. Computers on the other hand excel at storing large quantities of discrete information which can be updated, searched and retrieved very quickly. Rather than producing new editions of printed dictionaries every two or three years, it is now possible to create machine-readable data bases including all the necessary terminological information such as direct TL equivalents, synonyms and textual examples of usage. The resulting terminology data bank can be updated either by the translator seated at the terminal or alternatively by co-operating institutions which have agreed to supply relevant data. The information stored in the data bank is immediately accessible to all who use the system and the output from the system can be generated in various formats: a hard-copy print, a microfilm or a video-tape. (33)

A good example of such a terminology data bank is EURODICAUTOM (European Automatic Dictionary) operated by the Commission of the European Communities. It contains more than 180,000 items in the present official languages of the Community with Spanish and Portuguese and it provides direct access to the public in a wide range of subjects including medicine, agriculture, nuclear science, transport and the like. When a new term is encountered by the translators or is provided by specialized institutions it is added to the bank, together with a textual example, the translation equivalent in the other languages of the Community, a definition from a reliable source and bibliographical references. (34)

#### 1.6 The Feasibility of Universal Language :

Languages do not only differ but are also alike. The other side of diversity is universality. In the words of Walter Benjamin, "If difference necessitates translation, similarity makes

it possible; languages are drawn together, stretched to accommodate each other ...." (35) The possibility of a universal base for all languages is backed according to Nida by two factors:

- a. Semantic similarities among languages due, no doubt, in large measure to the common core of human experience.
- b. Fundamental similarities in the syntactic structure of languages especially at the kernel level. (36)

This universal nature of human languages has incited some scholars to explore the prospects of introducing a world-wide language that can be employed as an alternative to the slow and uneconomic process of translating. If one language could be made to outstrip the others and if all nations were to learn that language, the need for translating or learning other languages would diminish proportionately. In time, scientists all over the world could read one another's discoveries in their original language as soon and at the same time as they were published. To this end, English has often been nominated as a potential candidate for this supra-national language.

Undoubtedly, English is widely used throughout the world. Although it does not have the greatest number of native speakers - in this, it is exceeded by Chinese - yet it is an official language in more than twenty states and is studied extensively as a second language in many others. (37) Moreover, it is the principal language of commerce, tourism, international organizations and conferences. In the sphere of science the superiority of English is enhanced by the scientific and literary productivity of English-speaking scientists and writers and, above all, the tendency of scientists outside the English-speaking world to use English as a medium. This is attested to by a survey carried out by J. Large on extensive samples of works published in 1980 in four major science branches: physics, biology, medicine and chemistry. The results of this survey are shown in the following table:

SUBJECT	LANGUAGE %					
	English	Russian	German	French	Japanese	Others
Physics	82	5	5	2	2	4
Biology	88	4	3	2	1	2
Medicine	73	6	6	4	3	8
Chemistry	62	14	6	2	12	4

TABLE 1.1: LANGUAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE IN FOUR SCIENCE SUBJECTS (38)

Naturally, the prestige of many American and British journals and the wide market available to any article written in English largely account for this phenomenon.

Nevertheless, some scholars like Dr. Lapenna express their reservations about the adoption of any natural language currently in use. Their objection stems from the assumption that the diffusion of any given national language outside the limits of the people concerned may depend solely on the economic, political and consequently the cultural strength of that state or states and not as a result of any special qualities of the language itself. If the scientists belonging to a small community choose not to write in the foreign languages of advanced nations, this fact is attributable not only to the force of nationalistic sentiments but also to the simple fact that they do not know these languages in such a way that they are able to use them for their work. Such languages, besides their relatively wide diffusion, are and remain the sole spiritual property of the peoples to whom they owe their life and development. Hence, even if this or that language is widely enough used in international relations and particularly in science, it is and remains national in respect of its history, its effective use and the outlook which is conditioned by its spiritual allegiance and ethnic backgrounds. (39)

Consequently, those who oppose the use of a natural language as a universal means of communication suggest the adoption of a neutral super-national language such as Esperanto (invented by Dr. Zamenhof in 1887), Ido (proposed in 1907 by Louis de Beaufront) and Occidental (or better known as Interlingua which was proposed in 1922 by De Wahl). (40) The case for these international auxiliary languages depends basically on the pragmatic argument that they offer the best means for breaking down barriers to international intercourse. Being artificially structured, these languages belong equally to every user and do not distinguish between a native and a second language learner as is the case with natural languages. Similarly, the simplicity and regularity of their grammar, vocabulary and orthography can reduce the time needed for their acquisition very considerably in comparison with natural languages.

Yet despite the obvious benefits of learning such universal languages, there remains one major shortcoming: people lack the incentive to learn an artificial language even as an auxiliary language. The poor support from world governments in publicizing such languages, the cultural heritage and nationalistic aspirations associated with natural languages as well as the realization that the numbers of those learning any artificial language are unlikely to increase as rapidly as those learning natural languages, all acted as a damper to any further attempts at developing a universal artificial language. In addition, the basic fact that Esperanto, for example, is in origin constructed from the selected best elements in the national languages of Europe, and the nature of its latinized script present difficulties comparable to, though less extensive than, those of English or French to speakers whose mother tongues do not share a common ancestor with the Indo-European group.

1.7 The Need of the Developing Countries to Naturalize their Languages:

The languages of countries whose combination of size, wealth and scientific vigour has given them a lead tend to be adopted, to some extent, by scientists in countries of smaller size and resources and those which are scientifically less advanced. This tendency mainly affects higher levels of education, pure science and departments of technology and foreign trade (see Chapter Seven). This is helped by the tendency of advanced students in the smaller and less developed countries to resort to those countries which have acquired a reputation in this or that branch of science, in order to pursue their researches in famous schools and institutes. It is from a combination of these causes as well as the influence of previous military colonization that the languages of the Third World have tended to be infiltrated or eclipsed by foreign languages. (41)

However, with the independence of most former colonies and the surge in nationalistic and anti-Western feelings, there has arisen the need to reinstate the local languages as the media of communication in political, administrative, educational and scientific circles. In those countries which gained their sovereignty after the decline of the colonial empires, this need is felt to be an essential element in the ratification of their nationhood.

It is natural for the peoples of the developing countries to expect that an efflorescence of their national cultures will best be fertilized by using their own languages. Indeed, such efflorescence can scarcely be expected to occur unless the channels of thought are those which are native to the people who do the thinking. Educationally it is considered unsound to make a foreign language the means of developing the capacity for thought, or as it is put by Dr. Hans,

"Before entering school, the pupils have acquired a proficiency in their mother tongue, have built up a vocabulary covering most of the subjects of sense, impressions and their daily activities.

At school, they have to superimpose on this basis a language of ideas and abstract relations expressed entirely in a foreign medium. Their minds become split into two watertight compartments, one for ordinary things and actions expressed in their mother tongue and another for things connected with school subjects and the words for ideas expressed in a foreign language. As a result, they are unable to speak of their home affairs in the school language and about learned subjects in their mother tongue ..... Not only the individual but the nation develops a split consciousness." (42)

Nevertheless, any country which, on nationalistic grounds, wishes to encourage the use of its mother language in order to supersede other world languages such as English, French, German, Spanish and Italian, is faced with a dilemma from which there is no escape. Translation is usually a slow and essentially disorganized process which involves complicated procedures especially when it is carried on a wide scale. Now, should the developing countries divorce themselves from the pace of technological advancements in order to comply with their ideological and political sentiments? If these countries exercise such an option the immediate question that comes to one's mind is: will these countries remain as passive recipients of second-hand (translated) scientific material until science ceases to develop? The dilemma, we believe, is difficult to solve particularly in countries where technology is imported or duplicated rather than locally created.

1.8 The Arab World and the Need for Arabization:

Translation of foreign works into Arabic is not a new phenomenon in the Arab world. In fact, it goes back in antiquity to the period extending from the beginning of the eighth century up to the end of the ninth century; this is often referred to as 'the golden age' of translation. al-Mansūr, the second Abbasid caliph (754-775) and the founder of the city of Baghdad is given credit for bringing to Baghdad 'Ibn al-Batrīq, a pioneer translator of Greek works into Arabic, who is credited among other things with the translation of Ptolemy's great astronomical work the Almajest. 'Abdullah 'Ibn al-Muqaffa, another translator in the court of al-Mansūr, is best known for the translation of Siyar Mulūk al-'Ajam [The History of the Kings of Persia] and Kalīlah wa-Dimnah [The Fables of the Five Books] into Arabic. (43)

Similarly, al-Ma'mūn, the seventh Abbasid caliph (813-833) founded Bayt al-Ḥikmah 'The House of Wisdom' which served as an academy of science and translation. This school is credited with the translations of the great works of Aristotle, Plato, Galen, Hippocrates, Euclid, Archimedes and many other Greek scholars. Worthy of mention among the translators who worked in Bayt al-Ḥikmah are Thābit 'Ibn Qurrah (A.D. 829-901) the translator of Ptolemy's Geography, Ḥunayn 'Ibn Ishāq (A.D. 808-877) and his son Ishāq who translated the Sophist of Plato as well as some works of Menelaos, Aristotle and Archimedes.

Generally speaking, the Golden age of translation from Greek, Syriac and Persian into Arabic extended from about 850 to 950 A.D. The majority of translations were done in Baghdad. However, the centre of translation soon moved from Baghdad to Muslim Spain where the interest in collecting translated works continued unabated. For instance, al-Ḥakam II, the ninth Umayyad Caliph of Cordova (A.D. 961-976), is reputed to have established a library which contained a collection of 400,000 volumes of original and translated works. (44)

In due course, the cities of Seville, Toledo and Cordova served as the channel through which Greek knowledge was made available to Mediaeval Europe through the Latin translations of the Arabic translations (of the Syriac translations) of the Greek originals.

However, with the Mongol invasion of Baghdad in 1258, the end of Muslim rule in Spain with the fall of Granada in 1492, and the ensuing political division and instability which culminated in the Ottoman rule, the Arabic language went through a hibernation period which lasted until the second half of the 19th century. During this period Arabic was challenged by foreign languages such as Turkish and later on English, French and Italian.

The attempts made nowadays to revive a national language in order to replace a foreign (imposed) one is not a phenomenon which is peculiar to the Arab world. In China, Japan and Turkey before the last wars; in India, Indonesia and Israel since then, policies have officially been adopted for promoting the use for science and culture of the languages that are locally current for everyday purposes. (45) For example, as early as 1948-9, the Indian University Commission recommended that for the medium of instruction in higher education, English should be replaced by an Indian language and that international technical and scientific terminology be adopted, their pronunciation be properly assimilated and adapted to the phonetic system of that particular Indian language. For this federal language, one script (Devanagari) should be employed after having some of its defects removed. The Commission also called for immediate steps to prepare a scientific vocabulary which would be common to all Indian languages. Nevertheless, the Commission advised that English should be studied in high schools and in the universities in order to keep in touch with the living stream of ever-growing knowledge. (46)

Such recommendations are similar to the decisions and proposals which were voiced in almost all pan-Arab conferences on Arabization. As a matter of fact, the very word 'Arabization' -



as it will be used in this thesis - is a blanket term that encompasses a number of issues besides the actual process of translating foreign words and expressions into Arabic.

Among the issues involved in Arabization are the following:

- a. The revival of Arabic - in this case Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) - to assume its position not only as the language of religion but also as the medium of administration, education and cultural activities.
- b. The enrichment of MSA with modern scientific terms and the creation of standardized bilingual or trilingual (e.g. English-French-Arabic) dictionaries.
- c. To combat the proliferation of regional dialects. This particular aspect of Arabization is specific to the Arab world and can hardly be found in any naturalization programme of other developing countries. Arabization is not limited to the replacement of foreign languages by Arabic. As will be discussed in Chapter Three, Arabists have to exert a double effort in order to solve two problems, namely the intrusion of foreign languages and the spread of spectroglossia.
- d. The dissemination of Arabic in the higher levels of education particularly in the departments of science, medicine and technology. In this respect, original textbooks of a sufficiently high standard should be made available in order to replace the existing *foreign* scientific ones.
- e. The development of more efficient programmes for teaching foreign languages (TFL). A total exclusion of foreign languages at this stage of scientific development is undoubtedly fraught with grave danger. A knowledge of English or French is essential for both advance students and researchers so that they can keep pace with recent developments in their fields of interest.

In other words, a hurried and unplanned replacement of foreign languages by MSA may obstruct the process of assimilating foreign scientific advancements.

#### 1.9 The Nature and Scope of Our Present Study:

The need for translation in the Arab world has become more urgent particularly after the decline of Arabic as a scientific language and the emergence of other world languages which have become the vehicle of modern science and literature. Like the rest of the developing world, Arab countries have exerted tremendous efforts to catch up with the latest scientific developments by reviving Arabic as a modern medium of scientific communication. Yet these efforts have always been marred by linguistic, cultural and political barriers. This thesis seeks to explore and analyse some of these barriers.

In Chapter Two we will attempt to trace the development of Arabic: its inception into a full-fledged language, the circumstances that led to its decline and finally, the attempts being made to restore it to its position as a living pan-Arab language.

Bakalla's term 'spectroglossia',<sup>(47)</sup> is used in Chapter Three to describe the phenomenon which Ferguson calls diglossia<sup>(48)</sup> in reference to the dichotomy of a 'high' and 'low' varieties of a given language. It is our assumption that the term 'spectroglossia' is a better description of the current linguistic situation in the Arab world where various dialectal varieties of MSA are recognizable. The bulk of this chapter is devoted to tackling the problems and obstacles arising from spectroglossia and which, in turn, impede the implementation of the strategies of Arabization. Some proposals for combating such problems are also formulated.

The crux of the whole issue of Arabization in the traditional sense, namely the enrichment of MSA with scientific vocabulary, is discussed in Chapters Four and Five. In Chapter Four, for example, the circumstances which led to the current problem of lexical deficiency

are discussed as well as the possible resources of coping with the problem such as the formation of neologisms by means of semantic extension/*al-majāz*/, derivation by analogy/*al-'ishtiqaq bil-qiyās*/, compounding/*an-naḥt*/ and improvisation/*al-'irtijāl*/. However, it should be stressed that the process of creating new terminology has, so far, been a *laissez-faire* activity, run on the basis of individual initiatives.

Another controversial issue, namely the assimilation and transliteration of loanwords is dealt with in Chapter Five. The traditional debate on this subject has centred on whether foreign words taken into the language should retain their original pronunciation or be modified to conform to accepted Arabic paradigms or equally be eliminated altogether and replaced by derivatives from Arabic roots. The chapter also discusses some problems of transliterating borrowed words into Arabic and some of the solutions proposed by the language academies.

No consideration of the problems of English-Arabic translation can do without analysing some of the cultural and stylistic peculiarities of the two languages involved. This can help in describing patterns of interference and predicting possible points of error in the translator's performance. Therefore, Chapter Six will tackle some issues pertaining to the cultural context of each language such as the terminological range used in certain aspects of social activities, metaphorical and proverbial expressions as well as the problems involved in literary (aesthetic) translation, textual symmetry and stylistic shift. In our view, the process of comparing and contrasting the linguistic and cultural biases of the SL and TL must be part and parcel of any pedagogical material designed for the training of students of translation.

The final two chapters will be devoted to the discussion of other problems of a different nature. Our point of departure is that the issues involved in Arabization are not only linguistically oriented. Therefore, Chapter Seven, for example, will tackle the strategies laid down by the political and educational bodies in the Arab world and

the effectiveness of their implementation in achieving a fully Arabized educational system. In Chapter Eight, on the other hand, we will endeavour to evaluate the programmes of teaching foreign languages (TFL) in the Arab world and their role in upgrading the level of translations by producing more competent and better trained translators.

Obviously, translation from English into Arabic is so wide and profound a subject that any of its aspects demands a separate thesis. It involves two languages whose structures have little in common and whose conceptual boundaries vary in a way that defies principled explanations. Naturally, a work of this nature cannot claim to deal with all the issues involved, or to introduce fixed techniques for translating from English into Arabic, although such techniques can be developed if more analytical studies were made in the area of contrastive linguistics of English and Arabic.



NOTES

- (1) Newmark, p. 1, 3
- (2) Pinchuck, p. 16
- (3) Tytler, p. 13
- (4) Oettinger, p. 104
- (5) Vladimir Nabokov in his translation of A.S. Pushkin's Eugene Onegin, New York, Bollinger, 1964; as quoted by Newmark, p. 11.
- (6) Dostert, p. 124
- (7) Kelly, p. 30
- (8) Large, p. 58
- (9) Tytler, pp. 15-16
- (10) Nida and Taber (1974), pp. 1-2
- (11) Ibid, pp. 1-2, 24
- (12) For more on the subject, see Eugene Nida (1964), Ch. 1.
- (13) Gaur, p. 136
- (14) Bassnet-McGuire, pp. 43-5
- (15) Savory, p. 50
- (16) Tytler, pp. 63-4, 78-9
- (17) Nida (1975), p. 98
- (18) Newmark, p. 39
- (19) Ibid, p. 11
- (20) Nida and Taber (1974), p. 1
- (21) Steiner, p. 396
- (22) Ibid, p. 1
- (23) See for example Nida (1964)
- (24) See for example, B. Harris (ed.), Papers in Translatology, Ottawa University, 1977
- (25) Hockett, p. 61
- (26) el-Sheikh, p. 453
- (27) Ibid, p. 452
- (28) Halliday (1966), p. 135

- (29) See W. Weaver, "Translation" in W. N. Locke and A. D. Booth (eds.), Machine Translation of Languages, New York, Wiley, 1955, pp. 15-23.
- (30) Savory, p. 170. For more on the subject, see Bengt Sigurd, "Machine Translation: State of the Art", in Nobel Symposium (39) on the Theory and Practice of Translation, ed. by Lillebil Grähs et al, Switzerland, Lang Duck, 1978, pp. 33-49.
- (31) Congrat-Butler, p. 48
- (32) Large, p. 100
- (33) Ibid, p. 109
- (34) Ibid, p. 110
- (35) Benjamin, pp. 69-82
- (36) Nida (1975), p. 98
- (37) Large, pp. 140-3
- (38) Ibid, p. 18
- (39) UNESCO (1957), pp. 182-3
- (40) Large, p. 149
- (41) For more details and other statistics on how English dominates the languages of former British colonies, see Joshua Fishman et al, "English the World Over" in Hornby (1977), pp. 105 ff.
- (42) Dr. Hans speaking before the Indian University Commission in the mid-fifties; quoted in UNESCO (1957), p. 176.
- (43) Meyers, p. 8, 68
- (44) Ibid, p. 72
- (45) UNESCO (1957), p. 176
- (46) Ibid, p. 177
- (47) Bakalla, p. 87
- (48) Ferguson (1959), pp. 325-40
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## CHAPTER TWO

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARABIC AND THE RISE OF ARABIZATION

This and the following chapters are mainly concerned with the principal aspect of our study, namely the status quo and the problems of Arabization in the Arab world. However, our discussion can only be understood when placed within a wider historical and linguistic context, which will show how the present language situation has evolved and how it relates to other cultural aspects in Arab society.

Our aim in this chapter then is to sketch briefly the background against which our investigation of Arabization must be set, by tracing those particular events which led to the current situation of the Arabic language.

#### 2.1 Arabic and the Semitic family

Arabic is a member of one of the most important language families, in terms of numbers, in the world; it has been spoken for millennia in places where Arabic is now in use or in immediately adjacent areas. This language family is called the Semitic family and includes a cluster of languages besides Arabic, such as Akkadian (Babylonian and Assyrian), Ugaritic, Hebrew, Phoenician, Aramaic, Syriac and Ethiopic. (1)

The interrelationships among these languages are evident from similarities of structure which make it possible to assume the existence of a parent language, Proto-Semitic, from which they are all descended. For example, all of these languages are characterized by a series of consonants corresponding to the emphatic and emphatic-like consonants of Arabic, and a morphology based on trilateral consonant roots interlocking with derivational patterns. (2)

Some linguists also classify Arabic as a Hamito-Semitic language in so far as these two groups of languages show regular structural affinities in phonology, morphology and syntax. Amongst the Hamitic languages are: Ancient Egyptian, Old Libyan, Berber, Hausa, Fula and the Cushitic languages such as Somali, Galla, Eastern Sudanese languages and so on. (3)

On the other hand, through intensive research and comparative studies, modern linguists and Arabists have established a theory which assumes the early existence of a variety of Arabian languages: Northern Arabian languages and Southern Arabi languages. The first inscriptions in Southern Arabian may be traced back to the 8th century B.C. and include knowledge of the kingdoms of the Sabaeans, Minaeans, Qabatanians and Himyarites. Northern Arabi appeared much later, although Thamudic, Liḥyānite and Safaitic inscriptions may be related to an early Northern Arabian. It is not until the 6th century A.D. that we have information about a poetic Arabic that appears to have developed into the language of the Qur'ān in the following century. (4) It is this Arabic, often referred to as 'al-ʿArabiyyah al-Fuṣḥā', or the literary Arabic of Islamic times, that concerns us in the following few pages.

## 2.2 Some linguistic Peculiarities of Arabic

In spite of its late appearance in history, Classical Arabic displays certain features which have helped Semiticists to gain greater insight into the older Semitic languages. Arabic's close relationship to them manifests itself in a wealth of shared features. Among these are the derivation of words from trilateral roots, or radicals, by means of prefixes, infixes and suffixes; the specific patterns or paradigms followed in such derivations; cognate forms for the personal pronouns, the pronominal suffixes, nouns denoting close relatives, numerals, names for the parts of the body, etc.; grammatical gender; and the conjugation of the verb which in almost all these languages has only perfect and imperfect forms. (5)



To exemplify the structural affinity in some of the Semitic languages (including Arabic) let us show some regular correspondences in terms of sounds and vocabulary. Note, for instance, the word for the English number 'nine':

in Arabic	/tis9/
Hebrew	/tesha9/
Aramaic	/tasha9/
Ethiopic	/tesh9u/
Akkadian	/tishu/

Another example is the following set of words meaning 'night':

in Arabic	/laylah/
Hebrew	/laylah/
Aramaic	/lelya/
Ethiopic	/lelit/
Akkadian	/lilat/ (6)

The following example is taken from Semitic grammar. The present tense of the sentence 'he wrote' has the following equivalents:

in Arabic	/yaktubu/
Hebrew	/yikhtov/
Aramaic	/yikhtov/
Ethiopic	/yekteb/ (7)

Such examples, and hundreds more, show the relationships between the other members of the Semitic family and Arabic which although, as Nicholson states, is

"..... the youngest of the Semitic languages, it is generally allowed to be nearer akin than any of them to the original archetype, the 'Ursemitisch' (or Proto-Semitic), from which they are all derived ....." (8)

This statement falls short of saying that the Arabic language is more Semitic than its cognates or 'sister' languages, and that amongst the existing Semitic languages of today, it is the richest in its Semitic features and hence is regarded by some as the most primitive Semitic speech extant. (9)

Arabic has its distinct alphabet of twenty eight characters, twenty five consonants and three long vowels: /ā/, /ī/ and /ū/. In addition, the alphabet has three symbols for short vowels - 'dammah' /u/, 'fathah' /a/ and 'kasrah' /i/, which are indicated by diacritical marks written above and below each character. (see the transcription table). However, the short vowels have never been made a permanent part of the writing system, with the single exception perhaps, of the Qur'ān in which vowels are always written to ensure correct reading of the Divine Revelation. It should be added that in learning to read the language, vocalized texts are used for some time after which one must learn to read without vowels, a matter which makes for faulty reading, even on the part of those who possess a thorough knowledge of Arabic morphology /ṣarf/ and grammar /nahw/. For example, the same orthographic form is used to represent the five quite different words: /malik/ 'king', /malak/ 'angel', /mulk/ 'power', /milk/ 'property' and /malaka/ 'to own'

Arabic is also rich in consonants. In the written form they appear from right to left. Each consonant-sign has a somewhat different shape depending on the position in which it occurs relative to other consonant-signs. Some of the consonant sounds do not have equivalents in Western languages. In fact, the Arabs like to refer to themselves as /an-nāṭiqūn bi-d-dād/, literally "the speakers with the letter /d/", because an emphatic /d/ is believed to be a unique feature of the language. (10) Moreover, the Arabic sound system includes the guttural consonants /kh/, /gh/ as well as the emphatic /t/, /s/ and /z/ which are a source of difficulty for many foreigners learning the language.

On the other hand, such phonemes as /v/ and /p/ do not exist in Arabic; in other words, there is no /p/ phoneme in contrast to a /b/ phoneme; nor a /v/ in contrast to an /f/ as is the case in English. Likewise, those Arabists who are concerned with transliterating English loan words into Arabic are often faced with difficulties in transcribing such English phonemes as /g/, /tʃ/ along with the /v/ and the /p/ into Arabic due to their absence from the language. In 1936, the Language Academy of Cairo decided to supplement the Arabic alphabet with new letters to represent such phonemes as /v/ and /g/ which were needed to transcribe foreign proper nouns. However, other countries such as Syria adopted different symbols for the same purposes, while in others like Morocco two symbols may be used interchangeably. (11) This is one illustration of the unnecessary complications which result from a lack of co-ordination among the various Arab countries.

A more serious problem might be the representation of foreign vowel sounds. For instance, English vowel phonemes must all be represented by the three Arabic diacritics, so that /u/, /a/ and /ʌ/ are all transcribed with the same symbol, thus making it difficult to distinguish different English words when they are transcribed into Arabic (see 5.4).

Whatever may be the problems of the Arabic script, the Arab conquests and spread of Islam caused the spread of Arabic and its alphabet. Almost all Muslim peoples have used the alphabet at some time or another. In addition to Arabic, it has been used for Persian (and other Iranian languages), Osmanli, the Turkish of Turkey (and other Turkic languages, including Uighur and Kazakh), Urdu and Malay. In Africa it has been used for Berber, Swahili, Hausa, dialects in the area of Lake Chad, and occasional others. However, with the decline of Arabic as the imperial language and the rise of nationalistic movements, some languages such as Malay and Turkic in use in *Soviet Central Asia* as well as the Turkish of Turkey, have abandoned the Arabic alphabet in favour of Latin

alphabets. *Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan are* the only non-Arabic-speaking countries that use the Arabic script today, though in a modified form called /nasta 9līq/. (12)

In the process of its development, Arabic has been indebted to a number of languages, ancient, mediaeval and modern - from which it has borrowed an enormous amount of vocabulary. It in turn has made its own contributions to several eastern and western languages in areas where non-Semitic languages also exist. In Africa, for example: Hausa, Yoruba, Berber, Somali, Mandinka, Wolof and Swahili are amongst the languages which have been heavily influenced by Arabic; In Asia, too, we have Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Bengali, Malay, Kurdish and Pashtu.

In addition, as a vehicle of a great culture, Arabic has influenced a number of languages in Europe. Spanish and Portuguese still keep hundreds of words and expressions which they inherited from the six centuries or so of Muslim rule, and some of which, either through direct or indirect influence penetrated into English. (13) Nevertheless, many of the Arabic loanwords have lost part of their phonetic form and have become partially or totally unrecognizable. Let us compare some examples of the Arabic loanwords in Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French and English. (14)

ARABIC	SPANISH	PORTUGUESE	ITALIAN	FRENCH	ENGLISH
/'amīr al-bahr/ 'Commander of the sea'	almirante	almirante	ammiraglio	admiral	admiral
/ṣifr/ 'zero' or 'naught'	cero <u>or</u> cifra	zero <u>or</u> cifra	zero <u>or</u> cifra	zero <u>or</u> chiffre	zero
'dār aṣ-ṣināʿah/ 'dockyard' or 'factory'	arsenal	arsenal	arsenale	arsenal	arsenal

Table 2.1: Some Arabic Loanwords in European Languages

Also, note the Arabic Loans in some Non-European Languages: (15)

ARABIC	SWAHILI	MALAY	TURKISH	PERSIAN
/kitāb/ 'book'	kitābu	kitab	kitap	kitab
/ <u>kh</u> abar/ 'news'	habari	kabar	haber	<u>kh</u> abar
/waqt/ 'time'	wakati	waktu	vakit	vaqt

Table 2.2: Some Arabic Loanwords in Non-European Languages

In turn, Arabic has been influenced by many other languages. Classical Arabic was influenced by languages such as Greek, Latin, Persian, Aramaic, Hebrew, as well as several other Indo-European and Ugaritic languages, long before the advent of Islam. When the Qur'an was revealed, it contained many of these words which appear to have been completely assimilated into the Arabic lexicon. Words such as /Shaytān/'Satan', /Firdaws/'Paradise', /sirāt/ from the Latin strata 'path' and /falsafah/'philosophy' are thought to be borrowed from foreign origins. (16)

The practice of borrowing from other languages, which was used in the Middle Ages to provide new terminology, has been considered as a means of filling the gaps in scientific terminology which exist in Arabic today. (17) As a matter of fact, one of the most important factors which contributed to the rapid modernization of the Arabic language was the assimilation of a great number of words from modern languages, such as English, French, Italian, Spanish, Turkish and Portuguese. Examples of modern loanwords in Arabic are numerous, to mention but a few:

ARABIC WORD	SOURCE
/būfīh/	French 'buffet'
/barandah/	Hindi 'veranda' (terrace)
/kūras/	English 'chorus'
/karafatta/	Italian 'cravatta' (tie)
/rādār/	English 'radar'
/kuktīl/	English 'cocktail'
/fuluklūr/	English 'folklore' based on English spelling not pronunciation
/bilāj /	French 'plage' (beach)
/tabgh/	Spanish 'tabaco'

Table 2.3: Some Examples of Modern Loanwords in Arabic

Apart from object names, loanwords are also used as adjectives, verbs or part of verbal or nominal phrases. Note for instance the word /ta'amraka/'to become American', /talfaza/'televize', /munāwarah harbiyyah/'military manoeuvre', /sina mā'iy/'cinematic', /juḡhrāfiy/'geographic'. (18)

Nevertheless, it has been objected that the word-formation processes of Arabic which involve the addition of affixes to roots consisting of a number of consonants cannot readily be applied to words borrowed from other languages, and so these are limited in productivity. Attempts have also been made to apply English and French derivational processes to some Arabized words, but again, the results are judged unsatisfactory. A good example of such a practice is the Arabic word /kibrīt/'sulfure', to which the French suffixes - ate and - ure as in 'sulfate' and 'sulfure', have been added to produce /kibrītāt/ and /kibrītūr/, both of which are judged to sound very odd. Other problems are posed by the complex words based on Latin and Greek

roots which are characteristic of French and English scientific terminology, but which can only be transferred into Arabic by means of long and unwieldy paraphrases, e.g. 'hypertension' is /fart al-ḥāssiyyah/, 'peninsula' becomes /shibh jazīrah/ and 'agnosticism' is rendered as /lā'adriyah/. (19)

Consequently, it has been suggested that Arabic should borrow foreign words in their original form by merely translating them without adapting them to Arabic morphology, in order to avoid any further complexities, similar to the ones mentioned above. To this al-Maghribī expresses his reservations in the following statement:

"However much we approve of the point of view of Sībawayh in not regarding as a condition for the Arabization of a word its assimilation according to the methods and moulds/qawālib/ of our language, it is necessary that in our indulgence, we should stop at a certain limit. Otherwise, foreign words of different types and forms will multiply in our language to the extent that with the passage of time, it might lose its character and become a hybrid language - neither Arabic, nor foreign - something like the language of Malta, or the remaining dialects of the different regions of Islamdom" (20)

Proponents of the puristic doctrine have held that new vocabulary must be derived exclusively in accordance with ancient models or by semantic extensions of older forms. Thus, for example, they suggested that the ancient words for 'caravan' /qīṭār/ and /sayyārah/ should be used instead of /trām/'train' and /'utumbīl/'motor car', respectively. (21)

In recent decades innumerable such words have been suggested, while thousands of others have been coined in line with the Arabic derivational patterns. Unfortunately, however, relatively few of these have gained acceptance in common usage, either because they are

not understood by a multitude of speakers in the Arab world, or are rejected in favour of other equally short-lived private fabrications.<sup>(22)</sup>

Moreover, many loanwords which have been in public use for a long time have resisted all efforts to replace them. /tilifūn/'telephone', for instance, has outlived more than a dozen suggested alternatives, to mention a few: /'irzīz/, /nādī/, /hātif/, /misārā/, etc.<sup>(23)</sup>

The same thing runs for /rādyū/'radio', /tilifizyūn/'television', /kumbiyūtar/'computer', /stīryū/'stereo', /taksī/'taxi', /bātrī/or /battāriyyah/'battery', /kulūnyah/'cologne', etc. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the purists and the academics demand the translation into Arabic even of those Greek and Latin technical terms which make possible international understanding among specialists.<sup>(24)</sup>

A further problem lies in the lack of agreement between the various Arabic-speaking countries with regard to the standardization of the terms used. The lack of consistency may be related to the influences of colonization; the medium for science in the formerly colonized Arab countries was and remains the language of their colonizers, so that for North Africans, science is usually presented through the medium of French while in the Middle East it is English which serves this purpose. Moreover, the existence of dialects and the cultural seclusion of the Arab countries which is the result of their political heterogeneity makes for diversity of usage.

These, and some other linguistic peculiarities of Arabic (syntax, morphology, the script, and so on), warrant further investigation. Along with other topics, they will be discussed in the following chapters.

### 2.3 Growth, Stagnation and Revival:

It goes without saying that Arabic has a long standing history which goes back more than 2,000 years. In the course of its long existence, Arabic has served as a register of the cultural developments



of its speakers, their accomplishments as well as their failures. From a modest beginning followed by a period of adjustment and adaptation, the language went through a golden age of vigour and vitality, a declining period of stagnation and deterioration, and finally a glimpse of revival. Thus scholars have distinguished different periods in the history of Arabic.

The term 'Pre-Islamic Arabic' has been used to describe the language used by poets writing before the Islamic era, <sup>(25)</sup> this being followed by 'Early Islamic Arabic' while the language of the Qur'ān itself is often termed 'Qur'ānic Arabic'. The language used through the period of Arab conquests in the 7th and 8th centuries is sometimes called 'Middle Arabic' and, according to Blau, <sup>(26)</sup> reveals the influence of the Arabs' contact with other peoples. Finally, the language used today, for instance in the press and the media, is often referred to as 'Modern Standard Arabic' (MSA), <sup>(27)</sup> 'Journalistic Arabic', <sup>(28)</sup> and 'Educated Spoken Arabic'. <sup>(29)</sup> However, these labels do not seem to designate clearly distinct historical changes in the development of the language, for its grammar has remained almost intact throughout. The only linguistic contrasts between the various periods distinguished are ones of style and vocabulary, so that the number of labels may be misleading since they do not refer to grammatically distinct varieties. <sup>(30)</sup>

### 2.3.1 The Period of Inception:

Generally speaking, however, there is a lot of speculation and controversy as to what dialect or combination of dialects developed into Classical Arabic and in what way. Some linguists are of the view that the court of al-Hīra, the capital of an Arab dynasty in Pre-Islamic days, on the borders of Iran, became the resort of Bedouin poets in the late Jāhiliyyah period, and, therefore, helped in developing and unifying the language of poetry as well as standardizing its written form. About the origins of what is often termed 'Poetical Koine', there is another controversy as to whether it was a Hijāzī (particularly of the Quraysh) dialect or a Najdi one, but it is widely accepted that

in the late 6th century, it was a purely literary dialect, distinct from all spoken dialects and, above all, super-tribal. It is asserted by Western scholarship that the language of the Qur'ān stood somewhere between the poetical standard koine and the Hijāzī dialect. (31) An Arab scholar is of the view that the earlier Classical Arabic, i.e. the language of the /Muḡallaqāt/ (the Poetical Koine) had begun to deteriorate just before Islam, but the revelation of the Qur'ān in that language not only stopped this deterioration, but restored the language to its early purity and conciseness. (32)

From the seventh century A.D. onwards, the Arabs invaded a large area in south and southwest Asia and North Africa, spreading Islam among the hitherto pagan tribes and nations. All social or individual progress was inevitably achieved in the direction of a more complete Islamization which went together with a more thorough knowledge of the Arabic language. The new-comers (believers) in Islam admitted the superiority of Arabic over their own language, probably because of the link between Arabic and religion and maybe also because of the respect they felt towards the written forms which their own languages did not possess at the time. Their favourable attitude towards Arabic also reflected a more general desire to live in harmony with the Arabs. (33)

The need of the Islamic community for the preservation of Arabic, the language of the Qur'ān and for making it a workable language in the Islamic state took on a politico-religious significance. What accounts for its importance is that Arabic was intimately connected with the Divine Mission, whose success largely depended on the dissemination of the language through which the uncreated word was revealed. This is linked to the fact that the linguistic style of the Qur'ān and Prophet Muḡammad's use of Arabic were considered necessary and intrinsic parts of the Revelation, so that the Qur'ān could not, in orthodox Islam, be translated, read or recited in any other language. (34) Nicholson aptly expresses this fact as follows:-

"If the pride and delight of the Arabs in their noble language led them to regard the maintenance of its purity as a national duty, they were generally bound by their religious conviction, to take measures for insuring the correct pronunciation and interpretation of that miracle of 'Divine Eloquence', the Arabic Qur'ān." (35)

In addition, it is clear from an examination of the figures who created Arabic literature that during the period when Islam was united, a knowledge of Arabic - as an imperial language - was necessary for any scholarly or political advancement, and as a result, ambitious and talented men of various national backgrounds used Arabic as the medium for all kinds of written expression.

With the spread of the Islamic Empire from the Indus River in the east to the Atlantic Ocean in the west, and from the Arabian Sea in the south to the confines of Turkey and the Caucasus in the north, the process of Arabization went hand in hand with Islamization. The need for making Arabic the lingua franca of the newly acquired lands grew steadily with the growth of strong religious feelings among the new converts. The areas where Arabic triumphed most were primarily those where some form of Semitic was already existent. However, in areas where non-Semitic languages were in use (especially Berber in North Africa, Indo-Iranian in Persia and India, and Turkic in Asia Minor, the Caucasus and Central Asia), the original languages survived for a considerable period (especially within the realm of secular activities) during which a great deal of interaction took place between Arabic and the local languages but not without a heavy price. As a result, a new situation was created in which non-Arab Muslims faced difficulties in learning the Arabic language. Their presence amongst the Arabs led to the modification of Arabic, which triggered the gradual loss of the purity of Arabic in form and content. This situation is referred to by early scholars as the 'corruption' or 'deterioration' of the language, manifested in

foreign accents, mispronunciation of words, poor enunciation, shifting of vowels and consonants and misuse of certain expressions, among other peculiarities. From its inception this situation posed a linguistic problem of great magnitude not only for the Arab conquerors themselves but also for the new converts to Islam who apparently showed as much zeal in preserving Arabic as in espousing Islam. (36) Hence, there originated a great concern for the preservation of the language through a process of linguistic codification. The purpose was to attain uniformity and standardization of the language of the Qur'an, while special care was taken to check the spread of colloquialism and the encroachment of foreign influences.

In any case, only in the middle of the eighth century is there evidence of concrete steps in that direction. It was in Kūfah and Baṣrah that the cornerstone of the scientific study of the Arab language was laid by Arab and non-Arab linguists. (37) The science of grammar /nahw/ was invented by 'Abū-al-'Aswad al-Du'alī (died 688) of the Baṣran school, whereas the first lexical work of any significance, Kitāb al-9Ayn (the first dictionary to be arranged according to the middle radical sound of its entries) was collected by another Baṣran scholar by the name of al-Khalīl 'Ibn 'Aḥmad (died 786) whose pupil Sībawayh (died 793) is the well-known compiler of the celebrated grammar book entitled al-Kitāb. (38) Such linguistic enthusiasm helped to save the language from being lost or irreparably diluted in a polyglot society and at the same time contributed towards disseminating Arabic so that it became the language of state administration and of the speculative and natural sciences for more than a millennium and a half.

### 2.3.2 The Golden Period

It is said that Arabic reached its apex during the reign of the Umayyad (661-750) and Abbasid (750-1258) dynasties. For example, at the turn of the seventh century, the Umayyad caliph 9Abd-al-Malik (685-705) and his able viceroy and schoolmaster

al-Hajjāj (died 714) introduced measures to secure the supremacy of the Arabic language in the vast empire - measures that proved successful and had far-reaching consequences for the propagation of the language. Arabization was initiated as a matter of state policy and the language of the public registers was changed from Greek to Arabic in Syria and Egypt, and from Pahlavi to Arabic in the eastern part of the empire. ʿAbd-al-Malik also exchanged the previous Persian and Byzantine gold coins for coins carrying Arabic inscriptions. (39) With the help of al-Hajjāj, he promulgated some linguistic reforms in order to simplify the language. These consisted of adding dots to the Arabic letters to differentiate otherwise identical letters and of providing a vowel notation, /dammaḥ/ (◌َ), /fathah/ (◌\_), and /kasrah/ (◌ِ) to ensure correct reading. (40) These measures facilitated learning the language and as a result, many non-Arabic speaking persons studied Arabic so that they would have a chance to assume official positions. The reforms of ʿAbd-al-Malik put Arabization on a firmer foundation and contributed immeasurably to the linguistic conquest of Arabic over a wide territory, superseding, if not completely supplanting Greek and Aramaic in Syria and Palestine, Coptic in Egypt, Latin and Berber dialects in North Africa and Spain, and Persian and other languages in the eastern provinces.

The Arabic language enjoyed its 'Golden Age' under the Abbasids in the ninth and tenth centuries, paradoxically at a time when the Muslim Empire was undergoing serious political dislocation. The factors which helped its growth were many. Principally, they were its codification and the almost simultaneous adoption of the so-called foreign sciences through the medium of translation. No doubt, the translation of numerous works into Arabic enriched the language as it became necessary to develop the technical terminology required to express the new thoughts, ideas, and concepts found in the original works. The importance of translation, in this respect, can hardly be overestimated; it gave the language the needed

flexibility and force to express foreign modes of thought with clarity and precision. (41) Subsequently, its development was further enhanced by lavish borrowing from Syriac, Persian, Greek and Sanskrit, and the adoption of the then new sciences through their translation into Arabic.

The bulk of translation was conducted during the reign of the Caliph al-Mansūr (745-75), the founder of the city of Baghdad as well as in that of al-Ma'mūn (813-33). The latter, who was interested in Greek learning established his famous 'House of Wisdom' /Bayt al-Hikmah/ which consisted of a bureau of translation, in conjunction with an advanced observatory. (42) At first, the task of translating works on astronomy, mathematics, geography, philosophy and medicine proved to be an almost insurmountable difficulty due to the fact that the language was inadequately equipped for expressing alien terminology. It is not surprising, then, that the early translations contained a sizable number of Greek words which were simply transliterated into Arabic characters. Only later were Arabic equivalents coined to replace them. In some instances, loanwords were preserved along with the newly-coined Arabic terms. For example, such terms as /musīqā/'music', /falsafah/'philosophy' and /jughrafīyā/'geography', were never successfully replaced. (43)

The process of translation and Arabization gave rise to an ever-increasing amount of specialized vocabulary and coined terms. This, by itself, was a sufficient impetus for some lexicographers to attempt to record those lexical items and expressions which were of a genuine Arabic origin, in order to safeguard them against being assimilated into foreign methods of speech. The result was the production of several Arabic dictionaries which were, at first, restricted to Qur'ānic and Hadīth expressions. But soon from the eighth century onward specialized lexicons on a more comprehensive scale became quite common. al-Khalīl 'Ibn 'Ahmad (died 786) appears to have been the first to compile a general dictionary. al-Jawharī (died 1022) compiled his two volumes of al-Sihāh which

contained 40,000 entries arranged alphabetically according to the last letters . al-Zamakhsharī (died 1143), in turn produced 'Asās al-Balāghah, which was arranged alphabetically according to the first, second and third radicals. Since then, several important dictionaries have followed such as Lisān al-ʿArab in twenty volumes (30,000 entries), by 'Ibn Manẓūr (died 1311) and the Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ of al-Fayrūzabādī (died 1414), which are still in wide use as references for modern dictionaries. However different their authors might seem to be their strategies for coining new words were basically the same:

1. Metaphorical extension/majāz/ : e.g. /bahr/originally 'sea' is also used as another word for 'horse'.
2. Derivation by analogy /al-'ishtiqaq bil-qiyās/ : e.g. /nijārah/'carpentry' is derived from the trilateral verb /najara/ according to the mould /fiḡālah/.
3. Compounding /naḥṭ/ : e.g. /ḡamadalah/'thanks be to 'Allah' is the compound of /al-ḡamd Li-'Allāḡ/
4. Transliteration and assimilation of loanwords into Arabic moulds /taḡrīb/ <sup>(44)</sup>: e.g. /falsafah/'philosophy' and /musīqā/'music' have been fully assimilated into Arabic.

Although Baghdad remained the major intellectual and spiritual centre during the Abbasid Caliphate, until its destruction in 1258 by the Mongol hordes, other equally important centres of learning had emerged under the semi-independent or independent dynasties of al-'Andalus such as those of Cordova, Toledo, Seville and Granada. In Spain, the Arab conqueror did not have to delegate the administration of the state to natives to be conducted in their own language as was the case of the conquest of some lands of the East, but rather instituted Arabic as the official language from the beginning, in all official documents, coins and sermons. Further, Arabization increased as many Andalusians sought their education in the East

or received it from immigrant easterners. That being so, Arabic language and culture successfully made their way to the deep roots of Muslim Spain especially among the urban population, made up of a large Islamized class (Muwalladūn), and the substantial number of Arabized Christians that came to be known as Mozarabs. (45)

Intellectual life continued to flourish under the rule of the 'Party Kings' (1031-90), Almoravids (1056-1147) and Almohads (1147-1298). In fact, it was during this unsettled period that a great number of talented authors emerged [e.g. the geographers, al-Bakrī (died 1094), and al-'Idrīsī (died 1154), the philosophers 'Ibn Tufayl (died 1185) and 'Ibn Rushd (died 1198)].<sup>(46)</sup> However, with the fall of Almohads dynasty and the ascendancy of the Nasrīds (1232-1492), the Muslim and Arabic domain was reduced to a marginal pocket on the southern fringes of the Iberian Peninsula. Therefore, although Arabic remained an eminently important language on Spanish soil, it gradually gave way to the emerging Spanish and was finally forbidden in any shape or form by the Inquisitors, after the fall of Granada in 1492.

After that, Arabic served as a medium for transmitting Graeco-Arabic lore to the West through the translation of Arabic books into Latin, Spanish and French. This process began in the eleventh century in the city of Toledo where men like King Alfonso VII (1125-57) and Raymond, (died 1151), Archbishop of Toledo, recruited a group of translators, not unlike the 'House of Wisdom' of al-Ma'mūn in Baghdad. It was in this school and in other centres that all sorts of Arabic books on mathematics, astronomy, medicine, alchemy, physics and philosophy were translated into Latin. And it was through the Arabic language that ancient and mediaeval Greek and Latin philosophy and sciences were preserved and passed to Modern Europe via their Arabic version, rather than their original manuscripts. (47) This in turn meant that Spanish and other European languages were destined to borrow certain words of Arabic origins in the military, administrative, agricultural and commercial fields.



A similar development took place further east in Persia and beyond where bilingualism prevailed as in Spain. Persian, various Turkish dialects and some Indian dialects were never supplanted by Arabic. Yet, for centuries many authors in various disciplines used Arabic as a literary medium in preference to their native vernaculars, despite the fact that some rulers encouraged the use of the local tongue in administration and literature. For even though many scholars were at home, for instance, in both Arabic and Persian, Arabic was long used as the language of letters. Some of the outstanding scholars who wrote their most important works in Arabic during this period include the famous philosopher-physician al-Rāzī (died 925) and 'Ibn Sīnā (died 1037), the literary critic 'Abū-Hilāl al-ʿAskarī (died 1005), the great theologian al-Ghazālī (died 1111) and the prominent scientist al-Bīrūnī (died 1048). Yet with the advent of the eleventh century and the rise of national languages, first Persian and later Turkish, the status of Arabic began to decline. The same situation developed in some regions of continental India, the Punjab, Kashmir ..... etc., where Arabization had made some progress. (48)

### 2.3.3 The Period of Stagnation and Hibernation

In his article, "Arabs, Arabic and the Future", Saleem Khan is of the view that

"many of the so-called laws of the development and decay of languages, which have been mistakenly taken to be scientific and universal, are not applicable to Arabic" (49)

and to support his view he quotes Ernest Renan, who observes that, "(Arabic) ..... has no childhood and no old age". (50) Our view here does not run contrary to that of either Khan or Renan for it seems that what the two were talking about is the classical form of Arabic which is preserved in the Qur'ān and the ancient literary

writings as well as in some of the writings of the neo-classicists. However, our immediate concern here is not with the written or stereotyped pattern of the language, but rather with the actual use of Arabic in administration, education, the media, .... etc.

With this in mind, one cannot fail to see that the success of the language was in direct proportion to the interest, industry and creativeness of the people who used it. It would seem, moreover, that the fecundity of the intellectual life depended on political and social stability. In other words, Arabic as an instrument of expression and a register of the cultural achievements of its speakers grew with the ascendancy of its people and gradually deteriorated with their decadence, yielding ultimately to provincialism. (51) Even in places where Arabic remained the scientific language among Muslim scholars, it had not kept up with the times because the people who used it were just imitators of their counterparts of earlier times, and lacked the intellectual stamina required by the ever-changing conditions. The problems, then, with the Arabic language do not arise as much from the nature of the language itself as from the people who use it, and the attitudes they have towards it. The fact is that Arabic speakers are taught to regard their language as something valuable in itself, void of any practical implications. (52) Thus the language gradually lost its vitality, became stereotyped and completely isolated from the rapid advancements that had taken place elsewhere in the world.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to suggest a date for or to single out any one factor that led to the decline of Arabic language and culture. Yet, it can be said that the recurrent invasions of Muslim lands by East-Asiatic hordes was the major factor in the intellectual stagnation of Arabic. The Seljuks, a Turkish-speaking people, encroached upon Muslim territory as early as the eleventh century. Although they embraced Islam, they nevertheless encouraged Persian as the language of state and literature in Khurasan and the surrounding areas. Moreover,

during the thirteenth century, the forces of the Mongol hordes made massive attacks on the eastern parts of the Muslim world, inflicting destruction and havoc, and culminating their fury with ravaging Baghdad in 1258. (53) As a result, the language of the conqueror (i.e. Persian) was enforced as the medium of politics, administration and daily transactions, whereas Arabic was relegated as the language of prayer and religious sermons. Already, the fourteenth century lexicographer 'Ibn Manzūr (died 1311), the author of the famous Lisān al-ʿArab was complaining about the decadent state of the Arabic language and the tendency of people to learn a foreign language in preference to Arabic. (54) 'Ibn Manzūr's assessment is vividly confirmed by the traveller 'Ibn Battūtah, who visiting Basrah in 1327, heard a preacher commit serious mistakes of grammar while speaking from the pulpit, and in conversing with one of the judges, reported that the latter commented that:

"..... this Baṣrah, in whose people the mastery of grammar reached its height, which was the home of its leader whose pre-eminence is undisputed has no preacher who can deliver a sermon without breaking the rules" (55)

With the advent of the sixteenth century, most of the Arab lands fell under the control of the Turks, a situation which lasted up to the end of World War I. During this long period, the study of Arabic, which had been the medium par excellence of intellectual endeavour was, of course, relegated to the background. Subsequently, Turkish supplanted Arabic in administration and Arab officials in the Ottoman Empire studied Turkish to the detriment of Arabic which was replaced by local dialects that had taken hold not only of the masses but of the intelligentsia as well. (56) Arabic thus was no longer the only language of Islam; the use of Arabic no longer conferred prestige and was required only in some specifically religious contexts where the concern was with the interpretation

of Quar'ānic verses or the study of Islamic jurisprudence. Above all, the governing Ottoman Turks restricted membership in the ruling class to those who learned Turkish and thus became Ottoman, so that talented men from all over the Empire were attracted to this new imperial identity. (57) The Ottoman government even attempted, though without much success, to introduce the Turkish language in the religious sermons and the traditional educational system (al-kuttāb) with the aim of rooting out the Arabic identity after having usurped the political freedom of the Arabs.

Worse still was the advent of European colonization into the Arab world during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The colonizers came to the Arab World seemingly with the idea of liberating the Arabs from the clutches of the 'sick man of Europe' (i.e. the dying Ottoman rule), by disseminating European culture and its associated languages as the means of civilization and advancement. (58) The colonizers' policy had the effect of introducing a new lifestyle, a new set of values and of encouraging the Arabs to reject everything which belonged to their own culture. Thus Memmi, describing the position of the colonized North African countries, for instance, writes,

"... the memory which is made up for him (the native), is certainly not that of his own people. The history he is taught is not his own ..... The colonized individual has been told that his music is the caterwauling of a cat, his painting a sugary syrup. He repeats that his music is vulgar and his painting sickening". (59)

This policy may have given the European (colonizing) languages the connotations of modernism and advancement, but it has also strengthened the association between Arabic, religion and tradition. The contrast thus developed is summed up in some remarks by Calvet who comments that

"the dominant language (French, English, Spanish, etc.), occupies the domain of the secular, i.e. everything to do with everyday life, administration, technology, politics, studies ... etc., while the dominated language (Arabic) is driven back to the domain of the sacred. Thus the dominated-dominating language opposition is converted into an opposition between old and new" (60)

The opposition in turn worked in favour of the European languages, making them the pathways for those who wanted to participate in the developing industry, mechanized agriculture, oil transport, banks, insurance and commerce. In contrast, Arabic remained the medium of operation for the traditional Arab sector, which dealt with traditional agriculture, craftsmanship and the like. (61) This is, probably, the main reason why Arabic remained and still is poor in modern technological lexicon.

In the the same manner, and with the support of some Arab scholars and writers (e.g. Qāsim 'Amīn, Luṭfī al-Sayyid and 'Anīs Frayḥah), the Colonialists' next attempt at obliterating the Arabic language and culture, was directed towards replacing Classical Arabic by colloquial dialects. Their main argument was that Classical Arabic was difficult and far from the daily lives of people; that in the past millennium or so, it had undergone little or no change and therefore it had become badly undernourished in many areas of the arts and sciences. (62) Within these lines, Justice Wilmore, one of the judges of the Court of Appeal in Cairo during the British rule, went a step further and called in 1901, as Atatürk did later in Turkey, for the use of Latin script instead of the Arabic alphabet. His claim which was backed by the Egyptian ʿAbd-al-ʿAzīz Fahmī and two other French orientalist, Massignon and Banyar, (63) was that the Arabic script created an obstacle in the way of disseminating European culture and scientific advancements.

#### 2.3.4 Traces of Revival

After a period of semi-hibernation for more than four centuries, and with the Arabic countries slowly gaining their independence, there arose a strong reaction against the use of foreign (European) languages in the administrative, economic and educational systems. However, it was not until the mid-nineteenth century that the forerunners of the Arabic renaissance, whether they were nationalists, literary writers or journalists, began to devote a special effort towards the process of reinstating Arabic to assume its place as a modern language, capable of expressing modern thinking and modes of life in the modern age, instead of being, as is the case with many languages of the developing countries, a mere container of foreign knowledge and technology.

The Arabic /nahdah/'awakening' as some may prefer to call it,<sup>(64)</sup> was triggered by a multitude of developments in the Arab world, among which we might mention the following:

##### a. The East-West Contact:

The beginning of the /nahdah/ or 'renaissance' of Arabic is usually attributed to the first wide-scale contact between the Arab world and modern Europe, when Napoleon Bonaparte set foot in Egypt in 1798. Napoleon's expedition appears to have shaken the foundations of the Arabic-speaking world, culturally as well as politically. It exposed the Egyptians, and later on the Arabs in general to French culture and Western sciences; for although it was a military enterprise rather than a cultural mission, it had, in spite of the short duration, an impact on the Arab world far greater than that of a mere military adventure.

One of its positive results was the introduction of the first official Arabic press, which by the nineteenth century became readily available in the various sectors of the Arab world. This in itself was a major factor which contributed to the process of

rejuvenating and disseminating Arabic language and literature among the masses, by means of a large number of printed books and periodicals. For example, in 1828, a few years after the departure of the French, there appeared the first issue of the 'printed' official gazette Al-Waqa'i9 al-Miṣriyyah, as well as the first 'printed' French-Arabic dictionary, compiled by 'Ilyās al-Qubṭī both of which were made possible by the Bulāq press which was established by Muhammad Ali (1805-1848). (65)

Similarly, the many Lebanese and Syrian scholars who flocked to Egypt in search of freedom of speech founded several other well-known newspapers and magazines, some of which are still flourishing today. Hence, for example, Salīm al-Ḥamawī (from Damascus) founded the Kawkab al-Sharq of Alexandria in 1873, the brothers Taqlā, of Lebanon, founded the famous daily al-'Ahrām in 1875 (which is still one of the principal newspapers in the Arab world) while Ṣarrūf established the important periodical al-Muqtataf in 1889. (66) Thus by the end of the nineteenth century, Arabic works, newspapers and magazines were pouring out from the presses of Egypt, Lebanon and Syria in an ever-increasing number.

After the French expedition, cultural contacts between the West and the Arab world went on unabated, and with far reaching ramifications. This was manifested in the great number of Christian missionaries who were dispatched to Syria, Lebanon and Egypt, (67) the ever-increasing number of western orientologists, some of whom pursued extensive studies in the Arabic language and literature, and above all, the beginning of the European colonization of the Arab lands in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The Arabs, at first overwhelmed by Western ascendancy, eventually began to question their cultural and social backwardness and the great rift between the East and the West. This gave the incentive to some Arab intellectuals to emigrate from Arab lands to Europe and particularly to the Americas, in an effort to study

the Western arts and sciences. The first mission was sent to Italy in 1813 by Muhammad Ali, and was followed by several other missions to Italy, France and England. It is believed that more than 320 intellectuals were sent to Europe during the years between 1813 and 1849.<sup>(68)</sup> However, a greater number of immigrants travelled at their own expense. These intellectuals and immigrants contributed to the establishment of a number of publications in Arabic which were heavily indebted to Western thought, either through the exposure to and study of Western culture, or through the translation of Western works into Arabic. As a result, the Western influence became evident in the writings of the celebrated /Mahjar/ or 'immigrant' writers, such as 'Īlyā 'Abū-Mādī (1889-1958) and Jibrān Khalīl Jibrān (1883-1931), both in themes and style.<sup>(69)</sup> Similarly, the prolific writers of the East (especially in Egypt and the Fertile Crescent) developed a great interest in the translation of foreign works into Arabic. It suffices to say that a number of literary genres and styles such as the novel, short story, essay, drama, autobiography, criticism, journalism, free verse as well as the various movements of Romanticism, Realism, Symbolism, Existentialism and Expressionism were first introduced into Arabic through translation. This in turn, infiltrated the Arabic language with foreign modes of expression, lexical, semantic and syntactic developments which culminated in attempts to simplify the grammar of the language and modify its script in order to cope with the newly-imported knowledge.

b. Perhaps the most significant development in the success of the nahḍa was the appearance of a group of reformers such as Muhammad Ali, who, as already mentioned, is credited with being the first to have sent educational missions to Europe for specialized training in administration, law, economics, accounting, medicine, naval and military affairs, etc. He also founded several schools, including Kulliyat al-'Alsun 'the college of languages' (1837) which was headed by Rifā'ah al-Taḥṭāwī (1801-73), another significant figure in the revival of Arabic who was commissioned to train



officials and translators in the use of Arabic in administrative, commercial, legislative and technical affairs. Ali is also credited with having established the first school of medicine - Qasr al-9Aynī - which used Arabic as the medium of instruction. Within the same period, we also encounter Sayyid Darwīsh of Egypt, Nāsif al-Yāzījī of Lebanon (the author of Majma9 al-Bahrayn) and Shihāb al-Dīn al-'Alūsī of Iraq, who were interested in reviving the language by writing modern poetry on the lines of the classical Maqāmāt or 'Assemblies' of al-Harīrī and al-Hamadhānī as well as the poetry of al-Mutanabbī. (70) Other important figures of late include Muḥammad Sāmī al-Bārūdī (died 1904), Ḥāfiẓ 'Ibrāhīm (died 1932) 'Aḥmad Shawqī (died 1932), Khalīl Muṭrān (died 1949), Zaydān (died 1914), 'Aḥmad 'Amīn (died 1954), Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal (died 1956), Maḥmūd Taymūr (1894-1973) and Ṭāhā Ḥusayn (1889-1975). In addition, there were some other influential reformers who had religious rather than secular backgrounds, but whose activities had an immeasurable influence on the language. Among these were Muḥammad bin 9Abd-al-Wahhāb (1703-91), Muḥammad 9Abduh (1849-1905), Khayr al-Bīn al-Tūnisī (1810-79), the author of 'Aqḥam al-Masālik fī Ma9rifat 'Aḥwāl al-Mamālik [Best Roads Towards the Knowledge of the Conditions of States], 9Alī Mubārak (1823-93) and 9Abdullah al-Nadīm (1845-96) of Egypt, and 9Abd-al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī (1849-1902) of Aleppo. (71)

Intellectual revivalism and language rejuvenation in the Arab world went hand in hand with national awakening and awareness of Arab personality. A quick survey of the writings of the above-mentioned figures reveals that they had a strong belief in the bond between the Arabic language and the religious-political existence of its speakers. To them, 'it is the strongest bond of unity, the mainstay and the strongest pillar of Arab nationalism,' (72) 'the main deterrent against internal and external divisive forces, the instrument of thought and emotions and the link between the past and the present, the faithful guardian of the Arab cultural heritage and the register of past Arab glories, of their deeds and accomplishments, and of their triumphs and pitfalls. Still, it is the most important factor in uniting minority groups.' (73) This was summed up beautifully

by G. Hannā who stated that,

"if the language were not the primary factor in the formation of nationalism, the first step of the colonialists would not be to combat this important factor in the countries they covet." (74)

With this in mind, Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, addressing the Conference of the Arab Academies, which was held in Damascus in 1956, warned against the fact that, unless immediate reforms were adopted towards making the language more uniform but easily accessible to all Arabs,

"There will come a time when the sons of Arabism will not be able to read it. As a result, it will have to be translated to them as it would be to foreigners" (75)

c. Another factor which is closely linked to the rise of intellectual movements and which also helped in the revival of the Arabic language, is the Arabization of the educational system. For example, prior to the independence of Morocco (1956), Tunisia (1956) and Algeria (1962), French dominated the educational system, while Arabic was relegated to a marginal position, and treated more or less as a foreign language (e.g. the maximum time allocated to its study did not exceed more than 2 hours a week). (76)

However, with the rise of nationalistic movements, there developed a wide interest among the Arabic-speaking peoples of North Africa in making Arabic the official language of instruction. As early as 1936, an Algerian delegation in Paris demanded from the French government the abolition of all restrictions on the use of Arabic and its immediate introduction in all schools. A similar stand was taken in Morocco where in 1938, Harkat al-Wihdah al-Maghribiyyah 'The Moroccan Union Movement' and other nationalistic movements proclaimed Arabic as the only official language of the country,

and declared that the Berber dialects, already encouraged by the French were void of any culture or art. In the meantime, the Arabization of higher education gained momentum in the traditional Arab universities of the East such as al-'Azhar in Egypt, al-Qarawiyyīn in Morocco, al-Zaytūnah in Tunisia and the University of Damascus in Syria. The last is considered the only university of its kind in the Arab world - paralleled only by the University of Cairo - that has been teaching medicine in Arabic since 1919. (77)

The nationalistic demands for the Arabization of the educational system were often neglected by the Ottoman government. However, after several violent demonstrations, al-Mu'tamar al-'Arabī al-'Awwal 'The first Arab Conference' was held in Paris in 1913. The most important resolution passed, which is often referred to as 'Article 5' insists that,

"The Ottoman Parliament must decree the recognition of Arabic as the official language in the Arab provinces. (78)

Following the conference, the Ottoman government conceded the demand and finally agreed to Article 1 and 2 which state that,

"Elementary and secondary instruction shall be in the Arabic language in all the Arabic-speaking countries." (79)

#### d. The Role of the Academies

It was as early as 1892 when the first semi-official academy of languages was established in Egypt under the directorship of Muhammad al-Bakrī (died 1933), which, unfortunately, had little success, but for the development of a few technical terms. (80) Later, in 1914, leading intellectuals established a committee in Cairo for the purpose of editing, translating and publishing 'Lajnat al-Ta'līf wal-Tarjamah wal-Nashr.' The committee still

exists and has published numerous books, including editions of Arabic texts and translations of foreign works into Arabic. (81)

However, it had failed in many aspects concerning the standardization and uniformity of Arabic expressions, which were often hastily coined and were generally not accepted by the majority of writers.

Thus, the actual Language academies which still exist were to fill a gap in the absence of a linguistic authority that would supervise and organize the process of rejuvenating the Arabic language. The Syrian Academy was established in 1918-19, the Egyptian in 1932, the Iraqi in 1947 and the less active Jordanian Academy in 1957. Each of these academies has an official journal and other series of publications, covering modern language problems and philological or historical studies relevant to earlier periods or works. The major problem which none of the academies has been able to resolve is how to make Classical Arabic effective in meeting the needs of modern life without damaging changes in areas of orthography, grammar and vocabulary. (82) Similar problems such as classical versus colloquial, Arabic script versus Latin script, the simplification of Arabic grammar, methods of coining new terms and the use of Arabic in higher education were at the heart of many heated debates.

A more serious problem which the academies left unresolved is the question of how to implement their decisions on a large scale both locally and in different Arab countries. For example, the Egyptian Academy proposed a method of grammar reform which was submitted to the Egyptian Ministry of Education in 1945, but was not implemented before the late fifties, and even then, the opposition of the Syrian educational authorities obstructed its implementation Arab-wide. Likewise, the creation of a scientific and technological terminology is still a major intellectual challenge. The academies have produced and continue to publish vast numbers of technical terms for almost all fields of knowledge. But the problem lies not so much in inventing terms as it does in ensuring that they gain acceptance instead of being confined to textbooks and dictionaries.

A further problem lies in the lack of agreement between the various Arab-speaking countries with regard to standardization of the terms used. Thus, for example, the English word 'brake' is used in its transliterated form /brīk/ in some countries whereas others use the word /farmalah/ and the purists may in turn insist on the equivalent Arabic word /kammāhah/, to which their adversaries may object and, instead, suggest the word /mikbah/ as the best rendering. This is why in 1936, the Egyptian Academy, in response to the request made by the Egyptian Ministry of Education, began working on a dictionary that would include terms used in other Arab Countries, such as Iraq, Syria and North Africa. (83) The dictionary which was entitled al-Mu9jam al-Wasīṭ, was published in two volumes in 1960-62 and included many items of modern usage which were either approved by the 'sister' academies, or were already incorporated in the language. Along the same lines, the Academy continued to publish specialized lexicons in the various fields of modern arts and sciences. Yet the problem of bringing about a Pan-Arab academy went unresolved until 1970 when Cairo was chosen to host 'Ittihād al-Majāmi9 al-Lughawīyah al-9Arabiyyah 'The Union of Arab Language Academies', (84) with the aim of supervising and co-ordinating the various activities of the academies. Unfortunately, the political divisions of the Arab world brought this super-academy to a standstill.

Nowadays, the Bureau for the Co-ordination of Arabization /Maktab Tansīq al-Ta9rīb/ which was established in Rabat, Morocco in 1962, is virtually the only 'living' organisation of its kind in the Arab world. Under the aegis of the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) and in co-operation with the Arab academies, the Bureau has managed to publish 80 trilingual glossaries using English as the source language, French as the second and Arabic as the target language. These and some other studies on the problems of Arabic in the Arab world have been published in the Bureau's well-known quarterly journal al-Lisan al-9Arabī. It

has also succeeded in holding consecutive pan-Arab conferences in the years 1973, 1977 and 1981. <sup>(85)</sup> Nevertheless, the practical implications of its decisions and suggestions leave much to be desired.

### 2.3.5 The Current Position of the Arabic Language in the World:

What makes Arabic an important language in the twentieth century? Surely it is not only the oil question that gives Arabic its status today as some cynics - or even economists would suggest - though, of course, this is a relatively valid argument. Yet languages cannot be studied or looked at from a single point of view. There are many factors involved in giving Arabic a prestigious place among the languages of the world.

From the point of view of population, Arabic is spoken by more than 180 million people in the Arabic-speaking countries alone (i.e. more than 2.7% of the total population of the world, which is equal to that of French). <sup>(86)</sup> From a geographic point of view, these are distributed in the following countries:

1. In North Africa: Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania and Chad.
2. The Levant or Fertile Crescent, comprising: Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, *Iraq and Palestine.*
3. The Arabian Peninsula which includes: Saudi Arabia, Yemen, South Yemen, Oman, Qatar, U.A.E., Bahrain and Kuwait.

On the other hand, there are more than 7 million speakers outside the Arab Homeland in adjacent Muslim countries such as Iran, Turkey, Pakistan (which has recently declared Arabic an official language), some areas in the Soviet Union (e.g. Uzbekistan) as well as some African states (e.g. Ethiopia, Ghana).

Likewise, Arabic is the language of the daily prayers and the religious rites of more than one thousand million Muslims who live in several African and Asian countries aside from those already mentioned (e.g. India, the Philippines, Nigeria). Although Arabic did not establish deep roots in such areas of the 'Muslim Empire' as they lacked a Semitic background, it has exerted a tremendous influence on the emerging national languages both in orthography (Persian and Urdu) and lexicon (25-30% of Swahili and Hausa vocabulary is of Arabic origin). (87) Thus Arabic is not only an ancillary to Islam (i.e. Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh), which has been making a great progress in many regions of the world, particularly in Africa, but is also significant as a medium of cultural revival in both Arab and Muslim countries.

On the international level, Arabic was adopted as one of the official languages of the U.N. in 1973. Nowadays, the UNESCO, UNICEF, FAO and the WHO use it as one of their working languages. In addition, Arabic is employed as a medium of communication in some other important regional organizations such as the Organisation of African Unity, the Islamic World League and the Non-Aligned movement.

Furthermore, the financial role played worldwide by the Arabic Fund for Development in Cairo, the Islamic Bank in Jeddah and the Kuwaiti Fund for Development (which alone has spent 3 billion dollars in the form of grants or loans), has reinstated Arabic as a language of international politics and finance. The activities of these funds have recently been extended to include the various countries in the Communist Block as well as the developing nations of Asia and Africa. (88)

From the cultural point of view, the Arab world is entering a period of literary and scientific renaissance in which books published in Arabic are becoming an important source for science, arts and literature. Statistics indicate that there are now almost 100 official Arabic newspapers, no fewer than 120 Arabic periodicals and journals and an annual publication of about 10,000

Arabic books, of which more than 1,000 are translated from other languages. <sup>(89)</sup> Besides, with the eradication of illiteracy, <sup>(90)</sup> Arabic has become, not only a written language employed by the press and authors of books, but also a spoken language for both educated and semi-educated people, and is used extensively in religious sermons, radio and television as well as in daily talks between scholars and learned people. In addition, since Arabic (both Classical and Modern) is the only form of language which is normally written, it is pragmatically the only way of access (except for European languages) to any form of education or culture, or to any participation in national life outside the local scene.

Nevertheless, the linguistic situation in the Arab world is not promising. Classical Arabic is being beset by the phenomenon often referred to as 'diglossia' <sup>(91)</sup> or more accurately 'spectroglossia' <sup>(92)</sup> (see Chapter Three). In almost all the Arabic-speaking countries, there exist several colloquial varieties which differ from one another as well as from Classical Arabic (Qur'ānic Arabic) and its modern counterpart, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). These colloquials form a continuum so that for example, the Moroccan variety is closer to the Algerian variety than to the Kuwaiti and the Kuwaiti variety closer to the Iraqi than to the Algerian or Moroccan. Likewise, the Moroccan variety can barely be understood by an Iraqi, and vice versa. In spite of these variations, which can be quite marked at the extremities of the Arab world, the dialects on the whole show remarkable similarities and possess a common core which identifies them unmistakably as Arabic. <sup>(93)</sup>

Without a consideration of this linguistic phenomenon, our discussion of the current position of Arabic would have been ill-conceived and even misguided. Hence, Chapter Three will tackle some aspects of spectroglossia, its origins, its relation to MSA, and the problems it poses in Arabization.



## NOTES

- (1) Chejne (1969), p. 25. Notice that this is quite a rough grouping and there is a considerable dispute on the precise relationships among these languages and other groups of languages.
- (2) Bateson, pp. 50-1.
- (3) Bakalla, p. 4.
- (4) Chejne (1969), p. 25.
- (5) Hitti, p. 9.
- (6) All these examples are taken from Bakalla, pp. 4-5.
- (7) Ibid.
- (8) Nicholson, p. XIV.
- (9) Gray, p. 6
- (10) Chejne (1969), p. 27.
- (11) Bentahila (1983), p. 130.
- (12) Bateson, p. 57, 73.
- (13) Chejne (1969), p. 4.
- (14) Bakalla, pp. 67-8.
- (15) Ibid, pp. 68-9.
- (16) Bateson, p. 90.
- (17) Bentahila (1983), p.136.
- (18) Bakalla, pp. 76-7
- (19) For more examples, see Bateson, p. 89. Also Chapter 5 of our Study
- (20) al-Maghrībī, p. 14.
- (21) Bateson, p. 87.
- (22) Wher, A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, p. 4. See Chapter 4 of our Study.
- (23) Bentahila (1983), p. 137.
- (24) Ibid, p. 136.

- (25) Rabin, pp. 19-37.
- (26) Blau, pp. 1-18.
- (27) This term is used in V. Monteuil, L'Arabe Moderne, Paris, 1960.
- (28) Shouby, pp. 284-302.
- (29) Mitchell, pp. 86-105.
- (30) Bentahīla (1983), p. 3.
- (31) Khan, p. XXX.
- (32) Farrūkh, p. 82.
- (33) Bentahila (1983), p. 135.
- (34) Bateson, p. 72.
- (35) Nicholson, p. 342.
- (36) Chejne (1969), p. 38.
- (37) Hitti, pp. 241 ff.
- (38) Chejne (1978), p. 7, 40.
- (39) al-Baladhūrī, p. 201, 308, 473.
- (40) Hitti, p. 219.
- (41) Chejne (1969), p. 68.
- (42) 9Alī al-Ra9ī, "al-Thaqāfah al-9Arabiyyah wal-Tarjamah,"  
in al-Bayān, p. 179.
- (43) Chejne 1969, p. 71.
- (44) Ibid, pp. 49-50.
- (45) Ibid, p. 76.
- (46) Ibid, pp. 78-9.
- (47) Bakalla, p. 8.
- (48) Chejne (1969) p. 80.
- (49) Khan, pp. 29-30.
- (50) Ibid.

- (51) Chejne (1978), p. 8.
- (52) Bentahila (1983), p. 2.
- (53) Chejne (1969), pp. 81-2.
- (54) 'Ibn Manzūr, see the introduction to his Lisān.
- (55) Gibb, p. 142.
- (56) Chejne (1978), p. 8.
- (57) Bateson, p. 67.
- (58) Bourhis, p. 14.
- (59) Memmi, p. 133, 150. Translated by Bentahila (1983), p.7.
- (60) Calvet, p. 77.
- (61) Bentahila (1983), p. 9.
- (62) Frayḥah, pp. 188-95.
- (63) Khan, p. 35.
- (64) This term was used by Antonius, The Arab Awakening.
- (65) For further information see 'Abū-Futūh Radwān, Kitāb Tarīkh Maṭbaʿat Būlāq, Cairo, 1953.
- (66) Chejne (1969), p. 102.
- (67) These missionaries helped in establishing modern educational institutes such as St. Joseph College, Jesus College, The American University in Lebanon and its counterpart in Egypt. Arabic was the medium of instruction in the first years, then was supplanted by English and French.
- (68) Zaydān (1957), p. 23.
- (69) Bakalla, p. 196.
- (70) Ibid, pp. 186-7.
- (71) Chejne (1969), pp. 88-91.
- (72) al-Ḥuṣrī (1944), p. 28.
- (73) Ḥannā, pp. 10-12. Also, 9Uthmān et. al., p. 26.

- (74) Hanna, p. 10.
- (75) Taha Husayn, in Majallat Majma' al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah, 33, Cairo, 1936, p. 26.
- (76) al-Toma (1970), pp. 696-7.
- (77) al-Mubarak, p. 43.
- (78) Chejne (1978), p. 21.
- (79) Ibid.
- (80) Chejne (1969), p. 104.
- (81) Zaydan (1957), pp. 94 ff.
- (82) al-Toma (1970), pp. 710-11.
- (83) al-Sayyadī, pp. 287-8.
- (84) Bin 'Abdullah, p. 125.
- (85) Buret, pp. 77-8.
- (86) 'Alī al-Rā'ī, "al-Thaqāfah al-'Arabiyyah wal-Tarjamah", in al-Bayān, p. 175.
- (87) Bakalla, p. 18.
- (88) al-Kasimi (1979), p. 30.
- (89) Bakalla, p. 9.
- (90) 20 years ago, adult illiteracy ranged between 80 and 85 percent. Nowadays, though official statistics are scanty, it is believed that this figure may have dropped below the 60% level. (See Table 8.5).
- (91) Ferguson (1959) pp. 325-40.
- (92) Bakalla, p. 87.
- (93) Peter Abboud, "Spoken Arabic," in Sebeok (1970), p. 439.

## CHAPTER THREE

### SPECTROGLOSSIA AND THE MSA

Chapter Two dealt with Arabic in relation to the other Semitic languages, its external development as a lingua franca in the Muslim and Arab worlds from its inception up to the present, as well as the complex influences that it has had on the languages with which it has been in contact. Our discussion so far has concentrated on the history of the idealized form of only one of many dialects of Arabic, the one called /al-ʿArabiyyah al-Fuṣḥā /, omitting the development of other dialects, the extent of their actual use and the effects of these dialects and of other languages on the /ʿArabiyyah/ and the process of Arabization.

#### 3.1 The Relevance of the Term 'Spectroglossia' to the Linguistic Situation in the Arab World:

The first linguist to have used the term 'diglossia' in speaking of Arabic is believed to be the German Karl Krumbacher, who in his 1902 book Das Problem Der Modern Griechischen Schriftsprache [The Problem of Modern Written Greek] <sup>(1)</sup>, advised the Arabs to adopt the Egyptian colloquial as a language of science in order to catch up with Western advancements in science and technology. Twenty eight years later, the French linguist William Marçais defined the term 'la diglossie' by saying that:

"... it is the rivalry that exists between the literary written language and a common spoken form" <sup>(2)</sup>

Yet it is Charles Ferguson's 1959 article 'Diglossia' that is often quoted by modern linguists, in discussing the current situation of Arabic. In his article, Ferguson describes 'diglossia' as being

"... a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent highly codified (often grammatically more complex), superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes, but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation". (3)

Typical examples of diglossia cited by Ferguson are modern Greek, Swiss, German, Haitian, Creole and Arabic. (4)

The two functionally differentiated forms of Arabic have been traditionally labelled: 'Classical Arabic' (CA) or /Fushā/ - known in its present form as 'Modern Standard Arabic' (MSA) or /ʿArabiyyah Muʿāṣirah/ - and 'Colloquial Arabic' (COA). CA is the prestigious variety, the bearer of the literary heritage whereas COA is not socially valued in the same way. To use Ferguson's terms, we can call Classical Arabic the high variety (H) and Colloquial Arabic, the low variety (L). The latter is acquired as a first language, the language of the home, while CA is learnt only in a formal educational context. And despite some attempts to use COA in writing, only CA has a written form. Thus it is used for literature, newspapers, broadcasting and religious sermons whereas COA is the language of everyday conversation and folk literature which is transmitted orally (see Table 3.1)

TYPES OF DISCOURSE	CA	COA
Religious Sermons	X	
Folklore, Popular Songs		X
Newspapers, Political Speeches	X	
University Lectures	X	
Romance Films		X
Court Deliberations, Conferences	X	
Humorous and anecdotal material		X
Translations	X	

Table 3.1: Types of Discourse for CA and COA

To the Lebanese 'Anīs Frayḥah, to name only one, these two forms of Arabic are essentially two languages representing two distinct selves,

"we think, speak, sing, murmur our prayer, talk kindly to our children ..... and insult whom we see fit to in a simple and smooth language which does not retard thinking or require much effort. But when we assume a formal position, the capacity of a teacher, preacher, lawyer, a broadcast announcer or a lecturer, we have to attire ourselves in another linguistic personality, and we have to talk in a language with difficult inflection and with rigid rules in its constructions and expressions". (5)

However, this is not the whole picture, for in each Arab country there exist many regional and social varieties within each dialect. These include the special vernaculars and jargons employed by various groups of people according to their geographical

location, socio-economic class or caste, religious affiliation, educational level, occupation as well as the other variables such as the circumstances of usage, types of discourse, ethnic background (Persian, Turkish and Armenian descendants have their own varieties), and temporal elements (e.g. the young generation tend readily to adopt new 'slang' forms of speech). Thus for instance, in Saudi-Arabia alone, one can count at least ten dialects and sub-dialects. Similarly, in Iraq the Northern and Southern parts - which is also the case in Lower and Upper Egypt - have different dialects. In addition, the dialect of the nomadic community can be easily detected as being different from that of the town-dwellers' and the /fallāhs/ 'farmers' dialects.<sup>(6)</sup> Therefore, it will not be an exaggeration to say along with several other scholars such as James Snow,<sup>(7)</sup> that Arabic (in its Classical form) has no native speaker in the Arab world today.

Against this background Bakalla thinks that the term 'diglossia' (di: meaning two), does not seem to express the current situation of Arabic accurately. For throughout the ages there has always been another variety or varieties of Arabic which lie between the two extremes of classical and colloquial. Therefore it seems better to view the situation of Arabic not as a mere diglossic or triglossic situation, but as a spectrum or better still a continuum which has at one extreme the purest Classical Arabic and at the other, the purest type of the Colloquial. In between these two extremes lie the varieties of Arabic which are relatively closer either to the Classical or the Colloquial. Also criss-crossing this continuum are the various social and professional jargons or subdialects. Bakalla proceeds to call this state the 'spectroglossia of Arabic'.<sup>(8)</sup>

### 3.2 The Origins of the Problem:

Arabic spectroglossia is not a new phenomenon. It goes back to the pre-Islamic era, and it was observed by Arab and Muslim grammarians and philologists for centuries. Classical Arabic or /al-ʿArabiyyah al-Fuṣḥā/ (which in itself was at one time a dialect:



the Quraysh dialect), always co-existed with the local dialects and there was no controversy such as that which began around the nineteenth century, for although colloquial Arabic has always been viewed as being below the standard literary, religious and political expression, it was not considered a threat to Classical Arabic. The two language types co-existed peacefully, and the average Arab who had mastery of both was not disturbed by this linguistic dualism. Each tribe had its own distinct dialect while Arabic was the lingua franca, 'spoken' by all the Arabs; this situation did not hinder communication, since each form had its own contexts of use: the former was used for casual affairs, the latter for religion, serious literature and politics. Linguistic differences between the two did not exceed 'minor' variations in phonology and lexical synonyms.

A widely accepted hypothesis about the origin of modern dialects is that they are the descendants, directly or indirectly, of Classical Arabic, which was itself a koine based on the ancient dialects. Several refinements of this hypothesis have been suggested. For example, Fück traces the developments from Classical Arabic to 'Middle Arabic' by careful evaluation of deviations in the latter from the former as reflected in the works of the mediaeval writers and philologists, suggesting that a spoken koine developed in the military camps following the Arab conquests. As a result of the intermarriage and intercommunication of the Arabs with the conquered peoples of the area, there arose in the first century of the conquests various vernaculars which through the process of levelling and simplification developed features differing considerably from the language of the conquerors. It is these vernaculars which are the ancestors of the modern urban dialects outside the Arabian Peninsula. (9)

Ferguson, on the other hand, basing his arguments exclusively on linguistic criteria, propounds the hypothesis that most modern dialects descend from a common homogeneous spoken language, a koine which was not identical with any of the earlier dialects and which

differed in many significant respects from Classical Arabic, but was used side by side with the Classical language during the early centuries of the Muslim era.<sup>(10)</sup> Ferguson's basic argument is that modern dialects agree with one another, as against Classical Arabic, in a striking number of features, a thing which proves that these dialects come from a non-Classical source.<sup>(11)</sup> For example, among these features are the following:

a. Phonological Features:

a.1 The loss of the glottal stop /'/. Thus /fa's/ 'pickaxe' becomes /fās/ and /nā'im/'asleep' becomes /nāyim/.

a.2 The replacement of some consonant sounds by other close equivalents. For example, the voiceless uvular stop /q/ is pronounced as either /' or /g/, e.g. /qāla/ 'said' is pronounced as /'āl/ in Egypt and /gāl/ in Iraq and the Gulf. Likewise /j/ is pronounced as /g/ in Egypt or as /y/ in the Gulf, e.g. /jār/ 'neighbour' is pronounced as either /gār/ or /yār/. In addition, every dialect has its own means of modifying certain MSA sounds. Thus the /d/ is pronounced as /z/ in the Gulf, the /th/ as /s/ and the /dh/ as /z/ in Egypt.

b. Morphological Features:

b.1 The creation of phrasal words: by phrasal we mean those words which are created by the fusion of the components of a full phrase,

e.g. /balāsh/ 'it is needless to' (Egyptian): originally /bilā shay'/; /maʕalish/ 'alright' (Egyptian): originally /māʕalayhi shay'/; /jāb/ 'brought' (Iraqī): originally /jā'a bi/

b.2 The loss of the dual: e.g. CA /baytāni kabīrāni/ 'two large houses' contrasts with COA /bītīn kbār/.

b.3 The breach in the number system: forms originally associated with a following masculine noun have been generalized, becoming compound words, usually with a double stress and velarization /tafkhīm/, completely invariable in form and showing no trace of gender.

e.g. CA /khamsata 9ashara baytan/ '15 houses' and /khamsa 9ashrata ghurfatan/ '15 rooms',  
are both rendered in COA as  
/khamista9ash (ar) bayt/ or /ghurfah/.

b.4 The disappearance of high frequency words such as /mā/ 'what', /laysa/ 'it is not', /mundhu/ 'since' as well as a number of particles such as /'inna/, /'anna/ 'that' /qad/, /sawfa/ 'tense markers' and several other prefixes such as /ka/ 'as' and /li/ 'to'.

c. Syntactic Features:

c.1 The omission of declension or case-endings /'i9rāb/: words are no longer inflected according to their sentential function, instead they are merely used in their non-inflected form.

Therefore, the sentence /hasala ar-rajulu 9ala rukhsati saydin/  
'the man obtained a hunting licence' is rendered in COA as  
/'ir-rijjāl (or 'ir-rāgil ) hasal 9alā rukhsat sīd/.

c.2 The use of the unmarked colloquial form of the relative pronoun /'illī/ 'who' for the CA form which takes different shapes according to the gender and number of the antecedent, i.e. /'alladhī/, /'allatī/, /'alladhāni/, /'allatāni/, /'alladhīna/, /'allātī/ or /'allā'ī/.

c.3 Change in word order: for example, demonstrative pronouns in COA are often placed after rather than before the noun as is the case in CA.

e.g. CA /hādha ar-rajul ghaniy/ 'this man is rich' is rendered in COA as /'ir-rijjāl hādha ghaniy/.

c.4 The replacement of some negative particles such as /lam/, /lan/, /lammā/ and /laysa/ by /mā/ in the Sudanese dialect, /mū/ in the Iraqi and /mish/ or /mā/ in the Egyptian. Thus the sentence /lan ya'tiya Muhammad/ is rendered as

/Muhammad mājāy/ in the Sudanese dialect,  
 /Muhammad mūjāy/ in the Iraqi  
 and /Muhammad mish gay/ in the Egyptian.

Ferguson hopes that once his thesis is accepted, it may be possible to proceed towards reconstructing this Arabic koine on the bases of these and other features of dialectal agreement.

Whichever way it is, whether modern dialects are the development of 'Classical' vernaculars or of an ancestral Arabic koine, the fact remains that there existed great dialectal differences in Arabia in pre-Islamic and Islamic times and it is widely accepted that the Classical language, the 'Arabic of grammarians', was based on a standard poetic language, not necessarily identical with any one dialect. After the Qur'anic Arabic became accepted throughout the world of Islam, and was explicitly codified in the works of the philologists, it remained essentially unchanged in phonology and morphology until the present time when it is still accepted as the norm for both written and formally-spoken Arabic. However, over the centuries, spoken Arabic, even at the time of Prophet Muhammad, diverged increasingly from the standard.<sup>(12)</sup> Undoubtedly, this situation became more intense with the spread of Islam whereby, the *standard form of Arabic* i.e. the medium of the Divine Expression as revealed in the Qur'ān soon came into contact with, and was exposed to, the corrupting influence of not only many Arabic dialects but also Aramaic, Hebrew, Persian, Latin, Berber and other languages.

This kind of exposure was not altogether lacking even before the advent of Islam - if we were to consider Hijāz and the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, the crossroads of international commerce

and the centre of contact between Arabs and non-Arabs from time immemorial. This is attested to by the existence of foreign words in pre-Islamic poetry and the Qur'ān. <sup>(13)</sup> The first philologist to become aware of dialectal influences in the Arabic language was apparently 'Ibn 'Abbās (died A.H. 68), the cousin of the prophet. His primary concern with the Qur'ān led him to inquire into the etymologies of its vocabulary. As a result, it is attributed to him and to his school the singling out of a series of Qur'ānic words as being of non-Qurayshite origin. Among these words: /sirāt/, /qistās/, /Firdaw/, /'istabraq/, /rabbāniyyūn/, /tūr/ ... etc., which are attributed to Syriac, Aramaic, Hebrew, and Persian origins, as well as several other non-Qurashite dialectal variations.

The existence of dialectal situation in the early and middle Muslim periods was revealed in several other events; for example:

1. It is reported that the second Caliph 'Umar bin al-Khattāb (634-44 A.H.) once scolded a bedouin for reciting the Qur'ān with a tribal accent, thus misconstruing the original meaning intended. <sup>(14)</sup>
2. The Umayyad Caliph 'Abd-al-Malik bin Marwān (685-705 A.H.) is said to have cautioned his sons and court attendants against petty colloquialism, by saying that:
 

"a solecism /lahn/ in the speech of an honourable man is uglier than smallpox on a beautiful face, and is even worse than a cut in a much-cherished dress." <sup>(15)</sup>
3. The geographer al-Maqdisī, who is best known for his travels across the Arab world during the fourth century A.H., described the linguistic situation at that time in terms which indicate the relation between Qur'ānic Arabic and the spoken forms was not very different from the current situation of diglossia. <sup>(16)</sup>

4. Among the well-known writers on Arabic language and literature are 'Ibn Jinnī and al-Jāhiz. These two expressed their acceptance of the existing dialects as different but equally valid variations of Arabic. The former dedicated a full chapter entitled " 'Ikhtilāf al-Lughat wa-Kulluhā Hujjah" in his book al-Khaṣā'is in which he says that,

'one will not be in the wrong to use these dialects especially when the need arises to compose a line of rhymed prose'. (17)

The latter, in turn, in his book al-Bayān wal-Tabyīn warns against applying the rules of classical philology in reading popular anecdotes, lest they should lose their zest or become spoiled. (18)

5. A jump of several centuries brings us to the ever-quoted statement of the celebrated 'Ibn Khaldūn (A.D. 1332-1406) who in his Muqaddimah is quoted as saying,

"Contemporary Arabic is an independent language different from the language of the Mudar and Himyar" (19)

Thus it seems that the dialectal (or spectroglossic) problem is anything but new. As a matter of fact, the movement towards the unification and purification of the language as against dialectal intrusions and misuse of classical forms /Lahn al-9āmmah/ 'solecism of the populace' goes back to the third and fourth centuries A.H. when 'Ibn al-Sukkī (died 244 A.H.) wrote his book 'Islāh al-Mantiq [The Reformation of Utterance], 'Ibn Qutaybah (died 276 A.H.) wrote 'Adab al-Kātib [The Refinement of the Writer], al-Zubaydī (316-79 A.H.) completed Kitāb Lahn al-9āmmah [The Book on the Solecism of the Populace] not to mention the early pioneers who expended tremendous efforts towards the codification of the language such as al-Khalīl bin 'Ahmad (died 175 A.H.), the author of Kitāb al-9Ayn, his disciple Sībawayh (died 180 A.H.) the author of Kitāb Sībawayh, 'Abū-9Ubaydah (died 276 A.H.), al-Jawharī

(died 398 A.H.) and al-Jawālīqī (465-539 A.H.) who is well-known for his dictionary entitled al-Mu9arrab which is specifically dedicated to words of non-Arabic etymology. (20)

However, the existence of dialectal variations, it seems, has never been a source of great concern among Arab linguists. On the contrary, Arab grammarians recognized these dialectal variations and often referred to them to explain unusual forms. This is probably one of the reasons why the Arabic lexicon is rich in synonyms and collocational forms. Likewise, among the prolific literary figures of Arabic literature are 'Abū-Nuwās, famous for his Diwān [Poetical Anthology] and 'Ibn al-Muqaffa9, well known for his Kalīlah wa-Dimnah, who both lived in 8th century Baghdad. Being of Persian stock, these two introduced into Arabic verse and prose a great many number of Persian words, idiomatic phrases and some new methods of expression. Yet we find that these foreign methods of expression were later on totally assimilated and became integral parts of Arabic language and literature, if not a source of imitation for would-be writers.

Therefore, it was not until the nineteenth century and with the rise of the Nahda movement that the question of classicism versus colloquialism became the subject of much heated debate among individuals as well as the language academies.

### 3.3. The Main Factors Involved in the Emergence of the Present Language Dichotomy:

#### 3.3.1 The Role of the Colonial Powers

The language policies of the different colonial powers were directed towards two canons:

- a. To spread the use of the colonial language in administration and education.
- b. or alternatively, to encourage the use of selected vernaculars as co-official languages in places where a uniform Arabic was in use.

It was obviously in the interest of all colonial powers (and missionaries) to encourage small pockets of recognized indigenous local varieties in order to slacken the cultural homogeneity of their protectorates. The results of this policy were summed up by Fishman Cooper, who in a worldwide survey of bilingualism found that,

"Former Anglophone colonies were more linguistically diverse than the other countries. Whereas almost 80 percent of the countries which had never been Anglophone colonies were characterized as having a dominant language, only a little over one-third of the former Anglophone colonies were so characterized. Conversely, whereas less than 10 percent of the countries which had never been Anglophone colonies were described as linguistically mixed, about one-third of the former Anglophone colonies were so described."<sup>(21)</sup>

Consequently, the colonial authorities (French, British, Spanish and Italian), reinstated the use of Hassaniyyah and Berber in Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Libya, the Coptic and Egyptian dialects in Egypt (the attempts of Wilmore and Wilcox are well known in this respect), Bornu and Waday in Sudan, Armenian, Turkish, Kurdish, Hebrew, Syriac and Phoenician in the Levant, Anazi and Hadrami dialects in the Peninsula.<sup>(22)</sup>

Even after independence the linguistic legacies of the colonial period continued to create a politico-cultural disparity among the different Arab countries who felt that, after the almost complete neglect of Arabic under the colonialists, it was almost impossible to raise Arabic to be the sole vehicle of education and administration immediately. For one thing, a shortage of qualified teachers and the absence of adequate textbooks prevented such action, however much it might have been desired. Furthermore, the attitudes of individuals towards replacing the European languages and the local vernaculars by Classical Arabic were somewhat discouraging.



Many felt that CA was incapable of coping with the needs of the modern Arab world criticising it for its poor scientific terminology, lack of clarity, the difficulties of its writing system and its grammatical illogicalities. (23) To them, aside from the association of CA with religion and the heritage of the past, it was void of the practical gains that one might get from learning English, French or other modern European languages, such as: securing a profitable career, pursuing higher education, and enjoying the wealth of foreign radio and T.V. programmes, modern publications in science, amusement, etc. (see 7.3.6). Thus, for example in 1957, the Moroccan newspaper al-9Alam, was declaring that Moroccans "intend to conserve the use of French not so much through love of France, but by the necessity of having an opening into the West". (24)

### 3.3.2 Attempts to Abandon CA:

Such attempts were made by some scholars, Arab and non-Arab alike, who were in favour of adopting some form of the colloquial as the language of culture and literature. Supported by the colonialists, the main argument of the advocates of colloquialism was that Standard Arabic is difficult, far from daily life, its writing system is more of a cumbersome puzzle, and that, in time, it will disintegrate into various local and national vernaculars, as did Latin in Europe and Sanskrit in India. For this reason, several linguists as well as literary writers came to favour the idea of supplanting CA by a cultivated dialect of a particular region that enjoyed a large population. With this in mind, 'Ibrāhīm 'Anīs, a leading Egyptian linguist presented the language of educated Egyptians as a possible future candidate for all Arab countries on the basis that:

- a. Egypt is numerically the largest single Arab country.
- b. It enjoys a political and cultural prestige not equalled by that of other Arab countries.
- c. Egyptian Arabic represents the spoken variety most widely used in songs, movies, radio and T.V. programmes and other modes of expression. (25)

On the other hand, in his book Nahwa 9Arabiyyah Muyassarah, (26) 'Anīs Frayhah focuses his attention on adopting a common variety spoken by the intelligentsia, on the premise that CA with its complicated grammatical system cannot replace the various colloquials as a naturally-spoken language and that it is not practical to adopt local dialects or to impose one variety such as Egyptian on all Arabic-speaking regions. In his proposal, the plan could succeed, provided that a literature would spring up, that Arabic script could be changed to Latin characters, that phonetic, syntactic and grammatical rules could be set up, and that all Arabs would accept it. To carry out his plan, he suggested as did 9Abd-al-9Azīz Fahmī (a former Egyptian minister and a member of the Egyptian Academy) in 1943 replacing the Arabic orthographical system by an adapted Roman alphabet, as a means towards rectifying the defects of the Arabic writing system, thereby facilitating the processes of reading and printing Arabic texts. Addressing the Egyptian Academy Majma' Fu'ād al-'Awwal, Fahmī introduced his thesis by saying that,

"It is evident that the advanced nations in Europe and America are the ones that use the Latin script." (27)

These and other attempts to change or even uproot the Arabic grammatical morphological and phonological systems have created a feeling of uncertainty among the educated Arabs regarding the use of Arabic in expressing modern thoughts. As a result, the resolutions of the academies and the Classicists to revive CA as a pan-Arab medium of expression never received full acceptance and those who were in favour of colloquialism (usually out of ignorance of CA) found an excuse in the proposals of Frayhah, Fahmī and the mahjarite 'immigrant' writer Jibrān Khalīl Jibrān, who is well known in this respect for his article "to you your language and to me mine". (28)

### 3.3.3 The Nature of the Language and the Antiquarian Method of Instruction:

In attempting to revive Arabic as a modern language, there arose the question of whether the language in its Classical form is capable of assuming the position of a lingua franca in the Arab world. As was pointed out in Chapter Two, the long period of stagnation followed by the encroachment and domination of Ottoman Turkish and European languages made Arabic seem an obsolete instrument of expression out of touch with modern sciences. While the conservatives defended the language vehemently by saying that the defects do not stem from the language itself but rather from the people who use it, the liberal reformers blamed the language for:

1. Its rigid grammatical system, and in particular the system of /'i9rāb/ 'declension'.
2. The inflexible morphological system of coining new terminology according to the traditional /qawālib/ 'moulds'.
3. The lack of exactness in the vocabulary and the tendency to use florid rhetorical styles.

In reaction, in 1938, the Egyptian Ministry of Education created a committee for the study of a possible simplification of Arabic grammatical rules and writing system.<sup>(29)</sup> Thereafter, similar attempts have ensued ; for example the Syrian Saṭī9 al-Ḥusrī proposed that the first task in reforming grammar is to reclassify and regroup the illogical traditional system, whereby new scientific methods of Western philology are employed for the study of Arabic. Likewise, he would broaden the Arabic concept of the verb by incorporating the infinitive and the particles, add the future tense to the three traditional categories of past, present and the imperative, standardize the gender agreement between verb and noun, minimize the adjectival and plural forms (e.g. the five plural forms for /wadi/ 'valley' can be reduced to only two: /widyan/ and /'awdiyah/), and above all, the modification or elimination of the

pedantic system of /'i9rāb/ 'vocalization or declension'. al-Husri's views were reiterated by a number of other well-known linguists such as 'Ahmad 'Amīn, Jibrān Khalīl Jibrān, Mikha'īl Naḡīmah, Salāmah Mūsā, Muhammed Husayn Haykal, Saḡīd ḡAqī and to some extent Tāha Husayn. (30)

In addition, as we have already pointed out in 3.3.2, a complaint often made, is that the Arabic writing system (with the absence of diacritical marks) is the main cause for variations of spelling and pronunciation. Thus for instance the written form تقدم can, depending on the context, be interpreted as any of the following:

- /taqdimu/: 'she, you (masculine singular) will arrive'
- /tuqdamu/: 'it (a place) will be reached.'
- /tuqqadimu/: 'she, you (m., sing.) will present (something)'
- /tuqaddamu/: 'she, you (m. sing.) will be introduced'
- /tuqdimu /: 'she, you (m. sing.) is daring, audacious'
- /taqaddama/: 'he has proceeded or surpassed'
- /taqaddum/: 'progress' (31)

A similar claim is that the Arabic orthographical system is defective in the representation of words borrowed from other languages, and that the lack of certain vowels and diphthongs, as well as some European consonant sounds such as /g/, /tʃ/, /v/, /p/, the absence of capitalization and an efficient system of punctuation, make the process of transliterating foreign loanwords into Arabic a laborious process. Thus, for example, the following names can be transliterated differently by different people.

e.g.

	دي. أتش لورانس.
D. H. Lawrence -	دي. اج. لورانس.
	د. ه. لورانس.

Archimedes --

أرخميدس-

أرشميدس-

Aids--

ايدس or ايدز-

آيدس or آيدز-

أيدس or أيدز-

(for a detailed discussion of the problems of transliteration, see Chapter Five)

Within these lines, it has also been claimed that the present system poses problems for the educationists, since it prolongs the process of teaching the language and hence the other sciences. Lakhdar quotes al-Kirmilī saying that,

"the Arabs study the rules of the Arabic language in order to learn to read, whereas foreigners read in order to learn sciences". (32)

Despite such claims, the core of the problem does not seem to be inherent in the nature of the Arabic language, but rather in the methodologies employed in teaching it. We see, for example, how Ṭāha Ḥusayn, himself an 'Azharite, in his autobiographical reminiscences al-'Ayyām (1929), lays bare the deficiencies of the "antiquarian methods of language instruction". (33) In the same manner, 'Aḥmad 'Amīn points out that Arabic grammar, syntax, rhetoric, jurisprudence and other subjects are still being taught according to an old method, while the modern sciences are taught according to a Western pattern in a language other than Arabic. (34)

While efforts have constantly been made to update the teaching of foreign languages in order to make them more attractive subjects, new developments in language teaching seem to have had no influence on the way Arabic is taught. Pupils are made to memorize lists of rules of grammar, together with extracts from the Qur'ān and old

poetry; and the language is learned almost entirely from written materials, the teacher spending most of his time reading passages from books to his pupils, with little spontaneous discussion and free conversation, and almost no concern is given to the development of language skills in spoken contexts. This is perhaps inevitable since as Chejne points out,

"there is not a fully-disseminated standard Arabic for oral communication that would be called classic or neo-classic." (35)

Consequently, Classical Arabic remains basically a written language which no doubt contributes to the fact that Arabic lessons are rarely lively. The widely held assumption that "the sound method of teaching any living language is to move from sound to letters, from spoken patterns to written forms, and from the familiar to the formal", (36) is thus not applicable to the Arabic language in schools. This is also due to the functional differences between CA and its counterpart COA, the latter being the first language acquired at home.

Style, rhetoric and eloquence are the features most valued in the syllabus of teaching Arabic composition in schools. Hence, those learning to write in Arabic do not feel that they can simply use the language to make their point as directly as possible; instead, they have to pay considerable attention to how to express themselves in the most flowery style. This view is summed up by Laroui when he refers to Arabic as "the Arabs' only technology". (37) In effect, instead of just writing whatever they want to say, school graduates become obsessed with the need to use Arabic properly. Thus, they waste their time debating how to use the language instead of simply getting on with the task of using it, facing the problems as they arise and providing immediate solutions for them. Inertia and hesitancy to use Arabic may constitute more serious problems for Arabization than the so-called problems posed by the Arabic language itself.

In addition, classicism, a hallmark of the entire language programme, poses a special kind of difficulty in the earlier stages of learning. The child comes to school with a different set of linguistic habits, i.e. his colloquial, and is faced rather abruptly with the task of learning CA. With no gradual transition from the Colloquial to the Classical he is introduced by means of alphabet and phonic methods to the sounds and structure (often traditional grammar) of the language. From the outset, the student encounters numerous problems such as reading and writing, not to mention the kind of Arabic taught which, if and when he learns it well, he has little or no opportunity to put it into practice, unless he should be exposed to ridicule among his family and colleagues.

The student is generally handicapped in learning the language due to the lack of able teachers and modern textbooks, and the obsolete methods of instruction. For one thing, elementary (primary) teachers have not specialized in the teaching of Arabic, which is partly due to the lack of advanced training programmes, either pre-service or in-service, since most teachers are employed after two years of basic training following their graduation from secondary school. The textbooks, on the other hand, are steeped in classical traditions and frequently draw upon words and expressions which were already archaic in the Middle Ages. al-Toma points out that out of the textbooks used for the seventh grade in Iraq, for example, nearly 60% of the total are not of a recent origin but rather were extracted from works written prior to the tenth century. (38)

Although the educational systems and language syllabuses may differ widely from one country to another, there seems to be unanimous agreement among the educationists that CA must be used as the medium for instruction and oral class-lecturing not only by language teachers but also by all instructors of other subjects. However, actual practice shows that this is not

always the case. In a questionnaire addressed to 40 secondary school teachers in Kuwait about the use of CA in their classes, the following findings were revealed:

RATE OF USE	ALWAYS	OFTEN	RARELY	NEVER
NUMBER OF RESPONDANTS (TOTAL : 40)	4	18	10	8

Table 3.2 : The Use of CA by 40 Secondary School Teachers in Kuwait

Besides, only 17 respondents considered CA with its traditional grammar and vocabulary to be the easiest medium for the students to comprehend their subjects, whereas the rest chose other varieties of Arabic. This is perhaps related to the fact that in Kuwait as well as in the other Gulf States, there is a high percentage of expatriate teachers from Egypt and countries of the Levant, who due to their poor background in the language, use their local vernaculars instead. An analysis of 25 composition papers written by Kuwaiti students in the fourth year of secondary school (literary section) indicated the existence of errors which could not possibly have resulted from linguistic interference between CA and the local Kuwaiti dialect (KUD) but are rather attributable to the foreign influences of their teachers.

TYPE OF ERROR	DUE TO KUD	DUE TO OTHERS	TOTAL
Colloquial Vocabulary	31	19	50
/'i9rāb/ 'declension'	33	27	60
Prepositions	11	5	16
Relatives	20	8	28
Numerals	13	9	22

Table 3.3 : Sources of Errors in the Writings of Some Kuwaiti Students in the Fourth Year Secondary School (Literary Section).

(See under 7.3.4 for an analysis of some writing errors)



Thus it seems that one of the fundamental objectives in drawing up plans for Arabization must be the emphasis on the preparation of competent teaching staff who can use Arabic efficiently in and out of the classroom. More important still is that, before applying Arabization at the lower levels, it would seem logical to ensure that teachers at the higher levels are adequately prepared. This would avoid the problem of those pupils who on reaching an advanced stage in their education (e.g. the university level) find no competent teachers to teach them in the language in which they have hitherto pursued their studies.

What we have mentioned so far are probably the main factors - often brought up by linguists and Arabists - which are thought to be the main causes for the spread of Colloquialism and diglossia (in our study it is rather 'spectroglossia') in the Arab world. However, there are equally important arguments in this respect which deserve a brief discussion.

#### 3.3.4 The High Rate of Illiteracy:

Despite the apparent wealth of many of the Arab states, the rate of illiteracy in large parts of the Arab world is relatively among the highest in the whole world. According to UNESCO's Statistical Yearbook, the percentage of illiteracy in the Arab world ranges between 40% and 90% (see Table 7.5). Kaye attributes this situation to the absence of a standard medium of education and communication. In his view, illiteracy in the Arab world is the cause and the result of the widening gap between CA and the colloquial varieties. <sup>(39)</sup> As a result the mediaeval situation is still reflected in the fact that CA remains a possession of an elite who can read and write the language. Those who cannot read are in many ways culturally disinherited and in the Arab world their problem is twofold since they must acquire a new language other than the one they learned to speak.

Though the problem is deeply rooted in the four centuries or so of Ottoman and colonial rule, during which Arabic education in the traditional mosque-orientated system was cut down to a minimum, yet we find that the problem still exists due to the absence of coherent and comprehensive policies of Arabization. Henceforth, as a matter of expediency, the advocates of colloquialism suggested that the only way of democratizing Arabic was to write the vernaculars in a modernized script so that literacy would depend simply on the mastery of a rational script for writing the generally spoken language. Others proposed the use of the vernaculars in education, the mass-media and literary works. To mention but one example, Frayha, one of the staunchest advocates of dialects for oral and written purposes tried his hand at the vernacular in his novel 'Isma9 yā Ridā. (40) He also wrote the book al-Lahjah wa-'Uslūb Dirāsatihā, (41) that puts forward some proposals for the teaching of dialects. He and a number of other colloquialists such as 9Atiyyah, Tawfīq, Dhiyāb, Badrāwī and A. Taymūr compiled several glossaries which deal with colloquial expressions in various Arab dialects, with the aim of using them for pedagogical purposes. Their belief is that, sooner or later, there must develop a workable language for promoting the process of education and that the colloquial is better equipped since it is /Lughat al-hayāh/ 'the language of everyday life', which is nearer to the hearts and minds of the majority of people and, above all, is understood by both the educated and the illiterate, things which the Classical form lacks. (42) Unfortunately, these individual attempts to publicize COA were encouraged by the publication under the auspices of some universities and linguistic bodies of entire books and dictionaries devoted to one of the local varieties. An example of this is the series of bilingual dictionaries produced by Georgetown University in the 1960s for 'Iraqi Arabic', 'Syrian Arabic' and 'Moroccan Arabic. (43) Similarly, a large number of postgraduate degree theses both in Arab as well as

Western universities were and still are devoted completely to investigating the peculiar features, phonetic or grammatical of a given regional dialect.

A more serious phenomenon which is related to the issue of illiteracy is what might be termed the 'linguistic illiteracy of the educated'. A large number of Arab students seek their higher education abroad, especially in the United States, England, France, Germany and the Soviet Union. The great majority leave their homeland with insufficient training in Arabic to begin with. Those who return home after a prolonged stay find it difficult to express themselves in Arabic as easily as they do in the language of their training. The new graduate thus either makes do with using the colloquial which he learned during his childhood, or, when frustrated, may well do away with Arabic totally and use the foreign language of his education. This is nowhere more evident than in the case of university teaching staff who find it easier to express themselves in European Languages than in Arabic. Those who attempt to use Arabic often display a great diversity in approaching this linguistic gap; some may use archaic and obsolete terms derived from classical texts whereas others tend to use colloquial and foreign expressions profusely, often adding hastily-coined words derived from non-Arabic origins:

- e.g. 'round table conference' - /mu'tamar mā'idah mustadīrah/  
'to play a role' - /la9iba dawran/  
'last but not least' - /'akhīran wa-laysa 'ākhiran/  
'overwhelming majority' - /'akthariyyah sāhiqah/  
'cornerstone' - /hajar az-zāwiyah/  
'a storm of applause' - /9āsifah min at-tasfiq/  
'il rit dans sa barbe' (F)- /dahaka 9alā adh-dhuqun/

Haim Blanc, who conducted a comparative study on the linguistic features of some Arab graduates from the United States, calls this new 'colloquial' variety the 'Educated Arabic' <sup>(44)</sup> or as some may prefer, 'Literate Arabic' in contrast with the illiterate dialects. The dilemma of the educated is made worse by the relatively small number of available Arabic works and textbooks.

A glance at the average annual numbers of books produced or translated worldwide will suffice to prove this point (see tables 3.4 and 3.5) (45)

LANGUAGE	NUMBER OF BOOKS
ENGLISH	130,955
RUSSIAN	74,197
GERMAN	61,344
FRENCH	28,440
SPANISH	25,899
ARABIC	3,719

Table 3.4: Annual Book Production in Major World Languages

COUNTRY	NO. OF TRANSLATED BOOKS
SOVIET UNION	3,851
GERMANY	3,541
SPAIN	2,733
UNITED STATES	2,055
THE ARAB WORLD	227

Table 3.5: Average Annual Number of Translated Works

### 3.3.5 The Influence of the Mass-Media

Despite the fact that the various types of mass media (i.e. T.V., radio, cinema, newspapers and magazines) have, to a certain extent, helped in fusing the indigenous Arabic dialects into homogenous clusters, yet the situation is still far from promising. The reason for this is that in an age when the audio-visual word has become the most popular means of expression, we find that some countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq have virtually monopolized the production of films, drama series, songs, newspapers and magazines. For example, out of a total of 70 long films produced annually in the Arab world, <sup>(46)</sup> Egypt alone occupies the foremost percentage of 80%; such a situation can be generalized in all other areas of mass media production. The effects of such a situation are particularly evident in the spread of the Egyptian dialect in non-adjacent Arab countries and in particular in those areas where the high rate of illiteracy bestows especial significance on the audio-visual (spoken) language. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Egyptian dialect was chosen as the best candidate for the creation of the proposed pan-Arab lingua franca.

Such an idea was enhanced by the keen desire of several prolific novelists and writers to preserve a fundamentally Egyptian flavour in their writings. *Among the well-known writers we may mention* for instance, Muhammad Husayn Haykal who wrote the first truly Arabic novels introducing colloquial Egyptian Arabic in the dialogue, Tawfiq al-Hakim and Mahmud Taymur who created the modern Arabic drama, not to mention the numerous and widely read works of 'Ihsan 'Abd-al-Quddus and Najib Mahfuz, both of whom wished to secure a wider circulation through local dialectal colouring, which was received favourably as a sign of realism in literature. Several others chose a middle style, vacillating between CA and Egyptian COA in order to be understood in other Arab countries. Nowadays, a similar situation is developing in the Gulf countries where the Kuwaiti dialect is

gradually encroaching on the dialects of other countries in the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC). The main reason for this is that, during the past five or six years, Kuwait has assumed a leading position in the production of mass media programmes with a Gulf-wide distribution. However, though the process of publicising national dialects is much to be welcomed as a prelude to solving the linguistic diversity in the Arab world, such a process must not be achieved at the cost of consigning CA to oblivion.

### 3.3.6 The Political and Cultural Heterogeneity of The Arab Countries:

Every effort to solve the dialectal dilemma in the Arab world will prove futile if it does not include a plan to eliminate the political conflicts and cultural disharmony among the Arab states. The fact that the Arab world has split into several political units has been in itself a major deterrent to achieving some measure of linguistic standardization and uniformity, especially at a time of transition from mediaeval to a modern society. Worse still is the tendency of some countries to codify their local dialects and reinstate them as the emblem of their independence. This actually started during the spread of revolutionary or socialist-oriented movements in the post-war years, which discharged a sympathetic attitude toward the language used and understood by the masses, therefore elevating the spoken dialects to a higher status as was evident in Presidents 9Abd-al-Nāsir's and Bin Billa's highly colloquial speeches. (47) The masses, who were greatly impressed by their nationalistic leaders, were inclined towards imitating their linguistic peculiarities and eccentricities. Thus, cultural and linguistic revivalism has been influenced by political nationalism, which as a rule has conformed to state nationalism. In their attempt to restore the Arab identity, the nationalists, unaware of the importance of standardizing a pan-Arab language, have committed a grave mistake in creating the current state of linguistic provincialism. It is not infrequent, therefore, to hear the Lebanese or the Egyptian, for instance, claiming to

possess an 'Arabic language' which excels in quality and prestige to any other Arabic used in the rest of the Arab world. The process of Arabization is thus not simply a matter of excluding one dialect in favour of another; as well as replacing a language, it is necessary to replace all that that language stands for in people's minds and all that it gives access to, whether politically, socially or economically.

Plans for Arabization have also been disturbed by frequent changes of governments and ministers. Indeed, as Zartman puts it in his study of the process of Arabizing education, "in the early years there were a half-dozen educational plans for less than a half-dozen school years",<sup>(48)</sup> and plans were constantly being abandoned and replaced before they had been properly put into operation. Moreover, those scholars who express their views about Arabization are by no means united in their opinions about its value, its implications and its effects. One can distinguish a number of groups of differing attitudes to the problem. First, there are the traditionalists who originated with the nationalistic movement and who are in favour of a total restoration of Arabic as a means towards safeguarding the Muslim culture and the Arabic traditions. Another group, the modernists, are less committed to Arabization. They are more committed to preparing their countries to keep abreast with the Industrialized World rather than to carry out a hasty Arabization which might result in their countries being isolated from the West. They feel that European languages, at least for the time being, are more adequate than Arabic for producing the scientific and technical skills which are badly needed in the developing countries. The views of this group are summed up by Saleem Khan who poses the following question,

"should not the developing nations adopt one of the advanced languages in order to keep pace with the developments of the advanced world and to make their own contribution to the development of sciences, instead of getting engaged in the laborious and maybe

futile process of translating the knowledge generated by others and consequently always remain behind because of the time-consuming intermediate process?" (49)

This is perhaps why some North African officials want to retain European languages (French in particular) in schools as well as in governmental departments.

To all this must be added the fact that in spite of the numerous efforts aimed at making Arabic a workable language, whether in individual states or on a pan-Arab level, there is a 'conspicuous absence' (50) of a supranational authority or a unified policy which would regulate the efforts of individuals and semi-official or official agencies, transcending political allegiance and national frontiers. The existing language academies in Damascus, Cairo and Baghdad were and still are unable to co-ordinate their efforts and to agree on fixed approaches towards technical terminology and other similar problems confronting the language. Consequently, the attempts made by individual scholars to introduce needed terms in their fields were inevitable, and these in turn created a multiplicity of terms for the same object or concept which may vary not only from one country to another but from one book to another within the same country. For example, the coining of a word for 'encyclopedia' was a point of contention among various individuals. Butrus al-Bustānī had coined /da'irat ma'ārif/ while his contemporary Nāsif al-Yazījī suggested /kitāb mawsū'at al-ʿulūm/ and al-Kirmilī chose /miḡlamah/. (51) This problem of multiple terms is evident throughout the Arab states. The word for 'constitution' is /dustūr/ or /dastūr/ in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria, while the expression /al-qānūn al-'asāsī/ is used in Iraq and Jordan. The word /marsūm/ 'decree' is used in Lebanon, Syria and Egypt but the term /'irādah malakiyyah/ was used in Iraq up to the revolution in 1958. The word for 'alliance' can be /'ittihād/,



/ʾittifāq/ or /tahāluf/; for 'visa' we may have /simah/, /taʾshīrah/, /taʾlīm/ (52); the word 'protocols' is either /marāsim/, /marāsīm/ or /ʾijrāʾat dīblumāsiyyah/. This discrepancy is also found in natural sciences, where the word for 'physics' is /fīzyāʾ/ in Syria and Iraq, /ʾilm at-tabīʾah/ in Egypt; 'pendulum' is /bandūl/ in Egypt, /raqqās/ in Iraq and /nawwās/ in Syria; 'steering-wheel' is either /dirbiyāj/, /sikkān/, /miqwad/, /diriksiyūn/ (from French) or /stīring/ (from English).

However, the problem of lexical diversity is not limited to imported terminology. Regional variations have long existed within Arabic. For example, the very simple names of fruits and vegetables are often cited as a source for regrettable contradiction (see Table 3.6)

FRUIT	COUNTRY		
	EGYPT	SYRIA AND LEBANON	IRAQ AND THE GULF
Peach	/khūkh/	/durrāq/ or /barqūq/	/khūkh/
Plum	/barqūq/	/durrāq/ or /barqūq/	/kūj/
Pear	/kummatrah/	/ʾajjās/	/ʾarmūt/
Watermelon	/battikh/	/battikh/	/raggī/
(Yellow) Melon	/shammām/	/shammām/	/battikh/

Table 3.6 An Example of the Linguistic Diversity in the Arab World

Such varieties are not limited to geographically-distant communities. For example, in the Arab countries of North Africa, we find the following discrepancies:

ITEM	DIALECT				
	MOROCCAN	ALGERIAN	MAURITANIAN	LIBYAN	TUNISIAN
rain	/naw/	/shāb/	/shāb/	/maṭar/	/sḥtah/
well	/mizyan/	/milīh/	/zayn/	/bahī/	/tayyib/
how much	/shhal/	/yaddash/	/kam/	/kam/	/gaddash/
eggs	/'awlād 'ijjāj/	/bīd/	/bayj/	/dihī/	/'adam/
to do	/'idīr/	/khdām/	/wasa/	/sawa/	/ḡamal/

Table 3.7: Dialectal Varieties in the Arab Countries of North Africa (53)

This confusion becomes worst when it comes to preparing pan-Arab educational material or T.V. programmes. For examples, the producers of 'Iftah yā Simsim, the Arabic version of the American 'Sesame Street', had to seek the expertise of specialists in order to present the programme in a language level which is suitable to both the educated and the illiterate, juniors as well as seniors. Disappointed in their quest, they reverted to Modern Standard Arabic. On the other hand, UNESCO recently prepared a textbook on new mathematics to replace traditional mathematics at the secondary school level. The book was prepared in English and was translated by an Iraqi committee into Arabic. The glossary of terms suggested by Iraq was not entirely accepted by other Arab countries. As a result each of the committees in Kuwait, Jordan, Egypt and Syria made separate translations of the original English book.

It is apparent, therefore, that this chaotic situation is due to the lack of co-ordination between the different academies, and between the academies and other governmental departments or professional associations, and despite the recent attempts that have been made along the lines of unity, no substantial results are expected to be achieved in the absence of an 'efficient' central co-ordinating agency. If this situation persists

unresolved, the linguistic and cultural divisions between the Arab countries are likely to deteriorate to an alarming extent and the local vernaculars are likely to deepen their roots.

### 3.4 The Influences of Spectroglossia on Arabization and Proposals For Reform:

Undoubtedly, and much against the will of enthusiastic Arabists, the process of Arabization has been beset by the continuous domination of spectro-glossia in the linguistic scene all over the Arab world. This situation has created a feeling of frustration and disappointment in the minds and hearts of the once ardent advocates of Classical Arabic. For example, in his book Ṣaḡāṭ Bayna al-Kutub, ʿAbbās al-ʿAqqād who is well-known for his highly stylised Arabic writings admits that,

"in every nation there exist two linguistic forms: one for writing and the other for speech. Besides, each language may as well have a high and a low variety; a well-structured form as well as a loose counterpart. There will never come a time when any of the two will be replaced by the other; both /Fushā/ 'Classical' and the /ʿammiyyah/ 'Colloquial' will survive as long as man lives." (54)

Contrary to the views of those who have assumed that the Colloquial is but a slightly corrupted form of CA and that it represents nothing but a /mushkilah khurāfiyyah/ 'fictitious problem', as a prominent grammarian once argued, (55) the differences between CA and the various forms of COA are too numerous to be ignored and the problem is too complex to lend itself to individual solutions. Therefore, it is not surprising to note that in spite of the various solutions proposed since the 1880's (56) for eliminating the dichotomy, the problem has remained controversial and unresolved and is perhaps one of the major obstacles impeding national and intellectual resurgence.

In his book entitled Mushkilāt al-lughah al-ʿArabiyyah, Maḥmūd Taymūr, himself an advocate of CA stated the linguistic predicament and the attitudes of two main schools of thought regarding it,

"from the beginnings of this century, Colloquial Arabic has had its advocates and its opponents. There are those who extol and praise it, urging that it be the literary language, while others wish that it were dispensed with and its place taken by the Classical as the instrument of daily transactions in the homes and in the streets. Yet the Colloquial has remained with both its advocates and opponents.

Those who wish to have it supersede the Classical expressed themselves in the Classical and those who greatly dislike it and wish its premeditated death exchanged their conversation in it concerning their dislike for it and the manner of disposing of it." (57)

These two conflicting views have been an important part of the deliberations at the conferences of the Arab academies and have been discussed in a large number of books and seminars throughout the Arab world.

The colloquialists on the one hand, believe that CA which has undergone little or no change in the past millenium or so is badly undernourished in many areas of the arts and sciences and as a result it has become totally removed from the dialects of everyday activities /lughāt al-hayāh/ and that its use is merely restricted to writers /lughāt al-kuttāb/. In opposition the Colloquial, in the words of its staunchest representative, Frayḥah, "possesses the human element /al-ʿunsur al-ʿinsānī/ and as such it surpasses the archaic and lifeless Classical language especially in its quality in being near to the hearts and minds of those who use it". (58)

As far as the practical applications of COA (e.g. in education) are concerned, Spitta, the pioneer of this movement, writes,

"how much easier would the matter become if the student had merely to write the tongue which he speaks, instead of being forced to write a language which is as strange to the present generation as Latin to the people of Italy." (59)

As to what kind of language should be used as the instrument of intercommunication among the Arabs, Frayḥāh suggests the adoption of a united dialect, that of the intelligentsia, /lahjat al-muta'addibīn/. The weight of his argument rests on the premise that this type of dialect has special and favourable characteristics; mainly it is easily understood among all the educated classes throughout the Arab world since it stands in the middle of the road between COA and CA, and its reading is made easier than that of CA thanks to its minimal dependence on /'i9rāb/ 'declension'. (60)

On the other hand, the classicists, whose views are reflected in the works of the various language academies and have thus far determined language programmes, consider Frayḥāh's views as pure heresy, and maintain that CA can and should replace COA as the common spoken language. This group has maintained from the twenties onward that any change in the status of CA would constitute a betrayal of Arab nationalism and culture. Murqīṣ conveys the general view by saying that the vernacular is limited in many respects, among which is the fact that it fails to serve as a common denominator that binds the Arab countries. Only Classical Arabic can meet this requirement, since it has a long history, embodying the Arab cultural heritage in all its ramifications. He writes,

"if we were to replace Classical Arabic by the Colloquial what would happen to the cultural and literary heritage, how would posterity understand the traditions of our pious

ancestors which are embodied in a mass of precious books? And how would they acquaint themselves with the essence of religion and the minuteness of legislation treasured therein? Besides, which one of the existing dialects should we choose to take the place of the Classical?" (61)

Thus, the basic argument of the classicists rests on a number of considerations, primarily of a cultural nature:

- a. Classical Arabic is unique and could not possibly perish as Latin did because it is /lughat dīn samāwiy/ 'the language of a heavenly religion'. The fact that CA is the language of the Qur'ān acts as a deterrent against all attempts to replace or modify its script or structure since any attempt of this kind is to be interpreted as anti-Islamic. The Muslim Arabs have always advocated Classical Arabic as a unifying factor not only for the Arabs but also for non-Arab Muslims who share this language and its heritage with the Arabs.
- b. The disregard of the standard language would eventually lead to the disregard of the traditional literary and scientific heritage developed over thirteen hundred years and, therefore, direct access to the heritage of the past and the inter-Arab exchange of ideas would be greatly impaired. Sporadic use of the vernacular by some writers in Lebanon and Egypt has had little or no appeal for the masses and their short stories and plays have gone unnoticed. For example, Maḥmūd Taymūr, one of the classicists, tried his hand at the colloquial in some of his plays which have not found an audience either inside or outside Egypt, the home of his mother tongue.
- c. There is the political desire for Arab unity which frowns upon the divisive implications of the regional dialects. CA is viewed not only as the foundation of Arab unity but

also as "the precious and irreplaceable symbol of all that Arabs have meant to themselves and to the world".<sup>(62)</sup>

The Arab countries have chosen to include an item in their state constitutions which proclaims that Arabic is the official language of the state, though, of course, in practice other languages are also current.

- d. The most important issue in this respect, as was pointed out by Murqis, is the problem of which variety of Arabic should be adopted. If all dialects are to be written, it would mean the loss of the standardization which Classical Arabic has always maintained. An Indian or Indonesian scholar who uses any form of CA can be understood all over the Arabic-speaking world, whether in the Peninsula, the Levant, or North and East Africa. And if we are to use the dialects of Arabic in written as well as spoken expression, then which one should be used in teaching Arabic as a first, second or even as a foreign language? And which one will be suitable in pan-Arab mass-media production, books and periodicals, political and scientific conferences, and the like? Already during the 'June war of 1967' which was perhaps the first real example of a modern unilateral action by the Arabs, army officials were unable to achieve efficient communication among themselves, due to the lack of standardization in military terms. For example, Syria uses Arabic equivalents for Turkish military terminology, coined immediately after World War I, while Iraq and Egypt have preserved most of the Turkish terminology which is infiltrated by some European influences in certain areas. As viewed by the classicists, the current spectroglossic situation seems parallel to that of Maltese Arabic before its disintegration into heterogenous dialects.

However divergent the different views seem to be, there is a general area of agreement that a linguistic problem exists and

that something must be done to correct it. While schools of thought differ as to the method and procedure of tackling the problem, they all seem to share a strong faith in the role of universal literacy and mass communications media in gradually narrowing the gaps between the two forms of Arabic, thus paving the way towards promoting a unified and workable instrument of expression in all layers of Arab society.

### 3.5 The Emergence of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)

While the effects of spectroglottia are still felt, over the past thirty years or so there has been emerging a new form of Arabic which is neither low nor high, commonly known as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).

Varied and complex socio-linguistic factors have contributed to the rise of this new form of Arabic. Briefly stated MSA grew out of the pressing need for an adequate and practical medium to express the modern concerns and needs of the educated Arabs. Arab intellectuals have felt that the vernaculars were not equipped to cope with the educational and technical trends that were shaping their daily lives, simply because they lacked any standardized system of terminology, grammar and writing. Classical Arabic on the other hand, was viewed as too artificial, inflexible and accessible only to the intelligentsia who could use it faultlessly. The uneasiness towards the COA and the CA led many Arab writers and journalists to advocate a new form which combines both. Among the most vocal of these promoters was 'Ahmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid, who from the beginning of the century was predicating the idea of a new language. In one of the editorials of his paper al-Jarīdah, he wrote,

"We want to raise the language of the general public towards the level of the written language and to simplify the necessary elements of the written language and thus bring it closer to the level of daily discourse." (63)



With the democratization of education throughout the Arab world, the modernization of communication and transport facilities and the increase of pan-Arab professional and political meetings, this 'third language', as al-Ḥakīm called it, <sup>(64)</sup> has gradually gained force as a functional, flexible medium. Its extensive use by Arab leaders on the one hand and the media (al-Yāzījī prefers the name /Lughat al-jarā'id/ <sup>(65)</sup> 'the language of newspapers' on the other hand reinforced its viability as a bridge between the high and low forms of Arabic. In other words, MSA is a linguistic amalgam, a continuum whose outer limits are the high and low forms of the spectroglossic spectrum (see figure 3.1).

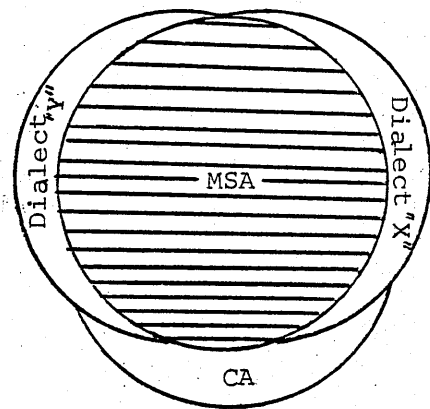


Figure 3.1: The Relation between MSA, CA and the dialectal varieties

Its closeness to one pole or another is governed by such variables as the educational and geographical backgrounds of the speakers/hearers, the topic discussed and the speech situation. Although MSA is spoken mainly by the educated, it is understood by the majority of speakers in the Arabic speech community. The more educated the speaker is, the wider are the choices of subjects discussed and the more spontaneous and fluent his use of the language becomes.

### 3.6 The Linguistic Characteristics of MSA

Although a full discussion of the linguistic peculiarities of MSA is not our immediate concern in this chapter, we will attempt to

pinpoint some of the salient features which are considered to be linguistic departures from the traditions of CA.

### 3.6.1 The Syntactic Level:

Perhaps the most common feature at this level is the minimization of /'i9rāb/ 'declension or case-endings', which is the result of colloquial influences. Thus the use of the *undeclined* form of words regardless of their position or function in the sentence has somewhat contributed to the simplification of grammar, but at the same time has led to lengthy paraphrasing as a means towards avoiding the ambiguity which can result in the absence of /'i9rāb/.

e.g.

/ḍuriba ar-rajul/ 'the man was beaten' becomes /ta9arrada ar-rajul lid-darb/ 'the man was subjected to beating'.

/'aqrada Muḥammad Sulaymān/ 'Sulayman lent Muḥammad (money)'

V O S

becomes /'uqrīda Muḥammad min qibal Sulaymān/

V O particle (by) S

or /Sulaymān 'aqrada Muḥammad/

S Y O

In the first instance, this passive structure was paraphrased into the active, whereas in /Sulaymān 'aqrada Muḥammad/; the CA syntactic rule which demands that in a verbal sentence the verb should go before the noun, has been changed in order to allow the subject to stand first, followed by the verbal predicate and then by the direct object without the /'i9rāb/. Thus the basic Arabic word order has come closer to English SVO and instead of the analytic (inflectional) nature of CA, MSA is gradually becoming synthetic.

Besides, due to Western influences, particles play an increasingly important role in the sentence defining tenses more precisely and expressing relationships among the sentential elements, a process which used to be effected in CA by inflection and simple prepositions,

e.g. /tibqan li/ or /binā'an 9alā/ 'according to'  
 /kama/ 'as'  
 /haythu 'anna/ 'since .....

In this connection, early in the century, Jurjī Zaydan (died 1914) pointed out the excessive use of the relative pronoun (as well as prepositions) as a modern tendency in the Arabic language. (66)

Thus a sentence such as:

/qābaltu ṣadīqī ṣāhib al-warshah/ 'I met my friend, the owner of the workshop' is rendered as /qābaltu ṣadīqī 'alladhī yamtalik al-warshah/ 'I met my friend who owns the workshop'.

Similar developments include the wide use of prepositions, adverbs and modal particles (/qad/, /rubbama/ 'may, perhaps').

### 3.6.2 The Lexical and Stylistic Level

It is this level that has received the bulk of modernism. Morphological innovations and foreign modes of expression abound in MSA not only in scientific works which are mostly translations from European languages and journalism, but also in the very essence of literary writings. Since many of the translations are hastily made by individuals or translators who do not have a good command of the Arabic language proper, one would expect literal translations, and at times even loan terms and expressions which are only partially Arabized - despite the existence of Arabic equivalents - and which do not fit into the derivational root-and-pattern system (morphosemantemes).

e.g.

/'arshīf/	'archives'
/turmus/	'thermus'
/'anthrubulūjyā/	'anthropology'
/'istabl/	'stable'
/'istratījiyyah/	'strategy'
/'istād/	'stadium'
/mutürsāykil/	'motorcycle'

MSA is also rich in calque translations of foreign compound nouns:

e.g. /hayhawā'iy/	'aerobic'
/mafawq al-banfajiy/	'ultraviolet'
/lasilkiy/	'wireless'
/kahrumaghnatīsiy/	'electromagnetic'
/'afur'asyawiy/	'Afro-Asian'

MSA has also expanded the use of some of its modal affixes to translate technical terms. For instance, the use of /iyah/ to produce abstract nouns such as /markisiyyah/ 'Marxism'/ mashrū'iyah/ 'legitimacy', /jasūsiyyah/ 'espionage' and /lānihā'iyah/ 'infinity'. Other modal affixes have been invented which, although they may be new, are not unlike existing morphemes. The chemist's suffixes /āyt/, /it/ and /āt/ are simply taken over,

e.g. /labanāyt/	'lactate'
/kibrītīt/	'sulphate'
/bīkarbūnāt/	'bicarbonate'

Such modern uses have introduced new methods of derivation, different word stresses and foreign sounds (e.g. the /g/ in /kungris/ 'congress' and some English-French diphthongs, though not written). Loan-translation is also responsible for extending the semantic and collocational ranges of lexical items. For instance, the items /sibāq/ 'race' and /tasalluh/ 'arming' have existed in the language for a long time, but they have never before come into a nominal structural relation as modifier and modified /sibāq at-tasalluh/ 'armsrace', nor, of course, /khatt/ 'line' and /sākhin/ 'hot' as in /khatt sākhin/ 'hot line'.

As far as stylistic developments are concerned, it can be said that journalists are the most active in introducing calques in MSA. Their coinages gain wider circulation since they occur in every daily issue. Their unique position in addressing the masses accounts for the quick adoption of their usages.

e.g. /safīr fawqa al-9ādah/	'an ambassador extraordinary'
/wazīr bilā wizārah/	'minister without portfolio'
/warā' al-kawālīs/	'behind the scenes'
/kasr al-jalīd/	'breaking the ice'

/siyāsāt at-tawassuḡ/	'expansionist policy'
/taṣṡīd al-mawqif/	'to aggravate the situation'
/al-kurah fī marmā at-taraf al-'akhar/	'the ball in the other side's court'
/nuḡṡat al-'iltiqā/	'meeting point'
/naql ad-dam/	'blood transfusion'
/kullila masḡahum bin-najāh/	'their effort was crowned with success'
/al-lamasāt al-'akhīrah/	'finishing touches'
/'akhadhā naṡīb al-'asad/	'take the lion's share'
/qatl al-waqt/	'killing time'
/'umūr ḡājilah/	'urgent affairs'

Further, 'Ibrahīm al-Yāzījī has observed in Lughāt al-Jarā'id (67) that the tendency to use the conditional /'in/, /law/ and the temporal /'idhā/ with the meaning of 'whether' was a result of literal renderings of Western stylistic models.

e.g. /su'ila al-wazīr ḡammā 'idhā tamma at-tawaṡṡul 'ilā 'ittifāq/  
'the minister was asked whether an agreement had been reached'.

Stylistic borrowings have developed certain syntactic structures in MSA.

e.g. /ḡabathan 'antaziru al-'anā fa-najmī laysa yaṡluḡu/ (adverb in primary position) 'in vain do I wait as my star does not rise' (an expression used by Nāzik al-Malā'ikah in her Dīwān 'anthology' ḡashīqtu al-Layl).

/innī ṡhakirun laka hādhā/ (the use of the gerund)  
'I am thankful to you for this'

The prepositional phrase /min nāhiyah/ 'on the one side' is often used as a complex conjunction as in /min nāhiyah ..... wamin nāhiyatin 'ukhrā/ which is a direct translation of 'on the one hand ..... and on the other ..... Similarly, the use of the conjunction /wa/ 'and' to join consecutive nouns or adjectives is often limited in MSA to the position between the last two items.

e.g. /zurtu Lubnān Sūrya al-ḡIrāq wal-Kuwayt/  
'I visited Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Kuwait'.

In CA, the conjunction is inserted between every two items.

These syntactic, lexical and stylistic developments gave rise to some pessimistic predications as to the future of the Arabic language. For example, Stetkevych thinks that Arabic is moving away from both the Classical and the colloquial languages. While retaining the essential morphological structure of Classical Arabic, syntactically and above all stylistically, it is coming ever closer to the form and spirit of the large supragenealogical family of Western culture-bearing languages. Provided Modern Arabic remains in that sphere, it may take no more than two or three generations for it to become a highly integrated member of the Western cultural linguistic family, sharing fully in a common modern linguistic spirit. The Arabic syntax will then have undergone far reaching changes dictated by modern thought dynamics. The categories of the verbal and the nominal sentences will not be the main syntactical characteristics. Instead, the notion of meaning-stress will dictate the order of sentence elements. Finally, Stetkevych predicts that this will suppose a shift in attitude from the formalistic grammatical one to a dynamic stylistic one. (68)

To sum up, despite its 'slight' divergence from CA, MSA is generally accepted as the only and most practical solution to the spectro-glossic dichotomy in the Arab world, at least for the next decade or two. Contrary to those who predict that MSA will finally drift away from CA, there is enough evidence that with the spread of education, the revival of the traditional cultural heritage of the Arabs and the increasing interest both nationally and individually in translation, MSA will slowly but gradually become Classicized

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## NOTES

- (1) Karl Krumbacher, Das Problem Der Modern Griechischen Schriftschprache, Munich (1902), as quoted in Muhammad al-Zaghlūl, " 'Izdiwājiyyat al-Lughah" in al-Lisān al-ʿArabī (1981).
- (2) William Marçais, "La Diglossie Arabe", in L'Enseignement Public, Vol. 97, 1930, as quoted by al-Zaghlūl, Ibid.
- (3) Ferguson (1959) pp. 325-40.
- (4) Ibid.
- (5) Frayhah (1952), p. 14.
- (6) al-Mutawa (1974), p. 50.
- (7) Snow, p. 3.
- (8) Bakalla, p. 87.
- (9) For more on Fück's hypothesis, see Fück, Arabiya.
- (10) Ferguson (1978) p. 11.
- (11) Ibid, p. 51.
- (12) Rabin, pp. 19-38.
- (13) See A. Jefferey, The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān, Borada, 1938.  
Also, al-Maghribī, al-'Ishtiqāq wal-Ta9rīb, pp. 27-9.
- (14) 'Ibrāhīm al-Sāmirrā'ī, Fiqh al-Lughah al-Muqāran, Beirut Dār al-ʿIlm Lilmālayīn, 1968, pp. 27-8.
- (15) Ibid.
- (16) 'Anīs (1970) p. 222.
- (17) Ibid, pp. 220-1.
- (18) Ibid.
- (19) 'Ibn Khaldūn, p. 344.
- (20) Stetkevych, p. 58. Also, al-Ṣayyādī, p. 533.
- (21) Fishman et al, in Hornby, pp. 116-17.
- (22) For more on the same subject, see Haim Blanc, "Arabic", pp.501-6 and John Spencer, "Colonial Language Polices ..." pp. 537-45, both in Sebeok, (1971).
- (23) Bentahila (1983), p. 156.
- (24) al-ʿAlam (1957), as quoted by Zartman, p. 158.

- (25) 'Anīs (1960) pp. 64-71.
- (26) Frayhah (1955), pp. 183-96.
- (27) Fahmī, p. 10.
- (28) al-Jundi, pp. 84-5.
- (29) al-Husrī, p. 84.
- (30) Stetkevych, pp. 79-81.
- (31) Snow, pp. 3-4.
- (32) Lakhdar (1976) p. 55.
- (33) Tāha Husayn as quoted by Stetkevych, p. 80.
- (34) 'Ahmad 'Amin, "Hājat al-9Ulūm al-9Arabiyyah 'ilā al-Tajdīd".  
in Majma9 (1927) pp. 481 ff.
- (35) Chejne (1978) p. 34.
- (36) Hanna and Gries, p. 173.
- (37) Laroui , p. 91.
- (38) al-Toma (1957) p. 165.
- (39) See Kaye, pp. 347-91.
- (40) 'Anīs Frayhah, 'Isma9 ya 9Alī, Beirut , 1956.
- (41) -----al-Lahja wa-'Uslūb Dirāsatiḥā, Cairo, 1954.
- (42) Chejne (1969), p. 167, 198, 201-2.
- (43) al-Kasimī in al-Lisān al-9Arabī, (1981), p.9.
- (44) Haim Blanc uses the term 'Educated' in his article "Stylistic Variations in Spoken Arabic : a Sample of Interdialectal Educated Conversations", in C. Ferguson (ed.) Contributions to Arabic Linguistics, Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1960.
- (45) al-Kasimi (1979), p. 32.
- (46) Ibid, p. 34.
- (47) al-Toma (1970) p. 693.
- (48) Zartman, p. 125.
- (49) Khan, p. 1, 27.
- (50) Chejne (1969), p. 119.
- (51) For more examples see M. Jawād al-Mabāḥith al-Lughawiyyah fī al-9Irāq, Cairo, 1955.
- (52) Chejne (1969), p. 175.
- (53) Bakalla, p. 93.



- (54) Translated from al-9Aqqād, pp. 145-6.
- (55) al-'Afghānī, pp. 157-69.
- (56) It is believed that the whole problem was brought into focus by G. Spitta in his book Contes Arabes Modernes (Leiden & Paris) 1883.
- (57) Taymūr, p. 184.
- (58) Frayhah (1955) p. 93.
- (59) Spitta, as quoted by Willmore, p. XIV.
- (60) Ibid, pp. 188 ff.
- (61) E. Murqis, "al-9Arabiyyah al-9Āmmah", in Majma9 (1943) pp. 30-43.
- (62) Gibb, p. 17.
- (63) 'Ahmad Lutfī al-Sayyid, al-Jarīdah (1913), the translation is by Yūsif Mahmūd, "The Glottal Stop in Middle Arabic", in al-Lisān al-9Arabi (1981), p. 52.
- (64) Tawfiq al-Hakīm as quoted by Mahmūd (note 63), Ibid.
- (65) 'Ibrāhīm al-Yāzījī, Lughat al-Jarā'id, Cairo, 1901.
- (66) Jurjī Zaydān al-Lughah al-9Arabiyyah Kā'in in Hay, Cairo, 1904.
- (67) See his Lughat al-Jarā'id.
- (68) Stetkevych, pp. 121-2.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### LEXICAL DEFICIENCY

#### 4.1 Introduction:

".... if names be not correct, language is not in accordance with the truth of things. If language be not in accordance with the truth of things, affairs cannot be carried on to success ...."

(Confucius 500 B.C.) (1)

One cannot deal with the problems of translating from English into Arabic without discussing how Arabic copes with lexical deficiency, particularly in the areas dealing with modern theoretical and applied sciences, contemporary philosophy, politics, international legislation, journalism and the like. This particular issue was raised during a recent seminar on "The History of Arab Sciences" (Kuwait, December, 10-14, 1983). The scholars participating in the seminar identified the main problem of using Arabic as a scientific language at the higher levels of education as being the scarcity of original text books and above all the lack of specialized vocabulary even in the fields of the humanities. It was also pointed out that Arabization seems to be a laissez faire activity run on the basis of individual initiatives, and that if it continues in this disorganized manner, the time will come when Arab scientists may find it difficult to understand each other due to the inconsistency in using scientific terms.

According to Chejne, the process of coining new words began to gain momentum over a century ago, when it was realized that the language was badly undernourished due to a long period of sterility, under the Ottomans and thereafter the European colonialists. (2)  
Considering the literary and scientific renaissance which was a natural outcome of the cultural contact between the Arabs and the

West, and the continuing discoveries in practically all disciplines, it was necessary that the Arabic language should receive new ideas with the accompanying new jargon. In this manner, a great many words made their way into the language; some were incorporated in their original form while others were given Arabic equivalents from mediaeval literature or by the coining of neologisms on the basis of Arabic roots. However, as was predicted decades ago by the well-known lexicographer and member of the Syrian Language Academy Mustafā al-Shihābī, the process of integrating foreign expressions into Arabic was and still is mostly undertaken on the initiatives of individuals. Consequently, with the absence of an active higher co-ordinating body coupled with the lack of established principles, the problem has centred not so much on what to incorporate as how to do it and even further still, how to standardize the created terminology and ensure its long-term use.

#### 4.2 The Problem of Acceptance

A large number of newly-created terms never gained acceptance or fell out of use soon after their inception by the language academies. Instead, loanwords became better established through recurrent usage: e.g.

<u>FOREIGN TERM</u>	<u>PROPOSED ARABIC EQUIVALENT</u> <sup>(3)</sup>	<u>EQUIVALENT IN USE</u>
'gear'	/turs/	/gīr/
'choke'	/khāniq/	/chūk/
'catalyst'	/haffaz/	/katalīst/
'compressor'	/dāghit/ or /mukaththif/	/kumbrīsūr/
'geology'	/ʕilm al-'ard/ or /ʕilm al-halak/ <sup>(4)</sup>	/jilūjyā/
'antenna' or 'aerial'	/al-hawā'iy/	/'antīnā/ or /'īryal/
'camera'	/'ālat taswīr/	/kāmīrā/
'autobus'	/hāfilat rukkāb/	/'utubīs/
'helicopter'	/tā'irah samtiyyah/ or /ʕamūdiyyah/	/hīlūkuptar/
'ceramics'	/khazaf muzajjaj/	/sirāmīk/ <sup>(5)</sup>
'garage'	/mir'āb/	/karāj/
'radar'	/mustashʕir/	/rādār/
'maillot' (F)	/kīswah/ or /thawb sibāhah/	/mayūh/

<u>FOREIGN TERM</u>	<u>PROPOSED ARABIC EQUIVALENT</u>	<u>EQUIVALENT IN USE</u>
'scrap'	/khurdah/	/sikrāb/
'tableau' (F) (i.e. dashboard)	/lawhat tahakkum/	/tablūh/
'bourgeoise' (F)	/at-tabaqah al-wustā/	/burjwāziyyah/
'malaria'	/al-bardā/	/malāryā/
'studio'	/muhtaraf/	/stūdyū/
'folklore'	/'adab sha9bī/	/fuluklūr/
'blouse'	/sidār/	/blūzah/
'bamboo'	/khayzurān/	/bāmbū/
'corset'	/mishad/	/kūrsīh/
'kiosk'	/zillah/	/kushk/
'rally'	/sibāq/	/rālī/ <u>or</u> /sibāq rālī/

The main reasons behind such a phenomenon can be summed up in the following:

4.2.1 To have access to modern science, one has to translate reference books or read them in the original. The literature which ought to be translated is too massive, so massive indeed that by the time it is in print, most of it will be outdated. The great number of scientific and technical terms that are produced every day in the industrial and post-industrial countries in a multitude of languages make it very difficult for Arabic to catch up. In contrast, Arabization is a relatively slow process and by the time final decisions are forwarded, the newly-coined equivalent may well be an odd synonym to an easily available transliterated loanword. Further, achieving a satisfactory scientific Arabic language is an exacting task which requires a larger number of personnel than the few local talents available at present. To achieve such a goal also presupposes an overall cultural, economic and political co-ordination, together with a standardized educational system throughout the area. To this end, some Arabists have suggested the adoption of wholesale foreign terms as an immediate remedy to the current chaotic situation. Others have questioned the futility of the process of coining new terms 'plodding its weary way' in an age when over 8,000 new terms are coined every year, apart from

hundreds of thousands of terms which have been coined previously.

With this in mind, Saleem Khan writes in al-Lisān al-ʿArabī,

"should not the developing nations adopt one of the advanced languages (preferably English) as the medium of instruction at the higher level as well as for research, instead of getting engaged in the laborious and maybe futile process of translating the knowledge and its attendant terms generated by the advanced world, and consequently always remain behind because of the tiring and time-consuming intermediate process?" (6)

4.2.2 There is no single linguistic or scientific body that is in charge of coining the required technical or scientific terms in Arabic. Terminology is derived from organisations and scholars such as:

- a. Universities and ministries of education in the Arab world.
- b. Arabic language academies in Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad and Amman.
- c. Lexicographers who compile general or specialized monolingual, bilingual or trilingual dictionaries, mostly on a commercial basis.
- d. Writers, translators and journalists who publish books and articles on various subjects, often creating their own lexicons without recourse to the methodologies adopted by the language academies.

Thus, for example, the geometrical term 'vertical angle' is translated as /zāwiyah shāqūliyyah/ in Syria, /zāwiyah 9amūdiyyah/ in Egypt, /zāwiyah qā'miah/ in Kuwait and /az-zāwiyah ar-ra's/ by the Egyptian Language Academy.<sup>(7)</sup> The problem arises from the fact that expatriate teachers from Syria or Egypt in Kuwait, for example, may not be familiar with the geometrical terms used in Kuwait and in consequence the teaching process may be affected.

4.2.3 The continuing linguistic controversy between the innovators and the purists (classicists) over the Arabic language. The former advocate the practice of free borrowing from foreign languages to meet the ever-increasing need for scientific and technical terminology; the latter protest against words of foreign derivation and urge the use of pure items revived or derived from Classical Arabic. This very controversy has been the main reason for the inconsistency often realized in modern Arabic lexicology. As a result, several technical terms which all fit one definition may still be current, or a given scientific term may have different meanings for different experts.

4.2.4 Spectroglossia: as a general rule, all scientific and technical terms should be coined in Standard Arabic. However, sometimes when a lexicographer or a writer does not find an equivalent for a foreign technical term in the standard language or he is not familiar with one that exists in it, he reverts to his mother dialect and uses a word that might not be understood by the speakers of the other Arabic dialects. Thus when an Egyptian scientist or lexicographer coins a term or translates a foreign technical term, he may choose an Arabic word well-known in Egypt whereas an Algerian scientist might translate the same foreign term by a different term taken from literary Arabic used in Algeria. Thus we end up with two different terms and the possibility that an Algerian reader cannot grasp what an Egyptian scientist talks about and so on. For example, for the word 'note-book' we may find the following equivalents: (8)

/daftar/  
/kurrās/ or /kurrāsah/  
/mudhakkirah/  
/mufakkirah/  
/kunnāsh/

For the word 'check-up room' or 'diagnosis room' we may encounter

/ghurfat tashkhīṣ/  
/ghurfat fahs/  
/ghurfat kashf/  
/ghurfat kasht or qash9/  
/ghurfat 'ikhtibār/

'pact', has the following translations:

/mithāq/  
/'ittifāqiyyah/  
/hilf/ or /tahāluf/  
/ḡaḡd/ or /taḡāḡud/

for 'thermometer'

/miqyās harārah/  
/maḡar/  
/miḡar/  
/mustaḡar/

for 'metallic'

/mīḡalīk/  
/filizzī/  
/maḡdanī/

for 'calorie'

/siḡr/ (in Egypt)  
/siḡrah/ (in Iraq)  
/ḡurayrah/ (in Syria)

In botany, 'maize' is called /dhurah shāmiyyah/ in Egypt, /dhurah safra/ in Syria and /dhurah masriyyah/ in Iraq. Even basic terms in linguistics have several Arabic equivalents:  
e.g. 'linguistics' is translated as:

/ḡilm al-ḡarūd/  
/ḡilm al-luḡḡah/  
/ḡilm al-lisāniyyāt/  
/ḡilm al-'alsun/

for 'morpheme'

/mūrfīm/  
/wahdah sawtiyyah/  
/sakrūnī mustaqir/  
/ʿāmil siḡḡah/

for 'prefix'

/sadr/  
/sābiqah/  
/kāsiḡah/  
/mustaqbil/

for 'phonology'

/funulūjya/  
/ʿilm waza'if al-'aswāt/  
/ʿilm al-'aswāt at-tashkīlī/  
/ʿilm at-tashkīl as-sawtī/

for 'synonymy'

/taʿāruḡ/  
/tawārud/  
/mujāwarah/  
/tarāduḡ/

for 'semantics'

/ʿilm as-sīma'  
/ʿilm al-maʿānī/  
/ʿilm ad-dalālah/  
/as-simantik /

Due to their impoverished vocabulary, local dialects are much more prone to importing foreign terms by direct borrowing.



A look at the daily newspapers in Kuwait, for example, will clearly show that such terms are stealthily conquering the MSA.,

e.g. 'skin lotion'	/skin lūshin/
'boots'	/'abwāt/
'soul songs'	/'aghānī as-sūl/
'soiree'	/swarīh/
'shopping centre'	/shubing santar/
'remote control'	/rimūt kuntrūl/
'motor'	/mūtūr/
'element'	/'ilimant/
'crystal'	/krīstāl/
'block'	/blūk/

#### 4.2.5 The Multiplicity of Linguistic Sources:

Previous political domination, economic, demographic and geographical factors have made French the second language in the Arab countries of North Africa and English assumes this role in the Arab countries of the Middle East. Thus we have ended up with two languages as sources of our scientific and technical terms. Although these two use a lot of terms that include the same Greek or Latin elements, yet, they belong to two different language families and have different ways of expression. This phenomenon has some side-effects. For instance, when English and French have two different names for the same thing or concept, and these names are borrowed or translated into Arabic, Arabic will have two different words instead of one:

e.g.	English	French
	'nitrogen'	= 'azote'
Arabic =	/naytrūjīn/	or /'āzūt/

Similarly, if one term is translated from English and another from French, Arabic may possibly have two terms which are conceptually related, but morphologically different. For example, in Syria,

the French term 'porte valve' is translated as /ḥāmilat as-ṣammām/  
'valve holder' and in Egypt, the equivalent English term is  
translated as /thughr as-ṣammām/ 'the valve opening or harbour'. (9)

The translations of some members of a word family from the English terminology and others from the French often leads to breaking related concepts into fortuitous pieces and to confusion. Even when Arab scientists or linguists adopt one source language, duplication in technical terminology cannot be completely avoided. This is due to the fact that duplication might originate in the source language(s) itself(ves). Thus, the word 'physician' in French means 'a scientist working in physics', whereas the same word in English means a 'practitioner of medicine' or a 'doctor'. In the case of English, American and British scientists might give two different terms to the same object or concept. Consequently two Arabs using two different textbooks, American and British are bound to produce two different terms for the same object. For example, where American physicists talk about an 'electronic tube', their British colleagues use 'electronic valve'. 'Tube' and 'valve' have two different equivalents in Arabic and thus we have two terms, namely /'unbūbah 'aliktrūniyyah/ and /ṣammām 'aliktrūnī/ (10)

Nevertheless, the multiplicity of linguistic sources may also prove to be advantageous. For example, the English word 'head' in engineering has the literal equivalent of /ra's/ in Arabic. Yet the actual meaning which is 'the energy derived from a single liquid weight unit is better expressed by the French equivalent 'charge' which has the Arabic equivalent /shuhnah/.

Nowadays, synonyms and polysemes in Arabic are another source of trouble in the creation of technical terminology. Arabs have always considered the existence of synonyms in their language a sign of richness and a unique characteristic of their mother tongue. Thus they boast of having 500 synonyms for the word 'lion', 300 for 'snake', 80 for 'honey', and 50 for 'sword'. (11)

It goes without saying that in creative literary expression, richness of vocabulary is advantageous, but in scientific and technical literature it is both advantageous and disadvantageous. On the one hand, synonymy might serve as a means of precision when each synonym is designated to denote a slightly different concept. This is normal practice among authors of technical works who may need to redefine an existing term in order to express a new concept, for after all, according to Jakobson, synonymy does not always mean complete equivalence. <sup>(12)</sup> Thus for example, words such as /tajammu9/, /jamā9ah/, /mujtama9/, /majmū9ah/ and /jam9/ which are synonymous can be used as different translations for 'reunion', 'multitude', 'assembly', 'group' and 'gathering' respectively. In other words, absolute synonyms that have identical semantic and grammatical functions in both languages are rare. This is expressed by Nida in his three semantic presuppositions:

1. No word has exactly the same meaning in two different languages.
2. There are no complete synonyms.
3. There are no exact correspondences between related words in different languages. <sup>(13)</sup>

Likewise the well-known Arab philologist Abū-Hilāl al-9Askarī attempts in his book al-Furuq fi al-Lughah, to prove that synonymy does not exist in the language and that each morpheme has a separately distinguished meaning. <sup>(14)</sup>

On the other hand, synonymy might be a handicap and lead to confusion when several synonyms are used to express the same technical concept. For example, the word 'gap' was translated by the three Language Academies as: /furjah/, /fajwah/ and /fushah/. <sup>(15)</sup> 'breed' was given the following equivalents: <sup>(16)</sup>

/yunshi'/	/yafqas/	/yalid/	/yastawlid/
/yurabbī/	/yansil/	/yuntij/	

for 'centrifugal':	/'intibādhīy/	For 'indentation':	/tahzīz/
	/'amarkaziy/		/tafrīd/
	/lamarkaziy/		/tathlīl/
	/tārid/		/tasnīn/
			/tadrīs/

An interesting example is furnished by the profusion of synonyms for the technical term 'brake'. Mustafā al-Shihābī counts at least 11 neologisms coined for this device: (17)

e.g.

1. /kammāhah/ from /kamaḥa/ 'to pull in a horse' (proposed by the Egyptian Academy).
2. /mūqif/ (in Iraq).
3. /mikbah/ (in Syria)
4. /Lijām/ in al-Najjārī's French-Arabic Dictionary.
5. /hakamah/ in Belot's Dictionnaire Français-Arabe
6. /ḍābitah/
7. /kābitah/ in Elias's English-Arabic Dictionary
8. /mīqāf/
9. /farmalah/ (colloquial)
10. /firān/ (Syrian)
11. /māsik (Syrian).

Synonymy in the source language can also be equally problematic. The French words 'conversation', 'propos', 'entretien' are all translated by the Arabic equivalent /ḥadīth/, though the SL items are used in different contexts with different implications. Likewise, the words 'bookshop', 'bookstore' and 'library' are all rendered in Arabic by the word /maktabah/.

Synonymy in Arabic is due partly to the fact that Arabic has a very long tradition, and new names of the same thing live side-by-side as synonyms, and partly to the fact that Arabic has been the cultural medium of a great number of peoples for centuries. Another source of synonymy is the neglect of the Arabic lexicological heritage by modern lexicographers. A humorous example is the word 'pyjama' which raised a controversy in many Arabic linguistic

circles. Many translations and explanatory equivalents were suggested, and after the matter settled down to a mere transliteration of the word, it was discovered that an Arabic word already existed, namely 'manamah' which is more meaningful, precise and fits nicely in the morphological patterns of Arabic. (18)

In this respect we might also mention the phenomenon which has been called by ʿAbd-al-ʿAzīz bin ʿAbdullah 'translation from Arabic into Arabic' (19) Many terms were translated or transliterated from English or French with traces of foreign pronunciation though such terms were originally borrowed from Arabic, e.g.

<u>FOREIGN TERM</u>	<u>ARABIC ORIGIN</u>	<u>CURRENT FORM IN USE</u>
'guitar'	/qīthārah/	/gītār/ or /jītār/
'sofa'	/suffah/	/kanabah/
'tambourine'	/tanbūr/	/duff/
'admiral'	/'amīr al-bahr/	/'admirāl/

4.2.6 The problem is further exacerbated by the fact that quite a large number of institutions of higher education in the Arab world use a given foreign language as the medium of instruction. As will be discussed in Chapter Seven this is a result of the steady increase in the number of academic or professional people trained abroad in foreign languages other than Arabic, the lack of original or translated books and the non-standardized process of coining new terminology.

4.2.7 Further still, some translators who are engaged in the process of Arabization often have a scant knowledge of Arabic lexical and morphological traditions. Such people often search in their local dialects for any available equivalents, create their own innovations or merely transliterate the foreign term into Arabic without being aware that a number of such terms may have already been translated by the academies or other linguistic bodies.

Consequently, the actual decisions are taken by the man on the spot, i.e. the writer, the translator and the lecturer. Unfortunately, some of these individuals depend on their personal knowledge of English and Arabic - which is often far from a high level of proficiency - in coining new terminology. This is aggravated by the fact that publishing and distribution of books face a lot of political and technical difficulties in the Arab world. For example, despite the active role played by ALECSO's (Arab League Educational Cultural and Scientific Organization) Bureau for the Co-ordination of Arabization in organizing conferences and seminars on the problems of Arabization, the official periodical published by the Bureau al-Lisān al-ʿArabī suffers from a meagre distribution and can hardly be located in the Arab libraries by researchers and interested Arabists. In the same manner, scientific publications are relatively limited, and many specialists, particularly university professors, prefer to publish their researches and papers in widely-known Western journals. This is likely to create a problem of cultural seclusion among Arab intellectuals. As a result, specialists in all disciplines keep on creating new terms that are either not understood by other specialists in the same field, or are rejected in favour of other equally short-lived private neologisms. Duplication is thus likely to occur in vast quantity since lexicographers and coiners of technical glossaries are not aware of their counterparts' work in other Arab countries.

#### 4.3 Methodologies and Problems of Lexical Innovation in Arabic

The question of the ability of the language to meet modern needs has been a point of much controversial discussion. While it has been generally recognised that Arabic is not properly equipped to meet present-day needs, the question has remained as to whether or not Arabic has the resources that would enable it to become a living and workable means of expression at all levels. The controversy can better be seen in connection with the methods employed in the creation of neologisms which include derivation, (20) semantic extension, compounding and transliteration. The criterion

governing the preference of any method to another depends to a great extent on the semantic and morphological nature of the language. For example, compared to Arabic, English is a somewhat transparent language in which morphological relations are easy to

analyse: e.g. teacher - teach(v) + er (suffix)  
pollution - pollute (v) + ion (suffix)  
ultraviolet - ultra (prefix)+ violet (adj.)

whereas in Arabic, most words are of a different type of structure.

For instance, the word معلم /mu9allim/ 'teacher' cannot be analysed into \*معل /mu9al/ + م /m/. The derivational patterns of Arabic involve changes in the whole structure of the word according to fixed patterns. The acceptability of a derived word-form is governed by the ability of the new form to match one of the patterns of the ideal paradigm. Unlike Arabic, derivational patterns in English can be achieved by direct prefixation or suffixation. As a result, in English long words can be treated by affixation and compounding without any semantic difficulty. For example, such words as 'antidisestablishmentarianism' and 'transubstantiation' are difficult to render by one word in Arabic.

English also differs from many languages, including European languages in "having a much greater propensity to swallow foreign words raw, as it were than to translate them". (21)

In English, borrowing has been the most important source of new words. So extensive has it been, that by far the greater part of the present-day English vocabulary is made up of borrowed rather than native words. On the other hand, Arabic is like German in its preference for loan-translations or calques to direct borrowing; it also prefers indigenous Arabic neologisms or what is known as 'derivation by analogy' and semantic extension. As will be shown later, there is a strong tendency in Arabic to give the highest priority to the rebirth of old terms by semantic extension and derivation by means of fixed morphosemanthemes or moulds. Transliteration and the formation of compound lexemes are only used as a last resort when all other methods fail to supply an Arabic equivalent.

#### 4.3.1 Semantic Extension and Rebirth of Obsolete Terms

Every language employs certain methods for expanding its vocabulary from an existing stock. This is feasible since like all living phenomena, words in language are subject to change. The meaning of a given lexical item may change, develop or disappear completely over the years.

Semantic extension is not a peculiarity of Arabic. Modern languages such as English, French and Spanish revive old Greek and Latin words with new meanings especially in the formation of medical and technical terminology. For example, the word 'helicopter' comes from the Greek words 'helikos' meaning 'spiral' and 'pteron' meaning 'wing'. Likewise, 'aquaplane' and 'hydroplane' are used for two different types of aircraft, though both 'aqua' and 'hydor' mean 'water' in *Latin and Greek respectively*.

Semantic changes and developments are an old process in the Arabic language. From pre-Islamic times until the present, the changes in the meanings of words have been so great that it now requires a special philological background to be able to read and properly understand poets like 'Imru' al-Qays, (died 550 A.D.), al-Nābighah (died 604 A.D.) and 'Abū-Tammām (died 845 A.D.). Not that the vocabulary used by those poets would be utterly strange to a modern reader, but although words remain and retain their structure, their meanings are less stable. (22)

Nevertheless, words do not change simply to degenerate, as was the assumption of the traditionalists. There are positive aspects to the change too. Through the process of derivation from and rebirth of obsolete terms, new meanings and modes of expression are introduced into the language. Among the Arab philologists who were aware of this fact are 'Abū-ʿUbaydah in his book Majāz al-Qur'ān (23) as well as al-Zamakhsharī who in his lexicon Muʿjam 'Asās al-Balāghah distinguishes between the original meaning of a word and its developed metaphorical connotations, (24)



On the other hand, al-Suyūṭī in his book Muṣṭarak al-'Aqrān fī 'Alfāz al-Qur'ān points out that part of the miracle of the Qur'ān lies in the fact that "a given word can be used in twenty contexts with more or less different meanings". (25) According to 'Abū-Ḡubaydah the very name of the Holy Book /Qur'ān/ is a semantic extension not only of the common meaning of /qara'a/ 'to read' but also in the sense which was used by the poet ḠAmr 'Ibn Kulthūm (lived during the 6th century A.D.) as 'conceiving a baby'. The Qur'ān in this sense is the container of /sūras/ 'verses'. (26)

The existence of polysemes and /'addād/ (i.e. words which have two opposite meanings) is among the major factors which extend the range of semantic extension in Arabic. In Classical Arabic, a word like /fataha/, for example, aside from meaning 'to open' was used metaphorically as equivalent to 'to conquer'. Another meaning of /fataha/ is 'to give' or 'to bestow' as it is used in the Qur'ānic verse: "/wa-law 'anna 'ahla al-qurā 'āmanū wattaqu Lafatahnā Ḡalayhim barkātin mina as-samā'i wal-'ard/", i.e. "... and if the people of those towns have believed and feared Us, We would have surely bestowed upon them blessings from Heaven and earth." (27)

The Arabs have also used words like /bahr/ to mean 'sea', 'horse' and 'verse metre'; /ḡayn/ as 'eye', 'spring', 'cash money', 'spy' and 'continuous rain'. Some words were used with two opposite senses (i.e. /'addād/), e.g.

/al-ḡaqūq/	both 'pregnant' and 'non-pregnant woman'
/zanna/	'to doubt' and 'to know'
/qāfilah/	'a travelling group either on departure or on arrival'
/shawhā'/	'beautiful' or 'ugly'
/mawlā/	'master' and 'servant'
/ḡharīm/	'creditor' and 'debtor' (28)

In other cases, a word may be given a new meaning different from the original. For example, the word /rasm/ was used with the meaning of 'the remaining traces of ruins or camps on the ground'. Later, it was used to indicate any drawing on a paper or a flat surface. Likewise, the word /qitār/, originally meaning 'a file of camels' is nowadays used for 'train'.

In the same way, the word /qalam/, originally meaning 'sugar-cane' was used thereafter for 'sharpened cane-wood especially prepared for writing'. Now it refers to any device used for handwriting even when it is not made of wood (e.g. ink pen). (29)  
It has also come to mean: 'office', 'bureau' or 'department' as in:

/qalam/ { /at-tahrīr/ 'editing room'  
 { /at-tarjamah/ 'translation department'  
 { /al-murājaʿah/ 'checking, inspection or audit department'  
 { /al-murūr/ 'traffic control board'

The derived form /taqlīm/ is used in the sense of 'clipping' or 'trimming'

/taqlīm/ { /al-'azāfir/ 'trimming finger-nails' or 'manicure'  
 { /al-'ashjār/ 'pruning' or 'topping' of trees

However, we do not agree with el-Sheikh that the same root /qalam/ is the origin of such neologisms as

/'iqlīm/ 'province' or 'region'  
 /'iqlīmiyyah/ 'regionalism' (30)

This seems to be a far-fetched assumption.

The most common type of semantic extension is what is called /at-tas9īd/ or /at-tajrīd/ 'abstraction or conceptualization'. According to 'Anīs Frayḥah, each language has the capacity to elevate a concrete word to the abstract level through conceptualization, and,

"..... Arabic is not less equipped in this respect than some other languages. Who would nowadays associate the word /ʕaql/ 'reason' with a rope made of hair which was used to tie a camel's leg? Who would suspect a relationship between /majd/ 'glory' and the full belly of a beast; or that of /nafs/ 'soul' with the activity of breathing ..... All meanings have their first concrete, tangible stage, but with the progress of life and intellect, and considering the limited number of units, man finds himself obliged to use the old lexicon for new meanings by way of semantic extension." (31)

Although the process of abstraction of the language could be equally considered as a form of its metaphorization, this process should be distinguished from the strictly literary use of metaphor; the former is a somewhat permanent semantic development while the latter is a temporary, mostly individual extension.

Characteristic of the Qur'ānic tendency to conceptualize is the use of /dhāqa/'to taste' in the following complex metaphor: "/fa-'adhāqahā al-Lāhu libāsa al-ju9ī wal-khawf/" meaning "so God made her taste the garment of hunger and fear". (32) Another example of abstraction is the verb /washā/. Stetkevych mentions that the original meaning of this verb 'to embroider a garment' has passed through a first metaphorical extension as in /washā al-kalām biz-zūr/ 'to adorn one's words with falsehood', and then simply /washā al-kalām/ 'to embellish words ....'. A further extension with the preposition ← /bi/ produces the meaning 'to misrepresent'; 'to accuse falsely'; 'to betray or to defame'. In contemporary usage this last meaning becomes even more abstracted from concrete reference as in the sentence: /fa-qāla al-ghulam bisawt yashī bil-'ihtijāj 9alā sū'i muqābalatihā lahu/ 'the boy spoke with a voice betraying his protest against her bad reception". (33)

Other examples of abstraction include the following:

/yat9an/ 'to stab' is also used in the sense of 'impeach', 'contest a verdict or an election'.

/yatabalwar/ 'crystalize' is used in the phrase /tablwarat 'afakarūhu/ to mean 'his ideas developed into ..."

/yahzim/ 'to tie up' or to 'pack' is used in the phrase /yahzim 'amrah/ to mean 'to be resolute, firm'.

/'aghar/ 'a horse with a white spot on his forehead'. Now it is used in the phrase /Yawm 'aghar/ 'a white (i.e. happy) day'.

Semantic extension and revival of old terms is a good way for avoiding repetition and monotonous literal translations. For example, in his translation of Joyce's Ulysses, Tāha Mahmūd made use of a great many numbers of old terms from al-Harīri's Maqāmāt. In one of his articles in al-Bayān, he mentions the word /shaghara/ as a perfect example of avoiding unnecessary paraphrasing by reviving an old term. He uses this word as a suitable euphemistic translation for the following underlined words:

"...he trotted forward, and lifting his hind leg, pissed quick,  
short at an unsmelt rock" (34)

The word /shaghara/ in this context is a good, short and socially acceptable term whereby the translator managed to avoid unnecessary and rather embarrassing details.

In the case of basic words which are used repeatedly in different phrases, translation can be more interesting if each context was given an independent expression. Thus the word /ghattā/ 'cover' can be replaced in the following manner:

/sadda 9ajzan/ 'cover a deficit'

/'ajrā ribūrtājan/ 'cover a reportage'

/ʿammaṇa didda al-makḥāṭir/ 'cover risks'  
/ʿijṭāza masāfah/ 'cover a distance'  
/sadda ḥājah/ 'cover the need for'  
/9ālaja mawḏū9/ 'cover a subject' (in research)

In the same manner, instead of the usual translation of 'false' as /khāṭi/, one can create a variety of translations: e.g.

/riwayah khāṭi'ah/ 'false statement'  
/shahādat zūr/ 'false testimony'  
/yamīn kādhībah/ 'false oath'  
/ʿism musta9ār/ 'false name'  
/bārūkah/ 'false hair'  
/sadīq khā'in/ 'false friend'  
/saqf mu'aqqat/ 'false roof'  
/nashāz mūsīqiy/ 'false note (in music)'

Generally speaking, current practice shows that only a small portion of the vast accumulated vocabulary is used, and words listed in traditional dictionaries with half a dozen very different meanings are now generally limited to one or two. Outside the portion in general use, the ancient vocabulary provides a treasury of words which may be analogically reinterpreted to fit modern contexts.

#### 4.3.1.1 The Factors Contributing to Semantic Extension:

- a. Religion: According to 'Aḥmad 'Ibn Fāris, with the revelation of Islam, a considerable number of words in the language underwent a semantic shift in their meanings. <sup>(35)</sup> Certain words were created. Others were given new meanings different from those used in the Jāhiliyyah period, e.g.

/salāh/ 'prayer'  
/zakāh/ 'alms giving'  
/wudū'/ 'ablution'  
/dhikr/ 'incessant mention of God's name'  
/rajm/ 'stoning'

b. Economic and Political Development:

Islamic economic legislation brought in words such as /jibāyah/ and /makūs/ 'taxes' or 'duties' /bayt al-māl/ '(public) treasury', /darībat al-9ushr/ literally 'the one tenth tax'. Nowadays, a large number of words such as:

/intājiyyah/ 'productivity'	
/sharikah/ 'company'	/jard/ 'stock-taking'
/mu'assasah/ 'corporation'	/wadi9ah/ 'deposit'
/ihtiyātiy/ 'reserve'	/fā'idah/ 'profit'
/ra'smāl/ 'capital'	/mizāniyyah/ 'budget'

are being used or recreated for special purposes.

Likewise, political speeches, decrees and newspaper reports contribute in their turn to the metaphorical lexicon of the language. For example, the twentieth century has witnessed an unprecedented use of certain words in new contexts with new connotations. e.g.

/harb al-9isābāt/ 'guerilla warfare'  
/al-ghawgha'iyyah/ 'demagogy'  
/al-harb al-bāridah/ 'cold war'  
/arrajiyyah/ 'reactionism'  
/taqaddumiyyah/ 'progressivism'  
/mithāq/ 'charter'  
/al-kutlah ash-sharqiyyah/ 'the Eastern Block'  
/isti9mār/ 'colonization: though we prefer the transliterated form /'imbiryāliyyah/ 'imperialism'.  
/'intihāziyyah/ 'opportunism'  
/muwājahah/ 'confrontation'

The Egyptian revolution of 1919, for example, gave the word /fallāhun/ 'peasants' a positive connotation, whereas the 1952 revolution has brought with it new connotations to the words

/yamīn/ 'right', /yasār/ 'left', /wasat/ 'middle', /qawmiyyah/ 'nationalism'. Shortly after the 1973 war in the Middle East words such as /al-ḡubūr/ 'crossing', /at-tadāmun/ 'solidarity', /siyāsāt al-khutwah khutwah/ 'step by step policy', /aṣ-ṣumūd/ 'defiance' or 'resistance', etc. acquired new political associations never heard of before.

c. Linguistic Need:

The existence of synonyms and polysyms in the language may create a tendency to make use of the existing stock whenever the need arises to form a neologism. For example, the rise of the first philological studies in Arabic in the early centuries of Islam gave the incentive to some philologists to use words such as /ḡurūd/ 'prosody', /ṣarf/ 'inflection', /balāghah/ 'rhetoric', /tibāq/ 'antithesis', /fāḡil/ 'subject' or 'agent', /jazm/ 'apocopate form', /jinās/ 'assonance', etc, with special meanings never used before. In the same way, Arabic logic and philosophy brought with it new meanings to words such as: /ḡarad/ 'accident' or 'form', /māddah/ 'substance', /jawhar/ 'essence', /maqūlāt/ 'categories', /'istiqrā'/ 'induction', etc.

Dialectal effects can also be of significance in this respect. One might mention the word /thib/ 'jump' which was used in the Old Himyarite Arabic in the sense of 'to sit and relax'. Nowadays, the word /ḡaysh/ 'life' is used for 'rice' in the Gulf countries, and for 'bread' along the River Nile area.

In their effort to define the various forms of lexical development, the Egyptian and Syrian Academies approved of semantic extension as a useful way to provide new vocabulary for general as well as scientific use, particularly in cases where formal root derivation is difficult to apply. The Academy's view was that such an approach would check any further increase in the already unwieldy wealth of the Arabic lexicon. Therefore, among methods of lexical development, priority was given to the revival of classical words rather than the invention of non-

existent ones. (36) Yet some academics cautioned against the excessive use of such a process since it might prove to be relatively cumbersome in certain cases. The fact that a word is already in existence in an obscure dictionary does not absolve modern users from the necessity of learning it in its modern definition.

In addition, semantic extension has failed, in some cases, to have any immediate effect on the neologizing movement. Many words attained by this method have not gained literary or scientific acceptance. Some like the word /'irzīz/ whose old meaning is 'rain' or 'thunder', and to which the academic 'Ahmad al-'Iskandarī gave the modern meaning of 'telephone' even became a proverbial object of ridicule. Another good example, here, is the Egyptian Academy's attempt to form a concise term for 'skyscraper', one that would replace the composite calque: /nāṭiḥat saḥāb/. Three possible substitutes were suggested:

/turbāl/: originally meaning 'a high portion of a wall or a building'

/ḡuṭm/: 'a fortress' or 'a lofty building'

/ṣarḥ/: 'a castle' or 'a high structure'

After an excessively lengthy discussion which lasted through several sessions, the first two of the above terms were rejected by reason of their being etymologically of non-Arabic origin. Finally, the Academy adopted /ṣarḥ/, with the recommendation that, temporarily, it should be accompanied and explained by the already current /nāṭiḥat saḥāb/. Today, the only literary use made of /ṣarḥ/ with reference to 'skyscraper' is purely metaphorical in the poetic sense. (37)

In the same way, the Academy failed to introduce the old term /jammāz/ 'swift-footed ass or camel' for /trām/ 'tram-car' and the transliterated word was finally tolerated



by the Academy. The archaic term /ḡatī/ 'conduit of water or rivulet' suggested by some members to represent 'siphon' remained unused. Also interesting is /zafazāfah/ 'the sound of a violent wind' which never succeeded in replacing the transliterated word /mūtūsāykil/ 'motor-cycle'. (38)

Common usage is, after all, the determining factor in the success or failure of the process of semantic extension and the 'resurrection' of old terms. The following words have gained acceptance not so much by virtue of the Academy's prescriptive resolutions, as by frequent usage: e.g.

/jarīdah/, originally 'paper or skin-pieces used for writing'  
now, it is widely used for 'newspaper'

/muqāwalah/, originally 'negotiation'. Nowadays 'contracting'

/'iḡdām/ originally 'utter poverty'. Now it is 'execution'

/sawwāq/, originally 'driver of cattle'. Now 'a chauffeur'.

/'tibāḡah/, originally 'sword-manufacturing'. Currently it  
is used for 'printing'

/nukāf/ 'tumour on a camel's jaw'. Now it is used for the  
disease called 'parotitis'.

/yakwī/ 'to cauterize'; its current meaning is 'to press or  
iron clothes'.

/barq/ 'lightning'. Nowadays it is also used for 'telegraph'

/'hashīsh/ 'grass'. Now it is particularly used in reference  
to 'cannabis'.

/'rā'id/ 'one who seeks green patches for grazing animals'.

Now, used generally as a 'pioneer'.

/'ratānah/ 'the mixed sounds coming from a herd of camels'.

Nowadays it is used for 'speaking in foreign languages'

In some cases, it is not unusual for a given term to have a technical meaning co-existing with an older, less specialized one. e.g.

/zaraq/ 'blue', but also used for 'glaucoma'  
 /zurqah/ 'blue' or 'blueness', but also used for 'cyanosis'  
 /miftāh/ 'key', but also used for a piano or typewriter 'key',  
 a trumpet 'valve' and the 'peg' of a stringed instrument.  
 /qamīs/ 'shirt'; the verb /taqammaṣa/ 'to be dressed in a shirt'  
 is nowadays used in the sense 'to imitate the character  
 of someone else'  
 /kursiy/ 'chair' is also used with a different sense in the  
 title /'ustādh kursiy/ 'full professor'  
 /riyādah/ 'sport' is used in its derived form /riyādiyyāt/ to  
 mean 'mathematics'.  
 /musallah/ 'armed' is used in /khurasānah musallahah/ 'reinforced  
 concrete' which is a literal translation of the  
 French term 'beton arme'.  
 /dhabaha/ 'to slay' is used in its nominal form /dhabbah/ in  
 the medical phrase /dhabbah ṣadriyyah/ 'angina pectoris'  
 /dabbābah/, originally meaning 'crawling or creeping (of animals)'  
 Now it is 'a tank'  
 /talqīh/ 'impregnation' or 'pollenation'. Now it is also used  
 to stand for 'vaccination' or 'inoculation'.

#### 4.3.2 /al-'Ishtiqāq bil-Qiyās/ "Derivation by Analogy":

Arabic is an inflected language which operates by the root-  
 and-pattern type of word formation, the hallmark of Semitic languages.  
 Prefixes, infixes and suffixes combine with basic roots (biliteral,  
 trilateral, quadrilateral... etc.), forming neologisms which in some  
 cases can be easily identified with a basic semantic nucleus. The  
 majority of nouns and verb forms in Arabic, in fact, are derivationally  
 related to a lexical root, which is a word skeleton of three to five  
 consonants. A lexical entry in an Arabic dictionary, then, consists  
 of the lexical root, followed by its verbal and nominal derivatives. (39)

Roots usually consist of three consonants, e.g. /k/ + /l/ +  
 /m/ as in 'كلم' and in some cases of four: e.g. /b/ + /r/ + /h/ +  
 /n/ as in 'برهن'. These consonant sequences unpronounceable by  
 themselves have several general meanings. Thus the root \* /klm/

means 'something to do with speech'. However, roots cannot be used unless they are provided with vowels, and may be specifically defined only when in association with a particular vowel pattern: e.g. /kalimah/ 'word' or 'utterance' using the pattern (C<sub>1</sub>aC<sub>2</sub>iC<sub>3</sub>ah) where C<sub>1</sub>C<sub>2</sub>C<sub>3</sub> represent the three consonants of the root in relation to the surrounding vowels. Some patterns involve the affixation of additional consonants: e.g. /mutakallim/ 'spokesman' from the pattern (/muta/+ C<sub>1</sub>aC<sub>2</sub>C<sub>2</sub>iC<sub>3</sub>).

Mediaeval philologists recognized three types of derivation:

a. /al-'ishtiqaq al-'asghar/ 'minor derivation': this is characterized by the original order of the radicals (C<sub>1</sub>C<sub>2</sub>C<sub>3</sub>) not being changed in the formation of the derivatives although infixes may intervene between them. Thus from the radicals /k/, /t/, /b/ a number of words can be formed without altering the order of the radicals, e.g.

/kataba/ 'wrote'

/kutiba/ 'was written'

/katib/ 'writer'

/maktab/ 'office'

/maktabah/ 'library' or 'bookshop' and so on.

Some of these forms are derived from one another rather than linearly from the root. In any case, no matter how we analyse such words, the morphological and semantic relationships among the various derived forms are readily apparent.

b. /al-'ishtiqaq al-'akbar/ or /al-qalb/ 'Inversion': This is formed by shifting the original order of radicals. 'Ibn Jinnī (died 1002) was one of its early advocates.<sup>(40)</sup> The assumption underlying this principle is that sounds have close connection to meaning no matter how a radical is placed. For instance, /jbr/ conveys in its original form the concept of 'force' or 'strength'. This basic concept is always preserved, according to the theory, regardless of whether any of the radicals is found at the beginning, middle or end. Thus /jabr/ implies a relationship to /burj/ 'tower', /abjar/ 'corpulent' and /rajaba/ 'to be afraid'.<sup>(41)</sup>

In this way a number of words connoting strength or power can supposedly be derived according to the rules of minor derivation.

c. /al-'ishtiqaq al-kabir/ 'major derivation': this type of derivation was advocated by 'Ibn Sikkit (died 857) among others.<sup>(42)</sup> Its underlying principle reflects the assumption that different words possessing two identical radicals have some relationship in meaning despite the difference in pronunciation. Thus the word /rajama/ 'to stone a person to death' is related to /ratama/ 'to crush something' because the radicals /r/ and /m/ are common to both words.

Derivation by means of analogy was investigated by early Muslim philologists such as 'Abu-al-'Aswad al-Du'ali (died A.H. 67), 'Abu-9Ali al-Farisi (died A.H. 377) and his disciple 9Uthman 'Ibn Jinni (died A.H. 392). Particularly important is the role of 'Ibn Jinni in the final formulation of the criterion of analogy. His book al-Khasa' contains three chapters related to /qiyas/, besides frequent scattered allusions.<sup>(43)</sup> Generally speaking, the Kufan school, unlike the Basran gave its sanction to the process of derivation as a useful means for enriching the language. Its philologists went further in considering every spoken word as a representative of a certain pattern even when this pattern does not have any other occurrences.<sup>(44)</sup>

/Qiyas/ probably plays its most important role, however, during the philological revival that is taking place in our own day. It has been discussed and applied as a productive method in reviving and modernizing the Arabic language, by men of the Nahdah like Jurji Zaydan,<sup>(45)</sup> Mahmud Shukri al-'Alusi.<sup>(46)</sup> 'Ahmad Taymur,<sup>(47)</sup> 9Abd-al-Qadir al-Maghribi,<sup>(48)</sup> Sati9 al-Husri,<sup>(49)</sup> 'Isma9il Mazhar,<sup>(50)</sup> 9Abdullah Nadim,<sup>(51)</sup> Mustafa Jawad,<sup>(52)</sup> and others. Of these, probably the most dedicated to the cause of modernization of the language and the most consistent exponent of the analogical principle is 9Abd-al-Qadir al-Maghribi. He sees

the language as a sociological organism whose growth and evolution are analogous to the growth and evolution of a people or nation. In a similar way, the Arabic language emerged, grew and should continue to grow, both by derivation from Arabic roots /'ishtiqaq/ and by assimilation of foreign vocabulary /ta9riib/.

Derivation from existing Arabic roots has always been considered the most natural way of growth for the language. For example, using the radicals /q/, /t/, /l/, it is theoretically possible to derive as many as fourteen new verbs and nouns, <sup>(53)</sup> whose meaning is predictable from their derivational history. e.g.

/qatl/ 'manslaughter'  
/maqtaal/ 'murder'  
/qitaal/ 'fighting'  
/qattaal/ 'murderous', 'lethal'  
/maqtuul/ 'killed' or 'slain'  
/qaatala/ 'fight against'  
/taqaatala/ and /'iqatatala/ 'fight with one another'  
/qatila/ 'killer'  
/qatila/ 'murdered' (person)  
/muqatila/ 'fighter'

and many other formations can be added when the need arises. Thus a simple trilateral root offers almost inexhaustible possibilities. The some 44 verbal nouns which could be derived from the ground form of a hypothetically-used trilateral verb /fa9al/, should alone be a convincing, though startling, example of this purely theoretical flexibility of Arabic. <sup>(54)</sup> Husan Fahmī made an attempt to exploit this flexibility by creating extended derivations from the root /sahara/ to 'melt' or 'liquify' or 'fuse'. Fahmī managed to offer a list of derivatives from this root amounting to some 196 lexical items divided into verbs and nouns, and based on the full scale of the derivational verbal moulds. <sup>(55)</sup> According

to Wajīh 9Abd-al-Rahmān Arabic has more than 254 morpho-semanticemes of which only 30 are now being used to form neologisms. (56)

As a productive method for lexical innovation, derivation can also work backwards. In tracing the word back to its root, two steps are involved:

1. The term is given its analogical 'mould' /wazn/ or /qālib/ e.g. /tahrīd/ 'provocation' - /taf9īl/: (/ta/+ C<sub>1</sub> C<sub>2</sub> ī C<sub>3</sub>).
2. By eliminating affixes, the remaining letters can indicate whether the root is bi-tri- or quadri-literal. Thus the root of the above word is /harada/ 'provoke' - /fa9ala/.

The Egyptian Language Academy had attempted to define and develop the traditional /qawālib/ 'moulds', in order to fit modern scientific and technical neologisms. The decisions adopted can be referred to in the various editions of the journal Majallat Majma9 al-Lughah al-9Arabiyyah. However, in the following few pages we will attempt to pinpoint those moulds which have gained acceptance and wide use among scholars and lexicographers:

1. /maf9alah/ and /fi9alah/: for 'occupations':  
e.g. /bastanah/ 'horticulture'  
/masmakah/ 'fish-shop'  
/nihālah/ 'apiculture'  
/sina9ah/ 'industry'  
/tiba9ah/ 'printing'  
/sihafah/ 'journalism'  
/sifānah/ 'shipping'  
/wiraqah/ 'production of stationery'
2. /fa99al/: for names of 'professionals':  
/jarrāh/ 'surgeon'  
/tayyār/ 'pilot'  
/sawwāq/ 'chauffeur'

3. /fu9āl/: for 'diseases'
- e.g.            /ḵudhām/ 'leprosy'  
                   /zukām/ 'cold' or 'catarrh'  
                   /ru9āf/ 'epistaxis'
4. /fa9ālān/: for 'movement' and 'fluctuation'
- e.g.            /ṭayarān/ 'aviation'  
                   /sayālān/ 'liquefication'  
                   /nabadān/ 'pulsation'
5. For names of 'instruments', 'machines' and 'vessels'
- 5.1 /mif9āl/:
- e.g.            /mijhar/ 'microscope'  
                   /mis9ad/ 'elevator'  
                   /mirash/ 'atomizer'
- 5.2 /mif9āl/:
- e.g.            /midhya9/ 'radio'  
                   /misma9/ 'stethoscope'
- 5.3 /mif9alah/:
- e.g.            /mirwahah/ 'propeller'  
                   /mibraḵah/ 'telegraph'
- 5.4 /fa99āllah/:
- e.g.            /fattāhah/ 'opener'  
                   /qattārah / 'drip' (medical)  
                   /naffāthah/ 'jetplane'  
                   /dabbāḵah/ 'stabler'  
                   /thallājah/ 'refrigerator'
- 5.5 /fa9ilah/:
- e.g.            /qadhifah/ 'bomber'  
                   /bākhirah/ 'ship'  
                   /hāfilah/ 'bus'
- 5.6 /mufa9il/ or /mufa99il/:
- e.g.            /mufa9il/ 'reactor'  
                   /muharrik/ 'motor' or 'engine'  
                   /muwallid/ 'generator'
- 5.7 /mif9āl/:
- e.g.            /mityāf/ 'spectroscope'

/mismā9/ 'stethoscope'

/mithqāb/ 'drill'

6. Moulds designating 'locality'

6.1 /maf9al/:

e.g. /masna9/ 'factory'

/majma9/ 'academy'

/masrah/ 'theatre'

6.2 /mufa99al/:

e.g. /mudarraaj/ 'amphitheatre'

6.3 /maf9il/:

e.g. /mawqif/ 'parking lot'

6.4 /mafallah/:

e.g. /mahatta/ 'station'

7. /maf9al/ or /maf9alah/ 'for time or place'

e.g. /maktab/ 'office'

/mahjar/ 'infirmary' or 'quarantine'

/jalsah/ 'session'

8. /fa9īl/ 'for sounds':

e.g. /za'īr/ 'roar'

/safīr/ 'whistling'

/kharīr/ 'ripple' (of water) (57)

Aside from this sampling of specific moulds which, with their pronounced inherent connotations, facilitate modern derivations which reflect such generic connotations, one should be warned that the modern process of semantic enrichment of the Arabic language extends across all forms and moulds, sometimes in an undisciplined fashion. Moreover, the adoption of foreign loanwords often entails a breach of traditional patterns. For instance, a broadly used approach to lexical neologizing is that of deriving adjectives and abstract nouns by means of the /nisbah/



suffix i.e. /iyyah/ or what is grammatically called the 'technical or artificial noun'. (58)

e.g. /'iqlīmiyyah/ 'regionalism'  
/shiyū9iyyah/ 'communism'  
/shu9ūbiyyah/ 'nationalism'  
/kayfiyyah/ 'qualification' or 'way of doing things'  
/rūhāniyyah/ 'spiritualism'  
/hurūbiyyah/ 'escapism'  
/'asbaqiyyah/ 'priority'  
/mashrū9iyyah/ 'legitimacy'  
/9ishrīniyyāt/ '20's'  
/masrahiyyah/ 'theatrical play'  
/mattātiyyah/ 'elasticity'

Despite the classical rule that derivation should be made from verbal roots only, the Egyptian Academy sanctioned analogical derivation from concrete nouns (ontonomasia) particularly in scientific terminology. (59)

e.g. From 'Pasteur': /bastarah/ 'pasteurization'  
/mubastar/ 'pasteurized' /yubastir/ 'pasteurize'

From 'oxygen': /'aksada/ 'to oxidize'  
/ta'aksud/ 'oxidization' /muta'aksid/ 'oxidized'

From 'Galvani': /mukalfan/ 'galvanized'  
/kalfanah/ 'galvanization' /kalfana/ 'to galvanize'

From 'calcium': /takallasa/ 'to calcine'  
/takallus/ 'calcination'

From 'America': /muta'amrik/ 'Americanized'  
/ta'amruk/ 'Americanization' /ta'amraka/ 'to act like an  
American'

### 4.3.3 Compounding /an-Naht/:

According to 'Ibn Fāris (and al-Sayyūti) /an-naht/ or /at-tarkīb al-mazjī/ 'compounding' is:

".... the formation of a neologism by means of fusing and (or) eliminating the sounds and letters of two (or more) existing words. The meaning of the new lexical item is comprehensive of the meanings of the original two." (60)

Among the old exponents of the principle of /naht/ are 'Ibn Fāris (died 1000 A.D.) author of Muḥjam Maḥayīs al-Lughah, al-Thaḡalibī (A.H. 350-429) author of Kitāb Fiqh al-Lughah wa-Sirr al-ʿArabiyyah, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Sayyūti (A.H. 849-911) author of al-Muzhir,<sup>and</sup> Abū-ʿAlī al-Zāhir al-ʿUmānī in his book 'Abniyat al-Bāriḡīn ʿalā al-Manḥūt min Kalām al-ʿArab. 'Ibn Fāris, for example, traces the etymologies of compound words and concludes by saying that any word composed of more than three letters is a compound lexeme. Thus mistakenly, he considers words like /barqash/ 'name of a bird' and /balḡūm/ 'esophagus' to be compound lexemes, though in reality they are but developed forms of the trilateral or quadrilateral verb patterns. He even went further to consider the word 'jardaba' which is a transliterated Persian word meaning 'to cover one's food with one's hand' to be a compound consisting of /jadaba/ + /jaraba/. (61)

According to 'Aḥmad Ḥammād, classical philologists divided Arabic compound lexemes into four categories: (62)

- a. Verbal Compounds: The formation of a compound that expresses an action which is usually expressed in a phrase: e.g. /basmal/ to utter the invocation /bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm/ 'in the name of 'Allāh most Beneficent most Merciful'. Similarly: /hallala/ to say /lā 'ilāha 'illā 'Allāh/ 'there is no God but 'Allāh'

/sabhalā/ to say/ subhāna 'Allāh/ 'praise be to 'Allāh'.  
 /hamdala/ to say /al-hamdu li-'Allāh/ 'thanks be to 'Allāh'.  
 Also /harwal/ 'walk fast': from /haraba /'flee' +  
 /wallā/ 'run away'  
 /dahraja/ 'roll along': from /dahara/ 'drive away' +  
 /jarā/ 'run'.

As may be realized, the majority of these expressions are used for daily religious rites which are practiced repeatedly.

- b. Adjectival Compounds: The formation of a compound that bears the meaning of the adjective form of two morphemes: e.g. /barmā'iy/ 'amphibian' from /bar/ 'land' + /mā'/ 'water'  
 /sildīm/ 'strong-hoofed' from /sald/ 'stiff' + /sadam/ 'strike against'  
 /sahaslaq/ 'vehement of voice' from /sahala/ 'neigh' + /salaqa/ 'to utter a loud shout'  
 /'imma9ah/ 'a yes-man' from /'innī/ 'I am' + /ma9a/ 'with' or 'pro'.

- c. Nominal Compounds: e.g.  
 /Hadramawt/ from /hadara/ 'be present' + /mawt/ 'death'  
 /jalmūd/ 'a large rock' from /jalada/ 'to harden' + /jamada/ 'to congeal'.  
 /māhiyyah/ 'essence' from /mā/ 'what' + /huwa/ or /hiya/: both are pronouns.  
 /9abshamī/ 'sunworshipper' from /9abd/ 'worshipper' + /shams/ 'sun'  
 /majriyāt/ '(course of) events' from /mā/ 'what' + /jarā/ 'happen'

- d. Relative Compounds: The formation of a compound from two proper nouns by adding the relative suffix ى :

e.g. /tabarkhaziy/ 'a man coming from Tabaristān and Khawārizm'  
 /shafa9anti/ 'any code of ethics which is agreed upon by both al-Shāfi9ī and 'Abū-Hanīfah.

Generally speaking compounds are rather few in both Classical Arabic and the MSA. A brief review of some of the lexicons compiled by the Bureau for the Co-ordination of Arabization in Rabat will attest to that: (63)

TYPE OF LEXICON	TOTAL NUMBER OF ENTRIES	NUMBER OF TRANSLITERATIONS	NUMBER OF COMPOUNDS
Physics	5126	50	8
Petroleum	3802	78	5
MEDICINE	2305	Nil	Nil

Table 4.1 : Number of Compounds and Transliterated Entries in Three Lexicons of ALECSO'S Bureau for the Co-ordination of Arabization

Nowadays, most of the compound lexemes in Arabic are loanwords which are translated (literally) especially in the fields of chemistry, medicine, biology and physics.

e.g.

FOREIGN COMPOUND

'Libocedrus' (cedrus of Liban)  
 'sous-sol'  
 'amphibian'

ARABIC EQUIVALENT

/Lub'arz/ : /'arz/ + /Lubnān/  
 /tahturbah/ : /taht/ + /turbah/  
 /barmā'iy/ : /bar/ + /mā'/

'orthoptères'	/misjanāhiyyāt/ : /mustaqīm/ + /ʿajnihah/
'aerobic'	/hayhawāʿiy/ : /hay/ + /hawāʿ/
'electromagnetic'	/kahrūmaghnātīsiy/ : /kahrabāʿ/+ /maghnātīs/

Here, it may be realized that abbreviation in European terms takes place in both components while in Arabic it is mostly in the first one.

The adoption of /naht/ as a productive lexical method was not and still is not unanimously accepted. Reviving a classical dispute, some modern Arabic philologists claim that Arabic was the language of /ʿishtiqaq/ 'derivation' alone, and that in spite of the classical evidence, the possibilities of /naht/ are now exhausted. (64) The principal representative of this point of view is the Egyptian ʿAhmad al-ʿIskandarī. On the other hand, defending the present use of /naht/, Saṭī9 al-Ḥusrī maintains that, especially in modern times, lexical expansion by this means has become of most vital importance. (65)

The Egyptian Academy sanctioned the formation of compounds only when deemed necessary and after all other possibilities had been exhausted. Further, the following rules should be observed:

1. The basic sounds of the original components should be represented as fully as possible.
2. Any additional affixes should be kept to the minimum.
3. The final compound lexeme should conform with Arabic patterns.
4. The total meaning of the compound lexeme should be easily understood and its semantic relation to the original components must be evident.

5. The compound lexeme should be available for further derivation. (66)

As the very term suggests, compounding consists of the formation of words, by means of fusing two words into a single new one. One or two basic consonants of each component are preserved while the rest of them are dropped. The difference, therefore, between derivation and compounding is that in the former, a new word is formed on the basis of a single root, whereas in the latter, two words or more are involved. Thus new words can be formed by combining two independent lexemes to create a compound lexical unit that functions as a single word. Sometimes, the words are not actually fused, but rather become associated with one another and are to all intents and purposes, a lexical unit, behaving like one word. (67) However, the compound form is not inevitably the sum of its parts. The German word, 'Handschuh', for instance, is formed from 'Hand' (i.e. hand) and 'Schuh' (i.e. shoe), but should not be translated as /hidhā' yadawī/ 'handshoe' in Arabic. It is properly translated as /quffāz/ 'glove'.

A great number of compound lexemes were originally two or more separate stems, and by time they became institutionalized and acquired their own specialized meanings. Therefore, they may create a problem when they are transferred into another language. The translator has to know the meaning of the original (single) components and their relation to the total meaning of the compound. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that some Arabic equivalents of foreign compounds and blends may have as many lexical items as the original SL components.

- e.g. 'smog' - /dabāb makhlūt bi-dukḥkhān/ 'fog mixed with smoke'  
'brunch' - /wajbah bayn al-'iftār wal-ghadā'/ 'a meal between breakfast and lunch'  
'motel' - /funduq yabīt fihi as-sawwāqūn 9alā at-tariq al-9ām/  
'a hotel where motorway drivers sleep'

Further, a compound lexeme such as 'underground', for instance, has a specialized meaning to people who have this kind of transport in their city, but might be difficult for those who lack it to understand the exact meaning without an explanation. (68)

Likewise, with words like 'blueprint' 'highway' and the 'White House', a direct literal rendering of the single morphemes does not suffice to give the full semantic (cultural) equivalent. A certain association with the cultural and etymological background is necessary in this respect.

Generally speaking, it is not easy to find one-to-one Arabic equivalents to foreign compounds, particularly when the underlying morphological and grammatical relations that govern the foreign ones are not clear in mind. Besides, some compounds are used metaphorically with specific cultural connotations that can scarcely be found in a bilingual dictionary. Consequently, a large number of such compounds are given Arabic paraphrases.

e.g.

ENGLISH COMPOUND

ARABIC EQUIVALENT

'redskin'

{ /hindi 'ahmar/ 'a red Indian' and  
 { not /dhu al-jild al-'ahmar/ one  
 { with a red skin'

'longhair'

{ /shakhs fannan/ and not /shakhs  
 { hibbiy/ 'a hippy'

'blueprint'

{ /khuttah/ or /mukhattat/ 'plan'  
 { and not /tab9ah zarqa/ 'a blue  
 { print'

'egghead'

{ /rafi9 ath-thaqafah/ 'highly  
 { intellectual' and not /ra's  
 { baydawiy/ 'an oval head'

'bonehead'

{ /a'hmaq/ 'stupid' or /9anid/  
 { 'stubborn' and not /ra's  
 { 9azmiy/ 'bone head'

'razorback'

{ /khanzir barriy/ 'a wild pig' and  
 { not /zahr had/

Subsequently, confusion and misunderstanding are likely to occur when each translator gives his own interpretation of the SL item.

The famous lexicographer Mustafā al-Shihābī believes that some of the newly-formed compounds especially in natural sciences, have become so opaque that students of science find them too difficult to cope with and understanding is put at risk. (69) He believes that using two words in translating a foreign compound is not a lexical blemish in any language. Arabic in its turn, has certain words that are translated into English or French by paraphrasing.

e.g.	/hadīdah/	in French: 'un morceau de fer'
	/mashā/	in French: 'il a marché'
	/'agharr/ (for a horse)	in French: 'marqué en tête'
	/'istanjada/	in English: 'he asked for help'
	/talāqayā/	in English: 'they met each other'
	/9amm/	in English: 'paternal uncle'
	/khāl/	in English: 'maternal uncle'
	/ya9tād 9alā/	in English: 'to get accustomed to'
	/yastashīr/	in English: 'seek someone's advice'

In other similar cases, a one-word translation may be used to substitute a multi-word literal translation:

e.g. 'unexpectedly' /bughtatan/ or /faj'atan/ instead of /min ghayr tawaqqū9/ or as in al-Mawrid /9alā nahwin ghayr mutawaqqa9/. (70)

'unreason'	/hamāqah/ <u>or</u> /junūn/
	instead of
	/9adam ta9aqqul/
'speechless'	/'abkam/ <u>or</u> /sāmit/
	instead of
	/lākalāmiy/

In his book, Ta9rīb al-9Ulūm fī al-Jami9āt, 'Ahmad Matlūb - like his predecessor Mustafā al-Shihābī - cautions against the formation of opaque compounds and recommends the use of two or more words when the compound lexeme is difficult



to understand. (71) Thus, for example, he prefers the two words /fahm as-sukkar/ 'sugar carbon' to /fahmas/, /faskar/, /fahsak/, etc. In the same way:  
 /as-sayr fī al-manām/ 'sommambulism' rather than /as-sarmanah/ or /al-'awmasha/.  
 /kibrītāt al-hadīd/ 'iron sulfurs' instead of /kabakhad/  
 /bayna khalawiy/ 'intercellular' instead of /baykhalawiy/  
 /fahm nabātī/ 'charcoal' instead of /fahmātī/  
 /qabla tārīkhiy/ 'prehistoric' rather than /qabtārīkhiy/  
 /shibh qalawiy/ 'semi-alkaline' rather than /shibqalī/  
 /yuhallil bil-mā'/ 'hydrolyze' instead of /yuhalmi'/  
 /sam9 basarī/ 'audic -visual' rather than /sambasī/  
 /shibh al-billawr/ 'crystalloid' instead of /shibbilūr/  
 /ta9adhdhur an-nuṭq/ 'aphasia' rather than /ta9antuq/  
 /fawqa banafsajiy/ 'ultra-violet' rather than /māfawsajī/

Jamīl al-Malā'ikah, who holds a view similar to that of Matlūb, believes that in the absence of any fixed rules for the formation of compound lexemes, it is better, at least for the present, to avoid the formation of any more compounds. In defence of this view, he says that compound lexemes may intensify the problem of non-standardized terminology. Thus, for example, /9ilm al-jabr/ 'arithmetic' may yield more than 17 possible compound lexemes, among which are /9almaj/, /9amjab/, /9alamjab/, /9ajbar/ ... etc. (72)  
 A translator into Arabic may have to think of equivalents of his own for foreign compounds since many of these compounds are not included in most bilingual dictionaries. Confusion is likely to occur when each translator or writer uses his own particular version. Besides, an increase of such kinds of words in the Arabic language may threaten its future development or rather lead to some muddle in Arabic orthography, phonetics, morphology and syntax. Bearing in mind this fact, the process, therefore, should be used only when necessary and in a very limited form.

Another source of the difficulty in building Arabic compounds is that European languages such as English, French,

Spanish and German have no set limits for the number of consonants and vowels in a word, whereas in Arabic, a word should fall into certain fixed patterns. As a result, the majority of foreign compound lexemes which are used as single entities in the source languages are translated into Arabic by two words or more. A good example to this effect is 'transubstantiation' which is paraphrased in Arabic as /tahawwul al-khamr 'ilā dam fī jism al-Masīh/; or 'anti-disestablishmentarianism' /'ittijāh mudād li-fikrat 'ilghā' al-mu'assasāt ad-dīniyyah was-siyāsiyyah/ and 'conjointly' /9alā nahw muwahhad/.

In chemistry, medicine and other sciences, a compound name should not be translated by a long paraphrase; it ought not to require circumlocutions to become explicit. Thus, for example, it is better to translate the word 'decant' as /yusfiq/ than /yanqil as-sā'il min 'inā' 'ilā 'akhar liyasfū/. In cases where paraphrasing becomes a must or when the suggested Arabic equivalent is opaque it is better to transliterate than to translate. This is particularly important in the case of chemical and medical names. For example 'entero-vioform' is a simplified medical name used for a drug which is composed of 'Iodochloroxyquinoline'. Here, it is preferable to use a transliterated form of the medical name than to compose an odd Arabic compound or paraphrase on the basis of the actual chemical materials.

In tracing the original components of a compound lexeme, it is often difficult to define the parts that were taken from each component without some kind of an etymological and morphological analysis. For example, in the Arabic word /burqa9/ 'veil', it is possible to assume that the word consists of /burq/ or /bur/ as belonging to the first component and /riqa9/ to the second. Yet, we have no grounds for attributing the consonants /r/ and /q/ either to the first or to the second components, (73) despite the fact that the correspondence

of the last consonant of the first component and the first consonant of the second component is a positive factor that facilitates the formation of compounds:

e.g. /qā'im/ + /maqām/ = /qā'imqām/ 'acting as',  
'army commander' or 'administrative officer'

likewise, in fundamental sciences and technology, it is customary and in many ways desirable to form new terms from Greek or Latin roots. The translator in this case, has to have an etymological background for the basic meanings of such affixes before he can proceed to form their Arabic equivalents. Etymological knowledge is also necessary in determining whether a current SL compound is a neologism, a common dialectal or archaic form reborn from the language stock and above all, in assessing the core and peripheral meanings of the components.

#### 4.3.4 The Translation of Affixes

Another problem related to the issue of translating foreign compound lexemes into Arabic is the translation or transliteration of foreign affixes. Like any other problem of Arabization, the translation of foreign affixes does not seem to have any fixed rules. Thus, for example, the suffix 'able' in the word 'potable' has various renderings:

/sharūb/

/mashrūb/

and /sālih lish-shurb/ which is the most common one in current usage.

The word 'flammable' is translated as

/lahūb/

/lāhib/

\* /multahib/ or \* /mushta9il/ 'burning'

and /qābil lil-'ishti9āl/ which is the most common one in current usage.

Despite the existence of established Arabic equivalents for some affixes, partial translations and the presence of two forms, one translated and the other transliterated, are not uncommon. For example, the suffix 'logy' or 'logie' is equal

to the Arabic /9ilm/. Yet, in the following compounds, the first component is given an Arabic translation whereas the suffix 'logy' is transliterated as it is. e.g.

<u>FOREIGN TERM</u>	<u>PARTIAL TRANSLATION</u>	<u>TRANSLITERATION</u>	<u>SUGGESTED EQUIVALENT</u>
'ideology'	/fikrulūjyā/	/'aydulūjyā/	/9ilm al-'afkār/
'mythology'	/'usturulūjyā/	/mithulūjyā/	/9ilm al-'asātīr/
'hipplogy'	/khaylulūjyā/	/hibulūjyā/	/9ilm al-khayl/

In chemistry, the problem of partial translations is even more extensive. For example 'acetone' is translated as /khillūn/ whereas 'acetylene' is translated as /khillīl/. Similarly, 'carbon monoxide' and 'hyperchloric' are translated as /'awwal 'uksīd al-karbūn/ and /fawq al-kulūr/ respectively. (74)

To conclude our discussion of the translating of affixes, we will review some of the typical problems often encountered by translators:

- a. The prefix 'para' has no established equivalent. For example, the French word 'paratonnerre' i.e. 'lightning conductor' has the following proposed equivalents:

/harbat as-sā9iqah/  
 /māni9at as-sawāqi9/  
 /dāfi9at as-sā9iqah/  
 /wiqā' as-sawāqi9/  
 /muwassil as-sawā9iq/ (75)

- b. In one of its sessions, the Egyptian Academy resolved that the suffix 'able' should be translated into Arabic by the present passive: e.g.

'durable' /yuhtamal/  
 'potable' /yushrab/  
 'reasonable' /yu9qal/  
 'portable' /yuhmal/ (76)

This decision has rarely been adopted by writers and lexicographers since it does not cover the adjectival function of the above-mentioned examples. Consequently, words which have 'able' or 'ible' in them have been translated as adjectives or as nouns preceded by /qābil li/ or other similar morphemes. e.g.

e.g.	'respectable'	/jadīr bil-'ihtirām/
	'debatable'	/qābil lil-munāqashah/
	'renewable'	/qābil lit-tajdīd/
	'reasonable'	/muntawi 9alā khiyānah/
	'habitable'	/sālih lis-sakan/

c. 'dis' + 'verb': There is no alternative, here, to using the opposite of the verb in question. Thus if 'prove' is /'athbata/, then 'disprove' is /dahada/. In the same way:

	'disconnect'	/fasala/
	'disinfect'	/tahhara/
	'disappear'	/'ikhtafā/
but	'disembody'	/harrar min al-jasad/ (77)

d. Some affixes may be more problematic than others since their translation into Arabic produces longish phrases.

d.1 'inter':

e.g.	'interplanetary'	/wāqi9 bayna al-kawākib/
	'intermarriage'	/zawāj al-qurbā/
	'intercultural'	/qā'im bayna thaqāfatayn/ or /mushtarak thaqāfī/

d.2 The same problem occurs with the prefix 'under':

e.g.	'undermanned'	/qhayr muzawwad bil-9adad al-kāfī min al-9ummāl/
	'underperform'	/ya9mal bi-'aqall min tāqatih/
	'understate'	/yusawwir (or yusarrih) bi-'aqall min al-haqīqah/

d.3 'pre':

e.g.	'prefab'	/yabnī bi-tariqat al-mabānī al-jāhizah/
	'preempt'	/yahtal 'ardan li-yaktasiba al-'awlawiyah fī shirā'ihā/

e. 'de'

e.g. 'deice' /yuzīl al-jalīd/ or /yazajlid/  
'dehumidify' /yuzīl ar-ruṭūbah/ or /yuzartib/  
'deoxidize' /yuzīl al-'uksijīn/ or /yuza'kiĵ/

The compound forms /yuzajlid/, /yuzartib/ and /yuza'kiĵ/ are both unfamiliar and unacceptable. In the original foreign term, both the prefix and the verb or noun are coexistent without any clipping or reduction. 'Ice', 'humidify' and 'oxidize' are there in the newly-created form with their full meanings. Besides, the prefix 'de' can stand alone in the dictionary as an entry by itself (as for example in Collins English Dictionary, London and Glasgow 1979), whereas the Arabic equivalent /yuza/ is undoubtedly odd and void of any meaning without suffixation. Moreover, in accordance with the decisions of the Egyptian Academy, it is better to translate such words into two Arabic lexemes in order to preserve the total meaning.

In dealing with suffixes and prefixes of Indo-European derivation, which do not have concrete references but have a semantic value (e.g. sub -, non -, semi -, post -, -like, -less, etc.), the moderns have tended to use particles to form compounds which deviate from Arabic grammar, when they are treated as unitary expressions. Among modern Arabists, Sāṭi9 al-Huṣrī is known for his attempt to exploit the possibilities in Arabic of forming compound lexemes by means of affixation. For example, he uses the negative particle /lā/ to make possible the creation of terms like

/lā'ijtima9iy/ 'asocial'

/lā'akhlāqiy/ 'amoral'

/lāmā'iy/ 'anhydrite'

/lāsilkīy/ 'wireless'

He has also investigated the use of other prefixes such as:

/taht/ 'under' or below'

e.g. /tahta shu9ūriy/ 'subconscious'

/fawq/ 'above' or 'over'

/fawqa sawtiy/ 'supersonic'

/fawqa banafsajiy/ 'ultra-violet'

/didda/ 'counter-' or 'anti':

e.g. /diddah jāsūsiyyah/ 'counterespionage'

/ghayr/ 'dis-' or 'non-':

e.g. /ghayr qānūniy/ 'illegal'

/shibh/ 'semi;':

e.g. /shibh jazīrah/ 'peninsula' (78)

Some conservatives look upon the formation of compound nouns by prefixing as essentially non-Arabic, and non-Semitic, and as being a characteristic feature of Indo-European and Agglutinative languages. (79) Yet, al-Husri argues that prefixing is not a complete novelty in Arabic. Old Arabic forms such as:

/lāmutanāhī/ 'infinite'

/lā'adriyah/ 'agnosticism' (80)

have long existed in the language, especially in the writings of the ancient Arab philosophers.

#### 4.3.5 A Note on /al-'Irtijāl/ 'Improvisation' and the Adoption of Dialectal Vocabulary:

Apart from what has been mentioned, some modern linguists suggested the use of other methodologies such as /al-'irtijāl/ or /at-tawlīd/: 'the formation of totally new words which have no pattern (or mould) in the language', and the incorporation of pan-Arab common dialectal vocabulary into MSA. The first method, which was banned by the Kūfans, is nowadays being revived as a possible means of creating non-existent Arabic equivalents to foreign terminology. (81)

e.g. /ta9anni/ 'semantics'; /'intisākh/ 'transliteration'

On the other hand, the inclusion of dialectal vocabulary in MSA, though not sanctioned by the language academies, is being practiced in certain cases, particularly when a much used dialectal term has the capacity of replacing a direct transliteration.

e.g. /dabbah/ 'car boot'  
/majraf/ 'shovel' or 'scoop'  
/haddāf/ 'shuttle' (weaving)

Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that both improvisation and the adoption of dialectal vocabulary should only be used when the aforementioned methodologies of semantic extension and derivation fail to meet our needs. The obvious reason for this restriction is that there are no fixed criteria as yet for either improvisation or the adoption of dialectal vocabulary. If both processes are left open for uncontrolled individual attempts the direct result will be a negative contribution to the problem of non-standardized terminology.

Generally speaking, it can be said that the over-emphasis on Arabic paradigms by some academicians such as 'Ahmad al-'Iskandarī, and the inconsistency of the measures adopted by the various academies have hampered the execution of the strategies aimed at keeping pace with the needs of progress. For example, between 1957 and 1964 fewer than 20,000 terms were approved. (82)  
This figure clearly reflects the slow procedures by which the terms are approved, and suggests that the academies, despite their valuable contributions, are still far from coping with the demands created by the rapidly developing sciences and growing terminologies.

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NOTES

- (1) UNESCO (1957) p. 209.
- (2) Chejne (1959), p. 151.
- (3) Most of these terms are taken from several issues of Majma9; Majallat majma9 al-Lughah al-9Arabiyya (Cairo) as well-as Majma9 al-Lughah al-9Arabiyyah fi Thalāthīn 9Ām 1932-62, Cairo, 1964.
- (4) Coined by 'Anistās al-Kirmilī, see al-Shihābī (1965) p. 137.
- (5) 9Awwād, pp. 251-89.
- (6) Khan, p. XXVIII.
- (7) al-Sayyādī, p. 334.
- (8) al-Kasimi in al-Lisān al-9Arabī (1979) p. 18.
- (9) Arab Language Academy of Science, pp. 2-3.
- (10) al-Khatib, p. 747.
- (11) al-Sayyādī, p. 445.
- (12) Jakobson, p. 233.
- (13) Nida (1961), p. 281.
- (14) al-9Askarī, pp. 13-15.
- (15) al-Kasimi, (1979), p. 20.
- (16) Ba9albaki, al-Mawrid, p. 127.
- (17) al-Shihābī (1959), p. 70.
- (18) al-Kasimi (1979) p. 20.
- (19) Bin 9Abdullah, pp. 105-19.
- (20) The word 'derivation', here, is used as an approximate equivalent of /'ishtiqaq/. The latter is different from that of English derivation (see 4.2.2).
- (21) Jaspersen, p. 215.
- (22) Stetkevych, p. 66.
- (23) 'Abū-9Ubaydah, p. 10.
- (24) 'Abu-al-Qāsim al-Zamakhsharī, 'Asās al-Balāghah, 2 Vols, Cairo, 1299 A.H.

- (25) al-Sayyūtī, p. 514.
- (26) 'Abū-9Ubaydah, p. 10.
- (27) The Qur'ān, sūra 7: "al-'A9rāf", Verse 96.
- (28) al-Malā'ikah (1984), p. 51.
- (29) Bateson, p. 87.
- (30) el-Sheikh, pp. 427-8.
- (31) Frayhah (1955) p. 14.
- (32) The Qur'ān, Sūra 16: al-Nahl", Verse 12.
- (33) Stetkevych, p. 74 .
- (34) Tāha M. Tāha, "Mushkilāt Khāssah fī al-Tarjamah", in al-Bayān, pp. 86-7.
- (35) 'Ibn Fāris, al-Sāhibī, p. 78.
- (36) Jamīl Ṣalībā, "Ta9rib al-'Istilahāt al-9Ilmiyyah", in Majma9 (1953, pp. 21-5)
- (37) Stetkevych, p. 32.
- (38) Ibid.
- (39) Travis, p. 7.
- (40) 'Abū-Fath 9Uthmān 'Ibn Jinnī (died 1002), al-Khaṣā'is, (3 Vols.), Cairo, 1913.
- (41) Chejne (1969), p. 188.
- (42) Ibid, p. 49.
- (43) See for example, Part 1, Chaps. 10, 11, 12 of his book.
- (44) Matlūb, pp. 75-6.
- (45) Zaydān (1961), pp. 59-66.
- (46) al-'Alusī, pp. 45-6.
- (47) 'Ahmad Taymūr, al-Samā9 wal-Qiyās, Cairo, 1955.
- (48) 9Abd-al-Qādir al-Maghribī, al-'Ishtiqāq wal-Ta9rīb, Cairo, 1947.
- (49) al-Husrī (1958), pp. 130-47.
- (50) 'Ismā9īl Mazhar, Tajdīd al-9Arabiyyah, Cairo, 1947.
- (51) 9Abdullah Nadīm, al-'Ishtiqāq, Cairo, 1956.
- (52) Jawād, pp. 113-25.
- (53) Chejne (1969), p. 31.
- (54) Wright, 1: 110-12 .

- (55) Fahmī, pp. 338-45.
- (56) ʿAbd-al-Rahmān, W., pp. 69-70.
- (57) Majallat majmaʿ al-Lughah al-ʿArabiyyah, Cairo (several issues); see also Majmūʿat al-Qarārāt al-ʿIlmiyyah fī Thalāthīn ʿĀm (1932-1962) Cairo, 1964.
- (58) Gachia, p. 53.
- (59) al-Shihābī (1965) p. 73.
- (60) 'Ibn Fāris, al-Sāhibī, p. 227.
- (61) ———— Muʿjam Maqāyīs al-Lughah, p. 482.
- (62) For more details, see 'Ahmad ʿAbd-al-Rahmān Hammād, ʿAwāmil al-Tatawwur al-Lughawī, Beirut, Dār al-'Andalus, 1983.
- (63) ʿAbd-al-Rahmān, W., p. 72.
- (64) Stetkevych, p. 49.
- (65) al-Ḥuṣrī (1958), p. 129.
- (66) See note no. 55.
- (67) Pinchuck, p. 93.
- (68) Abdul-Baqi, p. 129.
- (69) al-Shihābī (1965) pp. 109-10.
- (70) Baʿalbaki, al-Mawrid, p. 1011.
- (71) Matlūb, pp. 80-1.
- (72) ʿAbd-al-Rahmān, W., p. 72.
- (73) Banahy, pp. XXIX.
- (74) al-Shihābī (1965) pp. 196-8.
- (75) Ibid, pp. 199-200. We may also add the term /muntass̄ as-sawāʿiq/.
- (76) Ibid, p. 77.
- (77) Abdul-Baqi, p. 116.
- (78) Stetkevych, pp. 51-3.
- (79) Ibid.
- (80) Ibid.
- (81) Matlūb, p. 83.
- (82) al-Toma (1970), p. 712.
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## CHAPTER FIVE

### ASSIMILATION /TA9RĪB/ AND TRANSLITERATION OF LOANWORDS /al-'ALFĀZ

ad-DAKHĪLAH/ (1)

#### 5.1 Introduction:

One of the most important factors which contributed to the rapid modernization of the Arabic language was the assimilation of vocabulary of foreign origin which began to gain momentum as early as the second half of the 19th century as a pragmatic solution to the lexical deficiency of MSA. However, the process of /ta9rīb/ is as antiquated as the language itself. In al-lisān (2) and al-Siḥāh (3) the word /ta9rīb/ is entered as "adapting the pronunciation of a foreign term according to the Arabic paradigm" and in al-Muzhir, (4) it is "what the Arabs use of foreign terms coined in non-Arabic languages". (5) Arab philologists have identified /ad-dakhīl/ or /al-mu9arrab/ by several criteria such as the difference in mould /wazn/ or /qālib/ of the term from that of the traditional Arabic paradigms, or the occurrence of a cluster of consonants or vowels which are unfamiliar to the Arabic ear.

In the holy book of the Qur'ān, we may read /sirāt/ 'path', /Shayṭān/ 'Satan', /qistās/ 'justice or rightness', /Firdaws/ 'Paradise', (Greek or Latin) /mishkāh/ 'lamp' (Ethiopic), /'āmīn/ 'amen', /Jahannam/ 'Hell' (Hebrew) and so on. Likewise, in their literary writings and daily speech, the Arabs had indiscriminately used words borrowed from Latin, Greek, Persian, Hebrew, Ethiopic, Aramaic and Syriac. e.g. /musīqā/ 'music', /falsafah/ 'philosophy', /shurtah/ 'police' and /billawr/ 'crystal' (from Greek); /dīnar/ 'dinar': a monetary unit (from Latin); /bādhinjān/ 'eggplant', /misk/ 'musk', /jis/ 'plaster', /bustān/ 'garden', /hibb/ 'a large drinking jar', /tājīn/ 'frying pan', /jarmūq/ 'slipper' and /takht/ 'chest or coffer' (from Persian); /baghl/ 'mule' (from Ethiopic) and /tir9ah/ 'canal' from Aramaic. For example, the pre-Islamic poet 9Adiy bin Zayd (died 600 A.D.) used the word /dakhdār/ 'a well-maintained dress', in the verse line, "/taẓallu al-mashrafiyyatu fī dhirāh wa-yajlū safah dakhdār qashīb/"

wherein the word /dakhdār/ is of Persian origin and consists of two combined words namely /takht/ and /dār/; /dār/ being an adjectival suffix used in Persian. The word /sajanjal/'mirror' is another foreign word used by 'Imru' al-Qays (died 550 A.D.) when he says:

"/tarā'ibuhā masqūlatun kas-sajanjal/" (6)  
'her upper chest' is as polished as a mirror'

and the well-known historian 'Ibn Khaldūn used the Persian words, /barnāmaj/, /namūdhaj/ and /fihrist/ very frequently in his famous Muqaddimah.

Likewise, in Kitāb al-ʿAyn, the famous al-Khalīl bin 'Ahmad (died A.H. 175), includes in his lexicon a number of foreign loanwords and their etymologies, and his disciple Sībawayh (died A.H. 180), himself of non-Arab origin, dedicated several chapters of his grammar book to this issue. From his book Kitāb Sībawayh, we may quote, for example, the following passage on the concept of /taʿrīb/:

"When they (the Arabs) want to Arabize foreign words, they assimilate them into the structure of Arabic words in the same manner that they assimilate their letters to Arabic letters. Often they change the condition of a word from what it was in the foreign language by assimilating to Arabic those letters which are not Arabic and replacing a letter though it occurs in Arabic, by another one. Furthermore, they change the vocalization and the position of augmentative letters without attaining the Arabic word structure, for after all, it is a word of foreign origin whose power to attain the Arabic word structure is in their view not sufficient. Frequently, they shorten as in the nisbah construction or they add whereby they either attain the Arabic structure or not, as in the case of: /'ājur/, /'ibrīsam/, /'Ismaʿīl/ /sarāwīl/, /fayrūz/ and /kahramān/. Often they leave a noun unchanged when its letters are like theirs, be its structure Arabic or not, as in the cases of /Khurāsān/, /Khurram/ and /kurkum/. (7)

Other philologists who showed some interest in tracing the etymologies of loanwords in Arabic include 'Abū-ʿUbaydah (died A.H. 209), al-'Asmaʿī (died A.H. 321), 'Abū-al-Ḥasan bin Zakariyyah (A.H. 329-395) in his book *Muʿjam Maqāyīs al-lughah*, al-Jawharī (died A.H. 398) and al-Jawālīqī (A.H. 466-539), the author of *al-Muʿarrab*, a dictionary whose entries are mainly of non-Arabic etymology. In this dictionary al-Jawālīqī describes the practice of /taʿrīb/ by saying that,

"When the Arabs want to use a foreign term, they often change its letters and pronunciation in a manner that suits the Arabic paradigm. Thus they might change a letter to a similar one in Arabic, add or delete another, insert or eliminate a vowel, etc. For example, the Persian word /disht/ is Arabized as /dist/, /pālūdh/ as /fālūdh/ and /kurbuk/ as /kurbuj/ or /qurbuq/". (8)

## 5.2 The Controversy Over the Adoption of Foreign Terms:

However, not all of those early philologists and lexicographers shared identical views as to the methodologies of assimilation and the definition of /taʿrīb/. (9) The dispute centred on the extent of borrowing, the nature of Arabized words and their function in and their impact on the structure of the language as a whole. Whereas Sībawayh recognizes all the foreign vocabulary used by the Arabs however distant from the original Arabic morphological /qawālīb/ 'moulds' some of it might be, al-Jawharī and al-Ḥarīrī hold a conservative view and demand a strict observance of /qawālīb/, "otherwise the newly assimilated loanword will always remain /aʿjamiy/ 'foreign'." (10)

Nowadays, the same controversy still exists and the modern attitudes to /taʿrīb/ fall into two opposing camps. One school is generally opposed to /taʿrīb/ on the grounds that it will lead to an excess of foreign words that might ultimately do violence to

the spirit of the language; it demands the translation into Arabic even of those Greek and Latin technical terms which make possible international understanding among specialists. This school, instead, insists on the method of derivation /'ishtiqaq/ from Arabic roots as the secure way to safeguard the purity and integrity of the language. For example, 'Anīs Sallūm, rebutting those who favour the unlimited use of foreign words in Arabic, says in his article "'Ārā' wa-'Afkār",

"Is there any Arab who will accept something that will lead to the disappearance of the language and eventually to the disappearance of his own community?" (11)

Such a reaction against /ta9rīb/ is a recent development which started during the twenties when steps were undertaken to purge Arabic from Turkish words, in the same way Turkish nationalists called for the modernizing and purging of Turkish from Arabic and Persian influences during the same period. Claims that Turkish was the mother of all languages found their counterpart among the Arabs. (12) Thus for the Arabized word /'utumbīl/ 'automobile', they prefer the coined word /sayyārah/, for /trām/ 'tram-car' the word /jammāz/, for /tilifūn/ 'telephone' /hātif/, /nādī/ or the odd /misāra/ and for /tilifizyūn/ 'T.V.' the word /mirnā'/, and so on. (13) The conservative 'Ahmad al-'Iskandarī even suggested Arabic equivalents for some basic scientific substances:

e.g. /musdi'/ instead of /'uksijīn/'oxygen'  
/mumīh/ instead of /haydrūjīn/'hydrogen'  
/muhawwir/ instead of /klūr/ 'chlorine'  
/khuddāb/ instead of /krūm/ 'chrome'  
/mūmid/ instead of /fusfūr/ 'phosphorus' (14)

Another school has serious reservations about relying wholly on old methods and favours the liberal use of foreign words in their original forms arguing that this procedure was adopted by early Arab philologists and that it has the advantage of guaranteeing the

preservation of their intended meanings. Instead of mutilating the phonetic and semantic value of foreign words, it would be better to adopt them as they are until an Arabic form is established. In Gharīb al-lughah al-ʿArabiyyah Rafāʿīl al-Yasūʿī, expresses his resentment of the extreme conservatism adopted by some modern philologists towards the role of /taʿrīb/ in enriching the language,

"Modern inheritors of the Arabic tongue hold an extreme conservatism towards borrowing words from foreign languages despite the fact that French, English and German which enjoy the largest lexical inventory among the European languages, still adopt the method of assimilation in the development of their vocabulary. But we, the Arabs, prefer to call the 'telegraph' /barq/, and 'telephone' /ḥatīf/ although these two names fall short of expressing the exact meaning of the original words. Borrowing is a successful remedy for our current needs." (15)

Father 'Anistās al-Kirmilī expresses a similar view when he says that,

"in Arabic there are foreign terms which have survived through the ages, countries and peoples and which have managed to stay in the language, contesting against their Arabic synonyms thanks to their simplicity of pronunciation and efficiency of meaning." (16)

The prolific lexicographer Mustafā al-Shihābī points out that

"with the proper use of the various methods of Arabization employed by mediaeval translators, the acute vocabulary problems facing the language nowadays can be solved." (17)

However, he does not see anything wrong with Arabization and urges



that full use of it should be made, side by side with the traditional methods. He reasons that modern arts and sciences have undergone radical changes to the point that each discipline contains an enormous amount of vocabulary. Therefore, it would be hopeless to expect that Arabic could possibly fulfil its own needs on the basis of the mediaeval Arabic lexicon and literature. He urges the immediate adoption of standardized sets of principles to be followed in the borrowing of words throughout the Arab world. (18)

Important in this context is Yowell Aziz's view on the application of ancient methods, when he talks about transliteration.

".... the ancient Arabic writer was not always consistent in his (transliteration) methods. Some of the ancient practices are no longer suitable ....." (19)

He mentions, for example, that it would be ridiculous to render 'mechanics' as /Mīqanīqā/ and 'Toyota' as /Tuyūtā/. A more moderate view is held by al-Maghribī who, although strongly defends /ta9rīb/ as a factor for revitalizing the Arabic language, does not approve of excessive borrowing from other languages. He expresses his reservation in the following statement,

"/Ta9rīb/ is not an innovation in the Arabic language, nor does it constitute a foreign element in the sense that it ought to be removed. It is a natural development that occurs in the language and follows its general characteristics. Throughout the development of the language, /ta9rīb/ remained consistent with the language and in the same manner can do so now and in the future." (20)

He adds:

"However much we approve of the point of view of Sibawayh in not regarding as a condition for the Arabization of a word its assimilation according to the methods and moulds of our language, it is necessary that in our indulgence we should stop at a certain limit. Otherwise, foreign words of different types and forms will multiply in our literary language to the extent that, with the passage of time, it might lose its character and become a hybrid language - neither Arabic nor foreign." (21)

Within the same lines, Saliba suggests that whenever Arabic equivalents of foreign words are not found in mediaeval Arabic literature neologisms should be coined, defined and given Arabic paradigms. (22)

As actual usage demonstrates, the purists have been unable to cope with the sheer bulk of new linguistic material which has had to be incorporated into the language and the result is seen in the tendency of many writers, especially in the fields of science and technology, simply to adopt foreign words from the European languages. Likewise, many everyday expressions from the various colloquial dialects have also found their way into written expression. (23)

The Attitude of the Egyptian Academy: The Language Academy of Egypt has adopted a moderate attitude towards /ta9rib/. It permits the adoption of foreign words if deemed necessary, provided that one follows the early Arabs' methods. (24) However, the Academy has failed in its many attempts to substitute loanwords by indigenous neologisms due to the fact that a great deal of what the Academy has tried to eliminate has already been well-established as part of the lexical stock of the language. In due time, it was realized that total elimination of loanwords cannot be achieved since the validity of any proposed equivalent is not determined by a single decision,

or as it is put by Mahmūd Taymūr,

"... the decisive factor in the configuration of the modern Arabic language as far as its vocabulary is concerned is the acceptance the neologisms attain." (25)

Naturally, loanwords can go out of use when they are no longer required in the vocabulary of a society, or, alternatively, when they are replaced by more efficient equivalents (see the note at the bottom). Thus words like /ṭurumbīl/ and /'utumbīl/ meaning 'motorcar' have been replaced by /sayyārah/; /'utubīs/ and /bāṣ/ could eventually be replaced by the recently-coined /hāfilah/.

In dealing with borrowed words, the moderns have two alternatives:

1. Direct borrowing by means of phonological and graphological adaptations of the foreign forms (transliteration).
2. Indirect borrowing or loan-translations, i.e. words modelled more or less closely on foreign ones, though consisting of native speech-material. The extent of borrowed words by means of either alternatives is determined by:
  - a. The degree of difference between Arabic and the source language.
  - b. The extent of cultural contact and the degree of scientific or artistic achievement of the source language. Italian

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NOTE:

Efficiency, here, is inclusive of: easy spelling and pronunciation, adaptability to derivation, the semantic relation of the word to the thing or concept denoted by it and above all its acceptability and usage by the media, educational institutions and the public.

as the language of music and probably plastic arts,  
 French the language of fashion and diplomacy, English  
 and German of engineering and the modern sciences. (26)

- c. The degree of lexical deficiency: Generally, colloquial  
 dialects are more flexible than MSA in accepting loanwords.  
 The dialects are primarily spoken, and there is no insistence  
 by anybody or authority that they should be kept pure. (27)

More often than not, it is very difficult to trace the source  
 of borrowed words, for many of them are part of the vocabulary of  
 most European languages. e.g.

<u>FRENCH</u>	<u>ENGLISH</u>	<u>GERMAN</u>	<u>ARABIC</u>
'classique'	'classic'	'klassisch'	/klāsīkiy/
'romantique'	'romantic'	'romantisch'	/rūmānsiy/
'diplomatique'	'diplomatic'	'diplomatisch'	/diblūmāsiy/
'democratique'	'democratic'	'demokratisch'	/dīmūqrāṭiy/
'aristocratique'	'aristocratic'	'aristokratisch'	/'aristuqrāṭiy/

There is no authoritative work such as a dictionary which could help  
 in determining the source of a loanword. An Oxford-type dictionary  
 for Arabic, based on historical and comparative principles is yet to  
 be written. (28) This is probably why some contemporary scholars,  
 sometimes make the mistake of attributing certain loanwords to false  
 origins. Hasan Husayn Fahmī, for instance, traces the origin of the  
 English item 'cable' to Arabic /kabl/. He claims that 'cable' is  
 a corruption of the Arabic word /kabl/ which means 'anything used  
 for tying down a ship'. By semantic extension, it has come to mean  
 'the wires laid down the sea-bottom for conveying electric current'. (29)  
 According to Webster Universal and The Shorter Oxford, the item is  
 traced back to Middle English 'kabel', or from old French 'cable'.  
 The French item is traced to Latin 'capulum' meaning 'halter'.  
 Another example of false etymology is /majūs/ 'maji', i.e.  
 'adherents of Mazdaism'. Fahmī claims that it is a distortion of  
 the Greek item 'magos' i.e. 'ancient Iranian priest'. (30) But the

Arabized word /majūs/ is originally borrowed from Persian 'mixkus'. Likewise, the title /'afandī/ came to Arabic from Turkish. The Turks borrowed the item from the Greeks: 'authentēs', i.e. 'master' or 'autocrat'. Fahmī's claim that it is a direct borrowing from Greek is thus groundless. The evidence of history supports the claim that it was first introduced by the Turks. Under the Turks, the structure of society was divided into /bāshas/ and /bīs/ 'beys', who are the ruling class, /'afandīs/ 'the learned people' and the /fallāhūn/ 'the peasants' who constituted the great mass of the community.<sup>(31)</sup> According to el-Sheikh, Mahmūd Taymūr in his Mu9jam 'Alfāz al-Ḥadārah Dictionary of Neologisms is also confused. He records an admixture of entries ranging from colloquial Cairene Arabic and loan-translations to direct borrowings from European languages. Strangely enough, he treats Arabic words such as /dawwāsah/ 'doormat', /manshar/ 'clothes-airer', /matbakh/ 'kitchen' and /rijīm/ 'diet' on a par with transliterated foreign words such as /kābīnah/ 'cabin' and /jībah/ 'skirt' which are borrowed from either English or French.<sup>(32)</sup>

### 5.3 Literal Translations (Calques)

The objection some conservatives have against the process of transliteration has brought with it a tendency to compensate for the lexical deficiency of Arabic by any means possible including literal translations. This process was also received favourably by writers and journalists who - through their impoverished knowledge of Arabic- assumed that foreign expressions are more handy and popular than their Arabic counterparts.

The Egyptian Academy defines 'calques' in Arabic as being those methods of expression which may not include any foreign word, but which are structured in a pattern unfamiliar to the Arabic ear and whose meanings are unprecedented.<sup>(33)</sup> For example, the expression /al-waṭan al-'um/ 'mother home' is borrowed directly from French 'mere patrie', despite the fact that /al-waṭan/ in Arabic is masculine. With this in mind, Muhammad 'Abū-9Abduh suggests the use of /al-waṭan al-'ab/ 'father home' !<sup>(34)</sup>

Likewise, in engineering the term 'adopted street' meaning 'a road which falls under the management of a local administration', is sometimes translated as /ash-shāri9 al-mutabannā/. According to 'Ibrāhīm al-Sāmīrā'ī, this type of translation should rather be called /at-taghrīb/ 'foreignization' instead of /at-ta9rīb/ 'Arabization', (35) due to the encroachment of foreign expression in MSA.

This issue was tackled as early as the late 19th century by 'Ibrāhīm al-Yāzījī (1856-1889) in his book Lughat al-Jarā'id which was published in 1901. al-Yāzījī lists hundreds of words with diverse semantic and stylistic irregularities employed by journals and newspapers. He was concerned with recording errors of Arabs and non-Arabs in the language used in the press. To him the tendency to use the conditional /'in/ and the temporal /'idhā/ with the meaning of 'whether' or 'if' is the result of literal renderings of Western stylistic models.

e.g. /'unzur 'in kāna 9Aliy fī dārih/  
 "see if Ali is at home". (36)

On the other hand, Jurjī Zaydān (died 1914) dedicated a full chapter on the foreign modes of expression in his book al-lughah al-9Arabiyyah Ka'in Hay. In this chapter, he discusses some of the non-Arabic stylistic peculiarities and innovations. To exemplify, he points out the excessive use of the relative pronoun /'alladhī/ 'who' or 'which' and the frequent use of /yūjad/ 'there is' which he considers a new development in MSA. Thus in the sentence /yūjad fī bilād al-Hijāz 9iddat jibāl/ 'there are several mountains in Hijāz', the verb /yūjad/ can be deleted without any harm done to the structure or meaning of the sentence. (37) Within the same lines, al-Maghribī classifies foreign expressions in the language and considers the following as undeniably of non-Arabic origin (38)

e.g. /tahta ri9āyat/ 'under the auspices'  
 /yal9ab dawran/ 'play a role'  
 /yahzā bi-ta'yīd/ 'is supported by'

To these, we may add the following examples:

/yuḡalliḡ 'ahamiyyah khāssah ḡalā/ from 'Il attache certaine importance'  
(French)

/yalḡab bin-nār/ from 'jouer avec le feu' (French)

/'aḡtā saḡtahu/ from 'donner sa voix' (French)

/fulān lāyarā 'abḡada min 'arnabati 'anfiḡ/from the French 'le bout de son nez'

/saḡf al-'intāj/ from the English 'a production ceiling'

/tadahwarat al-ḡalāqāt/ 'the relations deteriorated'

/hajar ḡatharah/ 'a stumbling block'

/'iḡtajja didda/ 'to protest against'

/shajaba/ 'to condemn strongly' though the actual meaning of

/shajaba/ is 'to become engulfed with grief'

/nuzūlan ḡinda raḡbati/ from French 'cedant à son desire'

/masādir muḡtaliḡah/ 'well-informed sources'

/ḡasha al-mushkilah/ 'to live the problem' from French 'il a vécu ...'  
the proper Arabic use is /'iḡtamala/ or /kābad al-mushkilah/

/dawr taḡliḡiy/ 'avant-garde'

/lomasāt 'akhīrah/ 'final touches'

/muḡtayāt/ 'the basic ideas or suppositions' from French 'données'

/al-qadiyyah maṭruḥah 9alā bisāt al-baḥth/ 'this issue is open to discussion' from French 'cette cause est mise sur la table de travail'

/yaqtul al-waqt/ 'to kill time'

/9alā qadam al-musawāh/ 'on equal footing' from 'sur pied d'égalité' (French)

/safir fawqa al-9adah/ 'envoy extraordinary'

/warā'a al-kawālīs/ 'behind the scenes'

/'adab sha9biy/ 'folk literature'

/nuqtat al-tanwīr/ 'moment of illumination; 'denouement'

/mu9adil mawḍū9iy/ 'objective correlative'

/yadhak 9alā adh-dhuqūn/, from French 'Il rit dans sa barbe'

-Scientific Calques:

/bādi' al-ḥarakah/ 'self starter'

/tanabbu' jawwī/ 'weather forecast'

/tayyar mutanāwib/ 'alternating current'

/ḥāmilat tā'irāt/ 'aircraft carrier'

/māni9 al-'istiqtāb/ 'depolarizer'

/mu9āmil at-ta'thīr al-ḥarārī/ 'temperature co-efficient'

/mushi99/ 'radiator'



The massive translation movement in the 19th century and the proliferation of journalism forced upon the modern Arabic language a flood of more or less rapidly-paraphrased literal translations. Nowadays, it can be said that journalists and novelists are the most active in introducing calques into the language. Their coinages gain a wide circulation since they recur in everyday issues, T.V. and radio programmes and textbooks. From the daily newspapers published in Kuwait we may quote the following examples:

- 'minister without portfolio' - /wazīr bilā wizārah/  
'the man of the hour' - /rajul as-sā'ah/  
'overwhelming majority' - /'aḡhlabiyyah saḥiqah/  
'the American Administration' - /al-'idārah al-'Amīrkiyyah/  
instead of /al-hukūmah al-'Amīrkiyyah/  
'executive secretary' - /sikirtīrah tanfīdhiyyah/  
instead of /sikirtīrah 'idāriyyah/  
'shadow minister' - /wazīr az-zīl/  
'storm of protest' - /ḡāsifah min al-'ihtijāj/  
'general assembly' - /jam'iyah ḡumūmiyyah/  
'council of deputies' - /majlis muwwāb/  
'conditioned reflex' - /'inḡikās shartiy/  
'in the light of the current situation' - /fī daw' al-waḡ al-ḡālī/  
'roving reports' - /taqārīr mutanaqqilah/

From T.V. subtitles:

'la saison du froid est aux portes' - /ash-shitā' 9alā al-'abwāb/  
instead of ash-shitā' washīk/ or the idiomatic expression  
/ash-shitā' qāba qawsayn 'aw 'adnā/

'instrument cluster' - /9unqūd mafatīh/ instead of /lawhat  
/9addādāt/

'yours is a cupboard love!' - /'inna hubbaka huwa hubbu al-  
khizānah/ instead of /'inna hubbaka hubbun māddiy (or) naf9iy/

Examples from novels of the contemporary writer Najīb Mahfūz:

"/wa-lākinnahu sha9ara bi-'innahu waqa9a fī al-mašyadah/"

'But he felt that he had fallen into the trap'

(al-Sukkariyyah, p. 154)

On page 87 of al-Sarāb he uses the expression

"al-lamasāt al-'akhīrah/ 'final touches'

In al-Qāhira al-Jadīdah (p. 84)

"/'arjū 'an takūna rajulan 9amaliyyan/"

'I wish you were a practical man'

As a rule, these new expressions are the product of straight translations of the models provided by European languages.

They have been sanctioned by the linguistic habits of the people both through wide circulation and recurrent use. Nowadays, it is almost futile to try to replace them with other equivalents since most of them have become an essential part of everyday language.

In certain cases, literal translations of foreign expressions may involve a breach of the Arabic lexical and grammatical patterns, e.g.

\* /'ittisālāt mawthūqah/ 'trusted liaisons'

should be corrected to /'ittisālāt mawthūq bihā/

\* /al-'jra'āt al-mansūṣah/ 'prescribed formalities'  
should be corrected to /al-'ijra'āt al-mansūs 9alayhā/

In other cases, a paraphrase translation is used even when a one-word Arabic equivalent is available, e.g.

'to give a loan' - /manaha qardan/ instead of /'aqrada'

'to seek (his) pardon' - /talaba 9afwahu/ instead of  
/'istasmahahu/ or /'i9tadhara Lahu/

French 'faire la guerre' - /Shanna ḥarban/ instead of  
/yuhārib/

French 'donne l'importance à' - /'a9tā 'ihtmāman li/  
instead of /'ihtamma bi/

'to pay attention to' - /wajjaha 'intibāhahu 'ilā/  
instead of /'intabaha li/

'to carry an investigation' - /'ajrā taḥqīqan fī/ instead  
of /ḥaqqāqa fī/

'point of departure' - /nuqṭat al-'intilāq/ instead of  
/muntalaq/

'to kill one another' - /qatala 'ahaduhumā al-'ākhar/ instead  
of /'iqatalā/ or /taqatalā/

#### 5.4 Transliteration and the Problem of the Script:

In certain cases, when a word has no equivalent in Arabic, or when such an equivalent is opaque or not popular enough, a transliterated form (i.e. with a similar pronunciation to that of the source one) is used. The following names and proper nouns are often transliterated rather than translated:

- a. Personal names and universal titles, e.g. 'marshal', 'madam'; cultural particulars, e.g. 'jeans', 'Scottish haggis', 'hackney'.
- b. Geographical names which include names of continents, states, rivers, lakes, etc. e.g. 'Grand Canyon', 'New Zealand' (\* /bilād al-hamās al-jadīdah/)
- c. Temporal names, including names of the months, the days of the week and festivals, e.g. 'November', 'Christmas'.
- d. Names of publications, including titles of books, newspapers and journals, e.g. Joseph Andrews, The Daily Telegraph; brand names, e.g. 'Ariel', 'Parker'.
- e. Names of chemical products and natural minerals which are universally accepted in their original pronunciation, e.g. 'zinc' 'hydrogen', 'anthracite', 'chloride', as well as measures: e.g. 'mile', 'Fahrenhit', etc.

Yet the bulk of transliteration is done in the area of scientific and technical terms which are universally used by scientists, technicians or medical people. It is rather difficult to coin Arabic terms equivalent to those already in use because they have established themselves through all these years. Some dictionaries usually enlist these words followed by their possible equivalents and, or brief explanations. Sometimes the proposed equivalents become long paraphrases,

e.g. FOREIGN TERM

ARABIC EQUIVALENT

'chalet'

/shalīh/ or /kūkh/

'asbestos'

{ /'asbist/ or /'asbistūs/ or  
 { /al-ḥarīr as-sakhri/ 'rock silk'

FOREIGN TERMARABIC EQUIVALENT

'agriology'

{ /ad-dirāsah al-muqāranah  
 { liḡādāt ash-shuḡūb  
 { al-bidā'yyah/ 'the comparative  
 { study of the habits of  
 { primitive peoples'

'archduke'

{ /'ārshdyūq/ or /'amīr min  
 { 'umara' al-'usrah al-'imbaratūriyyah  
 { al-Nimsāwiyyah/ 'a prince of  
 { the Austrian Imperial family'

'imperialism'

{ /'imbiryāliyyah/or /'ittijāh  
 { siyāsī muttasif bi-hub  
 { as-saytarah wat-tawassuḡ/  
 { 'a political line characterized  
 { by its inclination towards  
 { domination and expansion'

'microbe'

/maykrūb/ or /jurthūm/

In transliteration as in translation, it is nearly impossible to reproduce the exact equivalent of the original word owing to the numerous phonological and graphological differences among languages. Thus all that one hopes for is approximation, which involves readjustment of the original word to the sound and writing patterns of the target language.

Readjustment usually becomes more urgent and its problems more serious when transliteration is carried out between remotely related or unrelated languages like English (an Indo-European language) and Arabic (a Semitic language). Problems of transliteration can be so serious that they may interfere with the meaning and thus confuse the reader as is illustrated by the following authentic incident told by 'Issān al-Khatīb. He mentions

that after reading the first two pages of a novel in translation, one of his friends closed the book and threw it away, describing the story as disgusting and the characters involved as queer. The source of the problem was that this unlucky friend had misread the sentence:

كانت مارغريت مفرمة ببول زوجها .

/kānat Māgrit mughramah bi-Būl zawjuhā/

'Margaret was fond of her husband Paul'

as /kānat Māgrit mughramah bi-būl zawjihā/

'Margaret was fond of her husband's urine'

Of course, this sentence should have been written as

كانت مارغريت مفرمة ب " بول " زوجها .

In this short incident, the transliteration of the personal name 'Paul' created three problems which played havoc with the meaning of the sentence. These problems are capitalization, the transliteration of 'P' and the prepositional prefix ' - '. (40) The absence of capitalization from Arabic and the lack of a graphological equivalent of 'P', resulted in the reader confusing the proper noun 'Paul' written ' بول ' with the ordinary word of the same spelling. This tendency was further encouraged by prefixing the prepositional ' - ' to the word. These and other related problems will be discussed in the following paragraphs:

1. Some foreign sounds have no equivalents in Arabic. Considerable inconsistency is thus found in representing these sounds in written Arabic. Either a new letter or the nearest existing equivalent is used, e.g.

ENGLISH SOUNDNEAREST ARABIC EQUIVALENTPROPOSED NEW LETTER

/g/

ج، ك، غ

گ، ك

/p/

ب

پ

/ŋ/

نك، نك

نگ، نك

/v/

ف

ف

/tʃ/

تش، ج، ش

چ

In the process of choosing the nearest equivalent, it matters a great deal whether the item has been borrowed by an Egyptian, a Lebanese or an Iraqi, etc. For example, in many parts of the Arab world, /g/ is replaced by ' غ ' /gh/, a voiced uvular fricative. In Egypt, where the /g/ is part of the phonological system, there is a tendency to keep the /g/, e.g.

FOREIGN TERMEGYPTIAN ARABICMSA FORM

'England'

/'Ingiltarah/

/'injiltarah/

OR

/'inkiltarah

'Gromyko'

/Grūmīkū/

/Ghrūmīkū/

'Luxemburg'

/Luksimbūrg/

/Luksimbūrh/

'congress'

/kungris/

/kunghris/

It also matters a great deal whether the item has been borrowed from French or English or from any other modern European language. What may appear to be a phonological change in Arabic may well be attributed to the source language from which the term was transliterated, e.g.

ARABIC WORDSOURCE LANGUAGE

/qūmisyūn/	French 'commission'
/'arshīf/	French 'archive'
/'utīl/	French 'hotel'
/baṭṭāriyyah/	Italian 'batteria'
/tiyātrū/	Italian 'teatro'
/qīthār/	Greek 'kithara'
/lūsyūn/	French 'lotion'
/tulīb/	French 'tulipe'

To replace the sounds which have no Arabic equivalents is easy to explain, since all languages, and Arabic is no exception, tend to adapt loanwords to conform with their phonological systems. But what is hard to explain is Arab translators' tendency to substitute sounds for which there are more or less Arabic equivalents. They change

/t/	into	/ṭ/
/d/	into	/ḍ/
/s/	into	/ṣ/
/k/	into	/q/

e.g.

'technique'	/tiqānīyyah/
'Watt'	/Wāṭ/
'Aristotle'	/'Aristū/
'democracy'	/dīmūqraṭiyyah/
'consul'	/qunṣul'/
'bureaucrat'	/bīruqraṭiy/
'mode'	/mūḍah/
'diplomatic'	/diblūmāsiy/
'Boston'	/Būstun/



According to el-Sheikh, a possible explanation to this phenomenon is that the early translators preferred complete assimilation of foreign words. They found in Arabic certain characteristics which distinguished it from the languages from which words were borrowed. One of these characteristics is the existence of four velarized alveolar consonants which are often defined by phoneticians as 'emphatics'. The Arabs have intuitively identified their language with these features, so much so that they called Arabic the language of the /dād/ ' ض '. Whether they consciously or unconsciously changed /t/ into /ṭ/, /d/ into /ḍ/, /s/ into /ṣ/ and /k/ into /q/, their aim was to exploit the phonological potentialities of the language in order to give loanwords an Arabic characteristic. (41)

This claim is supported by the fact that the Arabs incorporate loanwords into their inflectional and derivational systems, that by time, people use them as if they were of an Arabic origin,

e.g. /talfana/ 'he called by telephone'  
 /dimūqrāṭiyyatunā/ 'our democracy'  
 /sinamā'iy/ 'cinematic'  
 /mutalfaz/ 'televised'  
 /muta'ayyin/ 'ionized'  
 /mubastar/ 'pasteurized'

Aside from the external adaptations, borrowed words also undergo internal changes. For example, the syllable structure is altered and the stress pattern is modified in order to conform with native words, e.g.

<u>FOREIGN TERM</u>	<u>ARABIC EQUIVALENT</u>	<u>STRESS PATTERN</u>
'routine'	/rūtīn/	c̄v̄ c̄vc̄
'mannequin' (F)	/manīkān/	cv̄ cv̄ c̄v̄ c̄
'telegraph'	/talighrāf/	cv̄ cv̄c̄ c̄vc̄
'retouche' (F)	/rutūsh/	cv̄ c̄v̄ c̄
'Roman'	/Rumāniy/	c̄v̄ c̄v̄ c̄v̄

Since Arabic also does not admit consonant clusters except before a pause, in borrowed items consonant clusters are eliminated by the intrusion of vowels or by the glottal stop /'/, to yield acceptable Arabic patterns, e.g.

'strategy'	/'istirātījiyyah/
'Greek'	/'Ighrīqiy/
'spinach'	/sabānikh/
'balcony'	/balakūnah/

The Egyptian Language Academy dedicated a considerable portion of its meetings during 1955-6 and 1963-4 sessions, to laying down the main guidelines in transliterating foreign terms into Arabic. Some of the problems discussed and the proposals adopted, and which concern us here, include the following: (42)

- a. Regarding the question of the multiplicity of linguistic sources (e.g. English, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Etc.), the Academy advised that in case two pronunciations for the same foreign item exist, the easiest of the two should be transliterated. Thus for example, the French

'micron' - /mīkrūn/

is better suited for transliteration than the English

'micron' - /maykrūn/

- b. European languages may include a number of loanwords from Arabic. These words should be restored to their original Arabic pronunciation instead of being transliterated offhand, e.g.

'tambourine' from the Arabic /tanbūr/

'Alhambra' from the Arabic /al-Hamrā'/

'admiral' from the Arabic /'amirāl/ or /'amīr al-bahr/

- c. Letters are to be transliterated according to their pronunciation in the source language. Thus the letter 'j' is transliterated into 'ي' /y/ if the foreign term is German, 'ج' /j/ if the term is English or French, and 'خ' /kh/ if it is Spanish. The letter 'ch' /tʃ/ is transcribed into 'تش' /tsh/ if the foreign word is of an English source or 'ش' /sh/ when it is French or 'خ' /kh/ when it is German, e.g.

'J'

'Johann' (German) - يوهان /Yuhān/  
'jeep' - جيب /jīb/  
'Juan' (Spanish) - خوان /Khwan/

'Ch'

'Chaplin' - تشابلن /tshāblin/ (though, of course  
in ordinary usage it is  
شابلن /Shāblin/  
'chiffon' (F) - شيفون /shīfun/  
'Bach' (G) - باخ /Bākh/

- d. Since transliteration is normally based on phonology, unpronounced letters of the source language should be dropped in the target language.

<u>FOREIGN WORD</u>	<u>CURRENT FORM IN USE</u>	<u>CORRECT FORM</u>
'Louisville'	لويس فيل /Luwīsfīl/	لوفيل /Luwīfīl/
'François'	فرانسوا /Fransuwāz/	فرانسوا /Frānsuwā/
'Massignon'	ماسيجنون /Masījnūn/	ماسينون /Masinūn/
'Bourgeoise'	بورجوازية /būrjwāziyyah/	بورجوا /būrjwā/

Nevertheless, some transliterations seem to be based on the written form. For example, there is a tendency to represent the silent or weak 'r' of some foreign terms by the Arabic ' ر ' /r/ which is always pronounced, e.g.

'Peter' (in RP./pi:tə/) - بيتير /Bītar/  
'voucher' - فاونشر /fawtshar/  
'chiffonier' - شيفونير /shīfunīr/

- e. The following letters are to be transcribed in the following manner:

/p/ - ب /b/

e.g.

'diplomatiq' (French)	-	دبلماسي /diblumāsiy/
'cape'	-	كاب /kāb/
'popeline' (French)	-	بوبلين /būblīn/
'Ampère'	-	أمبير /'Ambīr/

In some cases, however, ancient Arab philologists have transliterated the /p/ into an /f/, e.g.

'Pythagoras'	-	فيثاغورس /Fīthāghūrs/
'Porphyrius'	-	فورفوريس /Fūrūrīyus/
'Plato'	-	أفلاطون /'Aflātūn/

/v/ is to be transliterated as ف /f/ or ب /b/ or و /w/ e.g.

'villa'	-	فيلا /fillā/
'veranda'	-	برندة /barandah/
'vandalism'	-	وندلة /wandalah/
'vanilla'	-	فانيللا /fānillā/
'Vaseline'	-	فازلين /fāzlin/ or وازلين /wazlin/

The 'Committee of Dialects' in the Egyptian Academy has suggested the adoption of two new letters namely ' ب ' and ' ف ' in order to stand for the /p/ and /v/ respectively (e.g. 'Volt' (أمبير 'Amper', فولت).

/t/ is to be transliterated in most cases into ط /t/, e.g.

'Malta'	-	مالطة /Māltah/,
'Socrates'	-	سقراط /Suqrāt/
'Watt'	-	واط /Wāt/

/g/ can be represented by غ /gh/ or ج /j/, e.g.

'Reagan'	-	ريغان /Rīghān/
'pragmatic'	-	براغماتي /brāghmātiy/
'Bloomington'	-	بلومنجتون /Blūminjtun/
	or	بلومنجتون /Blūminghtun/

'geography' - جغرافيا /jughrāfyā/

- f. Vowels and Diphthongs: Problems of transliterating European vowels and diphthongs into Arabic are more complicated than those of consonants. There are two reasons for this. First, these languages reveal greater and subtler divergencies in regard to this aspect of their phonological system. Secondly, an additional difficulty is caused by the fact that Arabic script is basically syllabic. Each letter represents a specific consonant. Vowels are indicated by the three diacritic marks (/fathah/ َ /dammah/ ِ and /kasrah/ ِ) above or below the consonants. These diacritic marks are normally omitted in ordinary everyday practice owing to printing complications. As a result, it is often difficult to work out the relationships between the different constituents in a sentence, and understanding is sometimes put at risk. For instance, the word 'decey' is rendered into Arabic as شرك which can read as /shark/ 'trap' or /shirk/ 'polytheism'.

Marçais comments on this problem by saying that,

"the Arab speaker has to fill in the vowels which are not written, in order to understand the text, and he needs to have understood it before he can fill them in." (43)

As far as the translator is concerned, the major difficulty is how to render foreign vowels and diphthongs into Arabic. If he opts for using the diacritic marks, his main problem would be how to represent a large number of foreign vowels and diphthongs in Arabic by using only three graphological symbols. The Egyptian Academy has suggested the following solutions: (44)

- I. Initial vowels should be rendered by 'hamza' ا /' / or ' ā ' /'ā/ in accordance with the pronunciation of the foreign noun. e.g. 'avocado', أفوكادو /'avukādū/,

'accordion'	أكورديون	/'akkurdyūn/
'Artemis'	آرتيميس	/'Artamīs/
'azote'	آزوت	/'āzūt/
'Ohm'	أوم	/'Ūm/.

II The three diacritic marks should be used to represent short vowels:

◌ُ for /u/ 'ton'	طن /tun/
◌_ for /a/ 'carbon'	كربون /karbūn/
◌̄ for /i/ 'million'	مليون /milyūn/

III Long vowels can be represented by ◌̄ for /ī/,

◌̄ for /ū/ and ◌̄ for /ā/, e.g.

'visa'	فيزا /fīzā/
'Hugo'	هوغو /Hūghū/
'Mark'	مارك /Mārk/

Yet the Academy has approved أكسفورد /'Uksfurd/ for 'Oxford', instead of أكسفرد /'Uksfurd/. Nowadays 'Datsun' is transliterated as داتسون /Dātsun/ instead of داتسن /Dātsun/, جاغوار /jaghwār/ for 'Jaguar' instead of جاغور and يَغَوْر /yaghwar/ for 'jaguar'. (45)

IV The quality and length of other vowels and diphthongs should be determined by approximation. For example /e/ can be represented by either 'soft' /'alif/ ا e.g. 'Menelaus'

منالوس /Minalaws/ or by the diacritic mark/fathah/

e.g. 'Pendulum' بَندول /bandūl/

This rule of approximation can also be applied to diphthongs:

e.g. /au/ - / أو / - e.g. 'Audi' أودي /'Awdī/
/eu/ - / أ / - e.g. 'Euclides' أقليدس /'Uqlīdis/
/ia/ - / يا / /يه/ - e.g. 'Fuchsia' فوشيا /fūshīā/ or فوشيه /fūshīah/

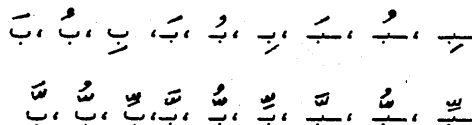
(name of a flower)

/ai/ - / اي / - e.g. 'kunzite'

كونزاييت /kunzāyt/ (a precious stone)

- g. Newly-transliterated terms should be enclosed between parenthesis in the letters of the source language, directly after their Arabized equivalents.

In their attempts to ensure correct pronunciation, conservative Arabists proposed the restoration of the diacritic marks, in order to clear up any anomalies. However, the objection was that in the manufacturing of Arabic electronic-printing machines and computers, this would constitute a technical challenge due to the large number of letter shapes that would have to be modelled or encoded. For example, the letter ' ب ' will have the following shapes:



In the 1950's Mahmūd Taymūr devised a plan for a simplified script in which the vowels are made permanent and the letter variants are reduced from hundreds to only 50. <sup>(46)</sup> Taymūr's proposal which was also supported by Mustafā Jawād of Iraq, and Tāha Ḥusayn of Egypt, suggested the incorporation of the diacritic marks within the main body of the alphabet. Thus, instead of كتاب /kitābun/ 'book', one may write كتابون /kitābun/. A long vowel can be indicated by doubling the vowel letter, e.g. كتّابون /kattābun/ 'writers' is to be written as كتتابون. Geminate consonants can also be doubled in transliteration instead of the traditional way of using the /shaddah/ ( ّ ) mark.

e.g. موحمّادون - 'muhammad' محمد

Other Arabists have expressed some reservations towards this method since it will finally lead to unnecessarily long Arabic texts, create a confusion between the diacritics and the vowels and may result in needless difficulties in learning the language.

Other more radical reform proposals such as Khattār's plan to reduce the number of characters <sup>(47)</sup>, and Fahmī's 1943 <sup>(48)</sup> proposal to replace the Arabic script by the Roman alphabet have not been well received. Arabic scholars have opposed the use of the Roman alphabet on such subjective grounds as the suggestion that any change in the alphabet, instead of helping to preserve the soundness and purity of the language, will only contribute to its decay and invite untold foreign and colloquial expressions into it.

- h. Capitalization: Proper nouns in English are distinguished from other words by initial capitals, which is a valuable graphological device that helps in reading and understanding. Unfortunately, capitalization does not exist in Arabic, and the reader relies on his general knowledge and linguistic intuition in guessing whether a word is a proper noun or not. This situation is aggravated by the fact that transliteration of proper nouns, in general, is at present characterized by inconsistency. The main reason for this is that not enough attention is paid to this important aspect of translation. Translators often regard transliteration of foreign proper nouns as an unimportant part of their task, which does not merit much thinking. The few studies that appear occasionally are confined to the pages of journals or kept in the files of the language academies. Their impact on the great number of persons actually engaged in translation is negligible. As a result, translators and writers in general, tackle this problem differently. Among the signs used to distinguish proper nouns are parenthesis, single inverted commas, underlying and slant lines. <sup>(49)</sup> Sometimes, the proper noun is added to the text in Latin letters. The Egyptian Academy recommended that foreign proper nouns should be written between parenthesis until they have become established in Arabic. Thereafter, as the foreign proper noun is gradually adopted into the language and thus becomes part of it, these distinguishing marks are left out. <sup>(50)</sup>



The problem of capitalization is complicated by prepositional prefixes, which are attached to nouns including proper nouns. In some cases, these prefixes may interfere with the meaning of the sentence as in,

لاشفرنس ميناء كبير جميل

/Li-'Infirmis mīnā kabīr jamīl/

'Inverness has a big beautiful harbour'

If the proper noun and the preposition were taken as one word, the sentence would mean '/Lānvirmis/ is a big beautiful harbour'. Problems may also arise in the opposite direction. Proper nouns beginning with B ' ب ' or L ' ل ' may be interpreted by the Arabic reader as made up of a prepositional prefix and a noun. For example, in a translation exercise given to one of the translation classes in Kuwait University, the following sentence was submitted to be translated from Arabic into English:

ثم بعثت لندا الطرد

/thumma ba9athat Lindā at-tard/

'then Linda sent the parcel'

Almost 14 out of a total of 17 students translated this sentence as

'then she (or I) sent the parcel to Nadā'

لندا , here was regarded as a prepositional phrase composed of ' ل ' and ' ندا '.

- i. A similar problem arises in transliterating proper noun initials and acronyms. The difficulty, here, is that it is not always easy to find out the full name represented by the initial letter. Thus, determining the phonetic value of some initials becomes problematic. For example, 'D. H. Lawrence' is sometimes

transliterated as either

د.ه.لورانس  
or دي.اچ.لورانس  
or دي.اتش.لورانس

Therefore, there is a good reason for choosing to write the name in full than to transcribe its initials. First, this will solve the problem of finding the exact phonetic or orthographical equivalent which may not exist in the target language. Secondly, in real life, it is the name of the initial which is used and not its sound. Thus 'W. S. Hill', for instance, is usually rendered داباليو.اس.هيل /Dabalyū. 'Iss. Hill/. To show that the first two words are initials, a full stop may be used after each of them. (51)

In transliterating acronyms (i.e. words composed of initials) it is almost impossible to have Arabic acronyms with a close representation of the original. This is accentuated by three factors:

1. Arabic tends to include the words in full. Acronymy is a new acquisition introduced by loan translations.
2. Foreign sound representation which is part and parcel of acronyms is difficult to match in Arabic. Moreover, when the full translational equivalents are used, the discrepancy becomes clearer since the transliterated acronym does not include the initials of the TL terms.  
e.g. RAF 'Royal Air Force' راف /Silāh al-Jaw al-Malakī/  
UNICEF 'United Nations Children's Fund'  
اليونيسيف /al-Yūnisīf/ /Sandūg al-Tufūlah al-Ṭabī9 lil-'Umm al-Muttahidah/
3. Capitalizations: Capitalized acronyms such as NATO, RAF, AWACS are transliterated as أو اكس، راف، ناتو with no indication whatsoever that these words are acronyms and not full words.

- j. Another dilemma is also related to the transliteration of proper names. Some names such as David, Joseph, James, Caesar, Venice and John, have two forms existing side by side, the one is translated by early Arab philologists, while the other transliterated by the moderns. e.g.,

'David'	-	/Dawūd/	or	/Dīvīd/
'James'	-	/Ya9qūb/	or	/Jīms/
'Joseph'	-	/Yusif/	or	/Jūzīf/
'Caesar'	-	/Qaysar/	or	/Sīzar/
'Venice'	-	/al-Bunduqiyyah/	or	/Finīsayā/
'John'	-	/Yūhanna/	or	/Jūn/

The crux of the problem, here, is which of the two forms should be adopted? The Egyptian Academy advised that traditional foreign proper nouns which have become established in Arabic should be preserved. However, the criterion of establishment was not defined. (52) A simple solution would be to transcribe personal names as pronounced by native speakers, except in the case of biblical names whose Arabic equivalents have become established. For example, 'David' would be better transliterated as ديفيد /Dīvīd/ except when it refers to a historical name (e.g. King David) in which case, it should be translated as داود /Dawūd/. In the same manner, a distinction could be drawn between بيتر /Bītar/ (modern) and بطرس /Butrus/ (biblical) for 'Peter', جوزيف /Juzīf (modern) and يوسف /Yusif/ (biblical) for 'Joseph'.

- k. A slight difficulty also arises with titles. (e.g. Mr., Mrs., Miss, Major, Professor, etc.). The controversy concerns the question of whether the title should be preserved as it is or be replaced by its Arabic counterparts. Some translators prefer to write بروفيسور ميچور ، مس ، مسز ، مستر others use Arabic translations of these titles, السيدة ، السيد ، الآنسة and الاستاد respectively.

What has been said of personal names and titles is basically true of temporal names and festivals. Thus, names of months and well-known festivals have both transliterated and translated Arabic equivalents, e.g.

'June'            /Yūnyū/ or /Huzayrān/  
'August'        /'Aghustus/ or /'Āb/  
'Christmas'    /Krīsmās/ or /9īd al-Mīlād/

In a translation exercise conducted at Kuwait University, only 6 students out of a total of 17 were able to translate the following Arabic sentence correctly:

/Kānūn al-'Awwal 'abrad min Tashrīn ath-Thānī/  
'December is colder than November'

The source of the difficulty in translating such a sentence is that Arabic names of the calendar months are not as well-known as their transliterated counterparts.

Another source of difficulty here, concerns those names which are not so well-known such as local festivals which have no Arabic equivalents. Yowell Aziz mentions the festival 'Boxing Day' as a possible example. (53) This festival name was included in the translation exercise which was submitted to the translation class just mentioned above. As was expected, all the 17 students translated the term as either /yawm al musāra9ah/ 'wrestling day' or /yawm al-mulākamah/ 'boxing day' instead of /yawm taqdīm al-hadāyā/ or the transliterated form بوكسينغ داي /Buksingh Dīy/.

To solve this problem it would be better to divide titles of personal names, proper nouns and temporal names into two categories:

1. Those which have Arabic equivalents.
2. Those for which no equivalent exists in Arabic.

The first category includes 'Princess', 'President', 'Mr.' 'Christmas', 'Thanksgiving', etc. There is no reason why these should not be replaced by their Arabic equivalents, /al-'Amīrah/, /ar-Ra'īs/ /as-Sayyid/, /9īd al-Mīlād/ /9īd al-Shukr/. Examples of the second category include: 'Count', 'Lord', 'Baron', 'D. Day'. These are usually borrowed by means of transliteration: /Kawnt/, /Lūrd/, /Bārūn/, /Dī Dāy/.

3. A third group may be recognised for which there are modified Arabic forms, e.g. /dūq/ for 'Duke', /dūqah/ for 'Duchess' and /Kuntīсах/ for 'Countess'. (54)

In conclusion, we might say that the problem called lexical deficiency to which both Chapter Four and Chapter Five have been devoted is not a blemish inherent in the nature of Arabic itself, which like any other language can surely be adapted to cope with the needs of its speakers. There are already precedents for the kind of development which Arabic is going through. Gallagher gives the example of Hebrew which in 50 years has been adapted to modern needs. Its technical vocabulary has grown rapidly and although it is a Semitic language like Arabic, there has been a successful borrowing from European languages; the morphological problems which have been claimed to make borrowing from European into Semitic languages very difficult have been resolved by borrowing even suffixes and prefixes directly into Hebrew. Gallagher also mentions the case of Turkish, where he suggests that peoples' attitudes towards their language contributed a lot to making it possible to adapt it to modern requirements and even to change its writing system. (55)

One could also consider the case of Japanese which has been adapted in an exceptional way by extensive borrowing, reduction of diglossia, a considerable simplification of its writing system - the characters of which have been reduced from 7,000 to 1850 - and the introduction of new spelling rules. This is not to say that Arabic must undergo internal modifications that touch upon its basic characteristics.

On the contrary, Arabic has features which can boost its development and make it a modern language. The only drawback that inhibits any efforts in such a direction is the inconsistency and the lack of co-ordination in adopting and carrying out the decisions of the language academies.

There seems to be no reason why Arabic should not develop along the lines of modern scientific languages and become a practical, fashionable, interesting and, above all, a competent means of communication. But before any success can be achieved, a certain change in the Arabic-speaker's attitude towards his language must take place. In the field of education, Arabic must be introduced as the language of instruction at all levels, its vocabulary expanded and its use widened to include scientific publications, radio and television programmes and films which are currently available in English or French versions.

As already mentioned in several other places, the problem of /ta9rīb/ lies not so much in creating Arabic equivalents to foreign terms as in guaranteeing their acceptability and usage by both the specialists and the general public. The multiplicity of linguistic sources, the absence of a pan-Arab strategy and a "super-academy" entrusted with the regulation and co-ordination of the process of /ta9rīb/ have altogether made the problem worse. Consequently, concerned Arabists are divided on the question of whether and when to employ the methods of semantic extension, derivation, literal translations (calques) or mere transliterations. The predominant principle which was approved by the Egyptian Academy calls for using Arabic equivalents except in cases for which no Arabic word can be found. (56) Thus, in terms of priority, one should:

1. Look for the closest equivalent in the current language.
2. Revive an archaic term by means of semantic extension /al-majāz/.
3. Create a neologism by means of derivation or literal translation.
4. Transliterate with the necessary graphological and phonological adaptations. (57)

Arabization of foreign terms is not as is often described, a 'nationalistic luxury'. In education, for example, it is more than a necessity, for it minimizes the effect of the linguistic barrier often realized when teaching in languages other than the mother tongue. In a questionnaire distributed among 20 selected Arab post-graduates in Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, on the time allotted to learning the language of instruction and understanding foreign methods of expression, the following results were obtained:

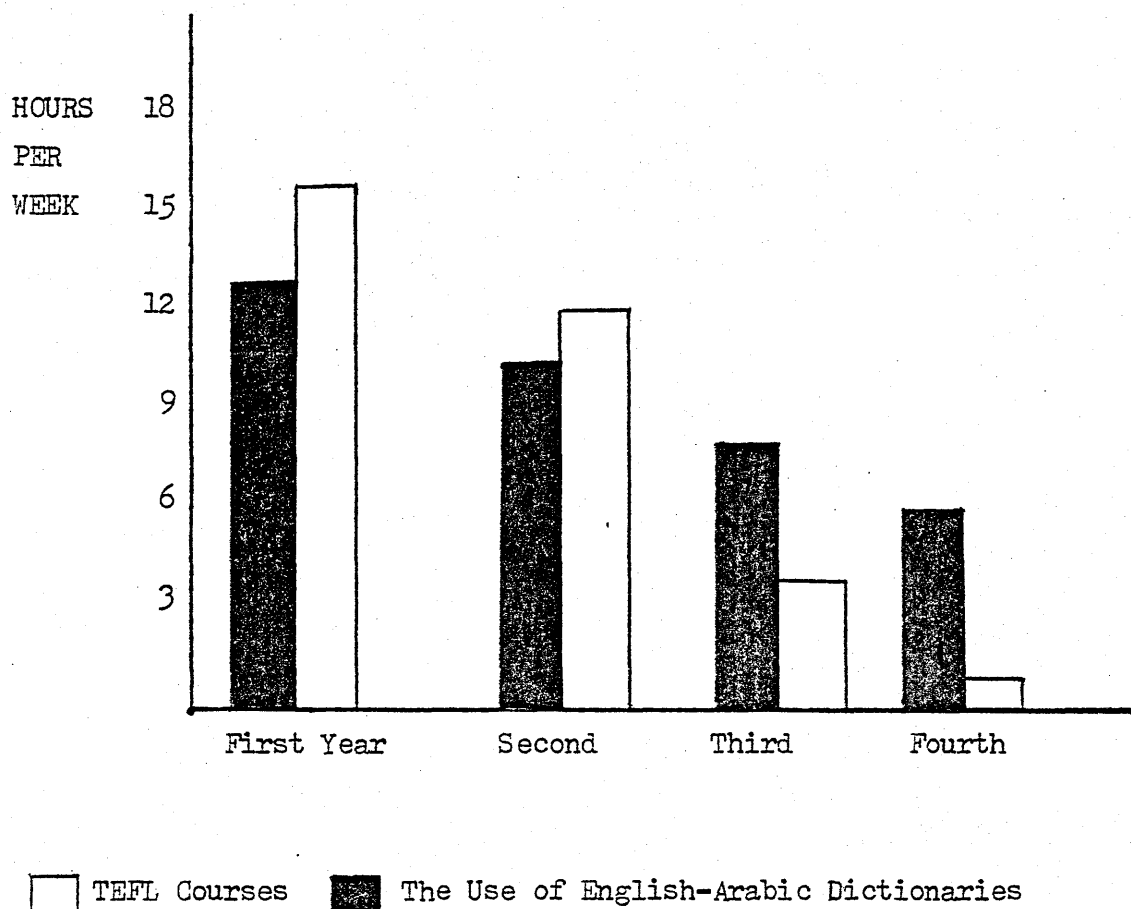


Figure 5.1 Time Allotted to TEFL Courses and the Use of English-Arabic Dictionaries by 20 Arab Students Studying at Indiana University in 1982.

Just imagine how much time would have been saved if instruction was given in the mother tongue. Yet, some pessimistic modernists claim that complete Arabization of the terminology currently used in the Arab world will have detrimental effects on educational and social development, a claim which is based on the notion that

".... the structure of the Arabic language and the absence of technical words make the teaching of applied sciences as well as maths, geology, chemistry, engineering and so in, in Arabic difficult if not impossible." (58)

Though the issue of Arabizing the educational system will be discussed fully in Chapter Seven, it suffices, here, to say that language can not be separated from the society in which it operates. If the society is prone to innovation and scientific inventions, the lexical terminology is bound to show parallel developments. In 1974, for example, several hundred new patents were issued to individuals residing in Arab states: Iraq received 137 such patents, Lebanon 218 and Syria 88. (59) All in all, considerable scientific and technical activity has been reported in the area. As this activity increases, the corresponding scientific terminology is likely to expand and improve as well. Nevertheless, the situation is still far from what is desired; there is much more to be done in order to attain some autonomy in science and technology. Certainly, there is the need to standardize and publicize neologisms and ensure their actual use by firm action. But above all, it must be recognized that there is nothing inherent in the language that would prevent or inhibit its use in scientific fields. If it appears that no substantial lexical developments have taken place, it is more the result of alien values and languages than the structure of the Arabic language itself.

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NOTES

- (1) This term is used by Stetkevych, p. 56.
- (2) 'Ibn Manzūr (died 1311) Lisān al-ʿArab, Būlāq 1300-7; Beirut 1955-6.
- (3) al-Jawharī (died 1002) al-Sihāh, Būlāq (A.H. 1282), New Edition, ed. by 'Ahmad ʿAbd-al-Ḡhaffār, Cairo, 1956-8.
- (4) Jalāl al-Dīn al-Sayyūtī (died 1505), al-Muzhir, Cairo, Dār 'Ihyā' al-Kutub al-ʿArabīyyah, 1958.
- (5) For more on the subject, see Ḥasan Zāzā, Kalām al-ʿArab, Alexandria, al-Masrī Press, 1971.
- (6) Ḥammād, p. 92.
- (7) Sībawayh, Vol. 2, p. 375.
- (8) al-Jawāliqī, pp. 6-7.
- (9) Stetkevych, p. 58.
- (10) al-Ḥarīrī, p. 131.
- (11) Sallūm, pp. 283-4.
- (12) Chejne (1978), p. 34.
- (13) Taymūr, pp. 12 - ff.
- (14) 'Ahmad al-'Iskandari as quoted in al-Shihābī, pp. 102-3.
- (15) al-Yasū9ī, p. 284.
- (16) al-Kirmilī, pp. 93 - ff.
- (17) al-Shihābī, pp. 74 - ff.
- (18) Ibid.
- (19) Aziz in META, p. 80.
- (20) al-Maghribī, pp. 43-44.
- (21) Ibid.
- (22) Jamīl Salībā, "Ta9rīb al-'Istilahāt al-ʿIlmiyyah," in Majma9 (1953), pp. 18 ff.
- (23) Wher, A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, p. VII.
- (24) Ḥasan, p. 241.
- (25) Taymūr, pp. 11-14.
- (26) el-Sheikh, p. 431.
- (27) Ibid, p. 429.
- (28) Ibid, p. 431.
- (29) Fahmī, pp. 176-80.
- (30) Ibid.

- (31) el-Sheikh, p. 434.
- (32) Ibid.
- (33) Majallat Majma' al-Lughah al-9Arabiyyah, I, Cairo (n.d.) p. 332.
- (34) Muhammad 'Abū-9Abduh, "Mashākil al-Ta9rīb al-Lughawiyah, in al-Lisān al-9Arabī (1982) pp. 103-10.
- (35) 'Ibrāhīm al-Sāmīrrā'ī, "al-Taghrīb fī al-lughah al-9Arabiyyah", in 9Ālam al-Fīkr, Vol. 10, No. 4, Kuwait, the Government Press, 1980, p. 216.
- (36) 'Ibrāhīm al-Yazījī, Lughat al-Jarā'id, Cairo, 1901.
- (37) See his book, al-lughah al-9Arabiyyah Kā'in Hay.
- (38) See Bakalla, pp. 257-8.
- (39) For more examples, see al-Sāmīrrā'ī, al-Taghrīb .....
- (40) Aziz, in META, p. 73.
- (41) el-Sheikh, p. 440.
- (42) al-Shihābī, p. 151.
- (43) Marçais, pp. 401-9.
- (44) al-Shihābī, pp. 112-24.
- (45) Ba9albakī, al-Mawrid, p. 488.
- (46) Taymūr, pp. 74 ff.
- (47) See Nasrī Khattār, "Unified Arabic: Weapon Against Illiteracy", Middle Eastern Affairs, VI, May, 1955.
- (48) 9Abd-al-9Azīz Fahmī, Taysīr al-Kitābah al-9Arabiyyah bi-Hurūf Lātīniyyah, Cairo, 1946.
- (49) Aziz, in META, p. 76.
- (50) Ibid.
- (51) Ibid, p. 82.
- (52) al-Shihābī, p. 167.
- (53) Aziz, in META, p. 78.
- (54) Ibid, p. 83.
- (55) Gallagher, pp. 61 ff.
- (56) al-Shihābī, pp. 71-2.
- (57) Ibid, p. 93.
- (58) Nelson, p. 109.
- (59) Massialas and Jarrar, p. 92.
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## CHAPTER SIX

### CULTURAL AND STYLISTIC DISPARITIES

#### 6.1 Introduction

To translate efficiently from a foreign language into his own, the translator has to play the part of a competent proxy on behalf of his readers; he must identify the situations where there is a cultural overlap or a linguistic interference. In other words, he must identify in both languages the functionally relevant features in the situation. In this regard translational equivalence is not - and in fact should not - be determined arbitrarily; it must be related to the linguistic and cultural features of both the SL and the TL. This fact explains the importance of conducting contrastive analytical studies between the languages concerned so as to predict areas of difficulty for the translator. After all, this is the core of the scientific study of Translating. Hence, we should have more linguistic and cross-cultural studies and less amateurish theorization which has been so far responsible for a good deal of the malpractices in and misconceptions about translating.

In Arabization, these facts are no less important. A great many translation errors can be interpreted as occurring through Arabic interference, false analogy, overgeneralization or the wrong equation of the SL and TL systems under the influence of internal mental translation. Therefore, in this chapter we will attempt to pinpoint some of the cultural and stylistic gaps that make for untranslatability or mistranslation between English (as a representative of foreign languages in the Arab world) and Arabic. However, it should be noted from the outset that our discussion is, of necessity, selective and far from being exhaustive. Dealing with minute details in this particular area would perhaps turn this chapter into an over-pedantic investigation, and it is not within the scope of this thesis to consider such matters

intensively. The objective, therefore is to pinpoint the most significant cultural and stylistic contrasts between English and Arabic which are the cause of difficulty in translation.

## 6.2 Beyond the Utterance, Information Assumed:

"Each text is the outcome of a conglomeration of elements. It is like a particle in an electric field attracted by the opposing forces of two cultures and the norms of two languages". (1)

It is true that the world as seen by different speakers of languages is not merely the same world with different labels attached to it; "conceptual boundaries vary from one language to another in a way that defies principled explanations". (2)

In other words every language has a cultural focus. Thus, for instance, in Roget's Thesaurus one may count hundreds of words which in some way or another refer to nautical terminology. (3)

Similarly, in al-Tha9alibī's Fiqh al-Lughah one may count over 200 words that refer to the desert environment, almost 100 words on horse terminology and another 100 on camels and snakes. (4)

Likewise, as will be shown later on, while English possesses a relatively more detailed colour lexicon than Arabic, kinship terminology is much more complicated in Arabic than in English.

In other words, each language has its own logic of encoding the experiences of its speakers and, as a result, apparently equivalent verbal symbols in two or more languages do not necessarily convey the same meaning. To consider the forms of the SL and the TL without reference to the functions that these forms serve is to deal with only one level of these languages in vacuo. (5)

With this in mind, the translator has to give priority to contextual consistency over verbal consistency (or strict word-for-word concordance). This is so because each utterance has its own historical, ethnological, sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic

presuppositions and connotations. In the words of Lyons,

"..... The context of an utterance can not simply be identified with the spatio-temporal situation in which it occurs: it must be held to include not only the relevant objects and actions taking place at the time, but also the knowledge shared by the speaker and the hearer of what has been said earlier, in so far as this is pertinent to the understanding of the utterance. It must also be taken to include the tacit acceptance by the speaker and hearer of all the relevant conventions, beliefs and presuppositions 'taken for granted' by the members of the speech community to which the speaker and hearer belong." (6)

In terms of translation, the problem is that these presuppositions and connotations are not always shared between the SL and TL and one has to decide "how what is said fits into what is not said", (7) and how much to add (or delete) for the TL reader. Moreover, if a translator relies on a bilingual dictionary in the hope of eliciting any information about the cultural and social values of words such as 'taboo', 'liturgical', 'formal', 'casual', 'modern' and 'obsolete' he may end up disappointed. Besides, lexicographers often fail to provide any indication of the functional (syntactic) meaning or the contextual connotations of a given entry.

It is evident, therefore, that it is almost impossible to have translational equivalence in the full formal and functional senses of the above, and this, of course, is not a novel conclusion. Thus, instead of talking about the need for an acceptable translation, accordingly one needs to think in terms of 'kinds' of acceptable translations; there are many possible approximations to the idealized notion of 'a' best translation. It is not uncommon for the translator of remotely-associated languages to find himself compelled to make do with partial translations, paraphrases, or at

times mere transliteration.

Being aware of the near impossibility of reproducing the cultural and sociolinguistic qualities of a given lexical item, al-Mawrid, for example, gives the meaning of the word 'hello' as a paraphrase: "/hitāf lit-tarhīb 'aw li-laft an-naẓar 'aw lit-ta9ajjub 'aw lil-'ijābah 9alā at-talifūn/" (8). This is despite the fact that one-word equivalents are available, e.g. /marḥaban/ used in MSA and some other dialects.  
/'Allāh bil-khīr/ used in the Gulf and Iraq  
/guwwah/ used in Kuwait  
or /as-salām 9alaykum/ which is a formal greeting with some religious connotations not found in the English word.

In an opposite case, Hans Wehr, Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, fails to give a one-word equivalent in English to the Arabic word /hanī'an/ which is said to someone before or after drinking or eating. Instead, the following paraphrase is given: "I hope you (will) enjoy it (i.e. food)!" (9) The near impossibility of transferring the full referential and associative (connotative) meaning of words and phrases can best be realized in translating foreign jokes. For example, it is futile to attempt to translate the following children's pun into Arabic:  
-"what did the hoopoe tell the hornbill?"  
-"don't blow your horn!"  
These as well as other points of cultural divergence will be considered in some detail in the following pages.

### 6.2.1 Food and Cooking Terminology:

English names of food items and dishes form an area where the translator has to play the role of a competent proxy. Names such as 'scallop', 'haggis', 'hamburger', 'broth', 'hot dog' and the like can only be transliterated into Arabic, preferably with a footnote describing the particular ingredients or shape of the particular dish or food item in question. The same procedure

applies in the case of Arabic dishes such as /tabbūlah/, /kunāfah/, /kiskusīh/, /makbūs/, /maḥshī/ and /mujaddarah/.

Equally problematic are the eating and drinking habits of the English and the Arabs. For example, a meal in the Arab world is usually a one-course meal made up of one or more dishes which are served more or less at the same time. The idea of a three-or-four-course meal is alien to an Arab. Although the translator might manage to give a literal translation of 'starter', 'main dish' and 'course', the very concept of a multi-course meal should be explained in a footnote. The same procedure can be applied to terms pertaining to the habits of drinking tea or coffee. To an Arab, tea is always with sugar, coffee is always black. Hence, phrases like 'tea with sugar or without', 'black or white coffee' make no sense in cafe's in many parts of the Arab world.

Similarly, cooking methods do not have a one-to-one agreement. This is evident from the following samples: (10)

ENGLISH TERM

ARABIC EQUIVALENT

'bake'	/khabaza/
'broil' )	(/khabaza/alā nār makshūfah/ 'roast on open fire')
'roast' )	
'grill' )	
'barbecue'	(/shawā 9ala faḥm muttaqid/ 'roast on burning charcoal')
'steam'	(Literally /bakhkhara/ (though may sound odd in Arabic cooking terms).
'boil'	(/salaqa ḥattā al-ghalayān/ 'cook in water until boiling')
'simmer'	(/salaqa dūna al-ghalayān/ 'cook in water until before boiling')

'braise'	{ /shawā thumma tabakha bibut' ma9a mā' qalīl/ (11) 'roast then (cook slowly with a little water'
'stew'	{ /tahā bil-ghaly al-batī'/ 'cook (by slow boiling' (12)'
'poach'	{ /tahā bi-but' li-yaḥfaza aṭ- ta9ām shaklah/ (13) 'cook slowly so (that food may maintain its shape'
'sauté'	{ /tahā bi-sur9ah ma9a qadr qalīl min ad-dih/ 'cook quickly with (a small amount of oil'
'deep-fry' } 'french fry' }	{ /qalā fī kammiyyah kabīrah min ad-dihn tughattī ash-shay' al- matbukh/ 'fry in a large amount (of oil that covers what is being (cooked'

### 6.2.2 Articles of Clothing:

Articles of clothing also present certain difficulties in translation. For instance, 'mini skirts', 'jeans', 'pullovers' and other similar items are familiar to most Arabs, yet there are no direct terms in MSA (apart from transliterations) to refer to them. Similarly, 'socks' and 'stockings' are referred to by the generic terms /jawārib/ which is sometimes modified by the two adjectives /qasīrah/ 'short' and /ṭawīlah/ 'long' to express the exact meaning of the English term. However, these are descriptive paraphrases and not single lexical units.

Social behaviour connected with certain articles of clothing can also raise some problems for the translator. A comic scene in an English play or a novel based on the shocking behaviour of one of the characters going out shopping in his pyjamas may not be so comic for an Egyptian or a Lebanese who is accustomed to this practice in his country. Thus he may miss the point why Pasmore in the following scene does not go out in his pyjamas to speak to the strangers,



- "I am sorry to disturb you", he said, "but there are some men downstairs asking for you".
  - "What do they want", he said.
  - 'I think you'd better come down", he told him.
- He pulled on a raincoat over his pyjamas and followed the shop keeper down the stairs. (14)

An Arab reader is likely to wonder why Pasmore put on the raincoat though there is no indication within the scene that it was raining outside, that is if he was going out at all.

In a similar example, the translator of Sheridan's The Rivals failing to understand some of the clothing terminology, mistranslated the following extract:

Acres: "she (i.e. Lydia) could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly - but odds, frogs and tambours!" (15)

Sābir rendered "but odds, frogs, and tambours" as "/wahaqqi ad-dafādi9 wal-'atbāl/" (16) 'By frogs and drums'. This shows to what extent cultural differences result in unintelligibility. Acres is not swearing, instead he is describing why Lydia does not fancy him. The main reason is that he does not dress fashionably. 'Frogs' are decorative loops of braid, part of a coat fastening: 'tambours' are circular frames on which silk or muslin is stretched for embroidery. (17)

### 6.2.3 Building Terminology:

#### ENGLISH TERM

'bunker'

#### ARABIC EQUIVALENT

{ /ghurfah muhassanah taht al-'ard/  
'a fortified room underground' (18)

'bunkhouse'

{ /mabnā basīt muzawwad bi-surar  
{ sādhiyah li-9ummāl al-binā'/  
'a simple building with simple beds  
{ for construction workers'. (19)

- 'scullery' (/hujrat ghasl al-'at**ḥ**āq  
{ wal- 'awānī/ 'a room for  
{ washing dishes and pots'. (20)
- 'larder' (/maw**ḍ**i9 li-hifz al-luhūm  
{ wa-ghayrihā min al-'at**ḥ**imāh/  
{ 'a place for keeping meat and  
{ other food'. (21)
- 'crypt' (/sirdāb tahata kanī**s**ah  
{ yuttak**h**adh madfanān/  
{ 'a cellar under a church  
{ used as a burying place'. (22)
- 'flatlet' (zero. We suggest the diminutive  
{ form /shuqayqah/
- 'chalet' (The transliterated form  
{ /shalīh/ or according to  
{ (al-Mawrid "/dār mashayyadah  
{ 9alā tirāz al-kū**ḥ** fī al-  
{ (jibāl al-Suwīsriyyah/" (23)  
{ 'a house built in the shape  
{ (of a cottage in the Swiss  
{ mountains'.
- 'semidetached' (/bayt muttasil bi-bayt  
{ 'āk**h**ar min nā**ḥ**iyah wā**ḥ**idāh/  
{ 'a house attached to another  
{ house from one side' or  
{ (/bayt bi-jar/ 'a house with  
{ a neighbour'
- 'thatched house' zero

#### 6.2.4 Seating Terminology:

##### ENGLISH TERM

##### ARABIC EQUIVALENT

'bench'	{ "/maq9ad ṭawīl li- <u>shakhsayn</u> 'aw { 'akthar/" (24) 'a long chair for { two people or more' <u>or</u> /kursī { ḥadīqah/ 'a garden chair' <u>or</u> the { colloquial /dakkah/.
'stool'	{ "/kursī bilā zāhr 'aw zirā9ayn/" (25) { 'a chair without a back or arms'
'davenport' 'settee' 'sofa'	{ /'arīkah/ or the transliterated { French word /kanabah/.
'love seat'	{ /kursī muzdawaj bi-zāhr wa-misnadayn/ { 'a double chair with a back and arms'
'pouffe'	{ /makān li-julūs <u>shakhs</u> bidūn misnad { 'aw 'arjul/ 'a place for one person { without a back or legs'
'pew'	{ "/'ahad al-maqā9id al- <u>khashabiyah</u> { <u>dhat</u> az-zāhr al-muthabbatah <u>sufūfan</u> { fi kanīсах/" (26) 'one of the wooden { chairs with a back and legs which are { ordered in rows in a church'

6.2.5 Transport Terminology:

ENGLISH TERM

ARABIC EQUIVALENT

'coupe'

{ The transliterated form /kubīh/ or  
 { "/sayyārah muqfalah dhāt bābayn  
 { tattasi9 li-rākibayn 'aw khamsah/" (27)  
 { 'a closed car with two doors for two  
 { or five persons'

'buggy'

{ The transliterated form /bagī/ or  
 { /9arabah khafīfah wahīdat al-maq9ad/  
 { 'a light carriage with one seat'

'limousine'

{ The transliterated form /limuzīn/  
 { or "/sayyārat rukkāb mutrafah/" (28)  
 { 'a luxury passenger car'

'hackney'

{ The transliterated form /hākīnī/ or  
 { /sayyārat 'ujrah/ 'a hire car'

'tram'

The transliterated form /trām/

'station-wagon'

{ The transliterated forms /sayyārah  
 { stīshīn/ or /sayyārah buks/ 'a box  
 { car' or "/sayyārah dhāt badan  
 { khashabiy muqfal dhū şufūf min al-  
 { maqā9id al-qābilah liṭ-ṭay khalf  
 { as-sā'iq/" (29) 'a car with a closed  
 { wooden body and rows of folding seats  
 { behind the driver'.

'rig'

{ /9arabah bi-jawād wāhid/ 'a one-  
 { horse carriage'

'gig'

{ /9arabah khafīfah dhāt 9ajalāt/  
 { 'a light carriage with wheels'

## 6.2.6 Kinship Systems:

A kinship system is part and parcel of every human society. Hence the lexical items that express kinship relations are part of the vocabulary of every language. Yet these items may be combined in various ways according to the nature and characteristics of the language that contains them and the society they are used in. (30)

The difficulty in translating English kinship terms into Arabic or vice-versa is not caused as much by the problem of untranslatability as by the difference in semantic fields and distributions of meaning. Generally speaking, Arabic has a more detailed kinship system than English. The lack of direct correspondence and the ambiguity of some English forms require somewhat paraphrased Arabic equivalents.

e.g. 'Cousin'	/ 'ibn al- <u>9amm</u> / 'son of father's brother'
	/ 'ibnat al- <u>9amm</u> / 'daughter of father's brother'
	/ 'ibn al- <u>9ammah</u> / 'son of father's sister'
	/ 'ibnat al- <u>9ammah</u> / 'daughter of father's sister'
	/ 'ibn al- <u>khāl</u> / 'son of mother's brother'
	/ 'ibnat al- <u>khāl</u> / 'daughter of mother's brother'
	/ 'ibn al- <u>khālah</u> / 'son of mother's sister'
	/ 'ibnat al- <u>khālah</u> / 'daughter of mother's sister'
'brother-in-law'	/ <u>zawj</u> al-' <u>ukht</u> / 'sister's husband'
	/ ' <u>akh</u> az-zawj/ 'husband's brother'
	/ ' <u>akh</u> az-zawjah/ 'wife's brother'

The same is true of:

'sister-in-law'	/zawjat al-'akh/ 'brother's wife'
	/'ukht az-zawj/ 'husband's sister'
	/'ukht az-zawjah/ 'wife's sister'
'nephew'	/'ibn al-'akh/ 'brother's son'
	/'ibn al-'ukht/ 'sister's son'
'neice'	/'ibnat al-'akh/ 'brother's daughter'
	/'ibnat al-'ukht/ 'sister's daughter'

Similarly, divisions can be applied to 'uncle', 'aunt', 'grand-father', 'grandmother', 'father-in-law', 'mother-in-law' ... etc. (31)

It may also be relevant at this point to mention that Arabs tend to call their friends and relatives by their nicknames or agnomina or what is referred to in linguistic terms as metonymy. Thus /'Abū-Salīm/ and /'Abū-Hasan/ can stand as proper names that have to be translated into English as 'Abū-Salīm' and 'Abū-Hasan' and not as \*'salīm's father' or \*'Hasan's father'. (32) In a similar way, the Arabic word /ḥāj/ is usually used as an honorary title before the names of old people, even when they have never performed the rites of the /ḥajj/ 'pilgrimage'. The title /shaykh/ 'sheikh' literally 'an old (or aged) man', is, on the other hand, used nowadays as a title before the names of wealthy people or religious men. The only way to render such words in English would be through transliteration unless one is using them intentionally in their literal sense.

#### 6.2.7 Religious Terminology:

##### ENGLISH TERM

##### ARABIC EQUIVALENT

'postulant'

{"/al-murashshah li-dukḥul  
{ar-rahbanah/" (33)  
{ 'a nominee for monasticism'

'ordinand'

zero

'pastor' )

/kāhin/

'parson' )

'vicar' )

'dean' )

'hermit' )

/rahīb/ or /nāsik/

'friar' )

'monk' )

'cenobite' )

Gaps in religious terminology can extend to taboo words. For example, the lexical items referring to the various types of pig-meat - which is totally forbidden in Islam - namely, 'pork' 'ham' and 'bacon' are almost impossible to render into Arabic where only the generic term /lahm khinzīr/ exists and is charged with unfavourable emotive connotations for the Muslim reader. In the same way, the word 'bigamy' is usually translated into Arabic as /ta9addud az-zawjāt/, yet the two words are equivalents only in their basic meanings. The English term has an extra religious implication for an English reader because it refers to a practice which is forbidden in Christianity. The Arabic word, on the other hand, is free from such negative implication. Similarly, in the conservative societies of the Arab world, English terms of some social relations such as 'boy-friend' 'girl-friend' and 'to live together (without marriage)' which sound perfectly natural to an English reader, may be embarrassing to an Arab reader and, of course, to the translator.

#### 6.2.8 Political Terminology:

On the counting of 'ghost-vote', the Daily Mirror (July 16, 1974, p.2) wrote the following:

"A full Commons probe is likely to be held  
into the ghost-voting by disabled M.P.s  
This is expected to follow a storm of protest

last night from back-benchers of all parties. Under the ghost-voting system, party whips can nod through a disabled M.P.'s vote - provided the M.P. is somewhere on the premises".

For an Arabic newspaper translator, this text is difficult to translate, if one is not familiar with the British parliamentary system. The key items in the text are 'ghost-voting', 'back-benchers' and 'party whip' none of which have corresponding lexical terms in Arabic.<sup>(34)</sup> In many parts of the Arab world, the parliamentary system has no opposition, nor are there back-benchers or shadow ministers. Likewise bilingual dictionaries can be of little help in such contexts. For example, the Oxford English-Arabic Dictionary of Current Usage, has no entry for 'ghost-voting'. However, it gives a definition of 'ghost-writer', a definition which does not help very much in translating 'ghost-voting'; 'back-benches' and 'party whip' are translated by circumlocutions, paraphrasing the contextual meanings they have in English:

- front-benches : 'seats preserved for Cabinet Ministers  
in the British House of Commons'
- back-benches : 'seats preserved for non-Cabinet Ministers  
in the British House of Commons'
- party-whip : 'a party MP responsible for the  
attendance of his party members at  
voting'

These terms and, of course, many other items which share the same collocational range with them (e.g. 'shadow cabinet', 'privy council', 'privy seal') form a lexical set in English. The meaning of each draws upon and is determined by the formal and contextual meanings of the other terms in the set. To translate 'back-benchers' as /shāghilī al-maqā'id al-khalfiyyah/ or 'ghost-voting' as /taṣwīt al-'ashbāh/ is what Catford defines as 'transference':



".... to carry out an operation in which the TL text or rather parts of the text do have values set up in the SL, in other words, have SL meanings" (35)

The Catfordian concept of transference can also be extended to include partial translations which are the result of the normal incompatibility in the connotational range of lexical items in two different languages. For example, in Arabic, the adjective /libirāliyy/ 'liberal' conveys a pejorative sense which is not found in the English adjective. The opposite may be true with regard to the noun 'slogan' which can have undesirable overtones; it is usually considered as an equivalent to the Arabic /shihār/ which, however, often carries a favourable connotation when it occurs unmodified by an adjective. In a similar way, in the Arab world where almost all broadcasting stations are state-controlled, it is redundant to translate the adjective in the phrase 'the state-controlled radio of ...' which is frequently used by newspapers to distinguish between official and private radio stations.

#### 6.2.9 Terms Pertaining to Weather and Temperature:

The influence of climatic conditions is reflected in the vocabulary of each language. For instance, the relatively large classifications of the English weather have no adequate equivalents in Arabic. The English people seem to be more obsessed with their weather than other nations are. Certainly, they are more so than the Arabs. This may be illustrated by the fact that the climate of Britain furnishes a number of expressions which belong to what Malinowski terms 'phatic communion'. Thus, "lovely weather, isn't it?" may be a way of greeting or starting a conversation in Britain. In the Arab world, it means one thing only - the literal meaning.

Likewise, practices existing in cold climates may be alien to people living in hot climates. Thus in a hot climate

there is no need for people to 'sunbathe' and get 'suntanned'. These practices and the terms referring to them belong to the culture of a cold climate. Consequently, it is difficult to establish direct one-word equivalents in the language of those societies where such practices are uncommon. In Arabic, for example, 'sunbathe' is paraphrased as /'akhadha hammām shams/ 'to have a bath of sun'

Differences in climatic conditions can also lead to different divisions of temperatures. This is illustrated in the following examples from English and Arabic.

'frozen' )	{ /mutajammid/ or /shadīd
'icy' )	
'frigid' )	

'cold' )	• /bārid/ or /qāris/
'chilly' )	
'cool' )	

'fresh' )	/muṡtadil/ or /munṡish/
'lukewarm' )	
'mild' )	
'moderate' )	
'brisk' )	

'warm'	/dāfi'/ or /hārr/
--------	-------------------

'hot'	/hārr/
-------	--------

'sweltering' )	{ /shadīd al-harārah/ (36)
'scorching' )	
'burning' )	
'boiling' )	

#### 6.2.10 Temporal Divisions:

The sequential division of the periods of day and night is, in some instances, different between English and Arabic. In consequence, some confusion in regard to the exact location of each period in both languages is likely to develop. It is also not uncommon to find that some terms in one language may have a zero-equivalent in the other. For example, English 'high noon' has no clear cut equivalent in Arabic, apart from the general term /az-zuhr/ which can also stand for 'noon' 'midday', 'noontide' and 'noonday'. On the other hand, the Arabic term /as-sahar/ roughly 'foredawn' has no English counterpart. The same thing is true of /al-hazī9 al-'awwal/ roughly 'the first part of the night' and /al-hazī9 ath-thānī/ 'the second part of the night' which can only be paraphrased in English.

Finally, terms pertaining to age divisions also show some disparities between English and Arabic. For example, 'infancy', 'babyhood' and 'childhood' are all rendered by the general word /at-tufūlah/ in Arabic. Likewise, the Arabic word /as-sibā/ is used indiscriminately to refer to both 'boyhood' and 'girlhood'.

#### 6.2.11 Colour Terminology:

According to 'Ahmad 9Umar, the human eye can distinguish more than 180 colours.<sup>(37)</sup> If this is true, then one can imagine how different peoples may differ in classifying these colours according to their needs and ideologies. For example, compared to MSA, English seems to be very rich in terms denoting the various shades of basic colours. Hence the search for the closest Arabic terms may sometimes lead to a dead end. This, of course, does not exclude the fact that certain colour terms may have existed or, in fact, still exist in traditional Arabic dictionaries and literary works, but under the influence of local dialects and foreign languages may have fallen out of usage.

To compensate for the absence of some frequently used English colour terms, Arabic may resort to paraphrasing or creating /nisbah/ 'relative' adjectives. The latter is accomplished by the addition of the /nisbah/ suffix /iy/ to certain names of well-known objects whose colours are similar to those referred to in the original text. The following are a few examples of English colour terms which either have a zero-equivalent, or paraphrase or a transliterated form in Arabic. It is also to be noticed that some Arabic equivalents cover quite a few words of English colour terminology, owing to their wide general usage.

ENGLISH COLOUR

ARABIC EQUIVALENT


'cream'	/qishdiy/ or the transliterated form /krīm/
'smoky' )	/ramādiy/
'ashy' )	
'cinerareous' )	
'brunette'	zero
'beige'	The transliterated form /bīj/
'fawn'	zero
'bronze'	The transliterated form /brūnziy/
'buff'	/bunnī fātih/
'tan'	/'asmar dārib liṣ-ṣufrah/ (38)
'scarlet' )	/qirmiziy/
'vermilion' )	
'crimson' )	

ENGLISH COLOUR

ARABIC EQUIVALENT

'lime'	zero
'sallow'	zero
'navy blue'	zero (39)

In this context, Arabic may benefit from reviving old colour terms which were used by the ancient Arabs. A good example of such terms are the various grades of the colour 'red' which have the following equivalents. (40)

/'urjuwān/		Most Intense
/'bahramān/		
/'mufaddam/		
/'mudrraj/		
/'muwarrad/		Lightest

6.2.12 Metaphorical Uses of Lexical Items:

Each language has its own method of assigning metaphorical shades of meaning to its lexical items in order to cover the wide range of contexts. The translator, therefore, should guard against the possible carry-over of metaphorical meanings from one language to another. For example, the word 'stone' is used in English in the contexts 'precious stone', 'plum stone', 'kidney stone' and 'date stone'. Among these contexts, the only one in which /hajar/ is the appropriate Arabic equivalent to 'stone' is that of 'precious stone' /hajar karīm/. The translator has to look for other Arabic semantic equivalents such as /badhrat al-barqūq/, /nawāt al-balahah/, /haṣwat al-kilā/ for the other contexts respectively. In the same way, 'evening of life' is translated into Arabic as /kharīf al-9umr/, literally 'the autumn of life' and the 'hands of the clock' are /9aqārib as-sā9ah/, i.e 'the scorpions of the clock'.

Furthermore, before embarking on any particular metaphorical expression in the TL, the translator should look for the underlying statement which the SL author wishes to convey. For example, it is acceptable to translate the following sentence /turīdu hukūmāt al-'isti9mār 'an taksira al-muqāwamah 9inda ash-shu9ūb al-mazlūmah li-taj9ala minhā luqmah sā'ighah/ as 'the colonialist governments seek to break the resistance of the oppressed people in order to make them a titbit'. In this example, the literal translation does not convey to the English reader the exact meaning of the metaphor /luqmah sā'ighah/; rather, it distorts it. The image conjured up by 'titbit' is that of something pleasant. In this case, we have to find another expression with an emotive quality close to that of the Arabic one. Thus for 'titbit', we should substitute a phrase like 'fall a prey to them' which reminds the reader of the ferocity of birds of prey and hence the cruelty of the colonialists.

In this context, it might also be appropriate to allude to some examples of the idiomatic uses of lexical items within fixed phrases. For although many idioms and metaphors are, in fact, clichés in several languages (e.g. 'to play a role', 'pave the way for', 'key-position', 'fruitful co-operation'..etc.) an idiomatic expression in one language will not necessarily be translated as an idiomatic expression in another. Likewise, an idiom in one language may be translated by a different idiom in another. Such English idioms as 'bald as a coot', 'cold as charity', 'drunk as a fiddler's bitch', 'drunk as a lord', 'warm as toast' can only be transferred into Arabic via paraphrase.<sup>(41)</sup> In the same way, a large number of Arabic idiomatic expressions cannot be fully understood even when they are translated literally.

e.g. /al-qawl mā qālat Hudhām/ 'whatever Hudhām says is to be taken for granted': used to describe someone whose attitudes and judgements are beyond the shadow of doubt.<sup>(42)</sup>

/wa-9inda Juhaynah al-khabar al-yaqīn/ 'Juhaynah has the certain (conclusive) news: used to describe a person who acts like a news agency.

/ka-mujīr 'Um-9Āmir/ 'like the protector of 'Um-9Āmir' meaning: an untrustworthy person whom one cannot depend upon.

Explanatory footnotes are necessary in such cases.

As will be shown in the following examples, direct functional idiomatic equivalents composed of similar lexical items to those of English are rare in Arabic. Furthermore, current English-Arabic dictionaries do not pay much attention to idiomatic expressions and when they do, their proposed Arabic equivalents are not always in agreement. e.g.

ENGLISH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSION

ARABIC EQUIVALENT

'(he is) on pins and needles'  
'(he is) on tenterhooks' }

(/yakūn 9alā 'aharr min al-jamr/ '(he is) on embers'

'(he is) in the soup'

(zero or /'innahu fī ma'zaq/ '(he is) in trouble'

'a red letter day'

(zero or /yawm sa9īd (or mashhūd/ 'a happy (or memorable) day'

'in time'

'on time'

(/fī al-waqt al-munāsib/ 'in the right time' or /fī al-maw9id/ 'on time'. Both are used interchangeably.

'pass away'

(/'intaqala 'ilā rahmati 'Allāh/ 'to pass away into God's mercy' or /'intaqala 'ilā jiwār Rabbih/ 'to be transferred into the presence of the Lord; notice that the Arabic equivalents bear religious overtones.

ENGLISH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSION

ARABIC EQUIVALENT

'once in a blue moon'

{ The nearest equivalents are the  
{ colloquial expressions /lammā  
{ yitla9 al-mishmish/ 'when  
{ appricots grow' or /lamma  
{ yishuf ḥalamat widnuh/ 'when  
{ (one) sees the lobe of one's  
{ ear'

'to go for a constitutional'

{ /ṭālaba bi-ḥuqūqihi ad-  
{ dustūriyyah/ 'ask for one's  
{ constitutional rights'. The  
{ nearest paraphrase is /al-mashy  
{ ba9da al-9ashā'/ . The nearest  
{ idiom is the colloquial /'it9ashsha  
{ witmashsha/(41) 'dine then walk'

'cupboard-love'

{ The closest and somewhat affected  
{ equivalent is /ḥub al-jayb/ 'pocket  
{ love'. Otherwise /ḥub māddiy/  
{ 'material love'

'bread and butter'  
(meaning basic food)

/9aysh wa malh/ 'bread and salt'

'to make a mountain out of  
a mole-hill'

{ /ja9ala min al-ḥabbah qubbah/  
{ 'to make a dome out of a single seed'

'to have a whale of a time'

{ /qadā 'awqāt sa9īdah/ 'to spend a  
{ happy time' (43)

'to have a finger in  
(something)'

{ /lahu yad fī/ 'to have a hand in ...  
{ or /lahu dil9 fī/ 'to have a rib  
{ in ...'



ENGLISH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONARABIC EQUIVALENT

'to have one's tongue in one's cheek'	{ /damara shay' mā fī an-nafs/ 'to hide something in one's mind'
'to have broad shoulders' (i.e. be responsible)	{ The nearest equivalent comes from the Kuwaiti dialect /yamshī 9alā zandah at-tays/ '(he is) like a buck which walks on its forearms'.
'to catch (someone) redhanded'	{ /qabada 9alayhi bil-jurm al- mashūd/ to catch someone in the act'
'to whitewash (a crime)'	{ The non-metaphorical verb /mawwaha/ 'to mislead'
'to salt away(money)'	{ The non-metaphorical verb /'iddakhara/ 'save (money)'
'to be a ham (actor)'	{ /mumaththil hāwi/ 'an amateur actor'
'to be snowed under (with questions)'	{ /'amtarūhu bil-'as'ilah/ 'they rained him with questions', (44)
'to be under the weather'	{ /kāna mutawa99ik 'aṣ-sihhah/ 'to feel unwell'

Furthermore, English and Arabic differ in their distribution of lexical items in metaphorical expressions. Thus for example, whereas the word 'run' is used polysemously, its Arabic equivalents are somewhat varied with a different lexical item in each context.

e.g.

'the train runs every hour'	{ /yantaliq al-qitār kulla sā9ah/ 'the train sets off (every hour'
'time is running out'	/al-waqt 'ākhiḏh fī an-nafāḏh/.
'to run a factory'	{ /'adāra masna9an/ 'to operate (or manage) a factory'
'running nose'	/'anf mazkūm/'catarrhal nose'

Likewise, the word 'play' is translated by different Arabic items in the following contexts:

'to play the piano'	{ /9azafa (or ḏaraba) 9alā al-biyānū/
'to play the flute'	/nafakha ash-shabbābah/
'to play the Fool' (in <u>King Lear</u> )	/maththala dawr al-mughaffal/
'don't play the innocent'	/lā tatazāhar bil-barā'ah/

Another source of difficulty in translating idiomatic expressions is the way in which certain items collocate. Collocation consists, basically of two or three lexical items which are linked semantically and contextually, i.e. the occurrence of one calls for the other. Thus, one of the meanings of 'cow' is its collocability with 'milk', e.g. 'they are milking the cow' and of 'night' with 'dark' and vice versa. (45) Similarly, 'bread' collocates with 'butter' in 'bread and butter' and 'hook' with 'crook' in 'by hook or by crook'. In translating such phrases it is usually difficult to determine the TL equivalent collocation - if there is any. Collocation, thus, is not a trivial aspect of the process of translating; it is indispensable for linking meaning to form. (46)

Languages vary in the way lexical items collocate and the meanings they acquire when they co-occur. A plausible explanation for such a phenomenon is that peoples are different in their ways of segmenting experience. This difference, is, in turn, reflected in the vocabulary of the language and how lexical items enter into habitual collocations. To illustrate this point we will compare some numeral collocations from both English and Arabic.

Apart from the basic function of enumerating, numerals in English have peculiar idiomatic applications. According to el-Sheikh it is not easy to explain for instance why the English refer to the farthest parts of the world as 'the four corners' whereas in a similar situation an Arab speaker may use

/ʾaṭrāf ad-dunyā/ 'the ends of the world'

/ʾaqsā al-biqāʾ/ 'the farthest parts'

In other words, he uses a translation equivalent of two items which are more or less a meaningful paraphrase of the English item and which are not directly or indirectly associated with the numeral '4'. (47)

In comparison with English, collocational use of numerals in Arabic is very limited. Arabic dialects on the other hand tend to be more elaborate in their idiomatic use of numerals than the standard language, e.g. /ʾil-bint bi-tur'uṣ 9alā waḥdah winuṣṣ/ (Egyptian dialect), literally 'the girl is performing a one-and-half dance'. The nearest translational equivalent to this type of Egyptian rhythmic dancing, which by no means conveys the particular sense of movement in the Arabic term, is 'belly-dancing'. Similarly MSA and a number of dialects use the expression /ʾalf mabrūk/ 'a thousand congratulations'. Unlike the Arabs, the English prefer not to specify a certain number of congratulations. In the same manner, the word /ʾalf/ 'a thousand' is used to express optimism or to welcome

a guest in the Egyptian collocation /'alf nahār 'abyad/ 'a thousand white daytimes'. This particular collocational use of the number 'one thousand' has no direct functional equivalent in English.

Equally interesting is the expression /tallaqtu (shay') thalāthan/ 'I have divorced (something) thrice', i.e. an irrevocable divorce. In other words, the speaker wants to say that he has given up something that he used to do in the past (e.g. football, drinking, smoking, etc.), once and for all. The idea of an irrevocable divorce in Islam must be explained by the translator in a footnote.

Other collocational uses of numerals include the following expressions:

1. /mithla al-quttah bi-sab9at 'arwah/ '(someone is) like a cat with seven souls'. In a similar situation, English people say: 'like a cat has nine lives'.
2. /9usfur fī al-yad khayr min 9asharah 9alā ash-shajarah/ 'a bird in hand is worth ten on a tree'. The English subtract 8 birds and say 'worth two in the bush'.
3. In English, when something has several colours, it is often described as 'variegated'. In Arabic one may equally use the expression /lahu mi'at lawn wa-lawn/ '(something) has a hundred and one colour'.

#### 6.2.13 Proverbs:

A proverb is commonly defined as a brief epigrammatic saying which presents a well-known truth that is popular and familiar to all. This truth reflects the life, habitat, social structure, moral values and customs of its users. (48)

Nonetheless, proverbs are a universal phenomenon since all human beings share a common core of experience (i.e. religions, philosophies, trades, social stereotypes, ... etc.). The major difference among proverbial systems in world languages is related to the cultural focus and the idiosyncracies of expression. For example, English proverbs emphasize modesty, friendship, co-operation, patience as well as the mocking of certain social stereotypes. (49) Arabic proverbs, on the other hand, emphasize more than anything else values which reflect the desert way of life such as altruism vs. egoism, valour vs. cowardice, contentment vs. greed, as well as generosity, honour, truth and fatalism. For example, a current but somewhat colloquial proverb states that 'that which was predestined must come to pass' /al-maktūb 9alā al-jabīn lāzim tishūfah al-9īn/. This is similar to the proverbial verse line of the pre-Islamic poet Zuhayr 'Ibn 'Abī-Salmā (A.H. 200-291) /ra'aytu al-manāyā khabṭa 9ashwā', man tuṣib tumithu wa-man tukhti' yu9ammāṭ fa-yahrami/ 'I have seen death like a night-blind camel stumbling on, the smitten die but the others age and wax in weakness whom he passes by'. (50) In another instance truth is exalted by reminding the liar of the punishment after death /al-kidhb ḥarām wal-qabr 9alām/ 'lying is a taboo (sin) and the tomb is pitch dark'.

A proverb is usually formulated in the guise of a metaphor with special rhythmic and alliterative qualities. Hence, to translate a proverb literally is to distort the sound effects and the metaphorical (ironic or satirical) semantic value. For example, the proverb /sakata dahran wa-naṭaqa kufran/ is translated literally as 'he was silent for a long time and then he spoke blasphemy'. Here, both /sakata/ and /naṭaqa/ consist of 3 short syllables of the CV type. Each of the two nouns /dahran/ and /kufran/ contains two syllables with identical stresses. The rhythm is equally maintained by the harmonious arrangement of the syllables. All these features are lost in the English translation. Similarly,

notice the alliterative quality in the following two proverbs and compare them to their English translations: /al-ḥurr min ḡhamzah wal-ḥimār min rafsah/ 'a free man learns from a wink and a donkey from a kick'.

/al-'aqrīb 9aqrīb/ 'relatives are scorpions'.

Surely the beauty and elegance of expression which make such Arabic proverbs memorable cannot be appreciated except in their original context. In the same way, other proverbial devices such as special stylistic turns of speech, deletion of certain elements, pattern symmetry and inversion of word order are difficult to preserve when a given proverb is reproduced in another language.

In the following pages, we will present some English proverbs with (if any) their Arabic equivalents or paraphrases.

e.g.

ENGLISH PROVERB

ARABIC EQUIVALENT

'two heads are better than one'

{ /al-mar' kathīr bi-'ukhwānih/  
 { literally 'a man is stronger  
 { with the help of his brothers'  
 { or /lakhāba man 'istakhār walā  
 { nadima man 'istashār/ literally  
 { 'he who chooses never fails and  
 { he who consults never ends up  
 { disappointed'.

'too many cooks spoil the broth'

{ Paraphrase: /kathrat aṭ-tuhā  
 { tufsid al-ḥisā/ 'the abundance  
 { of cooks spoils the soup' or  
 { the somewhat colloquial proverb  
 { /safīnah bi-qubṭānīn taghraḡ/  
 { 'a ship with two captains sinks'

'no rose without a thorn'

{ /wa-min ash-shawkah tanbit az-  
 { zahrah/ literally 'out of a  
 { thorn comes the rose'

ENGLISH PROVERB

ARABIC EQUIVALENT

'ugly women finely dressed  
are the uglier for it'

{ /wa-hal yuṣliḥ al-ḡaṭṭār mā  
'afsada ad-dahr/ literally  
'can the perfumer mend what  
time has spoiled'

'oaks may fall when reeds  
brave the storm'

{ /lā tuhaqqiranna ṣaghīran fī  
mukhāṣamatin, 'inna al-baḡūdata  
{ tudmī muqlata al-'asadi/ 'do not  
{ despise the small (or the weak)  
{ in a dispute for a mosquito can  
{ make the lion's eye bleed'

'much cry and little wool' or  
'empty vessels make the most  
noise'

{ /jaḡjaḡah min ḡhayr ṭahīn/  
{ literally: 'rumbling without  
{ grinding'

'one swallow does not make a  
summer'

{ Paraphrase /ṭayr sunūnū wāhid lā  
{ yaḡnī quḏūm aṣ-ṣayf/ 'one swallow  
{ does not mean the advent of  
{ summer'

'be vigilant but never  
suspicious'

{ /'inna sū'a az-ḡan min ḡuṣn  
{ al-fiṭan/ literally 'mistrust  
{ is part of sagacity'

'be sure before you marry  
of a house to tarry'

{ /qabla ar-rimā' tumla' al-  
{ kanā'in/ literally, 'before  
{ firing, cannons must be filled'

'a good anvil is not afraid  
of the hammer'

{ /lā yadīru as-sahāb nabḡ al-kilāb/  
{ 'clouds will not be disturbed by  
{ (the barking of dogs'.

Allusion to famous people to represent particular qualities is characteristic of many cultures. In Arabic, proverbial generosity is described as /kāram Ḥatimiy/ (51). On the other hand, avarice is ascribed to Mādir, hence the expression /'abkhal min Mādir/ 'more avaricious than Mādir. (52) The Arabs also say /'atma9 min 'Ash9ab/ 'more gluttonous than 'Ash9ab' (53) and lack of punctuality is described as /mawā9īd 9Araqūb/. (54) Understanding what these people symbolize is determined by a knowledge of Arabic culture. The text by itself provides little or no help. The translator has to look for the missing but vital information somewhere else, e.g. books of folklore, encyclopedias and the like.

### 6.3 Stylistic Incompatibilities:

#### 6.3.1 Textual Symmetry:

One of the outstanding features of Arabic is its fluidity and the extensive use of synonyms and clichés. This might explain the frequent use of the conjunction /wa/ 'and', and the lack of adherence to punctuation and paragraph division. In fact, punctuation has never been standardized in Arabic and many books still follow the practice of mediaeval manuscripts in having no visible punctuation apart from occasional full stops. When punctuation marks are employed, they are usually inserted in so unsystematic a manner as to be of little help in reading or writing.

Generally speaking, an Arabic translation of an English text tends to become longer than the original one. One of the factors involved in such a phenomenon is the overuse of Arabic conjunctions. For instance, Arabic, unlike English, uses the conjunction /wa/ between every two adjacent nouns or adjectives within a given sentence. Thus, for example, the English sentence 'racialism is a dangerous doctrine that produces nothing but evil, sins, wars, disputes and rivalry' is translated into Arabic as /'inna al-9unsuriyyah mabda' khaṭīr lāyuntij



'illā ash-shurūr wal-'ātham wal-hurūb wat-takhāṣum wat-tanāfus/'  
 i.e. 'racialism is a dangerous ..... etc., nothing but evil  
 (\*and) sins (\*and) wars (\*and) disputes and rivalry'. The  
 first three 'and's' are redundant if reproduced in English.  
 Instead, English inserts commas between the first two nouns or  
 adjectives while 'and' is positioned only before the last noun  
 or adjective.

At the paragraph level /wa/ is often added in Arabic to  
 connect as many as ten sentences. Compare, for example, the  
 following quotation from The Economist (10-16 August, 1985)  
 with its Arabic translation in al-Waṭan (13 August 1985)

"Nobody was surprised that Syria ..... boycotted  
 the Casablanca gathering. Its fellow-  
 rejectionist, South Yemen stayed away. So  
 did Algeria, although it has been edging ....  
 between rejectionists and would-be constructionists.  
 Libya's Colonel Qaddafi sent only a denunciatory  
 envoy ..... who did come. Iraq and Jordan were  
 pilloried for being too friendly to Egypt; Djibouti,  
 Somalia and Oman were castigated for joining Egypt  
 in the week-long Bright Star military manoeuvres ..."

"wa-lam yastaghrib 'aḥad 'an tuqāti9 Sūryā tajammu9  
 al-Dār al-Bydā', wa-ghābat ma9ahā zamīlatuhā ar-  
 rāfidah al-Yaman al-Janūbiyyah. wa-kadhālik fa9alat  
 al-Jaza'ir raghma 'annahā 'intahat 'ilā mawqif wasat  
 bayna ar-rāfidīn wal-bannā'īn al-muhtamalīn. wa-  
 'arsalat Lībyā mab9ūthan Lish-shajb faqat. wa-  
 ta9arrada al-9Irāq wal-'Urdun lil-'intiḡād Limughālātihima  
 fī sadaqat Miṣr. wa-ta9arradat Jibūti wal-Ṣumāl  
 wa-Saltanat 9Umān lil-'intiḡād bi-sabab 'indimāmihimā  
 'ilā munāwarāt al-Najm al-Sāti9/"

Whereas the English original uses no conjunction to connect the  
 sentences apart from 'so' in "so did Algiers ...", its Arabic  
 translation employs six 'and's'.

The overuse of conjunctions to comply with the requirements of fluidity is not limited to /wa/. Expressions such as /min jānib 'ākhar/ or /9ala ṣa9īd 'ākhar/ 'on the other hand', /kama/ 'also' or 'further' and /'ammā/ 'as for' are frequently added in the Arabic translations of foreign texts. For example, a paragraph in an article on USSR-USA relations published in The Christian Science Monitor (27 July - 2 August, 1985) reads like this:

"Trade talks between the two super-powers have gone reasonably well in recent months. So have talks on air safety (which began after the Korean airliner downing in 1983)."

This paragraph was translated in al-Qabas (8 August 1985) as:

"/wa-min jānib 'ākhar ḥaqqaqat al-muhādathāt bayna al-quwwatayn al-'a9zam taḥassunan malhūzan fī al-'ashhūr al'akhīrah ... etc."/.

Here, the translator chose to add /wa-min jānib 'ākhar/ 'on the other hand' for no obvious reason other than to make his translation read smoothly and uninterrupted.

One of the major factors that contribute to the economy of a text is the use of what Halliday terms the "cohesive relations".<sup>(55)</sup> Cohesion which is a semantic relation occurs when the interpretation of some element in the text is dependent on that of another, i.e. the one presupposes the other.<sup>(56)</sup> This presupposition can take one of three forms:

- a. Anaphoric: the presupposition of something that was mentioned earlier whether in the preceding sentence or not. This is achieved by the use of demonstrative pronouns, personal pronouns or expressions such as 'that being so', 'such a ...', 'on the other hand' all of which point back to some previous item or equally a whole passage.
- b. Cataphoric: when the presupposed element is yet to follow.

c. Exphoric: when the presupposed element is outside the text altogether, i.e. the item referred to is an element in the outside environment. (57)

Generally speaking, most English-Arabic translators, at least those working in journalism, usually avoid translating English cohesive elements by their possible Arabic equivalents. Instead, they often prefer to repeat the presupposed item in full every time it is referred to. This method which is aimed at evading the possibility of confusing the relation between a given lexical item and its reference, is bound to make the Arabic translation longer than the SL text. A good example of such a practice is the translation published in al-Waṭan newspaper (4 August, 1985) of an article on the relations between the USSR and Israel, originally published in The Christian Science Monitor (27 July - 2 August 1985). The article makes frequent references to an arrangement being made to restore normal relations between the two countries. One paragraph reads like this:

"Perhaps even more important, it could clear a major obstacle out of the way of a new era in US-Soviet relations."

The translator preferred to repeat the presupposed element, i.e. 'the arrangement made to restore relations' by saying:

"/wa-rubbamā yakūn al-'aham min dhālik 'an yuzīl hādha at-tartīb 9aqabah ra-'īsiyyah min tarīq 9asr jadīd fī al-9ilāqāt al-'Amīrkiyyah al-Sūfyātiyyah/"

The obvious reason for such a repetition is that Arabic has no neutral pronoun that can be used as a translational equivalent to English 'it'. Opting for either the masculine or the feminine third person singular pronoun may result in the reader confusing the exact presupposed element indicated by 'it' with one of either parties involved in creating such an arrangement. The same process is repeated in the translation of a following paragraph which reads like this:

"With implications so important, let us line up the known facts"

The translation given is:

"/wa-nazarān limadā 'ahamiyyat ma9ānī at-tawassul 'ilā tartīb kahād̄hā bayn Muskū wa-Tal 'Abīb da9ūnā nulakhkhiṣ al-ḥaqā'iq al-mu9rūfah/".

Finally, Arabic translations of English texts are made longer by the fact that English acronyms are usually expanded in Arabic. For example, the acronym 'NATO' is expanded in Arabic into /Munazzamat Hilf Shamāl al-'Aṭlasī/. A possible Arabic acronym is /MUḤSHA'/ which is ambiguous without its expanded phrase. This ambiguity is not confined to foreign acronyms, for even the Arabic acronym /JADA9/ i.e. /Jami9at al-Duwal al-9Arabiyyah/ 'The Arab League' may be misread, in the absence of capitalization in Arabic, as /jada9/ which is the Egyptian colloquial word for 'a bright fellow'.

### 6.3.2 Style Shift

An adequate translation should represent both the content and style of the original text or utterance. One exception, is perhaps, scientific texts where content is all important and style is but a vehicle for conveying meaning. In all other types of language, style is normally relevant to translation and is as important as meaning, sometimes even more important as, for example, in translating poetry. (58)

It follows then that a style should be rendered by its equivalent. In practice, this is not always the case.

The general problems of style shift in translation have been previously discussed by a number of specialists including Nida (1964) (59), Catford (1965) (60) and Slobodnik (1970). (61)

Our aim, here, is to maintain that informal English, usually found in oral conversation and its written imitation represented

by dialogues in novels, plays and subtitles of films, undergoes a change in style when translated into standard Arabic; it becomes formal. This style shift in translation is due to the diglossic nature of the Arabic language. The superior and more prestigious variety (i.e. MSA) which is normally used in translation lacks informal style.

There are two main reasons for a style shift in translation: linguistic and cultural. Cultural style shift may occur when the translator is required to replace a certain type of style by another in order to readjust his translation to the general frame of the TL culture. For example, he may find it culturally desirable or appropriate, to render the informal style of a passage by a formal style. An English youth, says Catford, may easily address his father in a casual style; an oriental youth, on the other hand, may have to use honorific forms in such a situation. (62)

It is generally accepted that certain languages or people prefer understatement, others favour overstatement. A translator dealing with languages belonging to different groups should make the necessary adjustments in style. A few examples from English (which normally favours understatement) and Arabic (which often prefers overstatement) will illustrate this point. The phrase a 'warm welcome' is rendered into Arabic as /'istiqbāl ḥārr/ literally 'a hot welcome'. In the same way, according to Aziz, one may read in Iraqī newspapers, /al-Rafīq al-Munādīl Ṣaddām Ḥusayn Ra'īs al-Jumhūriyyah/, literally 'Comrade Combatant Ṣaddām Ḥusayn President of the Republic', which may be appropriately translated into English as 'President Ṣaddām Ḥusayn'. (63)

Before we proceed to discuss the informal-formal style shift in English-Arabic translation, a summary of the general features of the informal style in English may be relevant at this point. First, the language of this style is said to be

inexplicit because it relies on the extra-linguistic context of conversation or dialogue. Thus inexplicitness is seen in apparent ambiguities due to frequent use of anaphoric expressions, incomplete utterances and abbreviated forms. Similarly, randomness of subject-matter and normal non-fluency are also significant. At the syntactic level, loosely co-ordinated sentences and clauses are common; short sentences with simple structure and incomplete clauses are frequently used. The vocabulary of informal style, in general, is made up of simple common lexical items of high frequency. (64)

In Arabic translation, inexplicitness is often replaced by obvious explicitness - a feature which is characteristic of formal style. As a result of this tendency, anaphoric expressions are avoided in favour of the original items. This will be shown in the following examples: (65)

e.g. "... (There was a little oval brass plate with a queer figure like a palm-tree beaten upon it).  
"I like that." she said"  
/ta9jibunī hādhihi as-safīhah/  
'I like this plate'

(D. H. Lawrence,  
The Virgin and the Gypsy  
pp. 76-7; (66) translated  
by Zaghlūl Fahmī, Cairo,  
1970)

"It's too cold". Mother said. "He'd better stay in Benjamin."  
"Stop that now!"  
"It won't hurt him". Uncle Maury said."  
"Lan yu'dhiyahu al-khurūj/"  
'Going out will not hurt him'

(William Faulkner  
The Sound and the Fury  
pp. 12-13: (67) translated  
by Jabrā I. Jabrā ,Beirut ,  
1963).

Another factor which contributes to the explicitness and consequently the formality of Arabic translation is the fact that incomplete sentences and clauses are frequently replaced by complete constructions.

e.g. Nora (calling): "Uncle Peter, now Uncle Peter, tea's ready".

The covey (provokingly): "Another cut o' bread, Uncle Peter?"

"/'aturīd qitṭah 'ukhrā min al-khubz yā-ḡam Bītar/"  
'Would you like to have another piece of bread, Uncle Peter?'

(Sean O'Casey, The Plough and the Stars, pp. 149-51<sup>(68)</sup>  
translated by Fawzī al-  
'Atīl, Cairo, 1965)

' "I would rather you said". She told him looking up at him'

"/'ufaddil law dhakarta lī thamanahā/"  
'I would rather you mention its price for me.'

"No". she said suddenly. If you won't tell me I won't have it"

"Alright", he said, "two shilling" '

"/thamanuha dirhamā/"  
'its price is two dirhams'

(D. H. Lawrence, The Virgin and the Gipsy  
pp. 76-77;<sup>(69)</sup>  
translated by Z. Fahmī,  
1970)

"... face going all the way back again with this great ..... you know my arms were aching ...."

"/'an 'atajarra'a 9ala al-khurūj marratan 'ukhrā  
bi-hādḥā al-himl ath-thaqīl. wa-lā-yakhfā 9alayka  
'anna dhira9ayya kānā yu'limānī/"

'That I face going all the way back again with this heavy load. You know my arms were aching me'

(D. Crystal and D. Davy  
Investigating English Style,  
pp. 97-9;<sup>(70)</sup> translated  
by Sulayman y. Sulayman,  
Mosul University, 1980).

Non-fluency in the original text is often replaced by fluency in Arabic translations.

e.g. 'Clithero (kissing her): "O, sorra, fear of her doin' anythin' desparate. I'll talk to her to-morrow when she's sober. A taste o' me mind that shock her into the sensibility of behavin' herself" '

"/laysa hunāka māyad9ūki lil-khawf min 'an taqūma  
bi-fi9l mutahawwir. sa-'ataḥaddathu 'ilayhā 9indamā  
takūn fī wa9yihā. sa-'aqūl ra'yī fīhā bi-ṣarāḥah  
taṣdumuhā fa-ta9rif kayfa tuhassin sulūkahā/.

'There is nothing that may make you fear of her doing something desparate. I will talk to her when she is completely sober. I will say my opinion of her with such a sincerity that may shock her and then she will know how to behave herself'.

(O'Casey, The Plough ....., (71)  
translated by F. al-'Atīl)



The following is another example from al-'Atīl's translation:

"Mind who you're pushin' now .... I tend my place o'  
worship, anyhow ..... not like some o' them that go  
to neither church, chapel not meetin' house ..... If  
me son was home from th' threnches he'd see me righted."

"/'i9raf man 'allatī tadfa9uhā 'al'ān. fa-'anā 9alā  
'ayyati hāl 'adhhab 'ilā al-kanīсах wa-lastu ka-ba9dihim  
mimman lā-yadhhab 'ilā kanīсах 'aw ma9bad ṣaghīr 'aw  
hāttā makān al-'ijtimā9. law kāna 'ibnī qad 9āda  
min jabhat al-qitāl la-'akhadha bi-haqqī/" (72)

Here, the loosely linked sentences of the English examples may be contrasted with the well-connected sentences of the Arabic translation which is again another feature of formality.

Arabic translations usually employ particles such as /'a/ or /hal/ in interrogative sentences rather than mere intonation which is the customary way of expressing interrogative sentences in Arabic informal conversation. Such particles, when inserted in an Arabic translation of an English informal text are viewed as redundant.

e.g. "you're not coming up to the Head no more?" he asked

"/'alasti qādimah 'ilā al-Hid marrah 'ukhrā/

'aren't you coming up to the Head no more?'

(D. H. Lawrence,  
The Virgin ..., (73)  
translated by Zaghīlūl  
Fahmī 1970)

' "I know it. It's a judgement on me. I sometimes wonder"

"/'innī la-'atasā'al 'ahyanan. 'ahuwa hukm 'Allāh  
9alay/"

'I sometimes wonder. Is it (God's) judgement upon me'

(Faulkner, The Sound ..., (74)

translated by Jabra I. Jabra)

Finally, most of the lexical items used in Arabic translations belong to the vocabulary of formal style; they are not what one would expect to find in the language of everyday utterances. Subtitles of films and English T.V. series are a good example of this. The following are but a few examples taken from Kuwait T.V. (Chanel TWO) during the period between 25 to 30 December, 1984.

- "we're going away soon"  
/lan nalbut<sup>h</sup>a 'an nashudda rihālanā/"  
instead of /sa-narḥal qarṭban/
- "I'm turning in"  
"/sa-'akhlidu lin-nawm/"  
instead of /sa-'anām/
- "don't blame yourself"  
"lā-tanḥā bil-lā'imah 9alā nafsik/"  
instead of /lā-talum nafsak/
- "I'll fix you a drink"  
"/sa-'uhayyi' laka ka'san min ash-sharāb/"  
instead of /sa-'uhaddir laka mashrūban/
- "what's the matter?"  
"/mal-khatb/"  
instead of /mal-'amr/

- "I hate to return empty-handed"  
 /'akrah 'an 'a9ūda khāwiya al-wifād/"  
 instead of /'akrah 'an 'a9ūda khaliya al-yadayn/  
 or the proverbial /'akrah 'an 'a9ūda bi-khuffay Ḥanayn/
  
- "I'm fed up with them"  
 /diqtu dhar9an bihim/"  
 instead of /malaltuhum/
  
- "I feel that"  
 /yukhālijunī shu9ur/"  
 instead of /'ash9ur/

As we have already mentioned in Chapter Three on "spectroglossia", the cause of this change of style is the fact that the situations MSA is associated with are those in which formal style would be used; informal 'casual' style belongs to Colloquial Arabic (COA). However, COA is the low variety, the least prestigious of the two. Therefore, translators often prefer to use MSA even when the SL text or dialogue is rendered in a colloquial (informal) style. This lack of style sensitivity in translation has an unpleasant effect. In the above-mentioned examples, the formal style of the Arabic translations sounds forced and ill-fitted for the casual language of conversation in the English originals. However, since this shift in style is inevitable, all that we can hope for is to narrow the gap resulting from such a shift. To achieve this, the translator should aim at a style that incorporates the formality of MSA and the informality of COA. For instance, the translator can reflect in his translation such features of informality as inexplicitness, non-fluency, anaphoric expressions incomplete sentences and lexical items which are commonly used in both MSA and COA. Thus, instead of /9imta masā'an/ for 'good evening' one can equally say /masā' al-khayr/ and /rakiba al-jawād/ 'he rode the

horse' instead of /'imtaṭā saḥwat al-jawād/. Similarly, as was mentioned in one of the above examples, instead of the long phrase /lā-tanḥā bil-lā'imah 9ala nafsik/ 'don't blame yourself' one might easily say /lā-talum nafsak/.

#### 6.4 Literary Translation:

Translating literary texts is perhaps one of the most demanding of all translations. Here, the cultural and stylistic peculiarities of the SL text are most essential, yet the most difficult to reproduce in the TL.

According to Danielson, literary translation is both a kind of commentary or criticism as well as a creative activity, which results in new texts that recapitulate the design of already existing works of art. The ultimate faithful rendering will be an exact replica of the original and the ultimate free text will be its own original. Thus neither can be a translation. (75) This might be particularly true in translating poetry where preserving and reproducing as closely as possible the effects of poetical devices such as rhyme, rhythm, tempo, stress patterns, metre, alliteration, euphony, assonance and onomatopoeia constitute a major challenge to the best of translators.

Sulaymān al-Bustānī (1856-1925), the translator of the Iliad into Arabic admitted this when he stated that he did not reproduce every word of the SL text. On the contrary, he followed a method whereby the idea behind the sentence is transferred rather than the actual words used by the original author. To him, the length of the TL text and the particular structures and sound devices of the SL text need not worry the translator, in so far as he manages to transfer the ideas behind the SL text intact. (76)

A simple but effective way of demonstrating how much of the impact of a statement depends on its music is to take well-known sayings and proverbs of a particular rhythmic quality and translate them into explicit prose. To quote a

ready example, the very cliché of translation, the Italian phrase "traduttore, traditore" loses its alliterative quality when translated into Arabic as /al-mutarjim khā'in/. Likewise, proverbs such as 'east, west, home is best', 'an apple a day keeps the doctor away', 'beer on whisky makes you frisky' and 'whisky on beer makes you queer!', owe their popularity to assonance, a quality which is lost in translation. In a similar vein, the well-known line of the pre-Islamic poet 'Imru' al-Qays (died 550.A.D.) /mikarrin mifarrin muqbilin *mudbirin* *māyan* ka-julmūdi sa<sup>ḥ</sup>krin ha<sup>ṭṭ</sup>ahu as-saylu min ʿali/  
'attacking and retreating; charging and fleeing (i.e. to and fro), (he is) like a huge rock thrown down by a flood'. Here, too, the rhythmic division, the alliterative adjectives and the whole image of a horse galloping at full speed are likely to be misrepresented in English translation.

In other words, the written word appeals not only to the eye but to the ear as well. Here, the dictionary can offer little help; the translator must work by intuition and try to be creative. As a result, one translator may render the clichéd phrase 'the still of the night' as /huḍ' al-layl/; another may prefer to reproduce some sound qualities of the SL phrase by saying /sukūn al-layl/. Yet, a third translator may try to reproduce both the sound quality and the feeling of uncertainty and disquietness in the phrase /khilsat al-layl/. In the same way the assonance and polysemy of 'Abū-Tammām's (died 845) line:

/mā māta min karami az-zamāni fa-'innahu yaḥyā ladā Yaḥyā  
verb noun

'Ibn ʿAbdullāh/ literally 'dead nobility (or generosity) is made alive by Yahya 'Ibn ʿAbdullah', and that of 'abu-Nuwas's (died 813) line;

<u>/ʿAbbās</u> noun	<u>ʿabbās</u> adjectival noun	'idhā 'ihtadama al-waḡhā
------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------

<u>wal-Fadlu</u>	<u>fadlun</u>	<u>wal-Rabī9u</u>	<u>rabī9u</u> /(77)
noun	adjectival noun	noun	adjectival noun

'9Abbās is stern when fighting breaks out and  
al-Fadl is (very) generous and al-Rabī9 is (like) spring'

are what make these lines memorable. To strip them of their sound qualities is to destroy their poetical essence. The only possible way, we believe, is to transliterate the essential words as they are with a paraphrase underneath. (78)

Another example which depends on the qualities of assonance and homonymy is the poem composed by Butrus Karamah (died 1851), which was appropriately called "al-Qasīdah al-Khāliyah". In this poem the word /khāl/ is used as the governing rhyme with a different meaning in each line,

e.g. /'amin khaddiha al-wardiy 'aftanaka al-khāl/  
 'were you enchanted by the mole on her rosy cheek?'  
 /fa-sahha min al-'ajfāni madma9uka al-khāl/  
 'and from the eyelids came your tears (in abundance)  
 like raining clouds'

/wa-'awmada barqun min muhayyā jamalihā 'aw min  
thaghrihā 'awmada al-khāl/  
 'and lightning flashed from the countenance of her  
 beauty or did the lighting flash from her front tooth?'

/ra9ā 'Allāhu dhayyāka al-qawām. wa-'in yakun talā9aba  
 fī 'a9tāfihi at-tīhu wal-khāl/  
 'Allāh protect that body though haughtiness and pride  
 dally with its looks'

/wa-li-'Allāh hātayk al-jufūn fa-'innahā 9ala al-fatki  
 yahwāhā 'akhū al-9ishq wal-khāl/  
 'and by 'Allāh these eyelids for despite their destructive  
 power, they are adored by both the loving and the  
passion-free (person)'

/mahātan bi-'ummī 'aftadihā wa-waladī wa-'in lāma  
 9ammī at-tayyib al-'asl wal-khāl/  
 'for her (this gazelle) I give up my mother and child  
 even if I am blamed by my noble (origin) uncle or by  
my maternal uncle.' (79)

As with other types of translation, the problem of literary translation is not only in choosing equivalent vocabulary and structure but also in finding an equivalent style in the TL. According to Khurma, the poetry of Homer, for example, has been translated into Arabic in a very esoteric style. The question is: is it possible to render the poetry of Homer in the form of the Nabatī poetry or that of 9Antarah bin Shaddād (528-608) or 'Abū-Zayd al-Hilālī (died 1529) whose poetry bears nearly the same heroic spirit as that of Homer? (80)

In translating classical Arabic poems it is often difficult to preserve the traditional form of the poem in the TL. For example, in traditional poetry, each line is divided into two hemistichs called /as-sadr/ and /al-9ajz/. The hemistichs of a divided line are often considered to be exactly alike in terms of assonance and metrical feet /bahr/. Consequently, metre in Arabic poetry is defined as the sequence of feet which constitutes a single hemistich; this definition stems from the fact that the second hemistich is a duplicate of the first. (81) The particular effect of this division cannot be appreciated in translation just as when a sonnet or an iambic pentametre or hexametre is reproduced in Arabic prose.

In poetry, images of a certain locality can not be recreated with the same effect in a language of a different environmental background. In other words, it is the translators's responsibility to select within the TL natural, social and linguistic features an image which bears similar associations and connotations to that of the TL. For example, the image in Shakespeare's sonnet number 18: "shall I compare thee to a summer's day" loses its aptness for a Middle Eastern audience since to them the excessive heat of the

summer is too oppressive to be considered an object of tender comparison. (82) Therefore, it might be culturally desirable to replace 'summer' by 'spring' in the Arabic version of this particular sonnet. However, when such a change is made some critics might claim that the integrity of the SL text has been betrayed. In effect, the concept of untranslatability has become synonymous with the translation of verse.

Generally speaking in literary translation, literal renderings of lexical items may conceal the actual connotations intended by the original author. For example, ʿAbd-al-Qādir al-Qitṭib translates the word 'mouse' in the following line from Hamlet:

"let the bloated King tempt you again to bed;

Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse"; (83)

as /fa'ratah/. (84) Yet, in Arabic, the word /fa'r/ has bad connotations which contrast with the playful affection intended by Shakespeare. Consequently, the word 'mouse' was translated more appropriately by Jabrā as /ʿusfūratah/ 'his bird (or sparrow)', (85)

In the same way, the marriage of Hamlet's mother Gertrude with Hamlet's uncle Claudius is not considered immoral in a Muslim society. With this in mind, the translator should provide a footnote in which the then immorality of such a marriage in the Christian creed is commented upon.

However, it should be noted that linguistic and cultural discrepancies do not warrant a drastic change in the original text that can lead to a devaluation of its integrity. For example, to forge a happy ending for Hamlet as Ṭānyus ʿAbduh did, in response to public taste, is not by any means a process of filling the cultural gaps between English and Arabic. (86) The translator should always bear in mind that his task is to minimize loss, maximize retention and complement where necessary. (87)

As far as philosophical, religious and social values are concerned, there exist many differences between English and Arabic



poetry particularly in relation to metaphysical concepts such as resurrection, the relation between man and God and body and soul. For example, the word /dahr/ 'time' is used by Arab poets in contexts similar to those where the English word 'Fate' is used.<sup>(88)</sup> In another instance, Islamic poets sometimes refer to their beloveds by using masculine markers.

e.g.

/Lī habībun lā-'abūhu bihi, 'anā al-yawma minhu maqtūlu/ 'I have a beloved whose name I do not divulge, of whom I am today slain'<sup>(89)</sup>

Bahā'al-Dīn Zuhayr (1186-1258)

Before transferring such masculine markers into English, the translator has to determine the sex of the beloved referred to in the poem. In a society which restricts overt male-female declarations of love and courtship the use of masculine markers in poetry do not necessarily have to bear homosexual overtones.<sup>(90)</sup>

Furthermore, the typical protagonist in Classical Arabic poetry is one who boasts unreservedly of his tribe's virtues and his heroic deeds in defeating his opponents. In contrast, the characteristics of the European hero may rather concentrate on his sensitivity and his peculiar way of interpreting life (e.g. Hamlet).

To sum up, we can say - in the words of Halliday - that "the nature of language is closely related to the demands we make on it and the functions it has to serve. In the most concrete terms, these functions are specific to a culture."<sup>(91)</sup> As far as translation is concerned, the peculiar cultural features of a given language determine the extent of its translatability into another language. In this respect, a contrastive linguistic and cultural study of the languages involved may help the translator in illuminating the possible points of divergence and methods of compensation. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the problems of difference in beliefs, traditions and social norms are subtler and more numerous than the problems of lexicon. Although the

latter may be solved through invention and (or) adoption of new terminology, the former are beyond the reach of language academies and other linguistic bodies.



NOTES

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- (1) Newmark, pp. 7-8, 20.
- (2) Leech, p. 30.
- (3) Roget's Thesaurus, 4th ed., Longman, 1983. See for example pp. 167-9 and 214-16.
- (4) al-Tha9alibi, pp. 150-60, 264-74.
- (5) Bouton, p. 145.
- (6) Lyons (1968), p. 413.
- (7) Crystal, p. 110.
- (8) Ba9albaki, al-Mawrid, p. 421.
- (9) Wehr, Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, p. 1035.
- (10) English terms are taken from A. Lehrer, Semantic Fields and Lexical Structure, Amsterdam-London, 1974, pp. 30 ff.
- (11) 9Umar, p. 130.
- (12) Ba9albaki, al-Mawrid, p. 907.
- (13) 9Umar, Ibid.
- (14) David Storey, Pasmore, Longman, 1972, p. 71.
- (15) R.B. Sheridan, The Rivals, Univ. of London Press, 1973, p. 70.
- (16) A.M. Šābir, al-Ghuramā', Cairo, al-Dār al-Qawmiyyah, n.d., p.80.
- (17) el-Sheikh, p. 402.
- (18) Ba9albaki, al-Mawrid, p. 135.
- (19) Ibid, p. 823.
- (20) Ibid, p. 514.
- (21) Ibid, p. 236.
- (22) Ibid, p. 165.
- (23) Ibid, p. 833.
- (24) Ibid, p. 99.
- (25) Ibid, p. 911.
- (26) Ibid, p. 679.
- (27) Ibid, p. 224.
- (28) Ibid, p. 531.
- (29) Ibid, p. 903.
- (30) For more details, see Lyons, p. 429.
- (31) For more examples see Abdul-Baqi, pp. 81-2.

- (32) Shrīm, pp. 101 ff.
- (33) Baḡalbakī, al-Mawrid, p. 712.
- (34) el-Sheikh, p. 412.
- (35) Catford, p. 43.
- (36) ḡUmar, pp. 259-60.
- (37) Ibid, p. 264.
- (38) Ibid, p. 948.
- (39) For more examples, see Abdul-Baqī, pp. 85-91.
- (40) ḡUmar, p. 252.
- (41) For more examples see Mamdūh Haqqī, al-Mathal al-Muqāran Bayna al-ḡArabiyyah wal-'Injilīziyyah, in al-Lisān al-ḡArabī (1973).
- (42) Hudhām bint al-ḡAtīk bin Rabīḡah was married to Lujaym bin Ṣaḡb bin Bakr bin Wā'il. When she quarrelled with her husband's second wife, Lujaym told the two that Hudhām should have the upper hand and that her judgements can not be refuted.
- (43) Incidentally, the same expression occurred in one of well-known American T.V. series shown recently on Kuwait T.V, Channel 2. The corresponding subtitle was /laḡad 'istadnā hūtan kabīran hīnadhāk/ 'we caught a huge whale then'.
- (44) Interestingly enough, the word used in the Arabic expression is 'to rain (someone)' instead of 'snow'; probably since snow is unfamiliar in most parts of the Arab world.
- (45) Firth, p. 196.
- (46) For more on the subject see D. Boliner, Aspects of Language, New York, Harcourt Brace & World, 1968, pp. 527 ff.
- (47) el-Sheikh, pp. 323-4.
- (48) Bakalla, p. 248.
- (49) M. Haqqī, "al-Mathal al-Muqāran Bayna al-ḡArabiyyah wal-'Injilīziyyah," in al-Lisān al-ḡArabī (1973), pp. 393-4.
- (50) Nicholson, p. 118.
- (51) Ḥātim al-Ṭā'ī, a descendant of Ṭay' tribe, was a poet who lived in the second half of the 6th century. He is known to be a perfect example of the pre-Islamic knight with all the magnanimity, generosity and hospitality. It is even said that after his death he would rise from his tomb, slaughter a camel to entertain the travellers who asked for hospitality.

- (52) Mādir was a descendant of an Arab tribe called Banū Hilāl and was well-known for his obsession with money.
- (53) 'Ash9ab (died 771) nicknamed /at-tamma9/ 'the greedy' lived in Madīna during the early Abbasid times and was renowned for his gluttony.
- (54) 9Arqūb bin Naṣr al-9Amālīqī, a descendant of Banū Tamīm was a contemporary of the Prophet Muḥammad. He had a notorious reputation for breaking promises.
- (55) Halliday and Ḥasan, p. 14.
- (56) Ibid, p. 4.
- (57) For more on the subject, see Halliday and Ḥasan, pp. 14-19.
- (58) Aziz, Style, p. 9.
- (59) Nida (1964), pp. 180-1.
- (60) Catford, pp. 83-92.
- (61) Slobodnick, pp. 139-43.
- (62) Catford, p. 91.
- (63) Aziz, Style, p. 10.
- (64) For other phonological, syntactic and lexical features, see David Crystal and D. Davy, Investigating English Style, London, Longman, 1969, Ch. 4.
- (65) Most of these examples are quoted from Aziz, Style.
- (66) D. H. Lawrence, The Virgin and the Gypsy, Penguin, 1974, pp. 76-7.
- (67) William Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury, Penguin, 1967, pp. 12-13.
- (68) Sean O'Casey, The Plough and the Stars, Papermacs, 1968, pp. 149-51.
- (69) Lawrence, pp. 76-7.
- (70) Crystal and Davy, pp. 97-9.
- (71) O'Casey, pp. 149-51.
- (72) Ibid.
- (73) Lawrence, pp. 76-7.
- (74) Faulkner, pp. 12-13.
- (75) Danielson, p. 1.
- (76) Sulaymān al-Bustānī, 'Ilyādhat Ḥumīrūs, part 1, Beirut, Dār 'Thyā' al-Turāth al-9Arabī (n.d.), p. 75.
- (77) 9Umar, p. 181.
- (78) This method has been adopted in Penguin Books of Italian, German and Spanish verse.

- (79) Zāza, p. 109
- (80) Nayef Khurma, "Tabīʿat al-Tarjamah", in al-Bayān, p. 4
- (81) Zaki Abdel-Malek, "Towards a New Theory of Arabic Prosody," in al-Lisān al-ʿArabī (1982) p. 65, 72-3
- (82) I owe this example to my friend Dr. Yowell Aziz of the University of Mosul, Iraq.
- (83) W. Shakespeare, Hamlet (3.4) lines 182-3. See W. J. Craig, Shakespeare: Complete Works, London, Oxford University Press, 1976, p. 894.
- (84) ʿAbd-al-Qādir al-Qit, Hāmlit, Kuwait, Ministry of Information, 1971, p. 191.
- (85) Jabrā I. Jabrā, Ma'sāt Hāmlit 'Amīr al-Danimark, Cairo, Riwayāt al-Hilāl, No. 254, Feb. 1970, p. 110.
- (86) Badawī, p. 186
- (87) Danielson, p. 13
- (88) Zaytūnah ʿUmar, "Tarjamat al-Shiʿr al-'Islāmī", in al-Bayān p. 222
- (89) Dīwan Bahā' al-Dīn Zuhayr, Cairo, (n.d.), p. 162
- (90) This is despite the fact that some poets like 'Abū Nuwās (died 813) and 'Ibn al-Muʿtaz (died 908 A.D.) may use the masculine marker to refer to a homosexual relationship.
- (91) Halliday, (1970), p. 141
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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### ARABIZATION OF EDUCATION

#### 7.1 The Primacy of Education in the Process of Arabization

In the previous chapters we have dealt with some linguistic (lexical, structural, and orthographical) as well as cultural problems of Arabization. Nevertheless, our discussion was limited to a general perspective that can apply to any real-life situations. In this chapter, we will focus our attention on one of these situations, namely education, as being a typically problematic issue in the plans for Arabization across the Arab world. But before we proceed any further, the first question that might occur to one's mind is: among all other issues, why education in particular?

There are several factors that can justify our choice, among which are:

7.1.1 Education is a cultural amalgamation of various factors, political, economic, social and historical. In other words, the level of education and the organization of its institutions have a direct relationship with the governmental policies and methods of administration, the economic situation, the social will and the traditional background of the people involved. In addition, the majority of the problems discussed in previous chapters such as spectroglissia and lexical deficiency reflect in one way or another on the level of education.

7.1.2 After independence, education has come to occupy a foremost position in the developmental plans of the Arab states. This is associated with, among other things, the desire to eradicate mass illiteracy by the introduction of a democratized universal education. In terms of budget, the oil boom enabled several Arab countries to

increase significantly their financial support to education. For example, between 1970 and 1974, the public expenditure on education increased by \$2,930 million, from \$1,640 million to \$4,570 million. This increase amounted to a 29.2% annual growth rate, or an overall 179% during the 4 year period.<sup>(1)</sup> Likewise, the proportion of the gross national product (GNP) allocated to public expenditure on education increased from an average of 4.6% in 1970 to 4.8% in 1974 (See table 7.1). This placed the Arab

Country	Percent of GNP		Percent of all Public Expenditures	
	1970	1974	1970	1974
Algeria	5.7	6.5	12.9	14.3
Egypt	4.8	5.5	14.6	17.6
Iraq	5.5	3.6	20.4	8.9
Jordan	3.9	3.9	9.3	9.4
Kuwait	3.9	2.6	11.8	14.7
Lebanon	2.4	3.0	16.8	20.5
Morocco	4.2	5.3	16.8	20.5
Saudi Arabia	4.9	4.6	9.8	8.2
Sudan	4.5	8.0	12.6	14.8
Syria	3.9	3.7	9.3	8.5
Tunisia	7.5	7.0	22.8	22.6

Table 7.1: Public Expenditure on Education as a Percentage of GNP and of Total Public Expenditure in Selected Arab Countries, 1970 and 1974.<sup>(2)</sup>

countries higher than all other countries in the developing world, which in 1974 registered the following: Asia 4% of GNP, Africa 4.2% and Latin America 4.3%.<sup>(3)</sup>



7.1.3 The large sums of money allotted to educational development have resulted in a manifold increase in school enrolment. Based on UNESCO data (1975-77), the total school enrolment in the Arab world has reached a figure of 23,116,959 in 1975, compared to 16,562,014 in 1970<sup>(4)</sup> which represents an average annual growth of approximately 6.6%. A UNESCO projection presented to the Conference of Ministers of Education held in Abu-Dhabi in 1977, showed that by 1985 there would be approximately 26,315,200 pupils enrolled in primary school alone compared to 16,676,480 in 1975.<sup>(5)</sup> The reader can imagine what the total number might be, in view of the annual rate of population growth, which currently stands at 3% (the total population in 1984 was estimated to have reached 180 million).<sup>(6)</sup> Therefore, there seems to be good reason for giving absolute priority to education in any plan for Arabization.

7.1.4 From number 7.1.3 above, it has become evident that the Arab society is a "youthful" society into which a new generation of educated men and women are flocking in large numbers at an unprecedented rate. Now, it is our belief that no plan to Arabize the administration, the mass media and the very man in the street can achieve any degree of success without ensuring in the first instance that there are enough people who can use the language not only in the traditional spheres of routine white-collar jobs but also in medicine, physics, engineering and technology. These much needed people are what the Arab world is desperately trying to produce by introducing advanced educational curricula.

In short, we might say that an Arabized system of education has become one of the primary and probably most important objectives in any plan of Arabization across the Arab world. Indeed, it has become so prominent that during the First Arabization Conference (Rabat 1961), the official definition of Arabization as proposed by the Moroccan delegation was: "the replacement of foreign languages by Arabic in education and the enrichment of the Arabic vocabulary".<sup>(7)</sup>

## 7.2 The Nature of the Problem:

The Abu-Dhabi Conference On Education (1977) reported that while education costs have continuously gone up, there was no parallel qualitative improvement in education. It was pointed out that much attention has been given to quantitative expansion regardless of the necessary improvement of structure, content and delivery systems. Moreover, the great disparity in the various educational systems employed in the Arab world, it was felt, was too great to be ignored.<sup>(8)</sup>

A special problem that presents itself in the Arab countries is in connection with the language of instruction - a problem that is the residue of years of colonial occupation of the region. For many countries that had just gained national independence, the language of instruction was, and continued to be, the language of the colonizing power. Since teachers were trained and textbooks were developed under the old system, they also sustained and promoted the language of the colonizer. Naturally, with national independence, Arab governments were keen on reinstating Arabic as the language of all instruction in classes with a particular emphasis on Islamic values, Arabic history, culture and literature. Still, there are many schools at all levels, especially in the Maghrib states that have not been able to bring about Arabization of the curriculum (See table 7.2).<sup>(9)</sup>

Country	Number of Primary Years	Language of Instruction	Number of Secondary Years	Language of Instruction
Algeria	6	Arabic/French	7	French/Arabic
Morocco	5	Arabic/French	7	French/Arabic
Sudan	4	Arabic	8	English/Arabic
Tunisia	6	French/Arabic	6	French/Arabic

Table 7.2: The Language of Instruction in Four Arab States

The persistence of nonindigenous languages, is more pronounced in secondary schools, teacher colleges and the universities, where educational personnel to replace non-Arab expatriates were hard to find. (10)

In their attempts to rid themselves of alien influences, Arab educationists were faced with a dilemma which divided them into two groups. The first group demanded an immediate and total Arabization of all subjects at all levels, relying on translation for the incorporation into Arabic of the major advancements in the sciences. The second group which was less radical, called for the Arabization of the primary stages of education as well as the humanities at all levels. Their viewpoint was that under the current circumstances it would be better to retain the use of foreign languages particularly in the teaching of scientific subjects until a fully-fledged scientific Arabic was developed, with the necessary pedagogical materials. To them, foreign languages are the avenue through which the Arab world can catch up with the more advanced countries. However, before we go on to evaluate the arguments of either group (See 7.2.6), it would be better if we put the origins of the problem in perspective by discussing those circumstances which led to the current situation.

### 7.3 The Origins of the Problem:

#### 7.3.1 The Legacy of Colonization:

As has already been pointed out in Chapters Two and Three, the Arabic language suffered a great deal under Ottoman rule and later on, European colonization. Thus while the Ottomans had propagated Turkish throughout their territories, the French embarked on a policy of obliteration of Arabic and Arabic culture. It was the Maghrib states (i.e. Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria) that had to suffer under the direct impact of the French whose foremost aim was to annihilate the cultural heritage of their colonies. As Spencer points out, the Governor-General of the Maghrib decreed in 1922 that,

"General education must be given in French ...  
Qur'ānic schools are authorized to use the local  
dialects for an exclusively religious education."<sup>(11)</sup>

The imposition of a French educational system had the effect of making the Arabs of North Africa despise their language and traditions as things of the past.<sup>(12)</sup> In Morocco, for example, children were taught for 20 hours a week in French and had to learn about French history and culture instead of that of their own country.<sup>(13)</sup> In Algeria on the other hand, Arabic was treated more or less as a foreign language which was given only two hours of instruction per week.<sup>(14)</sup> Accordingly, a high drop-out rate was characteristic of the French system. For example in 1938 only 608 students were registered in the Algerian secondary schools whereas by 1945, the number had not risen to more than 1,003 students. According to al-Jābirī, the system was so selective that during the whole period from 1926 to 1945 only 50 Moroccans obtained their secondary school leaving certificate (the Baccalauréat).<sup>(15)</sup>

Upon attaining independence, the curricula in these countries continued to be strongly influenced by the French system of education. French had to be maintained alongside Arabic as a medium of instruction. It was realized at the outset that bilingualism would be necessary for some time in the interests of modernization, economic development and universal education, or as it was put by the newspaper al-9Alam in 1957, "not out of love of France but by the necessity of having an opening into the West."<sup>(16)</sup>

The continued importance of French in the educational system of the Maghrib states can best be seen in the number of expatriate French teachers working within state schools. According to Baina, despite the fact that the numbers decreased slightly during the period following independence and up to 1963, they began to increase afterwards.<sup>(17)</sup> In 1978-79, there were still 4,340 French nationals teaching in the Moroccan state education alone. Of these, 3,797 were secondary school teachers whereas 517 were scattered throughout the

universities. In other words, they represent 13% of the total number of teachers working in secondary schools while at the universities the percentage is as high as 25% of the entire teaching staff.<sup>(18)</sup> This was complicated by the lack of educational assistance from other Arab countries, mainly Egypt. The number of teachers on loan was insufficient to cater for the increasing numbers of students in the Maghrib states. As a result, Arabization was carried out on an ad hoc basis, employed where there were enough Arabic-speaking teachers and ignored where there were few.<sup>(19)</sup> Hence, the recruitment of French teachers was necessary.

Other similar problems have surfaced in other parts of the Arab world, as well. For instance, both Sudan and Somalia have fairly large segments of their population who speak various native dialects. In addition, there is a wide knowledge of English (English and Italian in Somalia) which in many cases serves as a lingua franca among the various regional dialects. The educationists, thus, were faced with the dilemma of making a choice between teaching the local vernaculars, insisting on Arabic or preserving the use of English (or Italian) as the language of instruction. The desire to make education available to each and every individual tempted the educational authorities to make provisions for the incorporation of the vernacular languages in the curriculum but also to introduce Arabic at some point as well. However, when it comes to higher education (sometimes including the secondary school), English (and Italian) is used as the medium of instruction whereas Arabic is taught like any other subject.<sup>(20)</sup>

Aside from education, the colonial legacy is still manifest in the attitudes of the people themselves. As Matthews and Akrawi observed in their study of the educational system of the area in 1947,

"one of the main sources of pride in some of the countries is the fact that the standard of the Baccalaureat is as high as the French; or that the standard of matriculation is higher or more difficult than that of the University of London." (21)

### 7.3.2 The Economic and Administrative Bias:

European languages play a very important role in the administrative and economic sectors. This of course reflects the still strong economic links with the West which by far are the most important in the export-import industry. The failure of the Arab countries to conduct international business in Arabic enhances the need for incorporating foreign languages in the educational curricula (See Chapter Eight on the status of TFL programmes in the Arab world).

Similarly, a good knowledge of English or French is still required for many administrative jobs. High-level posts in key ministries like Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Industry, Planning, Public Health, Defence, Information ... etc, as well as in many private companies dealing with industrial and technical matters, are virtually closed to the monolingual Arabophone. The fact that foreign languages are regarded as a pre-requisite to any prestigious career has an immense influence in language choice. Students, for example, tend to compare the actual benefits they might gain from using any given language as far as their future is concerned. They might feel that unlike English or French, Arabic alone cannot qualify them to work in lucrative white-collar jobs.

Finally, one could mention the widespread use of English or French in notices and documents. Although Arabic is the only official language of all the Arab states, it is not unusual to use French or English alongside Arabic in road signs, names of shops and so on. Printed material in places such as banks, airports, travel agencies and post-offices is usually in both Arabic and English or French. Medical prescriptions, menus in hotel restaurants, airline

tickets and so on tend to be printed exclusively in English or French though recently more bilingual versions have been insisted upon.

### 7.3.3 The Shortage of Teaching Staff:

The problem of staffing the educational system, particularly at the higher level, with a sufficient number of qualified Arab teachers who can use Arabic fluently in the classroom, has been a long standing issue in the history of Arabizing education. From the outset Muhammad 9Alī's (1805-1848) plans for Arabizing the educational system of Egypt were challenged by the problem of finding qualified Arabic-speaking teachers and suitable instructional materials. This situation may have prompted him at times to employ French teachers in order to take over the task of teaching those scientific subjects for which Arab teachers were difficult to find. For the same reason, his son 'Ibrāhīm was forced to close down the schools where Arabic was used as the medium of instruction. (22)

The current situation, though much better in a quantitative sense, is still far from being ideal. As table 7.3 indicates, the

Country	Primary		Interm. and Secondary	
	Teacher Student Ratio	Students No. Per Classroom	Teacher Student Ratio	Students No. Per Classroom
Jordan	32.8	35.1	22.3	34.4
Bahrain	32.6	38.0	11.1	36.05
Tunisia	43.7	34.1	20.9	33.05
Sudan	36.7	48.1	16.8	53.7
Syria	34.0	24.0	30.0	39.4
Morocco	39.8	39.8	21.8	35.55
Iraq	32.2	32.5	29.7	37.15
Yemen (AR)	33.6	35.6	25.6	41.85
(PDR) Yemen	23.8	37.3	6.1	40.5
Oman	41.2	32.3	8.3	22.9

Table 7.3: Teacher/Student Ratio and Average Number of Students Per Classroom in Ten Arab States (23)

democratization of education has made the shortage of teachers even more acute. Excluding the oil-rich countries, it is clear that the primary student/teacher ratios of 43.7 (Tunisia) or 41.2 (Oman), the student/classroom numbers of 48.1 (Sudan) or 39.8 (Morocco), and the intermediate and secondary numbers of 53.7 (Sudan) or 41.85 (Yemen AR) students per classroom are certainly not very conducive to learning via non-directive methods. The situation in urban schools may be much worse; it is not unusual to find overcrowded primary and secondary school classrooms with as many as 60 students. Needless to say, in such instances teachers are virtually powerless to provide innovative instruction.<sup>(24)</sup> Moreover, it is not possible for a large-class teacher to give every pupil an opportunity of speaking or reading. Also the language teacher cannot detect individual mistakes when so many pupils are group-reading at the same time.

The problem can be seen in greater proportions at the higher level of education. All universities in the area are suffering from serious staffing problems. In 1977-78, seven Arab states had 8,171 faculty members serving 89,000 students; 7.4% of the faculty did not have higher degrees, while only 18.2% had a doctoral degree or its equivalence. Faculty members who had higher degrees (other than Ph.D) did not exceed 25.8%.<sup>(25)</sup>

The lack of highly trained nationals forced many countries to recruit foreign staff members who either came from other Arab states or were American and European expatriates. In 1977-78 almost 97.2% of the faculty staff at the University of the United Arab Emirates were non-nationals while in Kuwait the figure reached 93.5% (of which  $\frac{1}{3}$  were non-Arabic speakers).<sup>(26)</sup> Saudi-Arabia on the other hand, had around 65% non-nationals.<sup>(27)</sup> The effects of such a problem on the status of the Arabic language in higher education are enormous. In the code of practice of almost all the Arab universities, there is a straightforward statement that the official language of instruction is Arabic, unless otherwise indicated. However, it seems that under the pressure of foreign staffing, these exceptional cases have become the general rule and that Arabic is the exception,



particularly in the faculties of science, medicine and engineering. (28)

However, the problem of staffing higher education is not confined to the issue of the linguistic medium of instruction. The policy of making primary, intermediate and secondary schooling accessible (and in many cases compulsory) to the public has resulted in an overflow of secondary school graduates who qualify for university education. Yet the limited number of universities in the Arab world does not cater for such large numbers of secondary school graduates. As table 7.4 clearly demonstrates, despite the

Country	Secondary Enrolment			Post-Secondary Enrol.		
	1970	1975	Annual Growth Rate %	1970	1975	Annual Growth Rate %
Algeria	236,884	502,255	16.2	19,531	36,000	13.0
Egypt	1,486,170	2,094,659	7.1	233,304	449,397	14.0
Iraq	313,972	526,063	10.9	42,431	82,421	14.2
Jordan	97,612	158,852	10.2	4,518	10,746	18.9
Kuwait	70,734	109,209	9.1	2,686	6,470	19.2
Libya	53,931	150,649	22.8	5,222	15,332	24.0
Morocco	298,880	478,000	9.8	16,097	40,000	20.0
Saudi Arabia	89,226	218,467	19.6	8,492	22,968	22.0
Sudan	132,626	288,908	16.8	14,308	25,000	11.8
Syria	329,444	493,375	8.4	40,537	70,524	11.7
Tunisia	191,445	201,845	1.1	10,347	17,540	11.1

Table 7.4: Secondary and Post-Secondary Enrolments In 1970 and 1975 in Eleven Arab States (29)

growth in post-secondary school enrolments, which has reached over 20% in some countries, the rate of growth is still far from being sufficient to absorb the large number of secondary school graduates...

As might be expected, the result was that the policy of university enrolment has become very selective if not restrictive and those who do not qualify are bound to pursue their university education somewhere outside their countries. In this case, it is

usually the European countries and the United States, where scholarships and educational grants abound, thanks to the private and governmental organizations such as AID, Rockefeller, Ford, MIDEAST, and Fulbright. (30)

During their long stay abroad, these students will, for most of the time, be obliged to use the language of the country in which they are studying. Eventually, the acquired habits of MSA tend to weaken and upon his return the student will know basically two languages: his mother dialect and an acquired English or French or German ... etc. The only reasonable solution, therefore, will involve the increase in university enrolment rates; this seems to be rather a slow process. From only 8 in 1940 the Arab universities increased to 23 in the 1960's to 50 in 1977 and to almost 70 in 1983. (31) It is expected that the Arab world will need 540 universities by the year 2000 to absorb only 10% of the university age group at the time. (32)

#### 7.3.4 Spectroglossia:

As we have already pointed out in Chapter Three, the teaching of Arabic in the Arab countries is complicated by the fact that CA or more correctly MSA, on which the programme depends, is not acquired as a native language by any Arab. It is learned only later than the colloquial variety spoken daily by school children (a situation which resembles that of the Welsh pupils when they start learning English). This implies that pupils have to unlearn or suppress most of their linguistic habits while trying to acquire new ones based on MSA, as the language programme requires. (33)

The burden of internalizing or reinforcing these acquired habits is compounded by conflicting practices. On the one hand, the programme deliberately neglects the actual speech of the pupils, and on the other MSA, in practice, is not used in all subjects, since teachers themselves (especially of other subjects) tend to use the colloquial for one reason or another. Tāha Husayn attributes this practice to the fact that the teachers themselves are not competent in using the standard language. He remarks,

"like almost everyone else I should like teachers to use Classical Arabic in every class, regardless of the course, but I am reluctant to insist because they do not know the language well enough and, if required to speak it, would fail to communicate the subject matter to their pupils." (34)

The discrepancy can better be seen in the light of the fact that official instructions issued by the educational authorities and the recommendations of various Arabization conferences do urge teachers to avoid the use of the colloquial. For instance, a relatively recent conference on The Use of Arabic at the University Level held at Alexandria, Egypt in 1981 passed the following resolutions:

- a. The use of the colloquial should be prohibited during university lectures as well as in research work.
- b. The use of Arabic should not be restricted to Arabic language courses. Teachers of other subjects should promote the use of Arabic in their classes. (35)

Unfortunately, however, such instructions and recommendations are often disregarded by teachers, either because of their inability to speak MSA correctly and with ease for a prolonged time, or their desire to eliminate misunderstanding or achieve maximum communication in teaching their subjects. A questionnaire addressed to high school teachers of Arabic in Iraq revealed the following findings: 30.5% of the teachers considered MSA with its case endings to be the easiest medium for the students to comprehend their subjects whereas 69.5% chose other varieties of Arabic. On the question of the use of CA or MSA outside the classroom, only 6% claimed that they used it 'always' while 47.6% 'often'; 26.2% 'rarely' and 20.2% 'did not use it at all'. As to the use of the colloquial in instruction 90% indicated that they used it either 'often' or 'rarely'. (36)

However, it seems that there are other psychological and sociological factors involved in the teachers' attitude towards using MSA in the classroom. The writer has known university teachers who possess a

good command of MSA and yet hesitate to use it during lecturing lest their odd pronunciation should cause an unwanted embarrassment.

The influence of dialectal intrusions on the part of the teacher can sometimes become more serious than the mere feeling of embarrassment. In the states of the Arabian Gulf area where there exists a large number of expatriate Arab teachers, it is not uncommon to find that a good proportion of the student's writing errors in dictation classes, particularly at the primary and intermediate levels, are to a certain extent attributable to the dialectal peculiarities of the teacher. For instance, in our analysis of the writing errors of a class of 25 students in a primary school in Bahrain, it was found that in one dictation exercise, almost 21 students wrote

/walād zakīy/ 'a pure, chaste boy' instead of  
/walad dhakīy/ 'a brilliant boy'

In other exercises, some group mistakes were also noticeable

e.g. /at-tayyār/ 'pilot' instead of /at-tayyār/ 'current'  
/sū' al-bidā'ah/ 'the ill-condition of the merchandise'  
instead of /sūq al-bidā'ah/ 'merchandise market'  
/thamīn/ 'precious' instead of /samīn/ 'obese' or 'fat'  
/qallaba/ 'shuffle' instead of /'allaba/ 'incite'.

Any native speaker of Arabic can easily tell that the teacher of this particular class is an Egyptian and that his dialect is the Cairene Arabic. This is evident from the teacher's tendency to substitute the sound /z/ for /dh/ in the word /dhakīy/, and his inability to distinguish between the /t/ in /at-tayyār/ and the /t/ in /at-tayyār/, and the /q/ in /sūq/ and the /' / in /sū'/. The last two errors are the result of the students' tendency to overcorrect their teacher's deficient pronunciation. Consequently, they

mistakenly replaced the correct sound of /s/ in /samīn/ by /th/ in /thamīn/, and the sound /' / in /'allaba/ by /q/ in /qallaba/, despite the fact that the original words intended were /samīn/ and /'allaba/.

Sociolinguistically speaking, few learners of Arabic find that the official Arabic of the classroom has similar conventions to those of the playground and home. The desire for acceptance at home and in the playground is so much more easily fulfilled by the use of a local variety of Arabic; MSA is considered affected and unnatural if used outside the classroom. The teachers themselves may feel that the social pressure for acceptance in the local community by the other members of staff, the students' parents and the students themselves requires the use of the local dialect. It is becoming recognized, nowadays, that the teacher's attitude to the local variety may be significant to his success in teaching MSA. If he regards the local variety as something he has to combat, his attitude will probably set up a defensive reaction on the part of his learners. He is, it seems to them, not merely trying to impose forms which are difficult, but is also attempting to estrange them from their social allegiances which are important. Teachers therefore may allow the use of dialectal expressions in classroom conversations in an attempt to win the favourable attitude of their students.

As a result of this conflicting policy, the students' exposure to and practice in MSA within the school are, by mere quantitative measures, inadequate for attaining the desired objectives. Consequently, a large number of Arab educationists feel that most children do not only arrive at but also leave school with inadequate control of morphology, syntax and vocabulary. Some may carry such an assessment to an extreme and claim that schools send out into society numbers of reasonably intelligent illiterates whose handwriting, spelling and punctuation are no better than that of a primary school pupil. Altogether, in each generation of school-goers, only a minority of children are motivated to meet the

teachers' expectations and become good speakers and writers of MSA.

Another problem has surfaced in some parts of the Arab world where there exist large segments of the population who speak various non-Arabic dialects. The problem is whether schools should allow the use of these dialects or should enforce the use of the language that is commonly accepted as the national language. While the problem has not yet been resolved in its entirety, countries like Sudan, Somalia, Mauretania and Iraq have made accommodations to incorporate the vernacular languages in the curriculum with the introduction of the national language at some point at the primary level. Thus, for example, in Iraq, Kurdish has been used as a language of instruction in the primary schools after which it is replaced by Arabic. However, in recent years, demands have been made to extend the use of Kurdish as the language of instruction at various levels in the 'Kurdish Region'.<sup>(37)</sup> The educational authorities in these countries have begun to realize that the curriculum cannot separate children from the realities of their environment and that provision should be made to use both Arabic and the local vernacular in the curriculum, in an attempt to achieve the ultimate transfer towards total Arabization.

Generally speaking, in view of the high rate of illiteracy (See table 7.5) and the drive for universal education, the colloquial is likely to continue to serve, at least for the next few years, as an effective means of instruction, formal or informal, being readily accessible to its speakers. Thus a new attitude has developed recently whereby the use of local dialect can be looked at with understanding instead of hostility. Some educationists believe that local varieties can be used to advantage by comparing them with MSA in the hope that the standard variety

Country	Year	Adult Illiteracy Rate%
Algeria	1977	65
Egypt	1976	56
Iraq	1975	74
Kuwait	1975	47.6
Mauretania	1971	90
Somalia	1978	40
Sudan	1976	80

Table 7.5: Adult Illiteracy In Seven Arab Countries (38)

will not seem difficult and obsolete but useful and convenient. If the features of the mother dialect and the features of MSA are explicitly compared this can help in promoting the teaching of Arabic, in that points of correspondence will be points of straightforward learning, and that points present in MSA but not in the mother tongue will be points of difficulty which need more practice. In the words of Harris,

"It may prove possible to acquire a language by learning only the differences between the new language and the old, leaving those features which are identical in both be carried over untaught." (39)

The view of contrastive analysis is gaining momentum as central to language learning. To show how this method may enhance the process of teaching MSA we can give the following example. Some words are co-existent in MSA as well as in some local dialects, but with a different pronunciation:

e.g. Dialectal Pronunciation

MSA

/zghīr/ (Kuwaiti)

/saghīr/ 'little'

/yantī/ (Iraqi)

/ya9tī/ 'to give'

/nukra/ (Palestinian)

/nuqrah/ 'hole' or 'well'

/bit/ (Egyptian)

/bint/ 'girl'

/ga9/ (Kuwaiti, Bahrainian, Iraqi)

/qā9/ 'bottom', 'ground'

/tilūg/ (Various Gulf dialects)

/talīq/ 'matches' or 'fits'

Instead of trying to abolish the use of dialectal words completely, the teacher can instead with a little effort, transfer such words into the domain of MSA by correcting their dialectal pronunciation. The students therefore will be able to see the close affinity between their dialects and MSA.

#### 7.3.5 The Methods Employed in Teaching Arabic:

The teaching of Arabic receives a considerable share of the time devoted to the general curriculum in both primary and secondary schools in almost all the educational systems across the Arab world. An examination of the programmes in several Arab states reveals that the time allotted to Arabic ranges from one third at the primary level to one fifth at the secondary level. In other words, an average of 10 periods (approximately 5 hours) out of a total of 30 periods a week in the primary school is allocated to the teaching of Arabic grammar, writing and reading. The same amount of time is also maintained in the secondary school where students have to study Arabic language and literature for 7 periods (almost 5 hours) a week compared to 28 periods devoted to other subjects.<sup>(40)</sup> Nevertheless, the rigid division of the language programme into different branches (such as grammar, conversation, recitation, reading, rhetoric, composition, dictation ... etc) with special hours allotted to each, ignorance of the modern methods of language teaching (e.g. audio-visual aids, the communicative approach), and the shortage of well-trained teachers all undermined the efforts aimed at making the language a functional medium of scholarly and daily communication.



The method of instruction and the curriculum employed in the teaching of Arabic are mainly structured on a prescriptive approach whereby students are made to recite grammatical rules and memorize passages of verse, without building the basic analytical expertise that enables the student to develop his knowledge of the language and make a functional use of it in real situations. Teachers are not to blame, for they themselves are the victims of such a system. The syllabus is often overloaded and does not allow time for any free variation. According to prevalent practice, the content, textbooks and distribution of hours devoted to the different branches of Arabic are determined centrally by the ministries of education and are applied with optimum uniformity within each country.<sup>(41)</sup> Thus for example, children in rural areas are exposed to the same material as children residing in highly urbanized areas, and the teachers are allowed no discretion in varying or adapting the prescribed material according to local needs. They have to follow rigidly the lines laid down by the administrative machinery. Under the influence of such a policy, the possibility of testing new ideas or approaches in developing an effective language programme have been greatly limited; the traditional approach dominates, with its emphasis on classicism, grammar and passive knowledge about the language and its literature.<sup>(42)</sup> Consequently, in this part of the world where the spectrum of dialects is the first language in the market, television and playground, students have not the patience to accept the approach of teaching Arabic in schools where the basic need to communicate is hardly ever considered.

Furthermore, an overemphasis on classicism has produced an adverse reaction from students and teachers alike. Arabic language textbooks, particularly at the secondary level, are designed in an encyclopedic manner that stresses literary history at the expense of developing any critical insight into the great literary works of past and present. As Akil's study of 15 textbooks used in five Arab countries indicates, not only is the student

burdened with items too numerous to assimilate or too difficult to make use of, but learning them is made cumbersome by the uncontrolled fashion in which they are presented. (43)

In 1978, Ibaaquil investigated the intellectual and social values conveyed through Moroccan primary reading textbooks in both French and Arabic. To his dismay, he found that the Arabic texts, compared to the French tended to dwell more on the past and to concentrate on sententious pieties. It would, thus, not be surprising if the pupils gained the impression that whatever was presented in Arabic was concerned with moral duties, whereas in the world presented to them in French, they find society to be less austere and less concerned with such things. (44)

#### 7.3.5.1 The Grammatical Jigsaw:

No other branch of Arabic has been so much criticized or blamed for the failure of language education in the Arab countries as grammar. Much of the criticism stems from a widely held belief that the teaching of grammar proceeds along lines laid down more than 1,000 years ago, whether in terminology, organization or methods of teaching. For example, students are taught to use the /sukūn/ 'quiescence mark' (a pause or non-vowel sign) at the end of a 'strong' verb which is preceded by an apocopative particle such as the negative /lam/ and /lammā/ and the prohibitive /lā/. The student memorizes what he reads on the blackboard or in his textbook for the purpose of scoring a good grade in the final examination, without having the least knowledge of the actual function of such particles. Likewise, in a verbal sentence such as /qara'a at-tilmīdh/ 'the pupil read', the students repeat after their teacher that /al-fa9il/ 'the subject' is /at-tilmīdh/, whereas in the nominal sentence /at-tilmīdh qara'a/ 'the pupil read' which is produced by a reverse word order, the subject is /damīr mustatir/ a 'latent pronoun'. In his book Nahwa-Ta9līm al-Lughah al-9Arabiyyah Wa9lfiyyan [Towards a Functional Education of Arabic],

Dawūd ʿAbduh criticizes such a method on the basis that this roundabout technique of parsing stifles the linguistic creativity of the students and wastes the precious time of the teacher. Instead he suggests a productive functional approach whereby the student is taught the semantic value of the sentential components instead of merely parsing or describing the grammatical position of each constituent.<sup>(45)</sup>

Having to work with bulky grammar textbooks in centralized educational systems, Arabic language teachers often find themselves obliged to spend a great deal of time on grammar exercises at the expense of other, perhaps more important, language skills. The writer can recall from his own school time that some language teachers used to have to use the periods supposedly allocated to composition and free reading to complete the grammar and verse-recitation requirements. Unfortunately, the latter two items are the ones that are often heavily stressed by both the examiners and the visiting language inspectors who come under the supervision of the Ministry of Education.

The examination system has also aggravated the situation. The process of teaching Arabic in most of the Arab countries is governed by what teachers think the final examination will contain. Accordingly, they focus their efforts on completing the prescribed texts which are as a result formally taught. Consequently, the pupils' efforts are directed only to the set books in which they are going to be examined without paying attention to free reading. This practice is reinforced by the Ministries' insistence on assessing teachers by the ratio of students who pass the final examination.<sup>(46)</sup> The result is that the standard of the Arabic language acquired by the students leaves much to be desired.

In addition, the quality of Arabic language textbooks also has its share in creating a feeling of antagonism on the part of the

student towards classroom Arabic. The desire to produce cheap books on a wide scale has, in many cases, led to a low standard of organization, low quality (yellow) paper, serious printing errors and an almost total absence of illustrative devices such as tables, diagrams and pictures. All these things make the textbooks highly unattractive to students. In a questionnaire addressed to 150 students in the literary section of the secondary schools in Kuwait, it was discovered that only 11.5% considered the current textbooks to be reasonably attractive and of a good quality. On the question of what the student would like to see in his book, the majority of the respondents referred to the need for better printing standards, pictures, drawings and other illustrative materials, colours, a compact and handy size with sturdy bindings.

The problems of methodology and textbooks are not peculiar to the last few years only. They were recognized almost a century ago. As early as 1880 the committee entrusted with the reformation of education in Egypt presented a report in which it was pointed out that, despite the intensive teaching of Arabic in the primary and secondary schools, the students' standard was quite low. The reasons given for such a phenomenon were that: the methods employed were obsolete, the language used was exceptionally classical and the emphasis was on grammar and verse recitation.<sup>(47)</sup> Unfortunately, after more than a century, these defects have not yet been rectified; they were once again recognized during the Syposium on The Preparation of Teachers in the Arab World, held in Riyadh in 1977<sup>(48)</sup> and the Conference on the Methods of Teaching Arabic in the Arab Universities which was held at Alexandria in 1981. The latter produced the following report:

a- The use of the colloquial should be prohibited during lectures and other related academic activities.

b- Textbooks should not be limited to classical literary pieces and traditional grammar. Modern verse and prose works should be emphasized. On the other hand, in teaching grammar, more attention

should be given to the pragmatic value of each rule in correcting pronunciation and reading errors; unless deemed absolutely necessary, the prescriptive method should be avoided.

c- Audio-visual aids and pre-recorded texts might be extremely helpful in coping with the intrusion of the teachers' dialectal 'pull'.

d- The language requirements in the teachers' training programmes should be upgraded. In this respect, in-service evaluation and training should not be underestimated. The democratization of education does not necessarily entail poor language instruction. (49)

#### 7.3.6 The Attitudinal Factor:

In assessing the prospects of reinstating Arabic as the language of instruction in educational institutions, it is necessary to evaluate the attitudes of those who are involved in the educational process, towards their mother tongue. As might be expected, these attitudes have always shown a great disparity owing to the different educational backgrounds of their advocates. Some have received their training in conservative institutions such as al-'Azhar, while others have acquired it in foreign institutions, French, British, German, American ... etc. As a result, the debate over the adoption of Arabic as the medium of teaching the sciences has been complicated by biases reflecting various psychological and mental attitudes and by conflicts of values. While the conservatives have looked to the history of the language, the modernists who have received their training in a foreign institution, where they have been exposed to modern ideas and culture, have viewed the linguistic question in terms of adaptability to modern needs without regard for tradition. Among the common arguments of the liberals which prevailed during the 1960's and early 70's were that:

1. European languages are the media of the modern sciences, of prestige and prosperity. In contrast, Arabic is difficult to learn, has a complex grammar, a defective writing system and an impoverished vocabulary.

2. Arabization is a slow process and it can only offer second-hand information.

3. If the educational system is totally Arabized, students will not be able to pursue their higher studies abroad.

These arguments seem altogether wrong-headed. They seem to have been formulated around a laissez-faire orientation which is the result of so many years of frustration and disappointment under Turkish and European colonial domination. The following counter-arguments may be offered:

1. 'Naturalization' of education is not a new phenomenon or peculiar to the Arab world. Iran is currently using Persian in the faculties of medicine, engineering and agriculture, practically in all its national universities.<sup>(50)</sup> After independence, India introduced Hindi and a number of other Indian languages, to be used side by side with English in higher education.<sup>(51)</sup> Likewise, Hebrew is being used nowadays as the medium of instruction in the faculties of science in Israel, despite the fact that the population of Israel is far from being homogeneous. Now, if the claim that foreign sciences should be taught in foreign languages is true, then why have not the United States or Britain, for example, used German or Chinese to teach Marxist philosophy or acupuncture treatment, respectively.

2. The current situation, in which foreign languages are being used in education, particularly at advanced levels, is likely to deepen the disunity of the Arab world, since there is no one foreign language that is used in all the Arab states. Some, like the Maghrib

states and Lebanon, use French, others use English, as is the case in the Arabian Gulf countries and the Sudan, whereas Egypt uses both English and French. Moreover, a large number of students are studying in Russia, the Eastern Block, Germany, Spain, Italy, etc. Should each graduate be allowed to use the language of his education?

3. Science nowadays is international. English is not the only language of science in the world though, of course, it is the most popular. Is there any reason why scientific discoveries other than those made through the medium of English should not be transmitted to the Arab world? If not, then what language should be used if, for example, we have to study Japanese computer science, Chinese medical practice and philosophy or any other non-English cultural or scientific heritage? Surely, it is more logical to use Arabic than to spend our life in a cultural seclusion. If it is claimed that Arabization is a slow process, then what is needed is a specialized organization to be entrusted with the translation of the latest books and periodicals in the various fields of science. Abstracts may prove very valuable as a first recourse. If educationists and specialists judge a certain work to be worthy of translation, then the whole text might be translated. This might well be a possible solution to the current terminological chaos in the Arab world, which is the result of inadequate translations produced by incompetent translators.

4. The claim that Arabic has a complex grammar, a defective writing system and an impoverished vocabulary can be immediately offset on the grounds that:

a- As has been shown in Chapters Four and Five, Arabic has at least as many resources of lexical enrichment as any other living language. It may be sufficient to repeat what al-Kirmilī said a few decades ago,

"It is incumbent upon every Westernized Arab not to attribute inability or weakness to the language especially if he is not well informed about its secrets, expressions, precise meaning and structure..... Nothing derogatory can be attributed to the language, for the language is a buried treasure and if there is no one to lead you to it, this does not mean that it does not exist." (52)

b- During the acme of Islamic civilization (900 - 1200 A.D.), Arabic translators and scientists incorporated into Arabic new concepts and ideas from Greek and Syriac. They were able to overcome the impoverished state of the language by inventing new meanings for obsolete terms, deriving new words according to fixed patterns and transliterating what cannot be translated. In the words of the famous scientist al-Bīrūnī (died 1048), who himself was of non-Arab origin:

"Sciences from all countries of the world have been translated into the language of the Arabs; have been embellished and been made attractive. I speak from experience because I was brought up in a language in which it would be strange indeed to find a science perpetuated. Then I went to Arabic and Persian and I am a guest in both languages, having made an effort to acquire them. But I would rather be reviled in Arabic than praised in Persian." (53)

To admire one's own language is not by any means to be anti-modern. In the 19th century, Germans, Italians, French and other Europeans each claimed their language to be the most perfect. For instance, in the 18th century, the Russian poet Lomonosov made the



following pronouncement on the superiority of Russian:

"Lord of many languages, the Russian tongue is far superior to all those of Europe not only by the extent of the countries where it is dominant but by its own comprehensiveness and richness. Charles V, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire said that one ought to speak Spanish to the Deity, French to one's friends, German to one's enemies and Italian to the fair sex. But had he been acquainted with Russian he would assuredly have added that one could speak it with each and all." (54)

Regarding the claim that Arabic grammar and writing are difficult to learn, it suffices to say that Japanese and Chinese are practically much more difficult than Arabic. For example, to read a Japanese newspaper, one has to learn approximately 1,850 different characters. Yet the Japanese and the Chinese insist on preserving their languages as symbols of their long history and cultural identity.

c - To Arabize education does not necessarily mean the pedantic use of Arabic even in places where there are no current Arabic equivalents for basic scientific terms. On the contrary, if understanding is at stake, it is better to do away with Arabic equivalents, at least for the time being. Our objective is to make use of Arabic at the ordinary level of classroom discourse and to employ those Arabic terms which are easily understood. There is no objection whatsoever to using the Arabic term followed by its foreign counterpart. As a matter of fact, this might be the only way of publicizing the newly-created Arabic terms.

5. Arabizing education does not, by any means, entail a parallel neglect of foreign languages. As will be suggested in Chapter Eight, in the current transitional stage, Arabization and the production

of Arabic texts as well as improving the techniques of teaching the Arabic language should proceed simultaneously with the strengthening of teaching foreign languages, so that Arab scholars may be kept abreast of developments in their fields, in an age that is witnessing an explosion in knowledge at a rate never witnessed before. With this in mind, students majoring in science should be exposed to additional English and/or French or other similar language courses, in order to prepare them for pursuing their post-graduate studies without any difficulties. Furthermore, knowledge of a foreign language will help the student to translate into Arabic what he has read in foreign books.

Translation and original research in Arabic should go hand in hand. (55) Plans to reinstate Arabic as the official and practical language of education have to take into consideration the importance of TFL in catching up with modern sciences. Unfortunately, some Arabization plans have been a double-edged weapon, in that they have undermined the very structure of TFL programmes, without sufficiently improving the level of teaching Arabic, or enhancing the process of translation. The result is that neither an efficient bilingualism nor a healthy monolingualism has ever been achieved. The dilemma is not easy to solve, for nationalistic aspirations often conflict with progressive outlooks.

6. Naturally, graduate students will eventually end up working in their Arab societies. The issue here is how they can be expected to serve their community efficiently, if they do not know their own language. The Arabization of the various aspects of everyday life such as the mass media, the administrative and economic sectors and the like, cannot be achieved without producing a cadre of graduates who can assume the task of employing Arabic as the official language as well as the practical medium of all daily activities.

7. Arabization is not a nationalistic luxury; it is a cultural necessity. Language is not a medium composed only of linguistic symbols. It is a cultural utensil that carries the values and the traditions of the society in which it originated. To import foreign languages is to invite foreign cultures. Thus, in order to preserve the Arabic identity, to combat illiteracy by democratizing education and above all, to alter the colonial image of associating prestige with the use of foreign languages,<sup>(56)</sup> we should use a language which is uniform, is close to the hearts and minds of the people and, apart from anything else, enjoys a close lexical and structural affinity with the local dialects.

The existence of Arabic side by side with other foreign languages differs in an important aspect from the bilingualism of countries such as Switzerland, Belgium, Finland and Canada, where there are two or more speech communities, each with a different mother tongue; for neither English nor French is the first language of any section of the Arab community. They are instead introduced only via the educational system and, in this respect, their position could be compared to that of, say French and German in Luxemburg and Alsace. The role of foreign languages in the Arab world is also to be distinguished from that in West Africa, where English or French serves as the lingua-franca. Practice shows that neither English nor French or German is necessary for intercommunication among the Arab states. Instead, it is MSA that functions as a pan-Arab medium, used officially to transcend the regional linguistic barriers.

The attitudinal division has been further aggravated by the ever-increasing number of students who are more at home in foreign - mostly European - languages than in Arabic. Having received most of their training in a foreign language, it is only natural for these students to express their thoughts in that particular language. To them, English, French, Italian, Spanish and German have become

not only fashionable but also symbols of progress and enlightenment. As Bounfour notes,

"there is a strong tendency to associate French or English with science to the point of confusing the language with the concept and considering the language to be somehow scientific in itself." (57)

These students consider their knowledge of European languages to be a considerable asset, which offers them greater knowledge, wider experience, access to the Western world and to an endless supply of material which they would not otherwise be able to reach. In contrast, Arabic is seen as the language used to talk about the past, religion and morality; it is associated with the domains outside school and, as Bounfour claims, is clearly defined in the pupils' perception as the domain of the uncultivated, uneducated person who wears traditional clothes and belongs to the old generation. (58)

To determine the domains in which Arabic and/or French are habitually used, Betahila carried out a questionnaire which included 109 Arabic-French bilinguals of various ages, occupations and geographical origins. Some of the results obtained in this questionnaire are represented in the following graph. (59)

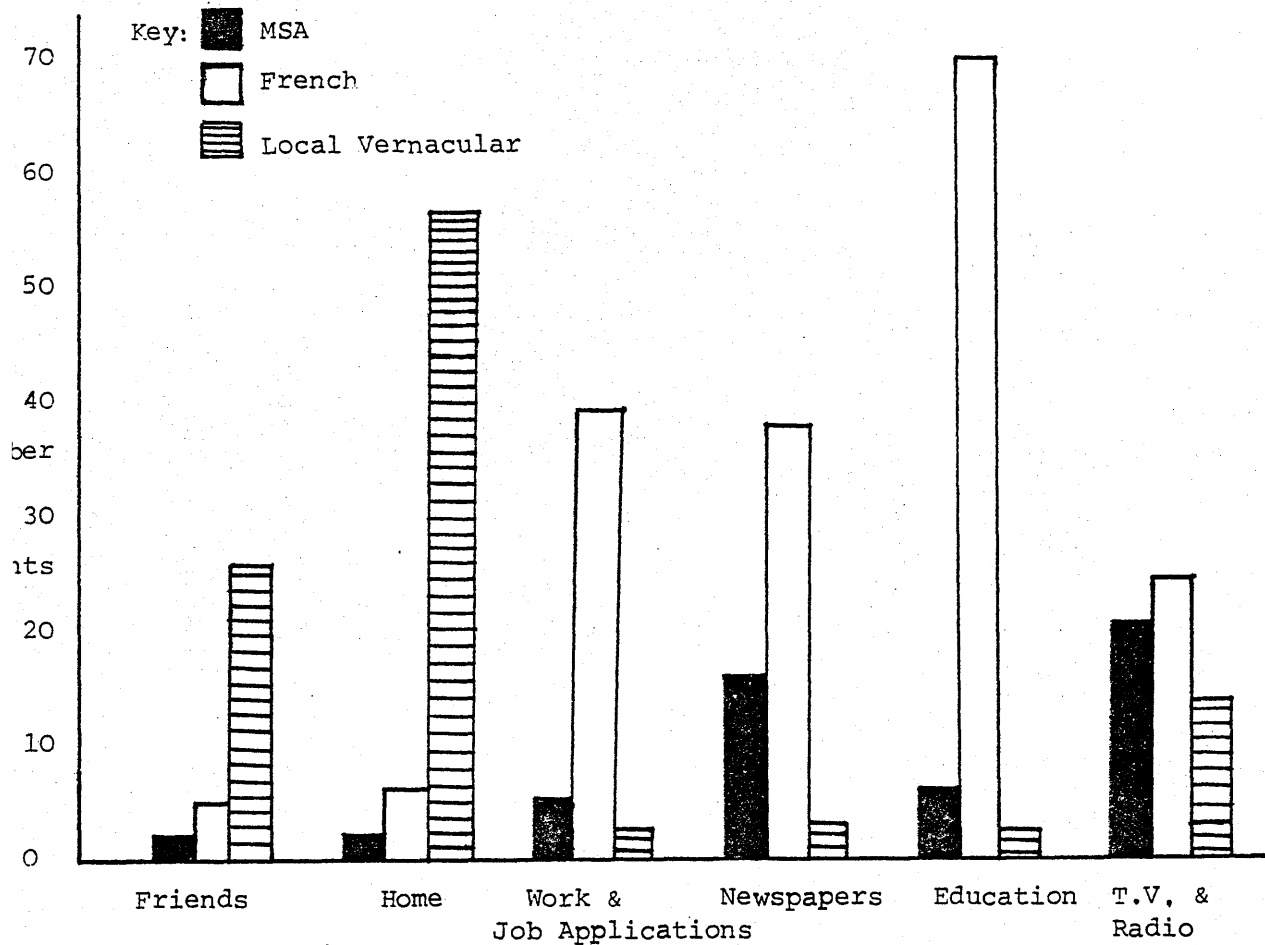


Figure 7.1: The Domains of Arabic (MSA) French and the Local Vernacular in the Life of Arabic-French Bilinguals

These findings suggest that each language has its own role to play in the bilingual's repertoire. These varying roles seem to correlate in some way with the differing attitudes the bilinguals have towards the languages. The association of French with education, sophistication and prestige, and that of the local vernacular with the intimacy of home and the practicalities of everyday life are reflected in the tendency to use French as a marker of formality and the local vernacular as a marker of informality.

Just as the bilingual perceives a language in a certain way because of the functions it fulfils in his life and in society, so he may perceive life and society in a certain way because he is

looking at them through a particular language. What we are interested in, here, is not Whorf's hypothesis that the individual's world-view is in fact dictated by his language,<sup>(60)</sup> but rather the lesser claim that the individual's outlook on some particular occasion may vary according to which language he is using. To investigate such a possibility, Bentahila devised a sentence completion test which involved 80 Moroccan bilinguals among whom were school children, students, teachers, secretaries and professional people.<sup>(61)</sup>

These were given a list of 13 incomplete sentences in one language and were asked to complete them in any way they wished. Then, six weeks later, they were given the corresponding incomplete sentences in the other language. Two completions of each sentence were thus obtained from each respondent, one in French and one in Arabic. One contrast which is perhaps not surprising, is that there were many more references to religion in the Arabic completions than in the French ones. For instance, completing the sentence,

"Marriage is ..."

14.1% of the respondents said in Arabic that it was

"a religious duty"

whereas none suggested this in French. In completing

"I like to read ..."

5.12% mentioned religious books in Arabic, but only 1.25% did so in French. In completing

"To succeed in life one must ..."

4% mentioned the need to be religious in Arabic but non in French.

In a similar way, the idea of Fate was invoked by 9.72% in completing the Arabic version of

"The future depends on ..."

but did not appear in any of the French versions.

There were also differences in the kinds of reading matter mentioned in completing

"I like reading ..."

Newspapers, journals and scientific subjects were mentioned more frequently in the French completions than in the Arabic ones, while

the reverse was true of poetry, religion and romance. Evidently, this reflects the different types of reading matter available in the two languages, scientific material being more accessible in French. (62)

The contrasts mentioned above offer some confirmation of the hypothesis that the bilingual's or semi-bilingual's attitude varies depending on which language he is using; or conversely, his language choice is related to the socio-cultural norms and expectations. (63) There is a tendency for his outlook to become more Westernized when he uses a European language, and more traditional and bound by Islamic doctrines when he uses Arabic.

The study of the factors governing the choice of language, may serve as a guideline for planning any Arabization programme in the educational field. Yet those currently working towards Arabizing the schools and universities of the Arab world seem to have taken little interest in the feelings and attitudes of the students. Driven mainly by political and ideological motives, they feel strongly that the use of European languages is a blemish left by colonization and that Arab states can only establish their authentic identity when they operate solely in Arabic. The process of Arabization is thus not only a matter of excluding one language in favour of another; as well as replacing a language, it is necessary to replace all that that language stands for in the people's minds and all that it gives access to. Changes of habits of language use must go hand in hand with changes of attitude; and while the use of one language rather than another in some domains may be determined by legislation, society's attitude to the languages can be manipulated only by more subtle means. Here, as elsewhere, contrived motivations often prove to be self-defeating.

Planners who seek to impose a fully Arabized educational system should pay considerable attention to what they are offering

as an alternative to the present situation. Before Arab students can be persuaded that Arabic is an adequate replacement for foreign languages, it will be necessary to show them that Arabic can give them access to material of the same quality as that available through these languages. In the first place, the textbooks offered within the educational system must be improved. The inclusion in Arabic textbooks of material more appealing to young people today might go a long way towards helping to change the image of Arabic. Classical poetry on heroism, and long passages on a utopia of nationalism and unity are no longer appealing to sophisticated young people who search for novelty, excitement and light-hearted entertainment. At the higher level of education, the success of Arabization is dependent on the creation of advanced scientific textbooks and reference materials, with a standard as high as the French or English ones. Until this is done, it will be more or less impossible to persuade students that Arabic is an efficient medium for modern science.

#### 7.3.7 Lexical Deficiency; Failure and Success:

This issue has been discussed in detail in both Chapters Four and Five. However, it suffices here to say that the Arabic language, although extremely rich and long-established as a medium of literary and scientific discourse and sophisticated communication, suffers from a deficiency in modern scientific terms. This is not, however, the specific defect of the Arabic language alone; it is a common phenomenon shared by all the languages of the developing countries.<sup>(64)</sup> Yet, the situation of the Arabic language has been aggravated by several factors, among which are:

##### a. The lack of original or translated textbooks:

According to Ahmad Ma'mūn, the ratio of books available per person in the Arab world is 37 per million, whereas in the advanced countries the ratio reaches a ceiling of 400 per million. As far as



original works are concerned, the total number produced annually in the Arab world does not exceed 500 whereas Turkey alone - which shares much of the cultural, historical and demographic factors existing in the Arab world - produces more than 1,482 a year.<sup>(65)</sup>

On the other hand, translation into Arabic seems to be a very slow process. For example, Egypt, which has the largest Arabic-speaking population (45 millions), produces 2,432 original and translated books annually, a large proportion of which is composed of Arabic and dialectal romantic novels, as well as other literary works. This figure constitutes 60% of the total number of Arabic books produced across the Arab world every year. Compared to Egypt, Holland, which has a population of 13 millions, produces 13,000 original and translated books a year.<sup>(66)</sup> In other words, if the Arab world wants to reach the ratio of say 200 books per million, it will be imperative to increase the number of translated books, within three years (because of the increase in population), to 15,000 a year. Nevertheless, the solution of the problem is not limited to a sheer increase in the number of books produced; there are other factors involved. Inadequate publishing and library systems, poor communication networks, censorship and political barriers can also create obstacles in the path of the scientist who is making an effort to publicize his ideas. In contrast, English, French and other foreign research materials seem to be more accessible. Whatever the obstacles may be, simply to translate foreign works into Arabic is certainly not sufficient. There is something else to be done: some autonomy in scientific research and technology must be attained in order to reduce the current dependence on imported expertise.

b. The Inadequacy of Bilingual Dictionaries:

The most common bilingual dictionaries that have gained a wide acceptance among students and teachers are those which have been

produced by individual lexicographers, such as al-Ba9aIbaki, al-Khayyāṭ, al-Khatib, al-Shihābī, al-Ma9Lūf, M. Mansūr, Hitti, S. 'Idrīs, Sharaf ... etc. These dictionaries, however, are structured on the personal linguistic experience of the compiler in both English and Arabic. Therefore, they are usually criticized for being uncomprehensive, and inconsistent. At times, these dictionaires include undesirable colloquial influences; sketchy translations, mistranslations and awkward compounds; above all they tend to neglect the official terms approved by the language academies and the conferences of Arabization. In addition, most of these dictionaries do not include the idiomatic occurrences or the metaphorical meanings of their entries nor do they give any evaluative classification of their usage (e.g. obsolete, slang, taboo, formal ... etc).

Individual dictionaries require a long time to compile and it is usually the case that by the time a dictionary is published, a large number of its entries may have already fallen out of use. As a general rule, a technical dictionary is most needed precisely where there is uncertainty about a term because it is still new and its permanence is not yet assured. But the same problem exists for the lexicographers, so it may be a case of the blind leading the blind. In practice, the lexicographer is tempted to wait until the new expression either is established or has been eliminated; but by the time he has taken his decision, the expression has in fact either become established or fallen out of use, and there is no need to look it up at all. The rate of obsolescence in technical vocabulary is very high, higher and faster than in general vocabulary. (67)

The proliferation of individual dictionaries has been widely encouraged by the failure of the language academies to keep abreast with the influx of foreign terms. For example, the Fifth Educational Conference held in Iraq in 1966, approved only 20,000 terms among the tens of thousands that were proposed by scholars and

educational institutions.<sup>(68)</sup> The same conference passed a plan to compile a pan-Arab general dictionary with 100,000 entries that would include all the scientific terms which have been approved by the various Arab language academies (despite the fact that the project was given a period of 5 years for completion, it was completely abandoned a short time after the compilation of the first volume).<sup>(69)</sup> In consequence, what we have today is hundreds of regional and national glossaries and dictionaries of which only a few have gained some degree of acceptance. Among these, some of the most well-known lexicons include the following:

- The Pan-Arab Dictionary of Military Terms (trilingual: English, French, and Arabic; 42,050 entries): one of the most successful pan-Arab dictionaries.
- Dictionary of Postal Terms
- Dictionary of Mathematics
- Dictionary of Chemistry
- Dictionary of Botany
- Dictionary of Geology
- Dictionary of Philosophy, Logic, Sociology and Psychology
- 6 Educational dictionaries published in 1973 under the supervision of ALECSO's Bureau for the Co-ordination of Arabization. These cover mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, botany and geology.

The problem therefore, does not lie in the need for more dictionaries and glossaries but rather in the possibility of the incorporation of these various lexicons into Pan-Arab trilingual (English-French-Arabic) dictionaries. There is an urgent need nowadays to:

- 1- Produce the long-promised general dictionary which was proposed during the 1966 Educational Conference in Baghdad.
- 2- Compile a comprehensive trilingual dictionary with topical arrangement along the lines of Roget's Thesaurus.
- 3- Produce a trilingual encyclopedia along the lines of Encyclopaedia Britannica.

4- Above all, the need is most urgent to reach a pan-Arab agreement whereby any lexicographical work should be checked by ALECSO's Bureau for the Co-ordination of Arabization before permission is given for publication. The significance of such an agreement is twofold:

a- To avoid any possible confrontation between the linguistic bodies, such as the dispute that took place between the Egyptian Language Academy and the Bureau for the Co-ordination of Arabization during the 1960's. (70)

b- To save the time and the money that is usually wasted in producing regional or local lexicons. Here, we might mention the example of the various versions of the dictionaries for military terms: the Lebanese, the Iraqi, the Egyptian and the Syrian. (71)

The problem of lexical deficiency, as far as scientific terms are concerned, has been exaggerated by anti-Arabists as an excuse for their rejection of the plans aimed at Arabizing education. However true their claim may be, experience shows that the lexical problem has not stood in the way of Arabizing education up to the university level. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the school called Qasr al-ʿAnyī, which was established in Cairo by Muhammad Ali in 1826 taught medicine in Arabic for almost 70 years. A great many medical textbooks and reference books were written in Arabic by the teaching staff. The same is true of the American University of Beirut (first established as a missionary school in 1866) and Saint Joseph University (established in Beirut in 1873). During their early years the latter two used Arabic as the language of instruction in the faculties of medicine and science - obviously for missionary purposes. Among their well-known lecturers who wrote scientific books in Arabic are:

- George Post who wrote al-Misbāh al-Waddāh fī Sināʿat al-Jarrāh (on surgery) and Mabādi' al-Tashrīh (Principles of Anatomy).

Another important figure is Yūsif al-'Asīr who wrote several textbooks on pathology and astronomy as well as an encyclopedia of chemistry, physics, engineering and mathematics. Unfortunately, however, when Egypt fell under British colonization in 1882 and Lebanon under French in 1916, the language of instruction in these schools was changed to English and French. (72)

Nowadays, the faculty of medicine at the University of Damascus is using Arabic as the official language of instruction. This practice goes back to 1919, when the Arabic Medical Institute - later the faculty of medicine - was established. The success of this experiment for the past sixty years has encouraged other faculties and departments of science within the university to try their hand at using Arabic. The successful use of Arabic in the lecture-room in the faculty of medicine was made possible by the enthusiastic efforts of the teaching staff to produce their own scientific books. It is estimated that the library of the University of Damascus includes more than 100 Arabic volumes of specialized research work in the various fields of medicine, among which are:

- al-Khayyāt's book on microbiology
- al-Haffār's book on botanic physiology
- al-Bāba's book on pharmacology.
- al-'Awwa's book on biology and poultry
- 'Azza's book on biochemistry
- and Khūrī's dictionary of dental terminology. (73)

In order to offset the claim that the graduates of the Arabic medical school find it difficult to read foreign references, the university officials have established a language centre which organizes a number of remedial courses. In order to graduate, the student has to pass a qualifying examination in English or French.

Now, since 1981, the University of Jordan has been experimenting with using Arabic in teaching mathematics, biology, geology, physics and chemistry. However, it is still too early to evaluate such an experiment.

## N O T E S

- (1) Conference of Ministers ....., p.10.
- (2) Although the examples and statistics in this chapter are taken from a selected number of states for whom statistics were available, much of our discussion holds true for other countries not only because they share basically the same problems, but also because they follow similar or nearly identical curricula and textbooks. However, special reference will be made to other countries whenever the need arises.  
Table source: Conference of Ministers ....., p.43.
- (3) Massialas and Jarrar, p.48.
- (4) Conference of Ministers, p.47.
- (5) Ibid.
- (6) Unofficial journalistic figures. The latest official census (1981) gave a total of 165 millions (see Massialas and Jarrar, p.4).
- (7) al-Sayyādī, p.38.
- (8) Massialas and Jarrar, p.48.
- (9) al-Toma (1970), p.691.
- (10) Massialas and Jarrar, p.123.
- (11) Spencer, p.543.

- (12) Bentahila (1983), p.6.
- (13) Ibid, p.7.
- (14) Gordon, p.39.
- (15) al-Jābirī, p.37, 43.
- (16) al-9Alam, Morocco, 1957.
- (17) A. Baina, "Hawla Ta9rib al-Ta9lim bil-Maghrib", in al-Muharrir  
(27.9. 1978).
- (18) Bentahila (1983), p.12.
- (19) al-Mutawa (1974), p.112.
- (20) al-Kasimi (1979), p.28.
- (21) Matthews and Akrawi, p.54.
- (22) Heyworth-Dunn, p.287.
- (23) Educational Statistics Bulletin For the Arab World, Tunisia,  
ALECSO, Dept. of Documentation and Information, 1980 (in Arabic).
- (24) Massialas and Jarrar, p.110.
- (25) See note 23.
- (26) al-Mutawa (1984), p.7.
- (27) Massialas and Jarrar, p.200.

- (28) al-Ra'y al-9Am, Kuwait, 9 February 1984, p.21.
- (29) Conference of Ministers ..., p.4, 17, 47.
- (30) For more on the subject, see Ahmad Lakhdar, "al-lughah al-9Arabiyyah," in al-Muhādarāt al-Thaqāfiyyah al-'Usbū9iyyah, Part 1, Rabat, 1969.
- (31) Massialas and Jarrar, p.194.  
- For a detailed account of higher education in the area see Costantine Zurayq, "The University in a Developing World", in al-Kulliyah, American University at Beirut, Summer 1975.
- (32) Zahlan, p.30.
- (33) al-Toma (1970), Ibid.
- (34) Husayn, p.6.
- (35) Conference on The Use of Arabic at the University Level, Alexandria (26 - 30 December, 1981), in al-Lisān al-9Arabī (1982), pp.192-3.
- (36) al-Toma (1957), pp.122-7.
- (37) 'Abū-Durrah, pp.381-2.
- (38) UNESCO (1970-80).
- (39) Zellig Harris, "Transfer Grammar" in IJAL, vol.20, 1954, p.259.
- (40) Khātir, p.2, 7, 10 .  
- Also UNESCO (1956), pp.48-52.
- (41) UNESCO (1959).



- (42) al-Toma (1970), p.702.
- (43) Akil, pp.1-6.
- (44) Ibaaquil, pp.40 ff.
- (45) 9Abduh, p.11, 44-45.
- (46) al- Mutawa, p.175.
- (47) 9Abd-al-Karīm, pp.259-60.
- (48) Arab Centre of Educational Researches for the Gulf Countries,  
Minutes of the Symposium on the Preparation of Teachers in the Arab World (Riyadh, 1977), Kuwait.
- (49) Conference on "The Use of Arabic ...", pp.192-5.
- (50) Matlūb, p.38.
- (51) Thaqāfat al-Hind, July 1966, p.35.
- (52) 'Anistās al-Kirmilī, in Majma9 1921, p.283.
- (53) al-Bīrūnī as quoted by Schacht, p.23.
- (54) Lomonosov, as quoted by Pei, p.159.
- (55) Massialas and Jarrar, pp.213-14.
- (56) al-Safatī, pp.12-13.
- (57) See A. Bonfour in his article "Le Bilinguisme Des Lycéens" in LAMALIF, April 1973.

- (58) Ibid.
- (59) Bentahila (1983), p.55, 66, 68, 70, 76.  
Also \_\_\_\_\_, Attitudinal Aspects of Arabic-French Bilingualism in Morocco, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wales, 1981  
Notice that this graph is our own representation of the results of Bentahila's questionnaire. It should be noted that a few respondents were undecided. Others have left certain questions unanswered. Such responses were rejected by Bentahila.
- (60) See, for example, B.L. Whorf, Language Thought and Reality, ed. by J.B. Carroll, Cambridge: Mass., MIT Press, 1956.
- (61) Bentahila (1983), pp.40-1.
- (62) Ibid.
- (63) Fishman (1972), p.19.
- (64) Khan, p.XXV.
- (65) Ma'mūn, p.62.
- (66) Ibid.
- (67) Pinchuck, p.235.
- (68) Muntasir, pp.363-72.
- (69) Ibid.
- (70) al-Sayyādī, p.82.

- (71) Mahmūd al-Khattāb, "Mulāhazāt Hawla al-Mu9jam al-9Askarī al-Muwahhad", in al-Lisān al-9Arabī (1971), pp.46-52 .
- (72) Matlūb, p.23 .  
Also al-Shihābī, pp.47-8.  
For an in-depth presentation of the role of the American University at Beirut and Saint Joseph University, see Munīr Bashshūr, The Role of Two Western Institutions in the National Life of Lebanon and the Middle East, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1964.
- (73) al-Mubāarak, p.36.
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## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE ROLE OF TFL IN THE ARAB WORLD

#### 8.1 Objectives Of Teaching Foreign Languages (TFL):

Scientific information has an international relevance regardless of nationality or language. The languages used in scientific communication may be diverse but the actual content of much scientific writing is international in scope. Thus the important factor is the information encompassed within the document rather than its language of exposition be it English, Chinese or Czech.

However, although scientific research is no longer the prerogative of a small group of affluent states but can be encountered throughout the world, it would not be true to assert that all languages currently used around the globe play an equal part in scientific communication.<sup>(1)</sup> For example, among all scientific languages English, French, German, Russian and Japanese have a dominant position.<sup>(2)</sup> It is noteworthy - as table 8.1 shows - that

<u>Language</u> Subject	English	Russian	German	French	Japanese	Others
Physics	87	6	2	2	1	2
Engineering	83	6	6	2	1	2
Biology	79	8	3	3	1	4
Medicine	76	8	6	3	1	6
Geology	72	14	2	3	1	8
Chemistry	47	27	9	3	8	6

Table 8.1: Percentage of Scientific Publications in  
Five World Languages<sup>(3)</sup>

the remaining languages of the world play relatively small roles, reaching only as high as 8% in geology. These 'minor' languages are, for the most part, the languages of the Third World countries including Arabic. Scientists and scholars in these parts of the world have to struggle against the foreign language barrier before they can make use of the foreign scientific material. This can impede the immediacy of knowledge transfer. To counteract the effects of this language barrier, educationists in these countries have come to realize that teaching world scientific languages is both convenient and practical in the transient period of development.

With this in mind, as was mentioned in Chapter Seven the process of Arabizing education should not, by any means lead to a total neglect of foreign languages. It might sound paradoxical to say that contemporary programmes of teaching foreign languages (TFL) must be made more efficient than they used to be. One reason for this is that achieving a satisfactorily scientific Arabic depends basically on the existence of bilingual scientists and scholars who are competent enough to translate into Arabic what they read in other world languages. Ever since the early epochs of history, the Arabs have been conscious of this fact and of the vital role played in their life by foreign languages. Thus, at one time these languages happened to be Greek and Latin, now they include English, French, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian.

Besides the cultural requirements, foreign languages are taught for several utilitarian purposes, among which is the need of many students to pursue their higher studies in the Arab countries (especially in the foreign language(s) departments, faculties of engineering, medicine and science) or abroad in English or French speaking countries. The large number of Arab students scattered throughout the U.K., the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and Germany gives a good indication of the pressing need to strengthen the position of TFL. In this respect, some countries have embarked on a policy of teaching more than one foreign language in order to enable post-graduate students to have a wider range of countries to choose from. Thus, for

example, the educational authorities in Algeria and Morocco are currently engaged in developing English Language courses which can be inserted into the educational curricula side by side with French. The proliferation of English language institutes in Algeria is a good example of such a tendency.<sup>(4)</sup> Similarly, in Kuwait, Iraq and the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), French is taught, besides English, in the final two years of the literary section of the secondary school. Likewise, at the university level, students in Kuwait, for example, are required to take a placement examination in English or French before they can register in any academic course. In addition to remedial language courses the student is free to develop his interest in the language of his choice through the elective-course system. Similarly, the Centre of Adult and Continuing Education at Kuwait University offers evening classes in a multitude of languages.

During the process of Arabizing education, it might well be useful to use a foreign language as a transient medium to cover the lexical gaps of Arabic through direct translation. In addition, TFL can help in enhancing the process of teaching Arabic as a first language particularly in the Maghrib Countries where until very recently, Arabic was taught as second to French. (See 8.3.1). As an aid to first language instruction, the introduction of a foreign language can help in undertaking contrastive analysis between Arabic and the foreign language with the aim of reinforcing the newly acquired habits by means of positive transfer.<sup>(5)</sup>

In addition to the educational objectives of TFL, economic progress also relies on foreign language acquisition. It is among people working in industry that the incentive for learning foreign languages has become strongest in recent years, for these languages are basic to the successful conduct of business. Likewise, educational language policy, while often based on national and cultural considerations is influenced by economic constraints. The failure of the developing countries (including the Arab world) to conduct international business in their national languages enhances the necessity for developing an efficient TFL programme. As is pointed out by Fishman, the language

to be promoted in a given country depends to a great extent on the export - import industry.<sup>(6)</sup> The Arab world is no exception in this case. The boom in the oil industry and exports and the need to import technology, is probably one of the main reasons for the keen interest of Arab educationists in introducing TFL programmes into the public school systems. Thus, the emergence of independent Arab oil countries has meant an increase and not a decrease in the use of foreign languages, as these countries seek to maintain or establish contact with more advanced areas through the use of the world's chief international languages.<sup>(7)</sup>

## 8.2 The Status Of TFL In The Curricula:

TFL has a long standing tradition in most of the Arab countries, but recently it has assumed even greater proportions as a result of Arabizing education and the need to develop a scientific Arabic via translation. In consequence, TFL commands a significant portion of the curricula in almost all the Arab states.

Among world scientific languages, English and French enjoy a paramount prestige in the Arab world. Others such as German, Italian, Spanish and Russian are slowly and steadily introduced as optional languages. This is especially the case in the predominantly French states.

With the exception of Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria, languages other than Arabic are non-existent in the first four years of the primary stage. Thus, as table 8.2 indicates, while French is started in the third grade in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, French or English is introduced right from the beginning in Lebanon.

Year	I		II		III		IV	
Language	E	F	E	F	E	F	E	F
Lebanon	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Morocco						15		15
Tunisia						14		14
Algeria						15		15

Key: E = English, F = French

Table 8.2: The Number of TFL Weekly Periods in the First Four Years of the Primary Level in Four Arab Countries<sup>(8)</sup>

In the rest of the Arab world the general tendency is to put more emphasis on Arabic at the primary stage as the sole means of communication and the medium of school instruction. Meanwhile, those countries which include TFL in the early years of the primary stage often do so as a result of certain cultural and linguistic peculiarities. In Lebanon, for example, the compromise between Arabic, English and French appears to have made greater progress than in any other country owing to the very cosmopolitan structure of society. In the three Maghrib Countries the situation is different. The policies of Arabization seem to favour the retention of foreign languages at least for the time being until a sufficient number of teachers is provided along with the necessary Arabized textbooks. Moreover, the legacy of the French occupation in these countries makes it imperative to teach French and Arabic in the primary school in order to allow their students to effect the cultural transfer from French to Arabic without much trouble.

Arab educationists, like those elsewhere, have been divided in their attitudes towards the issue of introducing foreign languages at the primary level. Some curricula designers are dubious about the advantage of introducing foreign languages at an early stage. It is often hypothesized that since Arabic is taught as a new language by



itself, second to the local dialect, the simultaneous introduction of another 'foreign' language in the primary school is likely to result in cross-association and negative inhibition of Arabic linguistic patterns. This hypothesis was put forward in the early sixties by ʿAbd-al-ʿAzīz al-Qūṣī, the former director of the UNESCO office in Beirut, and Sāṭiḡ al-Huṣrī the well-known educationist and Arabist, and was received favourably by Arab governments and nationalists. It seems that both al-Qūṣī and al-Huṣrī were, in turn, influenced by the articles published in the journal of English Language Teaching during 1958 - 59 in which Michael West criticizes the teaching of foreign languages at a very early age.<sup>(9)</sup>

For this reason, it has been the custom in some Arab countries to delay the teaching of foreign languages, at least until the student has reached the intermediate stage. Unfortunately, however, by that time the student has already acquired certain linguistic habits of Arabic which are usually transferred to the newly introduced language - be it English or French - and the result is that the TFL process becomes less efficient and more demanding. The dilemma is not easy to solve for nationalistic aspirations often conflict with progressive outlooks. The plans to reinstate Arabic as the official language of education have to take into consideration the importance of TFL in keeping pace with modern sciences.

At both the intermediate and secondary stages, TFL assumes a much more significant role in all the Arab states. As is shown in table 8.3, the number of weekly periods allotted to TFL at the secondary level is almost equal to that allotted to Arabic.

Country	Arabic	Foreign Languages	
		English	French
Jordan	5 - 7	5 - 7	-
Egypt	5 - 7	5 - 7	3 - 5
Kuwait	7 - 8	7 - 8	5 - 6
Iraq	4 - 8	6 - 7	-
Saudi-Arabia	6 - 11	5 - 8	4 - 5

Table 8.3: Average Weekly Periods of Arabic and Foreign Languages at the Secondary Level in Five Arab Countries<sup>(10)</sup>

Initially, one foreign language is taught. Thus English occupies a predominant place in the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, as well as in the African states of Egypt, Sudan and Libya. Yet, in Syria, Lebanon and Egypt, a choice between English and French is prevalent. This might be attributed to the fact that these countries have been intensively exposed to both English and French influence. In the Maghrib states, French maintains its lead in the TFL programme. However, recently other foreign languages besides French (e.g. English) have been taught on a smaller scale. The current developments such as the expansion of the oil industry, the rise of English as the most advanced scientific language and the nationalistic desire to achieve a cultural independence, are sufficient inducements for these states to take the initiative in introducing foreign languages other than French.<sup>(11)</sup> A similar situation has also developed in some Eastern Arab Countries such as Kuwait, U.A.E., Bahrain and Iraq, where French is offered as second to English in the foreign language programme.

Broadly speaking, both English and French as taught at the secondary level in most Arab countries form nearly one-third of the total number of weekly periods of all subjects. More time is often given to the predominant foreign language though some countries, like Lebanon, dedicate equal time to English and French.<sup>(12)</sup>

### 8.3 The Shortcomings of the TFL Programmes in the Arab World:

The process of introducing a foreign language to be taught side by side with Arabic is impeded by a number of obstacles. These obstacles are by no means peculiar to the Arab world. They can be encountered in most parts of the Third World where the desire to keep pace with the advanced countries often conflicts with nationalistic aspirations. In the following few pages we will attempt to discuss some of these obstacles and how they check the process of carrying out the TFL programmes in the Arab world.

#### 8.3.1 The Stage At Which TFL Is Introduced:

This differs from one Arab country to another. Thus, for example, whereas in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria, English is introduced during the seventh year of the educational ladder (i.e. when the student is 13 years old), Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait and Sudan begin the TFL programme in the fifth year (i.e. when the student is 11 years old). On the other hand, in Bahrain, students begin learning English during the fourth year (i.e. when the student is 10 years old) while in Morocco and Tunisia, French is introduced in the third year (i.e. at the age of 9). However, Algeria and Lebanon begin their TFL programmes during the first year of the primary school; sometimes it is even introduced at the kindergarten level.

The obvious reason for this diversity is that apart from the past colonial influences, the educationists in charge of planning the TFL programmes have different outlooks and backgrounds. Some are influenced by Michael West who in the late 1950's advocated that the first school-years should be dedicated entirely to teaching the mother tongue. Thus, for example, A. Baffun believes that foreign languages should only be introduced after the acquisition of the basic linguistic skills of MSA has been secured.<sup>(13)</sup> Other educationists, influenced by Penfield, believe that the introduction of foreign languages at an early stage can produce more fluent second language speakers and at the same time help in acquiring MSA by means of the

comparative and contrastive techniques.<sup>(14)</sup>

Another important factor in shaping the TFL programmes in the Arab world is nationalistic feelings among Arab educationists. In some Arab states, anti-colonialist feelings and a strong emphasis on the process of Arabization have worked against the improvement of foreign language teaching. The desire to assert a full cultural independence and the belief that TFL may exert unfavourable influences on the teaching of MSA have encouraged some countries like Sudan, Algeria, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Jordan to decrease the amount of time devoted to teaching foreign languages. Some, like Saudi Arabia, have lowered requirements in foreign languages by making TFL courses mere "pass" subjects.<sup>(15)</sup>

### 8.3.2 Deficient Textbooks:

Needless to say, the diversity of TFL programmes in the Arab world makes it much more difficult for Arab educationists to co-ordinate their curricula and to carry out the recommendations of the TFL regional and pan-Arab meetings. This diversity has also led to the adoption of different methods and textbooks across the Arab world. For instance, in Iraq the textbooks employed are the New English Course for Iraq and English Reader (both series are written by Iraqi TFL specialists) whereas in Saudi Arabia is Living English for the Arab World (Longman); in Kuwait, Bahrain and the UAE, is the Crescent English Course (Oxford) and the Omani educationists are currently using English for Oman (Longman). Egypt, on the other hand, employs its own local series entitled Living English.<sup>(16)</sup>

In general, the TFL textbooks used in the Arab states have been criticized for being rigid in layout.<sup>(17)</sup> In Egypt, for instance, such rigidity is manifested in the heavy load of vocabulary and the intensive provision of grammatical exercises rather than communicative activities. The main course, Living English also lacks consistency and coherence. Book IV for example, was found more difficult than Book V. A wide gap was also found between Book IV and the first three

books assigned to the preparatory stage.<sup>(18)</sup> Such gaps, which are not only peculiar to Egypt, but also common in other Arab states are attributed to the constant modifications and omissions made by the ministries of education in their efforts to reduce the material included in the texts. Such a procedure makes teaching rather labourious and time-consuming for TFL teachers as they face a difficulty in applying the communicative methods appropriately.

According to Khurma, most errors committed by Arab students learning foreign languages are due to bad textbook presentation and drill, and inadequate teaching of grammatical points. For example, in most elementary English courses like the one employed in Kuwait, grammatical items are presented and drilled in isolated sentences instead of longer stretches of discourse. Thus the students grow up with little awareness of the importance of context.<sup>(19)</sup> The outcome is that the students will naturally make errors, or avoid using something the actual application of which they are not sure of. Unfortunately, the majority of the TFL teachers, themselves, have been brought up in the same tradition. Consequently, the introduction of new methods and new textbooks does not often lead to better results.

Knowing a language involves not only a knowledge of the formal properties of the language as a system but also a knowledge of how this system is put to use in the performing of social actions of different kinds. In other words, acquiring a language is not only a matter of grammatical competence but also of communicative performance. It follows that the language teacher ought to be as much concerned with the one as with the other. However, with the generally low standard of non-native TFL teachers, we cannot expect them to try to compensate for the shortcomings of the textbook, which, to most of them is Holy Writ.<sup>(20)</sup> In consequence, once the students graduate from the secondary school, their level in foreign languages (as well as in MSA) is too low to be alleviated in one or two language courses at the university level.

### 8.3.3 The Language Factor:

In TFL courses, there is always the fear of what H.V. George calls 'the mother tongue pull'.<sup>(21)</sup> As was pointed out under 8.3.1, the Arab child, on average, begins learning the foreign language at the age of twelve.<sup>(22)</sup> At this stage, he has already acquired a set of habits through learning all subjects in MSA during his primary education. Moreover, the foreign language is introduced not as second to MSA, but actually as third to the local dialect and MSA, the latter being acquired only through formal instruction. In other words, TFL starts when the mother tongue interference is ubiquitous. This has a negative effect in the sense that no matter how intensive the TFL programme is, the influence of Arabic will remain a dominant obstacle in the way of mastering a foreign language. Consequently, students are bound to make errors since mother tongue habits interfere with the newly acquired patterns of the foreign language. This problem constitutes one of the crucial factors affecting foreign language programmes in the Arab world.

It is not uncommon, therefore, to find that many students (and poorly-trained teachers) carry some Arabic linguistic habits over to English or French. Examples of such a phenomenon include the following:

a- In Pronunciation and Spelling:

a-1 Misplaced stresses:

e.g. contést (n), póosition, úntil, comfórtable.

a-2 Some teachers and, in effect, students tend to insert additional vowels wherever there is a consonant cluster:

e.g. /ispilaf/ for 'splash', /biring/ for 'bring'.

This is the result of interference from Arabic which does not normally allow consonant clusters.

a-3 In written Arabic, double letters always indicate a geminate sound in pronunciation, e.g. /jamāl/ 'beauty' but /jammāl/ 'camel driver'. In written English, double consonants do not have to be stressed in pronunciation. However, Arab students often tend to pronounce English double consonant letters as geminate consonant sounds. Thus 'umbrella' is pronounced as /ʌmbrellə/, 'account' as /əkkaunt/ and 'corruption' as /kərrʌpʃən/.<sup>(23)</sup> This problem is manifested inversely in writing. The following are few examples of some common errors in the writings of Arab students:  
e.g. \*'runing', \*'omited', \*'writent', \*'gramar'.

a-4 Inability to distinguish between minimal pairs:  
e.g. both 'pad' and 'bad' are pronounced as /bad/ and both /ʒ/ and /dʒ/ as /ʒ/ or as /dʒ/. For example, both 'virgin' and 'vision' would be pronounced as either /virʒin/ and /və:ʒin/ or /virdʒin/ and /və:dʒin/.

a-5 Arabic has only three short vowels represented by the diacritic marks and three corresponding long vowels represented by َ , ِ , and ُ . Consequently, Arab students tend to polarize foreign vowels in order to fit them within the Arabic vowel system. Hence, minor phonetic differences which are of vital importance in the English vowel division, for example, are neglected and the result is mispronunciation or misspelling of foreign words.

e.g. \*'correspondant' instead of 'correspondent'.

'dual' instead of 'duel'

'tone' instead of 'tune'

b- In Syntax:

Arab students often neglect phenomena that seem too complex in comparison with Arabic or use Arabic equivalents. The following are some instances where such a situation may occur:

b-1 Arabic has no apparent copula in affirmative present tense constructions. This may account for the negative transfer

by many Arab students in omitting the English copula where it is necessary.

e.g. \*'he kind' \*'my brother a lawyer' ... etc.

#### b-2 Articles:

Arabic differs from English in that the definite article may precede plural nouns when they are used in a generic sense. Consequently Arab students may use the English definite article where it is redundant.

e.g. \*'the mammals occupy the highest rank in the animal kingdom' as a translation of /tahtal ath-thadyiyyāt a9lā martabah fī mamlakat al-hayawān/

However, whereas English admits the definite article before the first element of a genitive construction, Arabic does not. Consequently, students may omit the English definite article where it is essential.

e.g. \*'we visited south of Turkey' as a translation of /zurnā janūb Turkiyā/.

#### b-3 Prepositions:

Arab students often tend to transfer Arabic prepositions into English via literal translation. Thus, they may say \*'he sat on the table' as a direct translation of /jalasa 9alā at-tāwilah/ instead of 'he sat at the table'.

\*'our house is near from the station' as a direct translation of /baytunā qarīb min al-mahattah/.

#### b-4 Tag-Questions:

In comparison with English, Arabic tag-questions are relatively few and are limited to fixed expressions,

e.g. / alaysa kadhālik/ 'isn't it so?'

Therefore Arab students find it difficult to choose the correct tag-question for a given sentence from apparently too numerous options. Typical of tag-question errors are these examples:

\*'come back, don't you?'

\*'she visits her uncle every weekend, isn't she?'



#### b-5 Conditional Constructions:

Contrary to English, Arabic does not attach any significance to the chronological sequence of verbs in conditional sentences. (24) Thus, the perfect or imperfect verb can be used in any of the protasis or the apodosis without any grammatical restrictions. As a result, Arab students often find it difficult to produce correct conditional sentences in English. Most of the errors made in this area are the result of translating Arabic conditional sentences directly into English without any regard to the grammatical restrictions of the TL.

e.g. \*'if you gave up smoking, I gave up drinking.'

which is a direct translation of /'in 'aqla9ta 9an at-tadkhīn 'aqla9tu 'anā 9an ash-shurb/ instead of 'if you give up smoking, I will give up drinking.'

\*'if you visited me, I visit you' which is a direct translation of /'in zurtanī 'azūrak/ instead of 'if you visit me, I will visit you.'

As a result, most students memorize the correct structures either to please their teachers or to pass an examination. Teachers may point out errors but do not explain the usefulness of the correct form for they themselves may not be able to see the value of a given grammatical rule which is redundant in Arabic.

#### c - Lexical Errors:

Lexical errors made by Arab students have their origin in either MSA or the spoken dialects.

e.g. \*'to drink a cigarette' from the colloquial /yashrab sīgārah/

\*'to hesitate the club' from MSA /yataraddad 9alā an-nādī/i

'to visit the club frequently'.

Interference from the mother tongue cannot be totally eliminated. Thus, by accepting the inevitable, it is possible to use elements of similarity and elements of contrast between Arabic and the foreign language in order to encourage the required linguistic skills or alternatively inhibit bad habits and thus reduce the time needed for TFL.

#### 8.3.4 Teacher Recruitment and Training:

The problem of insufficient numbers of teachers, especially those of foreign languages is persistent in the Arab world. It is estimated that the population of the Arab world will double in the next two decades.<sup>(25)</sup> This means that even if all relevant variables remain the same, the number of pupils in schools will, accordingly, double in 20 years. However, advocates of the aural-oral approach (i.e. TFL by means of oral conversation and drills) claim that one of the major requirements to make this method effective is that the number of pupils should not exceed 15 (the ideal number is 12) in each class.<sup>(26)</sup> Yet in Egypt and Jordan, for example, the number of students in TFL classes normally exceeds 40.<sup>(27)</sup> The teacher following the aural-oral approach cannot be efficient in such classes, for no student can make more than few responses in the language in a given lesson.

Hence, the shortage of TFL teachers has resulted in the recruitment of a substantial number of untrained and under-trained nationals, Arab expatriates and foreign teachers. This, in turn, has led to a misapplication by many teachers of the objectives and methods required for the effective teaching of foreign languages in the countries concerned. As was pointed out by the Omani Ministry of Education,

"The rapidly increasing number of new schools meant that the Arab countries could not satisfy the demand and it became necessary to recruit from India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Although most of these teachers have got a good standard of English, many of them, however, have either not received proper training in the teaching of English as a foreign language, or are a product of a stereotyped system of education in their own countries."<sup>(28)</sup>

Needless to say, each teacher brings with him an approach different from that which is practiced in the country of employment. The student is, therefore, subjected to a succession of teachers whose methods of TFL vary from one year to the next. As it is reported by the Saudi Ministry of Education,

"This affects the process of continuity in education. We recruit teachers from different countries. Their experience varies from a life-time spent in education to none at all. Thus we have a variety of background and experience and we find it difficult to achieve a unified standard in our schools."<sup>(29)</sup>

In the countries of the Arabian Gulf, the problem of recruiting expatriate teachers has created another problem of continuity. These teachers, who form approximately nine-tenths of the total teaching staff, often come on short-term contracts. They leave the country of employment before they can apply the experience they have acquired.

Consequently, expenditure on in-service training programmes and audio-visual instruction rises considerably without a corresponding improvement in the general level of TFL teachers.

It is not uncommon nowadays to hear high-school students complain about the poor training of their TFL teachers. Some educationists find such a complaint valid since most of those teachers complete their university or college education without having mastered the necessary skills of the foreign language they are supposed to teach. Indeed, it will not be an exaggeration to say that a large number of TFL teachers in the Arab world should rather be classified as students than teachers of foreign languages. That being so, the main obstacle in the TFL programme, for example in Kuwait, as viewed by al-Mutawa is, therefore,

"... not the curriculum or the textbooks nor the approaches prescribed by the Ministry of Education. However important these things might be, their success is dependent on the teacher. Unfortunately, it is usually the case that the teacher himself lacks the basic language skills." (30)

In teaching foreign languages in Arab schools, there exists a double standard. Thus, for example, a teacher may complete a drill on question word order in which "where are you going?" occurs a score of times. Then when the bell rings and a too eager pupil moves to the door, the teacher calls out "where you are going?". The gap between the teacher's competence and performance is due partly to his insufficient training and partly to the lack of practice and in-service assessment. (31)

On their entrance to the teachers' training colleges the linguistic standard of some would-be teachers is so poor that most of the time is spent on teaching them the fundamentals of language structure and grammar rather than the concepts of foreign language teaching methods. As a result, their training is deficient in both methodology and oral

proficiency.<sup>(32)</sup> Consequently, when they graduate, they tend to teach English to their students in discrete units: word by word, sentence by sentence and rule by rule. The constant attempts to remedy the low standard of teachers' oral proficiency by expanding the facilities of the language laboratory often proves to be a waste of time. Without a qualified and well-trained teacher who can exploit the teaching materials available, audio-visual aids can have no impact whatsoever on the performance of students. The aural-oral and audio-visual approaches can yield fruitful results only in the hands of well qualified teachers. Their misapplication can seriously impede the pupils' acquisition of the foreign language skills. Untrained and inadequately trained teachers still prefer the traditional grammar-translation method. As is observed by Hussein, in Egypt, for example,

"... although the teaching materials used are the same all over the country, the variations in actual application and approach in classroom situations are so great that some teachers actually use a method that is closer to grammar-translation than an audio-lingual one."<sup>(33)</sup>

Some teachers may even use MSA or their local dialect in a TFL class. As al-Mutawa points out, almost 73% of the TFL teachers in Kuwait use their mother tongue in explaining the meaning of abstract words or difficult grammatical points.<sup>(34)</sup>

The use of the communicative approach, which has been recently introduced in the curriculum has in some instances aggravated the situation. Such a method places a great burden on the teacher who is not well prepared to use such a method. As a result, in a questionnaire distributed among 30 secondary school teachers of English in Kuwait, 23 considered the old methods and textbooks which emphasized reading and writing to be more suitable to the needs of their students and that despite the in-service training, the new method was too demanding to be efficient.

Taking the Arab world as a whole, the ratio of foreign language teachers with training qualifications is too small to meet the rapid growth in the number of pupils. This is mainly due to the limited number of training colleges.<sup>(35)</sup> For this reason, large numbers of untrained teachers with a university degree in English or French language and literature are recruited to cater for the rapid growth in the numbers of school children. Yet, the few graduates who possess a good command of the foreign language are often attracted to take up somewhat more profitable jobs in journalism, broadcasting and the private sector. The remaining majority are those whose knowledge of the foreign language does not qualify them for such lucrative positions. It is those low-standard graduates that are often recruited for teaching foreign languages.

In addition, these teachers face several linguistic difficulties during their university study which "crammed with classical literary pieces and theoretical linguistics, leaves them little time for practising the language."<sup>(36)</sup> In fact, teaching practice constitutes one of the major weaknesses of the present university syllabuses. It is excluded altogether from the syllabus of the University of Jordan whereas the time allocated for it in both Egypt and Kuwait is too short to yield satisfactory results.<sup>(37)</sup> For example, in Kuwait, the university syllabus for would-be TFL teachers does not include more than two courses (six credit hours) of teaching practice in the final year, out of a total of 42 courses (126 credit hours).<sup>(38)</sup> Similarly, in Libya, would-be TFL teachers are only able to practice teaching in their final college year and for only one day (i.e. six hours) every week. In other words, the total period is 4 weeks. This same situation obtains in Iraq and Sudan. The comparatively short period of teaching-practice is not sufficient for a well-rounded experience in teaching a foreign language; this requires a sound knowledge of methodology and proficiency in oral communication, a pre-requisite which is not so imperative in the case of teachers of other subjects.<sup>(39)</sup> In consequence, the quality of teaching leaves much to be desired and the standard of the English or French acquired by students falls short of the objectives of TFL.

### 8.3.5 The Problem of Motivation:

The difficulties of TFL are increased by the fact that students find very few people who speak foreign languages outside the classroom. The only occasion they can hear the language as used by its natives is when they watch British or American films and T.V. series. Yet, since the latter have no relation to the school textbook, the audience is often interested in the sequence of events than in the language spoken. The majority of TFL teachers make no attempt to relate their teaching to what students can see or hear in the various media of communication. Consequently, students think that school English (or French) is divorced from reality and, therefore, they make little effort towards understanding it. This situation has been confirmed by the report of the Saudi Ministry of Education on the TFL programme in the Kingdom's schools. In evaluating the status of TFL, the report makes it clear that,

"Regarding the problems of the learners, we are sorry to say that some of our pupils lack motivation. They think that English is a difficult language to learn and they do not get enough opportunity to practice the language outside the four walls of the classroom."<sup>(40)</sup>

Consequently, the proportion of failures in TFL courses is rather high, since the majority of students see no reason for learning a foreign language except that it happens to be a compulsory subject in the curriculum. They feel that they are compelled to study it so as to satisfy the scholastic regulations and also because it is part of the final examinations.

As a matter of fact, the examination system has in many ways made the situation more critical. The process of teaching foreign languages in most parts of the Arab world is governed by what teachers think the final examination will contain. Their focus is thus mainly on completing the prescribed texts and on

teaching their students how to answer written exercises. This is reinforced by the insistence of many TFL inspectors on assessing teachers by the number of students who pass the final examination. In effect, the students' efforts are directed only to the set books in which they are going to be examined without paying much attention to developing their conversation or composition skills. (41)

#### 8.3.6 The Methodologies of TFL:

Reaching the level of proficiency in a language requires the mastery of four skills: comprehending speech, comprehending writing; producing speech and producing writing. Unfortunately, the latter two are rarely emphasized in the current TFL systems in the Arab world. All too often language learning is not made to seem relevant to the students and lessons appear boring and difficult. Despite the tendency to apply the aural-oral and communicative methods, the current TFL practice calls for memorization of grammar (a practice which is probably carried over from Arabic) and vocabulary. This usually requires considerable effort on the student part at a time when actual usage of the language outside the classroom is minimal. Further, the audio-visual equipment which is provided in some schools, particularly in those of the oil-rich countries, is rarely, if ever used. In our survey of 4 secondary schools (2 boys' and 2 girls') in Kuwait, it was found that, on average, the number of times the language laboratory was used for developing language skills ranged between zero and two per session (See table 8.4). The main reason given by some language teachers for their reluctance to make full usage of the audio-visual facilities were that the syllabus was crammed, the language laboratories were badly staffed and the students could barely cope with the basics of English, let alone recorded material which assumed a certain degree of fluency.



Year	Average Times of Usage Per Session
First	1
Second	1
Third	2
Fourth	0

Table 8.4: Average Times of Usage of Language Laboratories Per Session (i.e. academic year) in Four Secondary Schools in Kuwait (notice that secondary schools in Kuwait follow the 4 year system)

In many ways, despite the introduction of new textbooks and methodologies by the Arab educational ministries, it can be said that the method currently used is an updated grammar-translation method which was popular in the late 1950's and the early 1960's. In this regard, one of the latest reports from the Saudi Ministry of Education states that,

"Some of our teachers use the mother tongue to explain new vocabulary. They also prepare notes in Arabic ... to make their work easy."<sup>(42)</sup>

In General, most of the emphasis in Arab schools is given to the written form of the language(s). Students thus possess a good mastery of grammar, yet they encounter great difficulties in expressing themselves in situational contexts.

#### 8.3.7 The Subservient Role of Translation in the Curricula:

Probably one of the most significant shortcomings of TFL programmes across the Arab world is the fact that the prime objective of teaching foreign languages, namely the creation of a scientific Arabic language via translation, has not been given its due. TFL

courses at the secondary and university levels in the Arab world do not take into account the need to produce graduates who are capable of translating into Arabic what they read in English. Mistakenly, it is somehow taken for granted that translation is an automatic byproduct of the student's exposure to massive reading materials. Some educationists seem to believe that translation has but little justification as an academic exercise.

Unfortunately, this concept has been carried over into the educational syllabuses in the teacher training institutes and colleges. Generally speaking, during his university career, a graduate teacher from a given Arab university will have taken (if any) an average of two to three translation courses which consist of translating extracts taken arbitrarily from newspapers or literary works. There is no stress neither on teaching the techniques of translation nor on the systematic analysis of the lexical and structural characteristics of the languages involved. For instance, in the Department of English at Kuwait University, the focus is on literary studies and theoretical linguistics whereas translation is looked upon as a subsidiary activity. According to the old course syllabus which was effective until the 1981-82 academic year, a student majoring in English was required to take 2 translation courses (6 credit hours) only out of a total of 40 courses (120 credit hours) throughout his university education. The syllabus at this Department was designed primarily for a degree in English literature and little or no training in the techniques of translation was provided. However, the new syllabus, which was introduced in 1982-83, has increased the number of compulsory courses of translation to 4.<sup>(43)</sup> Nevertheless, the problems of teaching translation cannot be solved by a mere increase in the number of required courses; equal consideration should be given to the textbooks and the pedagogical methods used in the lecture room.

In the same way, a glance at the syllabuses of teacher

training colleges in some Arab states will show that translation is yet to be recognized as an academic discipline by itself. For example, in the Teacher Training Colleges - English Language section - in Iraq, Libya and Sudan, there is no provision whatsoever for a translation training course. Instead, other minor subjects such as French, history and geography are included amongst the courses required for graduation<sup>(44)</sup> (See table 8.5).

Subjects Taught	Iraq		Libya		Sudan	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1 <u>English Language:</u>						
Literature and History	+		+		+	
Composition and Comprehension	+		+		+	
Grammar	+		+		+	
Tutorial and Library		-	+			-
2 <u>Education:</u>						
Psychology and Philosophy of Education	+		+		+	
Teaching Methods	+		+		+	
3 Second European Language (French)	+		+			-
4 Arabic Language	+		+		+	
5 History		-	+		+	
6 Geography	+		+			-
7 Sociology and Philosophy	+		+			-
8 Teaching Practice	+		+		+	
* Translation		-				-

Table 8.5: Syllabuses of the Teacher Training Colleges - English Language Section in Iraq, Libya and Sudan.<sup>(45)</sup>

Accordingly, what we have at present is a large number of graduates in English language and literature who can barely practice translation as a profession. The majority of those who work in translation offices and institutes are either part-time or free-lance translators. As far as training is concerned, some have developed individual experience over the years whereas others have hardly any. For instance, during a visit to one of the leading translation firms in Kuwait I had the opportunity to look at qualifications of the translating staff. To my surprise, of a total of seven, there were only three who had previous experience in similar firms whereas the other four had none at all. Yet, all these translators had one thing in common: their main profession was teaching English at intermediate and secondary schools; translating was an additional job that was looked upon as a source of extra income.

In the absence of organized academic training of translators, translation remains the pastime of amateurs. Consequently, finding good Arabic-English translators and interpreters will continue to constitute one of the major difficulties for conference organizers both in the Middle East and in international forums, for some time to come. This is a direct result of the fact that despite the increase in the importance of Arabic in the international arena (e.g. the U.N., the Organization of African Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement), the number of well-trained translators and interpreters has fallen far behind the demand.

Glimpses of hope have recently come from Bath University in the west of England where an M.A. degree course in translation and linguistics for Arabic speakers has been offered for the past four years. The course, which is organized in collaboration with al-Mustansiriyyah University in Baghdad, covers practical translation skills and comparative English/Arabic linguistics. (46) However, the course does not cover interpreting. Besides, the programme can only cater for a tiny fraction of the actual demand.

For instance, it has about 100 applications a year and has taken only 16 - 18 in each of the last two years. (47)

More facilities should be made available to train translators and interpreters within the region itself. For example, there is a centre for teaching translation and translating textbooks at the University of Algiers, but this caters mainly for the local needs of Arabization in that particular country. What is needed is a larger and better equipped centre modelled on the School of Translation and Interpretation of Geneva University and the U.N.-financed centres in New York, Moscow and Peking. This centre should fall under the auspices of the Arab League Bureau for the co-ordination of Arabization and should be entrusted with the supervision of any other local or regional centres.

To sum up, translation is not an ancillary activity that can be mastered by any English department graduate, nor can a few minor courses produce professional translators who are competent to fulfil the objectives of Arabization. Arab universities and ministries of education should adopt plans to establish independent university programmes in the theory and techniques of translation with particular emphasis on their implications for Arabization. In this respect, we might mention the plans of the English Department at Kuwait University to launch an M.A. graduate programme in Translation which, unfortunately, has been put off on several occasions. It is noteworthy that any procrastination in this matter is likely to deepen the plight of the current situation and it might even become costly in the long run as far as re-planning and staffing are concerned.

NOTES

- (1) Large, p.13
- (2) Among these languages, English is the first or second language, per excellence, in most of the world. To assert such a statement, Fishman et al came up with the following table:

Status and Context of Usage	No. of Countries
Official Status	94
Language of Government Administration	102
Lingua Franca Within Country	88
Technical Language	49
First Foreign Language Studied by Most Students	102
Use in Universities	32
Percent of Daily Newspapers in English	96
Use on Radio	80
Use on Television	38
Medium of Instruction in Secondary Schools	88
Medium of Instruction in Primary Schools	88
Subject of Instruction in Secondary Schools	88
Subject of Instruction in Primary Schools	88
Percent of Polulation in Primary and Secondary School English Classes	87

The Status of the English Language Worldwide

Reference: Joshua Fishman et al, "English the World Over" in Peter Hornby, Bilingualism (See note 4), p.110

- (3) Large, p.13
- (4) Hornby, pp.142-3

- (5) Anwar, p.3
- (6) Fishman et al, in Hornby, p.107, pp.112-14
- (7) Okby, p.311
- (8) For Lebanon: Ministry of Education, Centre For Educational Research and Archives, Symposium of Comparative Texts in Schools, part II, Cairo 1963, p.100.

For Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, see: M. Sasnett and I. Semeyer, Educational Systems of Africa, University of California Press, 1966, p.6, 62, 97.

The Reader should be aware that the educational systems and the divisions of the educational ladder into primary, intermediate and secondary is not by any means standardized. Some Arab states follow the system of 6-2-4, others 6-3-3 and 4-4-4. Therefore, the figures included in this and the following tables represent a mathematical average of the actual numbers.

- (9) English Language Teaching, several impressions 1958-59. For more details, see al-Kasimi (1979), pp.62 ff.
- (10) Figures are taken from the following sources:
  - al-Mutawa (1974)
  - Byron and Massialas, pp.87-88
  - Arab Centre of Educational Research for the Arabian Gulf Countries, Taqwīm al-Wāqī9 al-Halī Li-Manāhij al-Lughah al-Injilīziyyah, Kuwait (n.d.), p.43
- (11) al-Mutawa (1974), p.40
- (12) Ibid, p.43

- (13) Baffun, p.11, 43
- (14) Some Arab educationists adopted Michael West's approach which was launched in a series of articles published between 1958-59 in the journal of English Language Teaching (See note 8). Others, however, were more influenced by W. Penfield who in 1953 presented the theory that the basic linguistic habits are acquired before the age of 10 and until the age of 14, after which it becomes difficult to change those linguistic habits which were acquired during childhood. For more details see: W. Penfield, "The Human Brain and the Learning of Secondary Languages", in English Language Teaching, 4, 1953, pp.73-75.
- (15) Arab Centre of Educational Research for the Arabian Gulf Countries, Taqwīm al-Wāqi9 al-Hāli Lil-Manāhij fī Daw Ahdāfiḥā al-Muqtarahah fī Duwal al-KhaLiḥ al-9Arabi, Kuwait, 1980, pp.73-79  
- Also see Hornby, pp.142-43
- (16) Arab Centre of Educational Research for the Arabian Gulf Countries, Taqwīm al-Wāqi9 al-Hāli Lil-Manāhij fī Daw Ahdāfiḥā al-Muqtarahah: Tadrīs al-lughāt al-Ajnabiyyah, Kuwait, June 1980, p.64, 86
- (17) al-Mutawa (1977), p.176
- (18) National Centre For Educational Research, General Report of the working Party on the Improvement of the English-Language Syllabus, Cairo, 1975 (in Arabic)
- (19) Khurma, p.22
- (20) Ibid, p.23



- (21) George, p.14
- The degree of interference is intensified by the fact that TFL in the Arab world generally begins at the age of 11 or 12. This age is regarded by psychologists as the end of that desirable period in a child's life when his powers of imitation are at their best. For further explication on the subject, see D. Girard, Linguistics and Foreign Language Teaching, London, Longman, p.2
- (22) al-Mutawa (1974), p.47
- (23) Ibrahim (1977), p.160
- (24) Cantarino, p.312
- (25) al-Mutawa (1977) p.267
- (26) Ibrahim (1972), pp.34-42
- Also Davidson, p.88
- (27) al-Mutawa (1977), p.173
- (28) Arab Centre of Educational Research for the Arabian Gulf Countries, English Language Teaching in the Sultanate of Oman, Kuwait (n.d.) p.4
- (29) The Saudi Ministry of Education, Teaching of English . . . ., p.4
- (30) al-Mutawa (1985), p.7
- (31) This example is adapted from George (1972), p.11
- (32) al-Mutawa (1974), p.93
- (33) Hussein, p.30

- (34) al-Mutawa (1977), p.220
- (35) UNESCO (1974), p.41
- (36) al-Mutawa (1977), p.181
- (37) Ibid, p.188
- (38) Kuwait University, Course Requirement Sheet of the Department of English: Language and Education (1975-76) Kuwait.
- (39) al-Mutawa (1974), pp.95-98
- (40) The Saudi Ministry of Education, Teaching of English ..., p.1
- (41) Ibid p.4
- (42) Kuwait University, Course Requirement Sheet of the Department of English (1981-82).
- (43) Kuwait University, Course Requirement Sheet of the Department of English (1982-83).
- (44) al-Mutawa (1974) p.95
- (45) Ibid
- (46) Middle East Journal, No.113, March 1984, p.43
- (47) Ibid
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## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study has tackled some issues of English - Arabic translation from a variety of angles. However, our discussion has concentrated mainly on the defects of Arabization. In doing so, it may have given the impression that much is wrong and little is right. This is certainly not so. There are many aspects where Arabization has been carried out successfully. Our governing objective has been to pinpoint the problems that still need to be rectified and investigate their implications for the formulation of a workable strategy of Arabization. Therefore, in the following paragraphs we will attempt to recapitulate some of the issues that, we believe, should be given a special emphasis by Arab governments, linguists and educationists.

In general, it is felt here that any strategy for Arabization should not be bound to ephemeral nationalistic sentiments, nor should it be motivated by any political considerations or associated with any particular administrative structure. In the past, plans for Arabization were often disturbed by frequent changes of governments and ministers. Some plans were constantly being abandoned and replaced even before they had been properly put into operation.

This inconsistency in planning may also be attributed to the lack of overall agreement among policy makers, not all of whom share the same opinions about the value, implications and effects of Arabization, or have the same view of its wider role. One can distinguish between two major groups with different approaches to the issue. First, there are the nationalists, who favour a total Arabization of education, administration and the media. They see Arabization as a political and post-colonial problem which is vital to the preservation of the cultural heritage of the Arabs. Another group, the modernists, are more interested in the process of adopting modern sciences and catching up with the developed world rather than in carrying out a hasty Arabization which, to them, might impede the current pace of progress. Thus,

for example, they encourage the retention of foreign languages in education in order to ensure that Arab students can successfully pursue their higher studies in Western universities.

Even those individuals who are directly involved in making decisions and plans to promote Arabization do not always maintain consistent attitudes to it. To illustrate this, one could point to those members of the elite who send their own children to local English or French schools while still preaching Arabization as best for the masses. While such people may publicly express support for the use of Arabic in schools and universities, they are at the same time reluctant to abandon the advantages of a knowledge of a foreign language and culture for their own children. Gallagher refers to this situation as "the split between official dogma and observable reality; the symbolic and the utilitarian".<sup>(1)</sup> Consequently, this ambivalent attitude may prevent those elites from committing themselves to what they preach.

As was pointed out in Chapter Seven, the process of Arabizing the educational system has always been a controversial and much debated issue. Despite the recommendations of almost all pan-Arab educational conferences and the emphasis laid by governments upon making Arabic the sole medium of instruction there are still some important areas in the educational system, particularly in the domain of science teaching, and at the most advanced levels, where foreign languages are still as dominant as ever. Consequently, students who have had an Arabic-dominated primary and secondary education may experience serious difficulties when they reach the university level where a high standard of English or French is still essential for certain subjects. There may thus be some truth in the claim often made by some university lecturers that a large proportion of students who fail their examinations do so because of their low performance in the language of instruction rather than in the material taught.

Planning for Arabizing education has also been inadequate in

that emphasis has been laid on the Arabization of the pupils rather than on that of the teachers. Clearly, effective Arabization must begin with the preparation of competent teaching staff who can use the language constantly and consistently without the intrusion of colloquialism or foreignism. In this regard, it is important to take into consideration that before applying Arabization at the lower levels it would seem logical to ensure that teachers at the higher levels are adequately prepared. This would avoid the problem of university teachers who use a hybrid language which is the result of an admixture of stark colloquialism, foreign languages and an idiosyncratic use of Arabic.

In addition, the methods of teaching Arabic in schools are not as effective as might be desired. Pupils are made to memorize lists of grammar together with extracts from the Qur'ān and Classical poetry with little critical discussion. As a result MSA remains basically a written language. As we have suggested in Chapter Seven, a more functional approach should be adopted whereby MSA is presented as a pragmatic medium of communication.

Before Arab students can be persuaded that Arabic is an adequate replacement for foreign languages, it will be necessary to show them that Arabic can give them access to material of the same quality as that available through say English or French, for after all,

"All languages as systems are potentially equal for the expression of new thought and ideas but as social realities they vary according to the attitudes and values which underlie them".<sup>(2)</sup>

To effect a change in these attitudes and values, it is necessary to present Arabic not only as a medium of elegant expression which is used mainly to talk about abstract topics of religion, morality and history, but also as a language which can communicate straightforward facts and yet can be used informally outside the

classroom. The inclusion in Arabic textbooks of material more appealing to the young people of today would go a long way towards helping to change the image of Arabic. In addition, attempts should be made to offer a wider range of entertaining material in Arabic. To take the example of films, it is quite unrealistic to expect people to embrace enthusiastically an Arabization programme when all they are offered in place of a wealth of colloquial and foreign productions are historical films about the glory of the Arabs or plays which depend for their comic element on creating a mocking contrast between colloquial and Classical expressions. Obviously, we cannot expect people willingly to accept boring, unappealing material instead of a wealth of choice to suit all tastes. The provision of attractive material in Arabic, of appeal to the general public, seems to be crucial to the success of any plan which aims at reinstating Arabic as a prestigious and practical language. The process of Arabization is thus not simply a matter of excluding one language in favour of another; as well as replacing a language it is necessary to replace all that that language stands for in people's minds.

Assuming that Modern Standard Arabic is the language which is intended to replace European Languages, a further obstacle is posed by what we have referred to in this thesis as the lexical deficiency problem. A complaint often made is that Arabic is inadequate in the domain of scientific terminology and that a large number of French and English scientific terms can only be transferred into Arabic by means of long and unwieldy paraphrases. Therefore, some modernists have suggested that Arabic should borrow foreign words in their original form, merely transliterating them without adapting them to Arabic morphology in order to ensure that the foreign term can be recognized easily. The traditionalists have seen this as a grave threat to the purity of the language.

In view of the obvious success of Classical Arabic as a medium for scientific discourse in mediaeval times, it is worth noting how the demands for a technical terminology were met in

these earlier days. The Arab translators and scientists of that period exploited the derivational patterns of the Arabic language to create new words, adapted existing words by giving them new meanings, and borrowed terms from Syriac, Greek and Persian. These resources are still available in the language, but as we have explained in Chapter Four and Chapter Five, the current predicament is not confined to the creation of new terminology. There is a noticeable lack of uniformity among the Arabic-speaking countries with regard to the terms used. This is a direct result of the fact that each Arabic-speaking country tends to devise its own glossaries, taking little notice of the terms which have already been adopted by other countries, or which have been suggested by language academies and scientific institutions such as the ALECSO's\* Bureau for the Co-ordination of Arabization and the Arab Standards and Metrology Organization (ASMO). However great some of these individual efforts may have been, they have often proved abortive in the long run, as far as their actual implementation is concerned. As a result, these isolated and unconcerted initiatives have given rise to a wide variety of terms to express a concept which is rendered by a single word in English or French. Such a multiplicity of terms is likely to lead to confusion since the existence of a profusion of synonyms is no longer regarded as a sign of lexical richness. Any future strategy of Arabization should include among its immediate priorities the compilation of the long promised pan-Arab general dictionary proposed during the Fifth Educational Conference held in Baghdad in 1966. As a matter of fact, the proliferation of individual dictionaries has been widely encouraged by the failure of the language academies to produce comprehensive and updated dictionaries for the various branches of science. In this regard, we suggest the formation of a central terminological data-bank, possibly under the auspices of ALECSO, to be entrusted with establishing constant

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\* Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization

contacts with Arab lexicographers and linguistic bodies. This data-bank may benefit from the recently launched Arab satellite (ARABSAT) by entering its proposed terminologies in a central computer system which has various terminals distributed all over the Arab world. This project, if carried out successfully, will prevent unnecessary duplication of terminology and ensure that new lexical entries are maintained and publicised effectively.

Another aspect of the Arabic language which has been felt to present problems for the progress of Arabization is the Arabic writing system. The fact that short vowels are not indicated in the script can cause considerable uncertainty and may impair comprehension. Difficulties also arise from the fact that Arabic does not admit capitalization of proper nouns. In transliterating foreign words into Arabic, these two problems are complicated by the lack of uniformity in representing foreign sounds such as /tʃ/, /v/ and /g/ as well as the absence of a standardized system of punctuation.

Many proposals have been made to adapt the Arabic script to modern Western languages by the addition of new letters to the alphabet and the representation of short vowels by full consonants (e.g.  $\text{f}$  for the /fathah/,  $\text{d}$  for the /dammah/ and  $\text{k}$  for the /kasrah/). We believe that any change in the nature of the traditional Arabic script would not only lead to the loss of a long-standing cultural heritage but would also invite additional problems of reading and writing. Loanwords can be represented by approximate Arabic letters, enclosed between parenthesis with the actual foreign word written in Latin letters adjacent to its Arabic transliterated form. In fact, this practice of enclosing foreign proper nouns between brackets or inverted commas has been adopted in many recent scholarly writings as well as in daily newspapers.

As for the problem of representing short vowels, texts can always be vocalized by the addition of vowel diacritics if necessary as is done in some educational readers. Of course, we are not calling



for the revival of decorative calligraphy; far from it. Our aim is to insert diacritic marks wherever they are needed in order to ensure easy reading and help in working out the relationships among the sentential constituents. Examples of the situations where these marks are needed include double consonants represented by the /shaddah/ (i.e. ّ), passive verbs represented by /dammah/ (◌ْ) which is placed above the first letter of the verb, and the subject and predicate of the /'inna/ and /kāna/ constructions. This method of reinstating only those diacritic marks which are essential to correct reading and understanding was included among the recommendations and proposals of the recent "Symposium on Arabizing Computers" held in Kuwait (14 - 16 April 1985). The conferees recommended that computer designers should include as one of their primary objectives the maintenance of the essential characteristics of the Arabic script by adapting output devices and software to meet the requirements of Arabic rather than vice versa.<sup>(3)</sup> It was also pointed out that short vowel signs should be reproduced in modern texts particularly with the introduction of advanced Arabic word processors and computers where Arabic diacritic marks are incorporated within the keyboard and can be accurately printed out in their correct position relative to the consonants.<sup>(4)</sup>

Finally, in Chapter Eight, we have stressed the need to upgrade the current TFL programme in the Arab world as an aid to the efficient execution of any strategy of Arabization. This is in direct contrast to the many proposals which have been made by some staunch nationalists for bringing about a decrease in the amount of time allotted for teaching foreign languages, either by reducing the number of weekly periods or by the later introduction of these languages.

Moreover, we have suggested that translation should not be looked upon as an ancillary skill that can be mastered by any graduate of a teacher training college or a university English department. At the current stage of development in the Arab world,

there is an urgent need to set up a specialized programme for the training of translators along the lines of the École de Traduction et d'Interprétation (the School of Translation and Interpretation) of Geneva University. Only those who pass a qualifying examination after the completion of the programme can be certified as professional translators.

The pedagogical materials to be included in such training programmes should draw upon the findings of a systematic contrastive analysis of the linguistic and cultural features of both the source language (whether English or French) and Arabic. It is our assumption that such contrastive studies may help describe the patterns that are apt to cause difficulty in transference and aid the translator to predict those areas where interference problems are likely.

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NOTES

- (1) Gallagher, p.130.
  - (2) Ibid, p.61.
  - (3) "Tawsiyāt Nadwat Ta9rīb al-Hāsib al-'Ālī" (Kuwait 14 - 16 April, 1985) in al-Watan, 1 June 1985, p.14
  - (4) Ibid..
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