

# The Dilemma of Arabicization in the Arab World: Problems and Solutions

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**Abstract**—This study discusses the issue of Arabicization in the Arab World. It will also look through the obstacles that affected the Arabicization process such as the existence of colonialism and the borrowing of foreign words into Arabic. Finally, the study will shed light on the solutions the Academies have made to activate the movement of Arabicization.

**Index Terms**—Arabicization, the Arab World, problems and solutions

## I. INTRODUCTION

Arabicization is a language planning process which is a branch of sociolinguistics that study the relation between language and society and the way they affect each other, but Arabicize in linguistic dimension is to make Arabic inform, in this sense it is markedly different from Arabize which describes a growing cultural influence on a non- Arab area. (Al-Mazrouei, 2014, pp. 95-96)

The process of Arabicization is hampered during the degeneracy ages in the Arab World, because of the suspension of the linguistic diligence in Arabic language. However, it became active in the 19<sup>th</sup> century due to the failure of the Turkification process, which aimed at the elimination of a political deal in Arabic within the Ottoman Empire. Despite of the various attempts, that emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to improve Arabic language, the orally education Arabic language was limited to keep abstracts in books. Therefore, the information in Arabic curricula confused the students, in contrast, foreign languages suspense their students by attracting them to deliver the linguistic information using stimulating and clear methods. On the contrary, Arabic language did not go further to address the challenges that suspense its development. Thus, Arabicization was found as an equivalent against writing books in order to translate the Western Stories, and to introduce them in Arabic by Arabicizing the names of Western places and persons, and this delayed the actual Arabicization movement (Alsyyadi, 1982, p.42). Nowadays, Arabic language is threatened by the Israeli occupation to Palestine, in addition to the calls of many foreigners to neglect Standard Arabic and to use colloquial instead to divide Arab nations. As a result, the Arabicization process is delayed in many fields of study (Khalifa, 1987, p. 213). Arabicization is a national case that requires excessive efforts for preparing thoughtful studies. It also needs national efforts for keeping Arabic language, as it is holistic language for Arabs.

## II. THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to reveal the experiments of Arabicization done in the Arab World in the past and the present. It also shows the efforts of linguistic academies, in general, and the efforts that the Jordanian Arab language Academy has made regarding the issue of Arabicization.

## III. METHODOLOGY

First, the study shows the obstacles that Arabicization has been through and how the political situation in the Arab World mainly impacts this process. It also shows the efforts of the Academies of Arabic Language done by Arab countries, in general, and Jordan, in particular.

After that, the researcher provides solutions and recommendations to activate the movement of Arabicization in the Arab World. The material of the study was a selection of scientific books and articles that discusses this particular issue written in Arabic by Arab writers and published by the Arab language academies, especially the Jordanian Arab Language Academy.

## IV. DISCUSSION

### A. *The Obstacles Encountered Arabicization*

Many obstacles affect Arabicization process in the Arab World such as the following:

First, the existence of colonialism in the Eastern and Western parts of the Arab World led to immobilize the movement of Arabicization. There were many attractions to spread foreign languages in the Arab World such as facilitating the educational scholarships to the Western countries and to America. In addition, the Western countries

established universities adopted the Western culture and characteristics in the Arab World to spread the languages of these countries to colonize them culturally (Al-husari, 1982, p.7).

Moreover, these countries introduced their foreign vocabularies in the Arabic curricula in schools, institutes and universities to instill in the minds of the Arab learners that Arabic language is a limited one; and the students cannot use it to express the scientific terminologies. The colonization aimed to overwhelmingly control over the Arab World by having a direct impact on this language (Altonji, 1983, pp.123-124). Unfortunately, the Arabicization of the Western sciences was delayed, as the colonization entirely isolated Arabic language by imposing foreign languages to teach modern sciences in Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Jordan ...etc.

Another factor that affected the movement of Arabization is that some Arab intellectuals spread the idea of the Arabic language's inability to teach any modern science and its inability to follow the scientific development. This idea was promoted by some intellectuals before the Orabi Revolution in Egypt, which led to the conflict between those intellectuals and the defenders of the Arabic language and its pioneer role in the modern scientific development. The nationalists refused to abandon the language of the Arab nation, but they could not impose on the scientific field (Hafez, 2000, p.867).

There is no agreement between those who are opposed to the Arabicization of higher education; some of their opinion that Arabic is not sufficiently developed to be the language of science, because it lacks the required scientific terminology, also scientific publication in Arabic is very few. On the other hand, English or French language may help our scholars in maintaining worldwide intellectual contacts (Muhammad 1989, p.45).

However, as we all know that all Arabic countries are developing countries, thus, Arabic must be a developing language, and as long as Arabic remains not used as a language of science, it will continue to be hard to write on scientific topics in Arabic. Many staff members believe that the use of Arabic for instruction instead of any foreign language, reduced the failure of students significantly (ibid, pp.46-47).

The situation is similar in other Arab countries; many Arab intellectuals alienate Arabic language and learn foreign languages, they do not recognize the aesthetic values of Arabic expressions. The use of Arabic language becomes limited. Hence, Arabic language becomes inactive. Arab-Islamic heritage contains an enormous linguistic wealth such as words, terminologies and structures. This alienates the accusations of anti-Arabicization about the inactivity and indolence of Arabic (Alkubaisi, 1982, p.2).

Many Arabs are not tied intellectually and emotionally to their Arabic society; they are not connected with its rules, norms, values and developments through the ages, especially those who graduated from Western universities, as they know little about their society and language. In contrast, they know so much about the other Western societies; they come back to work in their countries, they transferred their knowledge to their students without recognizing that the different nature of various courses should be adopted by the nature of communities. So, they tend to teach these courses in English or French without Arabicizing the scientific terminologies into Arabic. This may cause the interference of the behavioral values and rules, and it may deteriorate the Arab student's mind who is looking for Arabic values and for being connected to his Arabic language which is a symbol of unity for Arab nations. It is true that some of Arabs respect foreign languages and they consider them as the languages of science and civilization that fit the modern life while they are degrading Arabic language as the language of science and civilization (Ibrahim, 1982, pp.5-10).

Some Arab governments discourage the Arabicization process for political reasons such as the supervisors of these educational institutions who study abroad and were affected by the language of that country, and they do not respect and appreciate Arabic (Alhusari, 1982, p.8).

In addition, borrowing foreign words into Arabic is problematic, because these words substitute the Arabic ones during time. Therefore, some Arabic vocabularies are not accepted nowadays because they were neglected for a long time. Arabic borrowed many foreign words in different fields (Altonji, 1983, pp.123-124) such as: the communications of peace and war and the agreements between Arabs and others, the commercial links between Arabs and other countries, and the use of the language of the exported countries in these transactions and this may affect the Arab businessmen's language and their lifestyle. In addition, the social communication between Arabs and other nations through marriages i.e. some Arabs have foreign wives, this may affect the new generation who will be reared according to a new culture other than Arabic. Consequently, the new generation will not master their native language, Arabic, and they will never have the chance to discover the aesthetic value of Arabic language. Also, some poets and authors are borrowing foreign words in their works.

Furthermore, Arab mass media has played a pivotal role in disseminating the foreign words in Arabic; this case is considered as a cultural invasion for the Arab nation, as the Western countries devoted their efforts through media to westernize the Arabic thought and to restrict it by what is heard and watched in the media. Mass media are one of the most powerful tools for spreading foreign languages and cultures in the Arab world. This linguistic and cultural challenge in the field of media is considered as the most challenging moves that threaten Arabic language and our social values (Altwaijri, 2004, p.19).

Another factor that participates in delaying the Arabicization process is that the Arabicization of terminologies was an individual effort rather than an organized effort at level of the Arab world. Some educational and cultural centers have concerns about the Arabicization of the terminologies in the science curricula taught in institutes and universities due to the difficulty of this process. An example on these concerns is the fear of the Arabicization of scientific

terminologies for the secondary schools in the Sudan. Most of Arab countries have the same concerns due to the lack of scientific references in Arabic (Ibrahim, 1982, pp.11-12). That is, there are not Arabic reference books that facilitate the process of finding an Arabic equivalent terminology for the foreign one. In addition, translators encounter a difficulty in finding the adequate equivalent terminologies in the fields of medicine, engineering and pharmacology, as the majority of available references are in Latin and English (Alhusari, 1982, p.7).

#### *B. The Efforts of the Academies of Arabic Language in Facilitating the Arabicization Movement*

The linguistics of modern believes point out that all languages are able to keep place with the progress of civilization. Fortunately, the Arabic language is a living language, it is considered the sixth official language of the United Nations, as well as English, French, Spanish, Russian, and Chinese.

One of the important efforts of the Arabic language Academies which are established in Damascus in 1999, in Cairo in 1932, in Baghdad in 1947, in Rabat in 1960, and in Amman in 1976 employed the process of Arabicization to create or Arabicize lists of terms among which are the technical and scientific terms that are used in Jordan and Syria. These Arabicized terms are borrowed from Latin, Greek, English, and French. (Al-Asal and Sabri, 2011, p.6).

The supervisors of Arabic Academy in Cairo introduce some suggestions to eliminate the reasons that hinder the movement of Arabicization such as taking necessary means for the Arabicization of higher education in the Arab World. Also, the supervisors in Cairo linguistic Academy call the union of Arab Scientific language academies to hold a workshop to establish rules for the formulation of the Arab Scientific terms and standardization of these terms in the Arab world. They also suggested that Arabic language should/be carefully taught in all educational stages and to arabicize the university education, as well as to prepare a historical linguistic dictionary (Conferences, 1998, pp. 247-249).

The Syrians professors teach in Arabic, they continued localization successfully in Syria since 1919, even present day, and after the adoption of apolitical decision in 1990 Arabicization of higher education.

The Sudan Candidate to join soon in Syria which is where education in the Arabic language at all levels since year 1919.

The start of Arabicization at the Universities of Sudan was in 1958, but the process of Arabicization flourished rapidly at 1990 after a decision to Arabicize the higher education (al-Mubarak, 1985, p.37).

#### *The Efforts of the Jordan Academy of Arabic Language in Facilitating the Arabicization Movement*

The idea of Arabicization started during the time of the Jordanian king Hussein Bin Talal Mercy be upon him (d 1999), where a Royal Decree was issued to establish the Jordan Academy of Arabic language in 1976, which believed that Arabicization is an educational necessity, they thought that the students learn better in their Arabic language than in a foreign one. Also, Arabicization is very necessary and spelled in higher education by the faculties which should teach scientific courses in Arabic

The Jordan Academy of Arabic language held a project in the Arabicization of scientific education. The project began as part of a plan to localize education and scientific terminology in three directions namely translation of scientific books, scientific authorship in the Arabic language, the Arabicization of scientific notation.

One of the important efforts of this Academy is to facilitate the issue of Arabicization; it has published eighteen reference books in physics, chemistry and mathematics, as well as its work on the development of many synonyms in Arabic for a lot of different scientific terms (khalifa, 1990, p.354).

Another important agenda approved by the supervisors of the Jordanian Academy of Arabic language is preparing a unified Arabic dictionary for everyday vocabulary; it aims to enrich Arabic language with new civilized vocabulary in different field of everyday life. In addition, to standardize the colloquial expressions, which are originally standard; to work on the pruning of words and to remove extraneous words from Standard Arabic (projects, 1998, pp. 249-251). After hard work that lasted for several years, Jordanian Academy of Arabic issued a dictionary of everyday vocabularies in Jordan; it is considered as the nucleus of the unified Arabic dictionary of everyday vocabulary.

Moreover, the Jordanian Academy of Arabic language prepare used and essential vocabularies and terms; it arabicizes some important scientific books, and in its project that aims to arabicize the university education. The medical science committee were asked to choose a significant source in general surgery to arabicize its terms, this dictionary consists of four volumes in (Baily and Love's, Short practice of surgery). They translate a book titled (The Obstacles of practicing Surgery). This is a useful book for physicians in the Arab world, and it is used by Jordanian universities (projects, 1998, pp.255-256). In addition, this book has won the prize of the 28 Arab Book Fair of the year1998, this book was prepared by the Kuwait Foundation in the field of best arabicized book in Medical Sciences (Nusair, 2013, p.194).

Academies of Arabic language in the Arab world are highly interested in Arabicizing sciences and new technologies. For instance, Jordanian academy of Arabic language believes that Arabicization is a national and cultural urgent need for building Arabic culture. In addition, making Arabic the language of scientific research and modern technologies in Arab universities (conferences, 2000, p.265). One of the recommendations of the 67 conference of the Jordanian academy of Arabic language is that the signs on the facades of shops and businesses should be written in Arabic. There is no objection for writing the equivalent of these words in foreign languages, but the foreign words should be written in small fonts (recommendations and conferences, 2000, p.248). The writing of foreign words in Arabic fonts can be an insertion of these sounds in Arabic phonological system (Abu Eid, 2010, p.7).

Another effort of this Academy is the establishment of Arabic scientific library in the Jordanian universities which are full of translated books in an easy standard Arabic. On the other hand it encourages teachers to translate scientific text books. And it contains the interested college in Arabicization members from all sections of the college.

It is in cooperation with the coordinating committees put glossaries of scientific term, and to update these dictionaries periodically.

The committee of Arabization in cooperation with the coordinating committee in the universities holds an annual conference in Jordan Academy of Arabic, members of field committees are also involved in it, to discuss the difficulties faced by the localization process, and to develop appropriate recommendations and solutions.

#### V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Arabic language encounters many threatening from the colonialists and Arabs as well. It is the duty of every Arab, who is keen on continuing the survival of Arabic language and independent of Arab nations, to cooperate with other Arabs to Arabicize the scientific terms; to make Arabic language the language of science and civilization. Scientific terms, which have the cultural vocabulary in all fields of science, are the major source of dictionaries and flourishing Arabic language. Therefore, the Arabicization of different sciences is an urgent and a national need imposed by the various knowledge sources and it participates effectively in humanitarian civilization. The governments should support Arabic language Academies in the Arabicization movement financially and morally, they should be committed to implement their decisions.

The cooperation between scientific institutions is essential in the Arab world to make Arabic language is the official language of education. In addition, the relationships between the academic faculties in the Arab world should be strengthened to support the Arabicization movement in university education.

Working on completing the historical dictionary of Arabic vocabularies to explain their various denotations within the texts and through the ages till now, this will enable Arabic language to keep pace with global civilization.

Preparing a national and a comprehensive language in its sounds and vocabularies by establishing a linguistic dictionary that can cope with the time requirements, all the Arab countries should cooperate in building this dictionary and they should be committed to use it.

Attention should be paid for the verification of the Arabic manuscripts, the revival of the old Arabic sources in the field of scientific terms and the Arabicization of foreign journals. This is very essential issue that has been neglected by Arab linguists. The manuscripts are crucial for Arabic heritage whether they are scientific, linguistic or Islamic ones. Thus, the verification of them will enhance the confidence of Arabs in their heritage. In addition, Arab researchers should be aware them as this will develop their educational level and improve the scientific research.

What has been mentioned above based on adapting the policy of Arabicization; quick decisions should be made to implement Arabicization in education, as this will reduce the foreign risks that threaten Arabic language. The Arabicization of university courses is connected with a political stream that opposes Arabism, its heritage and its language. Moreover, it prevents the Arab nation from cultural independence, as people can understand things in their native language more than other languages (Khalifa, 1987, p.213).

The main focus of Arabization is the efficient professors, as they should be rehabilitated specially those who are teaching in universities and institutes. Therefore, the professor should be familiar with Arabic terms and teach them to their students. Besides, there is no reason that prevents professors from teaching in Arabic, as the majority of scientific terms have been arabicized. For example, the unified medical dictionary has been published recently; it is a great effort of the experts in the Arab world (Abu Shwareeb, 2000, p.891-897).

Professors should rehabilitated by holding workshops on the how to teach in Standard Arabic instead of code switching to colloquial dialects or to foreign languages. Dr. Abdulkareem Khaleefa (1980) conducted a study about the rehabilitation of university professors to teach in Arabic, he stated that there should be organized training programs for professors to teach in Arabic; he suggested that these training courses should have some fundamental issues in Arabic syntax and morphology and the dilemma of Arabicization, this can be through lecture, and seminars, and professors should use modern technologies in education. Furthermore, these courses should provide professors with special books in syntax, morphology and linguistic styles to guide them in education. Besides, professors should innovate new educational strategies that suit Arabic linguistic concepts such as communication and context (Alaanati, 2006, p. 27).

Specialized scientific centers should be established in all fields of knowledge in order to gather the prominent scientific works in the popular languages of the world and index them to help professors in enhancing their academic research and to encourage them to write in Arabic.

A main center for Arabicizing modern sciences and technologies should be established, and we should issue scientific encyclopedias and specialized journals in Arabic, and these issues should abide by the Academic Arabic (Khalifa, 1987, p. 201-202).

Arabicization leads Arabic to be easily used by the members of the scientific community. This usage allows Arabic language to produce viable survival Arabic terms. (Muhammad, 1989, p. 53).

With regard to the lack of terminologies and their varieties, there is a recommendation to use modern technology in the process of unifying scientific terminologies. These terminologies should be sorted and classified, the scientific terminology should be subject to one denotation by the use of available means in Arabic morphology which should be

taken into consideration when arabicizing foreign words. In addition, the process of Arabicization should be subject to certain standards such as the standards that negotiated in Rabat seminar in 1981. That is, there should be only one terminology for the scientific concept that carries one meaning in the same field. In addition, the various meanings of the same concept should be avoided; there should be approximation between the Arabic terminology and the foreign one in order to make the equivalent possible. Moreover, the specialists should cooperate in generating, deriving and structuring these terminologies. Also, the arabicized terminology should be subject to the grammar of Arabic language such as derivation and morphology (Hamdan, 2007, p.259).

Another significant suggestion for popularizing Arabic terminology is the use of computer in storing, classifying and retrieving these terms. Also, mass media should work on unifying scientific terminology and work on popularizing it all over the Arab world. Besides, there should be electronic dictionaries in all fields of knowledge on the internet, and these terminologies should be updated regularly. In addition, there should be a central bank for Arabic terminologies located in the union of Academies of Arabic language (Alsyyadi, 1982, pp.41-42).

To make Arabicization as an effective power that activates the creative memory of researchers, we should make use of other languages to spread Arabic Language and devote it for the purpose of scientific revival.

The issue of Arabicization does not mean closing ourselves, but to open up to the outside world with its sciences, thoughts, achievements and speaking dynamic languages such as English and French. Arab people should learn computer languages in order to make use of that in arabicizing terminologies needed in university education and preparing scientific research (Hafez, 2002, pp. 885-886). In addition, the Arabicization of computer and using Arabic letters will lead to the spread of Arabic language in all scientific fields in the world and this will push the wheel of development all over the Arab world.

One of the most important suggestions to encourage the movement of Arabicization is to have an Arabic congregational agreement about the necessity of Arabicization because of its historical importance. This protects Arabic language and the unity of Arab nations. Moreover, the notion of Arabicization and its goals should be defended in all fields of national Arabic life. Also, the notion of Arabicization should be supported politically, as there should a national and a comprehensive plan for Arabicization in all sectors. In other words, national plans for Arabicization should be prepared in order to show its significant role in the comprehensive development of the Arab nation. Again, there should a political determination and decision for Arabicization such as in Syria as it will impose Arabicization and make it successful (Ghazalah, 2005, p.8).

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