STUDY ON
ARABIC SYNTACTIC
ERRORS OF ADVANCED
MALAY LEARNERS

ABU EL BASHAR ALI ADAM

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PREFACE

In order to write composition effectively in Arabic, language learners, in general, and advanced Malay learners, in particular, must understand some factors behind their syntactic errors. This book is written to highlight some of these composition writing issues. Readers are expected to find a comprehensive theoretical discussion of error analysis and related topics.

Study on Arabic Syntactic Errors of Advanced Malay Learners is a book prepared to serve as a contribution to the teaching and learning of Arabic as a second language (L2) or foreign language (FL) to non-native learners.

The purpose behind this is to help learners, teachers, Arabic course designers and material writers in their effort to develop Arabic teaching and learning. The book investigates factors that stand as an obstacle in advanced Arabic writing.

The term Arabic syntactic errors in this study refer to errors emanating from the use of definite article, nominal and verbal sentence structures, gender, and number and preposition usage. These areas often represent the major causes of writing problems among Malay learners of Arabic. After reading this book potential readers will be able to pinpoint the areas of deficiencies to take the right steps towards solving them. The idea behind the preparation of this book comes from the author's long experience in teaching non-native learners of Arabic especially advanced Malay learners at University level where they embark on intensive reading and writing in Arabic to improve their proficiency level.

The origin of this book is a PhD thesis submitted to the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya (UM) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

No doubt the preparation of this book has gone through various tiring stages of turning a thesis into a book as well as the original experience of writing it as a thesis. The book helped me extensively in my classroom teaching interactions and research and I hope that readers will similarly find benefit from it as well.

The book contains a number of organizational features that help the reader in capturing its' essence. The first chapter provides an introductory foundation for the book. Each chapter deals with a central issue that paves the way to the next. Chapter two addresses the development of Arabic education in

Malaysia. Chapter three discusses the concept and development of error analysis where various issues related to the study of error analysis, contrastive analysis, interlanguage, among others are treated. Chapter four focuses on the structure of the Arabic sentence with examples and tables, while Chapter five provides the methodology for data collection. Chapter six gives a theoretical aspect of error explanation. In chapter seven the reader will find clear tables and description for the errors made by advanced Malay learners in their Arabic composition writing. Finally, the last two chapters present the discussion of findings and conclusion of the book.

In concluding this preface, an acknowledgement of those numerous people who helped in writing this book is due. In this respect, I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to all those who helped me to complete this research specially Professor Dr Asmah Hj Omar for her invaluable guidance and advice in the process of writing this research as a thesis, as well as to all those friends who read and commented on the draft of this book.

Last but not least, prayers are due to my late father and mother. May Allah rest their souls in peace. My warm thanks also due to my uncle as well as my wife and my two daughters for their support, patience and encouragement during the difficult process of writing the original part of this study.

N.B
- This book is originally part of my PhD thesis submitted for the award of Doctor of Philosophy degree at Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya (UM) Malaysia 1998.
- The original title is: Arabic syntactic errors: An investigation into the written composition of Malay learners.

List of Table

Table 1: List of Abbreviations

BHD	Berhad.
CA	Contrastive Analysis.
EA	Error Analysis.
FL	Foreign Language.
IL	Interlanguage.
IIUM	International Islamic University Malaysia.
IA	Islamic Academy.
LA	Language Acquisition.
L1	First Language.
L2	Second Language.
MT	Mother Tongue.
LAD	Language acquisition dive
MC	Matriculation Centre.
P.B.U.H	Peace Be Upon Him.
SLA	Second Language Acquisition.
SV	Subject Verb
TAFL	Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language.
TL	Target Language.
TESFL	Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language.
UM	University of Malaya.

Arabic Transliteration symbols

Consonants Arabic	Consonants Roman
ء	a
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	S
ش	Sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ
ع	*'a*
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
هـ	h
و	w
ي	y

List of Short Vowels

Arabic	English
ـَ	a
ـِ	i
ـُ	u

List of Long Vowels

Arabic	Roman
ا	Ā
ي	Ī
و	Ū

DIPHTHONG

Arabic	Roman
وَ	aw
يَ	ay
يّ	iyy

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The study of grammatical errors attracted a lot of research in the field of Arabic composition writing. In spite of the fact that the study of grammatical errors has been ongoing for many years, it seems that research on this issue is still vigorously pursued.

The writing skill in a First language (henceforth L1), Second language (Hereafter L2) or foreign language (Hereafter FL) is a multidimensional issue. Advanced Arabic as L2 or FL learners are required to master the elements of composition writing such as content, organization, style, grammar, vocabulary and mechanics.

This study is primarily intended to investigate the major causes, as well as the types of Arabic syntactic errors in the writing of Malaysian University learners of Arabic as a second language at the Matriculation Centre of the International Islamic University and the Islamic Academy of the University of Malaya.

The researcher's practical Classroom interaction and teaching of the subject gave him the chance to observe and record the occurrence of certain syntactic errors in the writing of native Malaysian University learners of Arabic as a second language.

Occasional articles and seminar papers written in Malaysia regarding the analysis of Arabic language errors showed this syntactic error trend (Abu-Khudairi, 1982, 1991, & Ibrahim (1992). The conduct of Error Analysis in the above-mentioned papers and articles was directed towards the treatment of more than one written aspect of the language that is, syntactic, spelling, lexical, and structural errors (Abu Khudairi, 1982, p.140). The analysis of errors of Malaysian learners of Arabic showed that that occurrence of syntactic errors is the highest in percentage (58.9%).

This study comes as a result of personal interest in the field of Arabic and as a contribution to the existing L2 or FL language research which tries to enlighten us on the factors behind the L2 or FL language acquisition paradigm.

The history of the codification of the Arabic language was one of the significant scientific attempts carried out by Muslim scholars. Their efforts in analyzing and synthesizing the Arabic language in particular and other branches of the Islamic literature led to the establishment of strong bases for the development of the Arabic language. A vast wealth of literature in Arabic has existed from the early pre-Islamic period to the present. In this diachronic as well as synchronic process of investigating the Arabic language, the study of linguistic errors in general and speech in particular have flourished.

This has been due to the expansion of Islam in various regions. In the wake of this Islamic spread, many cultures and languages have been brought together by the new Muslim converts.

The intermingling of these above-mentioned factors together with motivation to master the teaching of the new religion created some linguistic problems in the recitation of the Holy Quran.

A large amount of literature has been written on the subject of linguistic errors by scholars such as Al-Jahiz (1948, p.239) Anwar (1983) in his article **"Legitimate Fathers of Speech Errors"** providing a comprehensive analysis of some of the major classical materials dealing with not only Speech Errors, but other linguistic areas too, such as the structure of the Arabic sentence, errors in writing, reading, substitution and so on. (1983, pp.13-19).

The aim of studying the problem of errors in the early Islamic literature was mainly directed at preserving the structure of Arabic from change which will, among other things, affect the proper understanding of the Holy Quran.

In this connection a reference can be made to a sample of studies which encourages the use of L2/FL findings for the teaching of the Arabic language such as that of Markee (1983, p.231) in which he attempted to

present a model drawing principles from the teaching of English as L2 or FL for the teaching of Arabic as L2 or FL. He pointed out that Arabic played a dynamic role in the past and it is still playing a challenging, political, social, cultural and religious role that demands the creation of a new strategy for the designing of syllabi for the teaching of Arabic.

In another recent symposium on the development of the teaching of Arabic in Malaysia, al-Rajihi (1990) presented a paper commenting on the urgent need to start applying FL or L2 learning and teaching approaches to the teaching of Arabic grammar by benefiting from the enormous body of research available in this field. In yet another Conference Paper entitled "Arabic for Specific Purposes: Brief Remarks on the Teaching of Arabic as a Foreign Language", Mustafa reported that: "...Arabic as a foreign language has an Opportunity to capitalize on the mistakes and successes of the teaching of English as a foreign language and of developments in Applied Linguistics in general (1986,p. 19).

The present researcher's interest was strengthened by the above-mentioned studies. He decided to follow up on this important task of analyzing the learners' errors in a more comprehensive manner using modern language research findings to investigate the problem of syntactic errors in Arabic focusing particularly on the writing of native Malaysian learners of Arabic.

The study will concentrate on linguistic problems in the Arabic syntax. Within this area of syntactic errors the following will be the main focus of the present study.

1. The use of the Arabic definite article.

2. Subject-verb-agreement.

3. Verb- subject agreement,

4. Gender (masculine and feminine)

5. Number (singular, dual and plural)

6. Prepositions.

The focus of the study on syntactic errors will allow maximum attention to be directed to this linguistic phenomenon. Most of the problems regarding the mastering of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing seem to come from these syntactic errors.

Discussing the complex nature of composition writing and the factors involved in it, Kroll (1991,p.261) in conclusion to her article **"Teaching writing in the ESL context"** reported the following:

Producing a successful written text is a complex task which requires simultaneous control over a number of language systems as well as ability to factor in considerations of the ways the discourse must be shaped for a particular audience and a particular purpose (Kroll, 1991,p.261).

The classroom written work in Arabic of Malaysian learners tends to indicate certain features of syntactic errors such as the use of the definite article with proper nouns, the lack of agreement between subject and verb, and the wrong use of prepositions, to mention just a few.

The appearance of these errors are an indication of the learning process and competence that learners achieve in certain aspects of the target language (Richards 1971, p.173). The occurrence of such errors Interlingual and Intralingual) is found in many case studies in different languages. The method adopted in such studies may be used in similar situations to investigate the syntactic errors of native Malaysian learners of Arabic as FL or L2 language at Malaysian Universities.

The research findings in foreign languages with particular reference to Error Analysis offer valuable linguistic insights. Most of the results obtained from these studies can help advance classroom language learning and teaching by adopting their relevant outcomes, especially for the teaching of Arabic which is still not fully benefiting from these scientific research findings.

If we consider these syntactic errors within the context of Arabic with the purpose of assessing the learner's language skills we will encounter various errors. These can be attributed to many variables, such as the generalization of linguistic rules, ignorance of rule restriction, wrong hypothesis, and complexity of the target language.

The writings of the learners in general and the process involved in it can be analyzed to investigate these errors and their effect on the communication of the intended message. Such scientific treatment will enable language teachers and researchers to have proper access to the real language problems facing learners in the learning process.

In this study the researcher intends to systematically analyze the learner's syntactic errors in Arabic. The purpose is to arrive at possible types of mechanisms that learners use in the learning process. The context of classroom writing has many purposes as noted by many writers, among them Rivers (1968,p. 291) and Cohen (1990,p.103).

Many classroom activities demand the inclusion of writing skills. If we assess the Arabic textbooks used by these two institutions [that is, the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and the Islamic Academy section of the University of Malaya (UM)], we will find that free expository, narrative, and descriptive types of composition writing are the major exercises in these text books. The classroom language tasks given to the learners of Arabic in the form of composition writing are the essential preparation for this skill. Since Syntax has a crucial role to play in the overall execution of the language curriculum, its role is significant as part of the language acquisition process (Celca Murcia 1991; Freeman 1989; Rutherford, 1980).

The teacher's task of responding to the learners' written composition as reported by some writers for example (Rivers,1981,p. 306; & Boon, 1985;p.13) impose a heavy burden on the willing teacher.

The dichotomy of the value of error correction and on feedback of student's written work has not been resolved as evidenced in numerous FL/L2 empirical research findings. (Henderikson, 1981, p.4: Zamel, 1985,p. 79; Horner, 1988,p.213; Cohen,1990, p.109). But the positive role of error correction is still maintained, provided that is directed to fulfill certain conditions in the overall impropvement of the student's writing skill (Cohen,1990, p.110).

Syntactic errors constitute the biggest category of errors committed by these learners in their effort to master the target language as a higher-level skill. These errors tend to hinder proper understanding of the material by readers, especially by non- native speakers.

This study is undertaken within the framework of a non-contrastiv approach to Error Analysis. It intends to investigate the written Arabi syntactic errors in the composition performance analysis of a population o hundred and sixteen students who constitute Malaysian university leve learners of Arabic at the Matriculation Center (MC) of the Internationa Islamic University (IIUM) and the Islamic Academy (IA) of the Universit of Malaya (UM) in Malaysia respectively.

The Purpose of the Study

The study seeks to investigate Arabic syntactic errors of a sample o native Malaysian University level learners in their free composition writing in a formal classroom situation at the two institutions

This leads to the selection, identification, classification and descriptior of these errors and into finding out as far as possible why these syntactic errors are committed.

Against the above-stated background the following questions provide the framework for this study:

1. Why do advanced Malaysian University level learners of Arabic as a second language commit syntactic errors in their writing such as the use of the definite article with proper nouns?

2. What are the major types and causes of these Arabic syntactic errors?

3. What are the most frequent ones?

4. How can these errors be treated?

5. What are the implications of this study to the learning and teaching of Arabic as L2 in Malaysia?

The scope of this study is limited to the following: it deals only with the written performance of Malaysian University level learners of Arabic as L2 in formal classroom setting.

The study is limited to mixed Malaysian male and female adult learners of Arabic who enrolled at the Matriculation Centre of IIUM and UM Universities in Malaysia during the Academic Semester 1993/1994.

The study does not claim to be exhaustive so as to cover all aspects of syntactic errors. It tries, rather, to describe some of the Arabic syntactic errors to the degree that they show the peculiarities of the learners.

The scores of the students' errors in their overall writing ability should be viewed as only a reflection and not a definite measure its validity.

The statement on the explanations of the causes of the errors should be viewed only as an attempt and not as a final explanation of these causes.

Research findings in second and foreign language acquisition provide more valuable information in areas such as error identification and correction.

Teachers of the Arabic language can benefit from some of these important scientific findings concerning the treatment of their students' written as well as spoken errors. A continuous positive attitude of researchers toward the subject of student's errors in the process of foreign language learning has given rise to an increasing interest in the study of Error Analysis as reported by (Corder, 1967; Duskova, 1969; Richards, 1971; George, 1972; & James, 1994).

Most of these above-mentioned studies suggest that students' errors in second or foreign languages should be tolerated and taken as part of the normal sequence of linguistic development.

The aims of these studies were to find out the linguistic process employed by the learners in their learning endeavours. The written and the spoken linguistic corpus were compiled for investigating students' learning processes. Numerous error studies conducted of children's and adult's language acquisition was carried out such as that of Gorbet (1979).

The final suggested result of these studies showed that the majority of errors made by children and adults learning foreign or second languages resemble that of the children learning their mother tongue (Duly and Burt, 1975).

Nevertheless, the availability and application of research on errors in Arabic syntax in particular, and the investigation of students' errors in the domain of the Arabic language in general, is very rare in Malaysia. The shortage of such valuable empirical research in the field of Arabic language has been the characteristic of this discipline all over the Muslim world in the recent past. This phenomenon could be attributed to the existing gap between the Islamic and Western scholarship.

This situation seems to be difficult because the recognition and treatment of linguistic errors is a subject well known in the history of Arabic language (Anwar, 1983.)

This study will endeavour to make use of Richard's (1971) non-contrastive approach in the area of Error analysis for investigating Arabic, syntactic errors in written compositions collected from the subjects.

Chapter 2
ARABIC EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA

Historical background

This study intends to briefly examine the history of Arabic scholarship in Malaysia and the role of Islam in spreading it. It also intends to study its uses from the early Islamic history to the present, its role in documenting and preserving Islamic-Arabic religious texts through translation of valuable Islamic books into Bahasa Malaysia or Malay language, as well as its role as the language of the Islamic Judiciary.

The relationship between Islam and Arabic is a dynamic one in the sense that the latter is celebrated as the vehicle of the former the vehicle of the former's revelation. Chejne (1968,p.8) in indicating the role of Arabic in the context of Islam reported that:

> "The intimate relationship between Arabic and Islam is reflected in the attitudes and beliefs of the Arab-Muslim all over the centuries. The Interaction between language and religion led to Development of a number of traditions and the establishment of a linguistic dogma".

There are many Quranic verses attesting to this intimate relationship. For example, "we have sent it down as an Arabic Quran" (surah, 12: V.2). This inseparable linkage between Arabic and Islam stresses the significant role that Arabic, as the language of Islam, plays in Malaysia, among other Muslim communities, especially through its dominant use in spiritual activities and Islamic Education. In addition to these roles, Arabic also take the role of documenting a lot of historical materials relating to the history of the Islamisation process in South-East Asia in general and Malaysia in particular. It also deeply influenced the language and culture of the country in various aspects and levels.

Arabic as the language of Islam came with trade into the Archipelago. There are many historical arguments and considerable evidence regarding the advent of Islam to the region. Brill, stated that Islam came to the region at the end of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (1988,pp.3-22). On the other hand, other sources trace its coming to an earlier period than the above-mentioned one.

Since Arabic is the vehicle of the teaching of Islam wherever it goes, it would be correct if we were to hypothesize that the history of the development of Arabic scholarship extends back to the coming of Islam to the area.

The result of the early foundation of Islam through worship and pedagogy gave a firm ground for the establishment of traditional Quranic schools and other centers of Islamic learning such as those in Acheh, Sumatra, Malaka, Petani, among many others in the region which attracted scholars from far and wide. The use of Arabic became wide spread not only in Islamic worship but also in administration, education and scholarly activities.

The role of Arabic in Malaysia

The Arabic language in Malaysia today will be evaluated in the light of the early historical process of Islamization in the peninsula and the later national language policies adopted in the country. The development of Arabic Education in Malaysia, as indicated earlier in this book, goes back to the advent of Islam in the region. Islam attaches great importance to the acquisition of knowledge. There are many Quranic verses, traditions of the holy Prophet Mohammed, Peace Be Upon Him (P.B.U.H.), in which emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge is placed. As a result of this spiritual value accorded to knowledge by Islam, Muslims tend to teach knowledge in the context of Islam wherever they go. Arabic has a vital role to play in terms of understanding the religion.

For this reason, it is taught by Muslims as a means to enable them to experience the spiritual values of Islam. In this sense, the teaching of Arabic indicates the concept of Islamic education.

In this respect, a brief introduction to the role of Quranic system of pedagogy will throw some light on the spread of Arabic language in the context of this study.

The Quranic Education is considered to be one of the significant aspects of human training. It emphasizes the overall growth and development of Man spiritually as well as physically through the injunctions of the Holy Quran and the teachings of the holy Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H.).

Generally, the development of education in Islam starts from the informal level of the Masjid, *Kuttab* (elementary), private tutoring, literary salons, Madrasah and finally to a full-fledged mosque universities. One of the earliest Islamic universities representing this type of traditional system of education is Al-Azhar University in Egypt (Dodge,1974).

The teaching and learning of Arabic in Malaysia is influenced by the Institutions of learning in the Middle East in general and Al-Azhar University in particular.

The result of the early foundation of Islam in the Peninsula gave strong ground for the development of Traditional Quranic Education and other centres of literacy. These centers attracted many scholars from far and wide seeking knowledge. The Pondok, Madrasah, Masjid and Surau played a major role in the dissemination of literacy among the Malay community. The use of Arabic in the context of religion and pedagogy was popularized.

In the15th century, Melaka among many other places in the Malay region was one of the greatest centers of Islamic Education. In these widely-scattered centers many Arabic and Islamic books were translated into the Malay language using the Jawi script which is itself an adoption of the Arabic alphabet.

Reporting on these scholarly activities in the context of Arabic as a source language from which Islamic-related materials were translated into Malay, Ngah in his article, **"Some writing of the Traditional Malay Muslim scholars found in Malaysia"**, stressed that from 17th century onward Malay scholars played a significant role in rendering many Arabic textbooks into Malay. The knowledge of the Arabic language in such activities is a major influence in consolidating the teaching of Islam. In this regard, the contributions of

these scholars pertaining to the translation or adaptation of popular Islamic books and writing of instructional books in various branches of Islamic disciplines were tremendous. They were described by him as prolific authors (1980,p.11).

In terms of writing instructional books for teaching the Arabic language, various aspects of Arabic such as grammar, morphology, and etymology, were handled and dictionaries were compiled. (Kim, 1980,p.187; El-Muhammady, 1984,pp. 52-65).

Pondok is taken from the Arabic word (Funduq). The pondok in Malaysia is defined by El-Muhammady as a type of an early traditional system of Islamic education. He described it as:"a small wooden hut built around the Residence of an alim." (El-Muhammady, 1984).

The Pondok as a place where Islamic Education used to be imparted was popular in the northern states of Malaysia. (1984: 62). With regards to Madrasah, its introduction is relatively late in the Malay Peninsula. The early history of the Madrasah in the Islamic system of Education goes back to the Nizamiyyah Madrasah established in Baghdad in 1065 A.D. It is a type of an advanced system of Islamic Education. Unlike the Pondok system in which both Arabic and Malay were simultaneously used. Arabic as a medium of instruction widely dominated the Madrasah curricula.

The Surau in Malaysia, is a small hall for worship. It carries some literacy activities in the Malay Muslim community suitable to its level.

After giving the above-mentioned definitions it would be of interest to start briefly discussing the curriculum or syllabus of the Quranic schools in Malaysia where Arabic is a language of instruction. The Pondok curriculum or syllabus is determined by the individual teachers. A wide range of Islamic subjects is taught. They cover major classical works such as Arabic grammar, Fiqh Theology, Tafsir of the Holy Quran and Hadith, among others.

Pertaining to the Arabic grammar, popular books used in Institutions of learning in the Middle East such as the famous commentaries of the (Al-fiyyah) of Ibn Malik on Grammar, among others, are used in these Quranic schools.

The Madrasah syllabus is broader in academic scope. The subjects taught differ from one Madrasah to another. Arabic constitutes a major medium of instruction in the Madrasah. Its syllabus is more structured than the Pondok. Learning is graded into levels.

In addition to what is in the Pondok curriculum, the Madrasah introduced new subjects such as "Mutala'ah, Mahfuzat, Muhadathan and Insyah" (Rejab & Ismail, 1980,p.4)

With regard to the Surau and Masjid, in addition to these being places of Islamic worship, they specialize in conducting regular, after prayers - basic religious foundation to the young children as well as regular guidance to the adult Muslim community members

The significance of the Arabic language

The importance of the Arabic language cannot be over-emphasized. It is an indispensable tool for Muslims everywhere.

The cultivation of the Islamic sciences can only be achieved through knowledge of the Arabic language. Therefore, we find that there are many scholars who wrote about its significance in the lives of Muslims all over the world. The Holy Quran, the Hadith of the Prophet Mohammed (P. B.U.H.) as well as other authentic sources of Islam are all written in Arabic. There are many Quranic verses, traditions of the Holy Prophet and various wise sayings from Muslim scholars attesting to this fact.

Chejne, in his book "The Arabic language Its Role in History", gave lengthy quotations from many scholars to illustrate the importance of the status of Arabic among world languages; its role in the life of Muslims; and how they view it religiously as well as linguistically, how the native-speakers consider it as a means of correct self-expression and its prestige and cultural impact on Muslims.(1968,pp. 3-18).

In another detailed study Inayatullah (1942) in trying to answer the question "Why learn the Arabic language?" elaborated on various aspects that indicate the significance of Arabic not only to the Muslims but also to others. He discussed the relationship of Arabic to religion, Semitic, Romantic philologies etc. In the context of Islamic religion, he reported

that, "The word of God has been revealed in the Arabic language; and from one end of the Muslim world to the other, whatever may be the living speech of the people-whether it be Berber, Hausa, Pashto, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Javanese, or Malay-prayers are everywhere repeated five times a day in Arabic..."(1942,pp.4-5).

In another statement, Nasr (1978,p.6), provided a compact summary of the significance of Arabic attributing it to the following; the Holy Quran, Arabic being natively spoken by many people and used by a number of non-natives for various purposes; to the geographic position and number of the Arabic countries, Arabic-Islamic cultural influences, wealth of the Arab world and the effect of Arab migration. All the above-mentioned points were stated by him as factors relating to the importance of Arabic.

In terms of literature, Arabic is the richest of all the Semitic family of languages. Arabic is known to have originated from the South-west Semitic subfamily. Arabic is divided into two branches, the Northern and the Southern. Each of the subdivisions further ramified into other minor dialects that developed, shaped and spread with distinct regional features.

Pertaining to its linguistic classification, Arabic linguists classify it under various categories e.g Semitic, Afro-Asiatic and Hamito-semitic. The Arabic language shares many phonological, morphological, lexical, and syntactic traits with other Semitic languages such as Asserian, and Hebrew (Barber, 1964,pp. 73-75; Bakalla, 1984,p.4), among others.

The Quraishi Arabic was the major dialect of Mecca through which the Prophet Mohammed (P.B.U.H) received the Quranic revelation (Chejne,1968,pp.6-10; Bakalla, 1983,p.1)

The Spread and influence of Arabic on other languages

The spread of Islam to the various regions of the world since the 7th century had much influence on the native languages which came directly or indirectly in contact with it. Many languages in Asia, Africa, and Europe were influenced by Arabic at the levels of phonetics, grammar and vocabulary.

Numerous writers reported on the influence of Arabic on Islamic as well as non-Islamic languages on various spects. (Inayatullah,1942,p.52; Asmah,1975,pp.39-40; Beg,1983,p.1; kaye, 1983,p.173; Bakalla, 1984,pp.66-71; Jadwat, 1987,p.71.). The extent to which one language can assimilate with another, as reported by Sapir (1963, p.195), indicates the socio-cultural role that the particular language concerned will play in the development of the other. This factor is apparently seen in the influence of Arabic on Malay.

The prestige of the language of the Holy Quran has brought about tremendous influence not only on the Malay language but also on Malay culture. The Arabic script has been adopted in the form of the Jawi script and it represents an early form of Malay literacy. Arabic as reported by Asmah (1979,pp.62-65;1982,pp.123-129;1987,pp.4-11) also enriched Bahasa Malay on the phonemic, phonological word, sentence structural levels, grammatical translation of Arabic into Bahasa Malaysia etc.

Skinner: (undated,p.34) writing on the influence of Arabic on standard Malay made a similar statement. What is the status of Arabic in Malaysia? Is it a First, second, foreign language or just a religious language? How can criteria be established to judge its true status?

Before answering the above questions the present researcher will summarize some current definitions suggested in second language literature. Such data will enable us to view the factors under which these definitions emerged. We shall then see whether the factors selected to specify the status of languages in terms of second and foreign language are applicable to any other situation. Without any further considerations of such factors and situations where a particular language prevails, the situation demands that the definition of any second language (L2)/ foreign language (FL) be approached through strict consideration of various intrinsic psychological factors.

Many linguists who have discussed the phenomenon of first, second and foreign language admit that there is difficulty in drawing limits between them.

This difficulty arises, as stated by Lewis, not only from drawing a demarcation line but from the complexity of the second language as well (1974,p.33).

Definition

Before defining second language (L2) and foreign language (FL) Richards, Platt and Weber (1985) reported that the North American and British linguists differ in their definitions about the two concepts.

The American linguists use the two terms simultaneously. While their British counterpart draw distinctive features between them. In the British sense of definition, second language (L2) is defined as follows:"is a language which is not a native language in a country but which is widely used as medium of communication (e.g. in Education and Government) and which is usually used alongside another language or languages."(1985)

While Foreign Language (FL) is defined as: "a language which is taught as a school subject but which is not used as a medium of instructions in schools nor as a language of communication within a country (e.g. in government, Business, or industry." (1985:108).

According to Wilkins (1972,pp.150-159), the L2:".. is not the mother-tongue (L1) of any group within the country but that it does have some internal, social function. "And he defined FL as follows "...is one in which the target language is not the mother-tongue of any group within the country where it is being learned and has no internal communication function either." (1972:154).

In another situation, Lewis, in analyzing this second or foreign language phenomenon states that: "Ordinarily the clearest distinction between the Second and a foreign language is based on the Context of their acquisition. The former is normally acquired under the stress of close social or environmental requirements." (1974:32).

From the above-mentioned definitions we can realize that there are many problems emerging from an effort to draw distinctive features that will differentiate the status of second language vis-a-vis mother tongue. These problems come from considerations relating to linguistic

definitions that stress the functional aspects of the language in the society especially its use in the day to day communicative situations. But the cultural aspect, as it is defined in anthropology, the psycho-socio factors, attitude of society to the language prevalent and the motivational effect on the personality development of the individual all contribute to thecomplexity of defining the two concepts. In other words the social function and attitudes towards a language give different parameters for distinguishing second from foreign language. Other problems relate to their acquisition second or foreign language. The case of second or foreign language in this situation is just like that of bilingualism whereby the line distinguishing the first acquired language and the subsequent one is difficult to determine.

The context where second or foreign language is acquired or taught plays a significant role in determining the status of a language. The second language has a strong supporting social and physychological background that influences the personality, development and behavior of the child compared to foreign language.

In terms of learning, the attitudes relating to the two languages play different contextual roles. An acceptable attitude and motivation are necessary for both of them but the attitude towards the second language emanates from deeper positive psychological considerations pertaining to the culture of the second language which has more motivating strength than the foreign language does.

The foreign language derives its learning attitudes from cultural considerations that are not necessarily favored.

The significant influence of Arabic in Malaysia as it is shown in the previous part of this study as well as in the following subsequent portion will determine its status among the other languages used in the country.

After independence, the efforts for systematically teaching Arabic language in Malaysia culminated in the establishment of semi-formal departments at the Federal level to cater for an organized manner of teaching the Islamic disciplines along the western adopted syllabus. This administrative step allowed the status of the Islamic disciplines to be introduced to some Malaysian tertiary level of institutions of learning.

The development process of religious and secular education in Malaysia passed through various stages. In one aspect there was a wide gap in existence between the two systems. This was due to the different aims and objectives of socialisation envisaged by each of the systems.

With properly scheduled national programmes of Education, the gap reported by Hassan (1987) diminished. The system of scholarship which aimed at unifying the Islamic studies curricula as a common approach in 1956 reduced this gap. As a result of this positive direction, the isolated status of Arabic-Islamic schools was changed to follow the general government system of education (Rauf, undated, p. 24; Hassan, 1986, p. 51; Ismail R. & Rejab, I., 1980, pp. 2-3).

The various stages through which Islamic Education in Malaysia fermented, matured, and developed gave the status of Arabic the impetus to achieve recognition at University level. Commenting on the pedagogical status of Arabic and Islamic studies in Malaysia, Rauf stated that the need for training Madrasah graduates to allow them to participate in the economic development of the country opened chances for them to further their professional Academic careers in the local universities.

In 1955 the Malaysian University of Malaya and the Muslim college of Klang commenced such affiliated programs (Rauf, undated. 25).

The status of Arabic as seen in the history of Islamic pedagogy, Malay culture, post-independence language in Education policies, as well as its sociolinguistic classification reveal that it has a unique position. Malaysia is a multilingual country. Some of the languages spoken are regional while others are non-regional. The most developed language among them is Bahasa Malaysia or Malay. It is the national language of the country. The sociolinguistic status of the language given by Asmah, (1982, p.112) is as follows:

1. Malay or Bahasa Malaysia is categorized as an indigenous language.

2. Chinese with its multiple dialects, Arabic, and the languages of the sub-continent are immigrant languages.

3. English is accorded the position of the colonial language.

4. Portuguese and Bazaar Malay as creolised or pidginized languages.

With the above Classification, Rodgers (1982), applied the same method from Asmah by arguing that another category is needed to cater for languages such as (French, German, and Arabic). He cited Marimuthu and Gaudart's 1980 new categorization in which the three above-mentioned languages were called (newer foreign languages) stating that they belong to neither the immigrant status nor to the colonial one. But when elaborating on the status of the immigrant languages in the same article he mentioned that Arabic is one of them (Rogers, 1982: 48-51).

In this study Arabic is the focus of investigation and the intention is to determine its status among the other languages in Malaysia

Describing Arabic under Ferguson's formula of sociolinguistic profiling which characterizes language as major, minor and special, with additional manipulation of some relevant factors, Asmah, was able to generate more characteristics to qualify and make the status of Arabic distinguishable from that of the status of the minor languages.

Among the factors she mentioned were that Arabic is a non-native language, extensively used for religious purposes by Muslims, taught as a subject in school and used as a language of teaching and learning in Arabic schools; and it is studied at undergraduate and postgraduate level as mentioned earlier in this study.

Language teaching: An introduction

The methods of language teaching are a very vital element in the process of teaching and learning languages. The various variables relating to the nature of language, learning, objectives, syllabus, teachers, learners and approaches are significant in these processes. They lead to different methods of teaching.

The application of the above-mentioned variables to the teaching of Arabic as the language of the Holy Quran to non-native speakers needs technical ability to analyze and draw relevant aspects that will help achieve the intended goals.

It would be interesting to start this compact analysis by defining the concept of method as it is used in the teaching of L2 or FL. The method of teaching as defined by Anthony (cited in Richards and Rogers, 1986, p.15) is that:

> "method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach."

In analysing the above-mentioned definition Richards et al (1986, p.15) stated that:

> "...method is the level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about the particular skills to be taught, the contents to be taught, and the order in which the content will be presented. "

There are many methods of teaching languages. Each emerges as a result of the nature and manner by which language is perceived. The variations in the way languages were considered by linguists lead to the application of different methods as well as learning interactions to achieve the goals of teaching and learning (Richards, Platt & Weber, 1985,pp.15, 179).

In the wave of new trends in the field of communication, language teaching and learning has taken on a new dimension. Various methods have come into being such as the Grammar-translation method, direct method, the Audio-lingual method. Communicative language teaching, Total physical response, the Silent way, and Community language learning (Richards & Rogers, 1986). As regards the methods of teaching the Arabic language in Malaysia, the Grammar-translation method has been the most dominant.

Rivers (1968) reported that grammar translation method is a 19th century fundamental method for the teaching of Latin and Greek. In the course of its historical development it was applied to the teaching of modern languages such s German. The logical analysis of the rules of Latin was sought by the supporters of this method as a mental exercise for learners. The memorization of language rules and their application to translate exercises into the mother tongue (MT) were held as a

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