



'Linguistic Planning in the Light of the Contributions of Abdel Rahman Al-Hadj Saleh'

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Abstract:

The emergence of language planning coincided with the development of the social and economic sciences. Scholars in this field were influenced by these sciences, particularly the exploration of ways to develop and modernise developing countries economically, socially, educationally and linguistically. Thus, the role of language planning is to elevate and advance the Arabic language, given its Islamic significance which emphasises the crucial role of the Arabic language in nation-building and as a symbol of national and ethnic identity. Consequently, this field has attracted the attention of several linguists, including Abdel Rahman Hadj Salah, who has addressed this issue in his writings across various fields.

Keywords: Language planning, Arabic language, Abdel Rahman Hadj Salah, advancement, writings .

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Introduction:

One of the fundamental ways to safeguard cultural identity is to master one's language and have the ability to innovate scientifically through it. While a language derives its strength from its internal structures, it truly prospers through its speakers when they achieve notable accomplishments in cultural and intellectual advancement. A language attains dominance over others when its community reaches the highest levels of cultural development.

2. The current state of the Arabic language and the challenges it confronts:

The Arabic language has been criticised for its inability to respond to modern technological transformations. It now faces a rapidly developing urban environment and a new way of life characterised by accelerating demands, which is the most severe and challenging test it has ever faced. This situation is the result of pressures originating from three main sources.

2.1 Challenges arising from its speakers:

As a consequence of the loss of cultural sovereignty, Arabic speakers have fallen behind in various areas, including language development. Furthermore, the Arab world is experiencing a continuous and massive influx of foreign terms, expressions and designations on a daily basis.

2.2 Technological invasion

The Arabic language is not immune to the overwhelming influx of English and other languages. We cannot deny that it is affected by factors of both strength and weakness. Furthermore, its enemies have seized an opportune moment to attempt to eradicate it, claiming that it is unsuitable for modern civilisation. These enemies promote destructive ideas such as advocating the use of colloquial Arabic instead of Modern Standard Arabic in writing and teaching, using Latin characters to write Arabic, and suggesting that

modern sciences should be studied in the languages of their respective speakers, while reserving Arabic only for literature, poetry and daily life¹.

One reason for the Arabic language's inability to keep pace with global languages such as English² is the wide gap between Arab societies and scientific achievements. Additionally, reliance on outdated teaching frameworks has significantly impacted its stagnation. In the context of globalisation and the information revolution, Arabic is actively marginalised due to immense pressure resulting from the dominance of English in politics, economics, technology and information, leading to a crisis for the Arabic language — one that is exacerbated by the growing digital divide.

The reasons for this include:

- The scarcity of Arabic translations.
- The small number of Arab readers compared to the number of Arabic speakers.
- The rapid expansion of global knowledge, with new English terms appearing daily.
- A lack of consensus among Arabic language academies regarding the issuance of new vocabulary and terminology, which is often very late.
- The intellectual rigidity of certain linguistic theorists who prioritise form over substance.
- The lack of agreement on development mechanisms.
- Disparities between Arab countries and their linguistic academies³.

Moreover, there are various other problems, including:

- The negative impact of colloquial Arabic.
- The inadequate training of Arabic language teachers, which results in a reliance on unqualified instructors.
- A lack of scientific objectivity in educational curricula.
- The deficiency and backwardness of school libraries.
- Inadequate assessment methods.
- Linguistic duality.

Language is a social phenomenon influenced by the environment in which it develops. Hence, the relationship between language and society is as follows:

3. The relationship between the Arabic language and society:

Anyone seeking to understand human behaviour must prioritise the study of language, as it has always been — and will always be — one of the fundamental forces that have enabled humanity to progress beyond the animal realm. It is through language that human beings acquired the capacity for thought and achieved the levels of development we see today. This living phenomenon cannot be understood outside of the linguistic domain because everything in the world is intrinsically linked to language. As has been stated, 'Language emerged with the emergence of labour and developed alongside it. Without language, excellence in work would not be possible, art would not progress, life would not improve and civilisation would not exist⁴.

¹- Fatih Ziwan, 'The Arabic Language Between Yesterday and Today', Diwan Al Arab, 23 May 2006 [<http://www.diwanalarab.com>].

²- Nabil Ali, 'Arabic Culture and the Information Age', 2nd ed., Dar Al-Ma'arifah, 2001, p. 238.

³- Mansour Faraj, 'The Digital Divide in Arab Society and Its Impact on the Arabic Language', p. 94.

⁴- Al-Hadi Nahr, *Sociolinguistics among Arabs*, Dar Al-Amal for Publishing and Distribution, Irbid, Jordan, 2010, p. 46.

Language is one of the most essential tools for scientific, intellectual and social activity. As a social phenomenon that grows and evolves within society, language is influenced by numerous factors, the most significant of which include:

Purely social factors: These encompass a nation's level of civilisation, its social system, customs, traditions, beliefs, general culture and prevailing intellectual orientations.

The influence of other languages: Like all living languages, the Arabic language is affected by contact with other languages.

Literary factors: These relate to the creative output of language users, as well as the role played by educational institutions and linguistic academies in preserving and developing the language.

Natural factors: These include geographical and physiological factors.

Linguistic factors: These relate to the internal nature of the language itself, such as its phonological system and grammatical rules. Certain structural elements may facilitate or hinder linguistic development⁵. The existence of any linguistic phenomenon depends on two interrelated essential conditions: the organic capacities of human beings and the intellectual content of linguistic symbols, which can only emerge through life within human society.

Language is an inherent human attribute that accompanies individuals as speakers — namely, as thinkers — who articulate symbols bearing intellectual meaning. It also accompanies them in their social interactions as a means of communicating with others. Language arises automatically from interaction within social life, independent of individual will, making it a collective societal phenomenon. Consequently, the linguistic and social characteristics that define human beings are inseparable from the linguistic phenomenon itself⁶.

Despite its extensive lexical resources for expressing concepts, demonstrating its ingenuity, capacity for development, and ability to encompass diverse sciences and arts, the Arabic language nevertheless encounters difficulties and obstacles in its practical use within society. The most prominent of these challenges are manifested in:

6. Linguistic duality

Linguistic duality is a complex issue in Arab society. It encompasses two levels of language: Modern Standard Arabic (Fus'ha) and colloquial Arabic (Ammiyya). Consequently, this situation poses a significant threat to Modern Standard Arabic, as no Arab community today conducts its interactions in this language; rather, colloquial language is more prevalent. Linguistic duality manifests in several concepts, including 'language reaching a strong degree of linguistic conflict, with fluctuations rising and falling'⁷.

One could argue that linguistic duality refers to the dual usage of colloquial and Modern Standard Arabic, blending the two. Colloquial language is used in everyday life, while Modern Standard Arabic is used in formal situations.

As a result, linguistic duality has led to several problems.

7. Problems of linguistic duality

Linguistic duality has resulted from the conflict between Modern Standard Arabic and colloquial dialects. On the one hand, it stems from individuals' backgrounds, which has led to the undermining of the Arabic

⁵- Ali Abdul Wahid Al-Wafi, *Language and Society*, 2nd edition, Dar Ihya Al-Kutub, Cairo, Egypt, 1951, pp. 8–9.

⁶- Ahmed bin Nauman, *Arabicisation Between Principle and Application – In Algeria and the Arab World*, National Company for Publishing and Distribution, Algeria, 1981, p. 67.

⁷- Hayat Khalifati, 'Hybridisation in Algeria: The Case of Tizi Ouzou', an article in the proceedings of the symposium 'The Arabic Language Between Hybridisation and Refinement: Causes and Solutions', published by the Higher Council for the Arabic Language and printed by Dar Al-Khaldounia for Printing and Publishing, p. 86.

language in its own domain. This is based on the notion that Modern Standard Arabic is incapable of keeping up with contemporary developments and current events. Some assert that the Arabic language is in decline in the Arab world, and there may be some truth to this claim. Some people believe that the ability to speak a foreign language is the only way to advance socially and obtain prestigious positions in various fields. Consequently, they abandon the Arabic language, sending their children to foreign schools and communicating with them in foreign languages. Often, their command of English or French is limited and subpar, as if they were Shakespeare, Charlotte Brontë, Voltaire or Marie Antoinette — what a spectacle! However, this remains merely a whim or a deviation, not extending beyond a privileged layer of society: a wealthy, educated elite or a pampered group of individuals⁸.

Linguistic duality is one of the most prominent problems to have affected Arab society. The exacerbation of this phenomenon has prompted civil societies and governments to prioritise it, paying careful attention to linguistic planning in order to mitigate its effects. Linguistic planning is a branch of social linguistics which studies the relationship between language and society, and how they influence each other. It focuses on solving linguistic problems at individual and institutional levels by proposing clear, structured and well-defined scientific plans to address linguistic issues, considering practical solutions within a specified timeframe based on all relevant linguistic studies and scientific research. This is typically overseen by a council at the national level⁹.

Addressing linguistic duality requires various solutions, which is not an easy task, especially when the aim is to implement comprehensive linguistic practices. One of the solutions aimed at curbing this problem is linguistic planning, which is considered one of the essential pillars working to uplift and preserve Modern Standard Arabic.

So, what is linguistic planning?

7. The concept of linguistic planning

Linguistic planning can be defined in various ways. It is often described as 'systematic procedures aimed at selecting a language to be promoted or developed, and in some cases, refining its orthographic, grammatical, lexical and semantic aspects to encourage agreed uses and functions of that language'¹⁰. It also denotes 'the organised effort aimed at finding solutions to language problems, particularly at the national level'¹¹.

Haugen informs us that Weinreich was the first to use the term 'linguistic planning' in a seminar at Columbia University in 1957. However, it was Haugen himself who introduced the term into the literature of social linguistics¹².

Khawla Taleb Al-Ibrahimi defines linguistic planning as follows:

'Linguistic planning is confronting the dominant foreign language and attempting to establish the Arabic language; it asserts the right to Arab and Islamic existence, as well as demanding education in Arabic. It involves affirming national personal identity while liberating oneself from the influence of the Arabisation movement and the pressure of overwhelming foreign culture. It seeks to affirm Arab identity with the

⁸- Ali Darwish, 'Foreign Language and Arabic Sounds: The Phenomenon of Intellectual and Linguistic Orientalism in Modern Arabic', website www.elaph.com, accessed on 13/12/2009 at 10:45 am.

⁹- See Abdul Majid Aissani, 'Language Planning and the Foundations of Choosing Vocabulary for Arabic Language Study Plans', published on the Qasdi Merbah University, Ouargla, Algeria website: <https://revues.univ-ouargla.dz>.

¹⁰- Robert L. Cooper, 'Language Planning and Social Change', translated by Khalifa Abu Bakr Al-Aswad, General Culture Council, Tripoli, 2006, p. 69.

¹¹- See the same reference, p. 69. See the same reference, p. 68.

¹²- Khawla Taleb Al-Ibrahimi, 'Algerians and the Language Issue: Elements for a Sociolinguistic Approach to Algerian Society', translated by Muhammad Yahaytin, 1st ed., Dar Al-Hikma, 2007, p. 187.

ambition of contributing to the revival of Arab culture by penetrating its inherent civilisational dimension and equipping oneself to engage in the ongoing confrontation between civilisations worldwide.¹³

The definitions of linguistic planning that have been presented converge on the idea that it is an authoritative governmental term associated with political decisions, which studies the relationship between language and society with the aim of preserving it. The focus has been on addressing the linguistic problems arising from the erasure of Arabic linguistic and national identity in some colonised countries.

8. Linguistic Planning in the Works of Abdel Rahman Al-Haj Saleh:

The emergence of linguistic planning coincided with advancements in the social and economic sciences. This influenced the work of scholars in these disciplines, particularly those focusing on methods for the economic, social, educational and linguistic development of developing countries. For example, Turkey originally wrote the Turkish language in Arabic script, but in 1927 Mustafa Kemal Atatürk decided to Latinize it¹⁴. A linguistic council was established to carry out this task, working alongside the Ministry of Information, Turkish schools and universities to compile dictionaries, generate vocabulary and develop terminology, and disseminate the results.

Linguistic planning therefore plays a role in advancing and elevating the Arabic language, as it is referenced in Islam as having a primary role in nation-building and as a symbol of national and cultural identity. Consequently, the field of linguistic planning has attracted the attention of numerous linguists, including Abdel Rahman Al-Haj Saleh. In his works, he addresses the topic of linguistic planning through the following areas:

- The deficiencies that the Arabic language suffers from when facing the challenges of the modern era.
- The Arabisation movement¹⁵.

1. The deficiencies that the Arabic language suffers from in facing modern challenges

Abdel Rahman Al-Haj Saleh began by identifying the deficiencies that hinder the Arabic language from confronting the challenges of modernity from a terminological perspective. This includes the following points:

- The randomness of efforts.
- Scattered and fragmented efforts in terminology work.
- Lack of comprehensiveness, arising from not referring to original Arabic sources¹⁶.

Thus, it can be concluded that:

1-1 Arbitrariness of efforts

According to him, the reason lies in the lack of scientific grounding, which inevitably leads to relative results. 'The absence of a set of precise scientific criteria — most importantly, observation and analysis metrics — may lead the researcher to exhibit this kind of deficient behaviour and make judgements

¹³- Louis Jean Calvi, *The Language Wars and Language Policies*, translated by Dr Hassan Hamza, 1st edition, Arab Organisation for Translation and Distribution, Centre for Arab Unity Studies, Beirut, Lebanon, 2008, pp. 261–262.

¹⁴- 'Arabicisation, in its modern sense, means making Arabic the language of science, life and administration, which signifies the dominance of Arab thought, Arab values and the Arabic language in societal life. It involves recovering the civilisational identity and Arab personality of the Arab peoples of origin and upbringing, returning them to their former glory.' Waleed Ahmed Al-Anati and Issa Barhouma, 'The Arabic Language and the Questions of Modernity', Dar Al-Shorouk for Publishing and Distribution, 1st edition, Jordan, 2007, p. 173.

¹⁵- Abdul Rahman Al-Haj Saleh, *Researches and Studies in Arabic Linguistics*, Vol. 2, p. 126.

¹⁶- The same source, p. 126.

without referring to reality.¹⁷ Therefore, one must rely on scientific foundations to arrive at precise scientific conclusions.

Language is both a system and a usage, and this cannot be ignored. 'A linguist who ignores this is like a craftsman who provides people with tools without considering their genuine interests and needs, or what suits them among those tools and matches their nature — what they deem useful and prefer.'¹⁸ Thus, when we talk about terminological research, we are not only referring to the scientific criteria that terminology creators depend on, such as 'derivation', 'extracting terms from roots', and 'methods of expansion in language and metaphor'¹⁹. Neglecting the pragmatic side of these terms will inevitably lead to their extinction and lack of widespread use among the practising group in society, which poses a significant challenge to the language in the context of scientific and technological developments.

One of the challenges facing the Arabic language is choosing appropriate terms for specific designations. Researchers must adhere to scientific standards when selecting terms. 'Selecting a term from a variety of options, whether derived from roots or commonly known words, to denote a new designation, cannot be done optimally unless the researcher has all the aforementioned data; otherwise, their work would be mere random guessing.'²⁰ Therefore, adhering to scientific criteria when selecting suitable terms for newly coined designations helps to mitigate this issue. The second challenge is represented by:

1-2 Semi-professional work

One deficiency that Al-Haj Saleh pointed out in terminological work aimed at meeting the demands of the modern era is the reliance on individual efforts in creating terms and the lack of unity and coordination between these efforts to produce scientific work that addresses existing challenges. 'Research in Arabic terminology is still semi-professional. By this, we mean that it has not moved beyond the stage of individual, manual research. It is still conducted at an individual level, even when those involved belong to a scientific body, as their work is not truly collective.'²¹ There is a clear call for the unification of efforts and encouragement of collaboration in scientific research. 'In a comprehensive, single endeavour, researchers from different specialisations come together, each contributing to the benefit of others. None can work in isolation or be self-sufficient.'²² The outcomes produced by organised groups are generally superior to those of individual efforts. Thus, scientific research in the Arab world is currently characterised by individualism, and a lack of coordination and solidarity among members of the same body.

Consequently, many Arab researchers have recognised the importance of collaborative work in enhancing the pace of scientific research. The first project they initiated was the linguistic corpus project, first at the Maghrebi level and then at the Arab world level. This project was completed, with the Moroccan corpus finalised in 1972 and endorsed by the ministers of the four countries: Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and Mauritania in 1975. It was also incorporated into school textbooks in these countries²³.

This project clearly aims to promote the use of the Arabic language in education. Its goals include expanding the practical usage of the language by establishing a set of Modern Standard Arabic vocabulary and expressions that students need in primary and secondary education. This enables them to express ordinary uses and meanings that arise in daily communication, as well as articulating the fundamental

¹⁷- Abdul Rahman Al-Haj Saleh, 'The Arabic Language and the Challenges of Modernity in Linguistic Research and Language Development', in International Symposium on the Status of Arabic Among Global Languages, published by the Higher Council for the Arabic Language, 2001, pp. 26–27.

¹⁸- The same source, p. 26.

¹⁹- Abdul Rahman Al-Haj Saleh, 'Researches and Studies in Arabic Linguistics', vol. 2, pp. 129–130.

²⁰- The same source, p. 130.

²¹- The same source, p. 130.

²²- The same source, p. 131.

²³- Abdul Rahman Al-Haj Saleh, 'The Arabic Language and the Challenges of Modernity in Linguistic Research and Language Development', p. 33.

cultural and scientific concepts they must learn during this educational stage²⁴. This project has provided learners with a linguistic repertoire they can rely on for their communication needs.

1.3 Lack of comprehensiveness

One of the challenges facing the Arabic language is reliance on prominent and prevalent dictionaries²⁵s. It is rare to find someone who is concerned with texts that have come down to us as foundational books in literature and science. There is also a common belief that what is found in these dictionaries matches usage perfectly.

Al-Haj Saleh pointed out the significant role that linguistic academies play in serving the Arabic language, particularly with regard to terminology, and praised the efforts of their members. Among the projects established to protect the Arabic language, in light of the internal and external pressures it faces, is Arabisation. Hence, we can discuss:

2. Arabisation movement

Abdel Rahman Al-Haj Saleh focused on the following points regarding the Arabisation movement:

- Steps to implement the principle of Arabisation in Algeria's education system.
- The status of the Arabic language on the eve of independence.
- Phases of the Arabisation movement.

Thus, regarding:

2.1 Steps to implement the principle of Arabisation in the Algerian education system:

Discussing the steps to implement the principle of Arabisation requires first addressing the status of the Arabic language at the time of independence. At that time, it was:

A. The status of the Arabic language on the eve of independence

Our Arabic language experienced alienation among its own people due to oppressive colonialism, which rendered it a foreign language for 132 years. A policy of 'complete ignorance'²⁶ was implemented for the children of this nation, and we continue to suffer the consequences to this day. This situation posed significant difficulties and challenges for the Arabic language in its homeland and among its people. French was the official language adopted in state administrations and institutions, as it faced no competition from any other language in administration, education, and economic and political management²⁷.

The French language policy had a profound impact on Algerian individuals, primarily because it relied on a strategy of ignorance aimed at erasing the linguistic aspect of Algerian identity. The French government prohibited the establishment of schools teaching the Arabic language. Consequently, civil society emerged in the form of the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars, which planned to defend and preserve the Arabic language in the face of French colonial policies designed to eliminate it. 'In this context, the Association of Muslim Scholars established free schools under the guise of religion and succeeded in incorporating all the literary and scientific subjects taught in French schools.²⁸' Civil society faced repression due to the pressures of colonialism resulting from its revivalist efforts dedicated to the Arabic language. The French authorities worked to close every avenue that could promote the Arabic language.

²⁴ The same source, p. 33.

²⁵ Abdul Rahman Al-Haj Saleh, 'Researches and Studies in Arabic Linguistics', Vol. 1, p. 387.

²⁶ The same source, p. 387.

²⁷ The same source, p. 388.

²⁸ The same source, p. 388.

Nevertheless, the association achieved impressive results, training thousands of Algerians, particularly after opening Ibn Badis Secondary School in Constantine²⁹.

French colonialism caused widespread devastation affecting all aspects of Algerian society. As language is one of its fundamental elements, the linguistic community bore its share of this destruction. Consequently, after gaining independence, the Algerian people strove to free themselves from the constraints of the French language and regain their linguistic sovereignty by replacing French with Arabic. This marked the beginning of the Arabisation movement.

B. The status of the Arabic language on the eve of independence

Our Arabic language was alienated from its own people due to oppressive colonialism, which made it seem foreign for 132 years. Alongside this, there was a policy of complete ignorance towards the children of this nation, the effects of which we continue to suffer from to this day. This situation posed significant difficulties and challenges for the Arabic language among its own people and in its own land. The state administrations and institutions adopted a linguistic policy based on French, as it was 'the only official language in administration, education, and economic and political management, facing no competition from any other language'³⁰.

This profoundly impacted the Algerian individual, primarily due to the French government's strategy of ignorance aimed at erasing the Algerian identity, particularly in terms of language. The French government prohibited the establishment of schools to teach Arabic³¹. Against this backdrop, civil society played a key role, with the Association of Algerian Muslim Scholars planning to defend and preserve the Arabic language against French colonial policies that sought to eliminate it³². 'In this context, the Association of Muslim Scholars established free schools in the name of religion, successfully incorporating all the literary and scientific subjects taught in French schools.'³³ Civil society faced repression due to colonial pressure as part of revivalist efforts dedicated to the Arabic language. The French authorities worked to close every avenue that could promote the Arabic language. Nevertheless, the association achieved impressive results, training thousands of Algerians, particularly after opening Ibn Badis Secondary School in Constantine.

French colonialism caused widespread devastation, affecting all aspects of Algerian society. As language is a fundamental component of society, the linguistic community also suffered as a result. Consequently, after gaining independence, the Algerian people strove to free themselves from the constraints of the French language and regain their linguistic sovereignty by replacing French with Arabic. This marked the beginning of the Arabisation movement.

B. The Beginning of the Arabisation Movement

The education sector was one of the first areas to be affected by the Arabisation movement, which impacted all three levels of education. The Ministry of National Education adopted strategies for its implementation, deciding to 'Arabise' subjects related to Arab identity, such as history, philosophy and descriptive geography, at primary and secondary level. It also aimed to increase the number of hours allocated to teaching Arabic in these schools. In 1965, it was also decided that these subjects would be Arabised in faculties of arts. This was one of the most significant political decisions adopted by Algeria. Comprehensive Arabisation in the first and second levels of primary education forms the basis on which learners develop linguistic proficiency. Conversely, Algeria decided to send student delegations to Arab countries to receive an education in Arabic. One consequence of these political decisions was 'the emergence of a group of graduates whose native language is Arabic'.

²⁹ The same source, p. 388.

³⁰ Abdul Rahman Al-Haj Saleh, 'Researches and Studies in Arabic Linguistics', Vol. 1, p. 389.

³¹ The same source, p. 389.

³² The same source, p. 389.

³³ The same source, p. 390.

The education system underwent comprehensive Arabisation in 1970, affecting all its foundations and requirements. Higher education underwent "a fundamental reform, leaving behind all the systems inherited from France and restructuring them". One consequence of this reform was the establishment of scientific departments taught in Arabic, including mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology, in response to the need for Arabic-speaking teachers in these subjects at secondary level.

Additionally, the Arabisation movement within the education sector during the 1970s resulted in the formation of two distinct groups: one imbued with Islamic culture and the other influenced by French culture. This created a kind of clash within society and put pressure on officials. In an attempt to reduce the intensity of this division, officials required all students studying French to attend a specific number of Arabic lessons, totalling 180 hours during the first three years of their bachelor's degree or its equivalent in engineering, medicine and other fields³⁴. Consequently, this phase resulted in the establishment of the basic school, where Arabic was adopted as the primary language.

C. The Arabisation Movement from 1980 to the Present

Since 1980, Algeria has witnessed significant political decisions within the Arabisation movement. These decisions have been aimed at the comprehensive Arabisation of all humanities disciplines across various specialisations. This included the Arabisation of law at bachelor's level, as well as economics, political science, psychology, education, sociology and other social sciences, despite the lack of qualified personnel in all areas³⁵. Consequently, this phase has resulted in various challenges.

A. A group of professors who have not experienced Arabisation due to their age. Thus, "we are currently trying to find an appropriate solution to this complex human problem"³⁶.

B. The scarcity of Arabic references in this regard, despite "huge efforts"³⁷ having been made to overcome this obstacle. Official entities have resorted to mitigating this issue by 'importing a substantial number of books and scientific resources from the East'³⁸, in addition to the work produced by professors in Arabic.

C. The issue of linguistic duality is a serious problem that is not limited to individuals, but encompasses 'two groups of citizens whose advanced cultures rely on one language, either French or Arabic exclusively'³⁹.

In light of this, Abdel Rahman Al-Haj Saleh founded the Arabic Linguistic Corpus Project in an attempt to preserve the Arabic language. Therefore:

The Arabic Linguistic Corpus Project: A Strategy for Planning and Preserving the Arabic Language

The Arabic Linguistic Corpus Project is an open academic achievement that guides many stakeholders concerned with the state and status of the Arabic language. The Arabic Linguistic Corpus is based on computational programming and modern Khalilian theory. It aims to revive traditional linguistic thought and adapt or develop it to meet the demands of a modern vision, particularly in the context of linguistic computing.

Many Arab countries have adopted the Arabic Linguistic Corpus Project, which is based in Algeria and aims to digitise all Arabic texts from the era of inscriptions onwards, including poetry and novels. The project includes words and their spellings, how they have evolved, and other related details, as well as the meanings of Arabic words in French and English. This information is made available online to anyone,

³⁴- The same source, p. 391.

³⁵- The same source, p. 391.

³⁶- The same source, p. 391.

³⁷- The same source, p. 391.

³⁸- Abdul Rahman Al-Haj Saleh, 'The Arabic Dictionary and the Actual Use of the Arabic Language', Algerian Academy of the Arabic Language Journal, No. 1, May 2005, pp. 19–20.

³⁹- Abdul Rahman Al-Haj Saleh, 'The Arabic Linguistic Resource and Its Role in the Spread and Standardisation of Terminology', Algerian Academy of the Arabic Language Journal, No. 18, December 2013, p. 9.

anywhere. Thus, the Arabic Linguistic Corpus Project is one of the largest fields in which computers are employed to serve the Arabic language.

3.1 Features and characteristics of the Arabic linguistic corpus project

Efforts devoted to serving the Arabic language have been characterised by fragmentation and a lack of coordination. This makes preserving the language difficult and achieving unity in scientific terminology more challenging. Therefore, Al-Haj Saleh frequently discussed the features and characteristics that distinguish the computerised Arabic corpus as an automated database. Some of the most important characteristics include:

1. Comprehensiveness of the computerised Arabic corpus.
2. Integration of texts arranged according to historical periods and fields of knowledge.
3. Representation of the actual usage of the Arabic language, both ancient and modern.
4. Quick response to questions, saving researchers time and effort⁴⁰.

The computerised Arabic corpus has played a role in enhancing the use of the Arabic language based on the features that distinguish it.

3.2 The Role of the Arabic Linguistic Corpus Project in Planning and Preserving the Arabic Language

Many efforts have been made to preserve the Arabic language. However, our current era stands out due to its serious, precise and scientific attempts to protect and enhance the usage of the Arabic language, given that this is an age of technological advancement and digitisation. Computers play an important role in preserving and retrieving information as and when needed. While many researchers have engaged with computational linguistics⁴¹, Abdel Rahman Al-Haj Saleh emphasised another necessity: the success of the Arabic linguistic corpus depends on computers. He emphasised the need to digitise Arab and Islamic heritage, and highlighted the importance of the internet: 'The benefits that internet users reap daily are well known to them... Nevertheless, the majority of Arab intellectuals, including many high-ranking officials, are unaware of this because they do not benefit from this great cultural tool, nor do they comprehend its benefits or potential returns, firstly for the Arabic language and secondly for the scientific development of Arab citizens.

Therefore, Saleh emphasised the importance of paying attention to computers and the internet due to their significance in efforts to elevate the Arabic language and enhance its usage. This becomes even clearer in the role they play in the following attempts:

1. The Computerised Arabic Corpus and Arabic and Islamic Linguistic Heritage.
2. The Computerised Arabic Corpus and Electronic Dictionaries.

Interest in Arabic words and terms emerged with the introduction of the first Arabic dictionary, *Kitab al-Ayn*, by Khalil Ahmad al-Farahidi. Scientific, technological and technical advancements have led to significant progress in the field of informatics, which has in turn led to the development of electronic dictionaries⁴².

The importance of computers in producing Arabic dictionaries is evident in the following aspects:

- Automatic recognition of letters and words.

⁴⁰- Abdul Majid Ben Hamadou, 'The Arab Electronic Blogs: A Survey Study Towards a Historical Dictionary of the Arabic Language', Goodreads, p. 267.

⁴¹- See Ahmed Habes, 'Computing the Arabic Dictionary: A Scientific and Cultural Necessity' (An Analytical View through the Arab Resource Project), *Algerian Academy of the Arabic Language Journal*, No. 4, 2006, p. 67.

⁴²- Bashir Ebrire, 'The Arabic Linguistic Resource: A Scientific Civilisation Project', *Algerian Academy of the Arabic Language Journal*, No. 4, 2006, p. 37.

- Storing lexical material in the desired order programmed into the computer.
- Retrieving lexical material easily and simply when needed.
- Storing entire texts, which enables us to understand the context in which a term or scientific concept appears and determine its actual usage.

The goals set for the computerised Arabic corpus include various dictionaries that benefit from it, such as:

- The Historical Dictionary.
- Children's Dictionary.
- The Electronic Dictionary of Technical Terms and Its Role in Unifying Scientific Terminology.
- The Comprehensive Electronic Dictionary of Arabic Words⁴³.

3.3 The importance of the computerised Arabic linguistic corpus project

The computerised Arabic linguistic corpus project is significant in preserving the Arabic language and enhancing its usage. It aims to collect, organise, coordinate and store linguistic data comprehensively. The project is based on the concept of actual language usage, including terms that are in use but have not become widespread, or that have been left aside for a long time, as found in both ancient and modern dictionaries or in lists of terminology.

Thus, we can elaborate on its importance at two levels:

3.3.1 Attention of the Computerised Arabic Corpus to Language in its Scientific, Social, Political and Economic Contexts

Language cannot be studied in isolation from political, social, scientific and educational aspects. It is the medium through which researchers explore various fields, including mathematics and technical sciences. It is incorrect to claim that the Arabic Corpus only focuses on 'the Arabic language and its literature without considering the humanities, social sciences, basic sciences and technology', because language is the means by which researchers in all fields of knowledge communicate. Language is not the exclusive domain of linguists and literary scholars, but is needed by everyone.

3.3.2 Linguistic knowledge from the perspective of the Arabic linguistic corpus

The Computerised Arabic Linguistic Corpus Project plays a vital role in preserving the Arabic language and enhancing its usage to keep pace with other global languages. The most significant aspects of this role include:

- preserving the Arabic language by digitising both heritage and modern Arabic texts;
- The variety of dictionaries that will inevitably result from this effort.
- Unifying scientific and technical terminology in the Arabic language.

Conclusion

After studying Abdel Rahman Al-Haj Saleh's work on linguistic planning, we came to the following conclusions:

Abdel Rahman Al-Haj Saleh identified:

1. Problems of the Arabic language in the terminological framework

This stems from a lack of reliance on precise scientific methodology based on observation and analysis, leading to inaccurate and subjective results. The selection of terms for specific and precise designations is one of the most significant challenges facing the Arabic language.

⁴³- 43. Abdul Rahman Al-Haj Saleh, 'Researches and Studies in Arabic Linguistics', Vol. 1, p. 272.

2. Other challenges he noted include:

- The ongoing struggle between Arabic and French is an inevitable consequence of the fierce challenges Arabic faced from French during the colonial period in Algeria, when the two languages competed with each other in various fields, particularly administrative ones. This was exacerbated by a policy of ignorance aimed at erasing Algerian identity, including its language.

Arabisation is one of the solutions proposed by Abdel Rahman Al-Haj Saleh to preserve the Arabic language and restore its status.

- The Arabic Linguistic Corpus Project is an initiative established by Abdel Rahman Al-Haj Saleh to preserve the Arabic language and is considered a linguistic planning strategy.

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