



# 100 Questions About the Arabic Language



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Translated by: Dr. Haytham Talal Bakri

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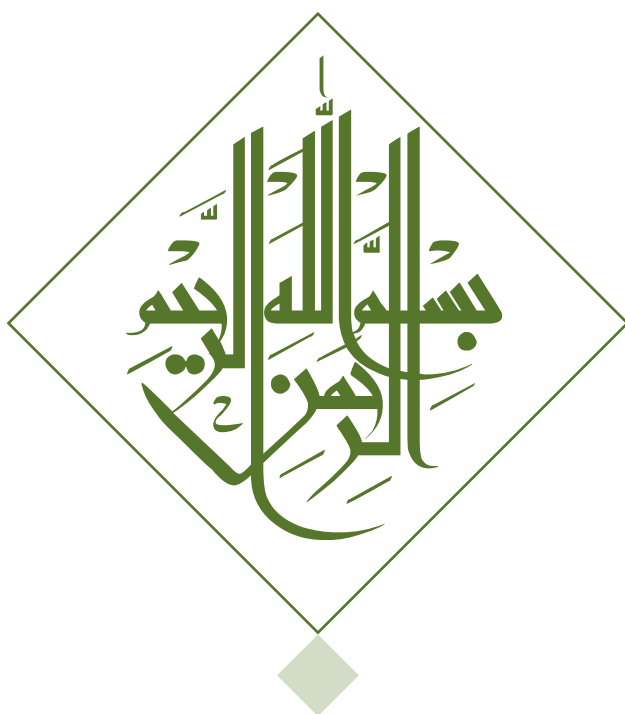
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## The Academy's Message

In the heart of the Arab world, under the auspices of Saudi Arabia, King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language was inaugurated. This initiative aligns harmoniously with the noble objectives of Saudi Vision 2030, a vision that seeks to disseminate, elevate, and nurture the profound depths of the Arabic language.

The Academy, a beacon of knowledge and tradition, has committed itself to a myriad of tasks that serve to promote the language of our ancestors. With a focus on the preservation of the phonetics and script, the enhancement of its status, the exploration of its roots, the study of its grammar and vocabulary, and the facilitation of its acquisition, King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language is relentlessly active across multiple fronts. This grand endeavor has its sights set on ensuring that the Arabic language continues to evolve and thrive in contemporary society, both within the Kingdom and beyond its borders.

As we strive to make significant strides in the elevation of the Arabic language, the Academy has placed a special emphasis on tracks for both Arabic speakers and non-Arabic speakers. We are committed to ensuring that these tracks are given due attention in our diverse activities. These activities span the spectrum of the academy's four core sectors: educational programs, cultural programs, planning and linguistic policy, and linguistic computing. In our multifaceted work, we also take great care to cater to those interested in the Arabic language from non-Arabic speaking backgrounds. To support their curiosity and engagement,



we have published several guides, such as “A Guide for Arabic Teachers for Non-Arabic Speakers,” “A Guide for Arabic Learners for Non-Arabic Speakers,” and “A Guide to Arabic Language Culture for Non-Arabic Speakers. “Our latest contribution, the book titled “100 Questions About the Arabic Language,” aims to demystify the language for English speakers. We have addressed the most common queries about the Arabic language and its culture, providing clear and concise answers devoid of unnecessary complexity. Our team has worked tirelessly, holding numerous discussion sessions, distributing questionnaires, consulting experts, and engaging with Arabic learners from diverse backgrounds.

In closing this foreword, the King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language wishes to express profound gratitude to His Highness Prince Badr bin Abdullah bin Farhan Al Saud, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Academy and Minister of Culture, for his unwavering support and care. We are equally thankful to the Board of Trustees for their support and the dedicated team that brought this book to fruition. As you turn the pages, we hope you find this book not only informative but also inspiring, encouraging you to delve deeper into the rich tapestry of the Arabic language.

May God bestow success upon our endeavors.

Secretary General of the Academy  
**Dr. Abdullah Saleh Al-Washmi**



## 1. To which language family does the Arabic language belong?

There is agreement among researchers that the Arabic language belongs to the Semitic language group, although there are differences in the details. This group belongs to the larger Afro-Asiatic family, and today scholars refer to the Aramaic, Phoenician, Hebrew, Arabic, Yemeni, and Assyrian-Babylonian peoples as Semitic.

The Semitic languages are divided in their origins into Eastern and Western branches, and the Western branch is further divided into two sub-branches: Northern and Southern. The northern sub-branch includes Canaanite, Aramaic, and Hebrew, with Hebrew being one of the most well-known dialects of Canaanite. The main southern sub-branch includes the two great Arabic languages: Southern Arabic and Northern Arabic. The Southern Arabic language is known by different names, such as Old Yemeni and Qahtani. The remaining Arabic language dialects that we know today are part of the Northern Arabic dialect.



## 2. What was the first modern dictionary in the Arabic language?

The first modern dictionary in the Arabic language is “Muhit al-Muhit” by Butrus al-Bustani, which was completed in 1869 CE (1286 AH). Al-Bustani used “al-Muhit” by al-Firuzabadi as the basis for his dictionary<sup>(1)</sup> and added vocabulary from other dictionaries. Additionally, he included numerous newly coined words, Christian and colloquial terms, as well as scientific and philosophical terms. Notably, he omitted names of places, people, tribes, and other specific entities. As for the “Munjid Dictionary” by Louis Ma'louf, it was published in 1908 CE. Ma'louf condensed “Muhit al-Muhit” and followed its system, but his dictionary was distinguished by its good presentation and ease of use, along with additions in its appendices. It became a school dictionary similar to its counterparts in other languages. However, it is criticized for the errors that occurred in dealing with some topics related to the Islamic religion, but nevertheless this dictionary has gained wide popularity.

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(1) See Question 92: Who are some of the most prominent non-Arab scholars who have contributed to the Arabic language in the past and present?



### 3. What is the best dictionary for a non-native Arabic learner?

One of the best dictionaries for learners is a user-friendly dictionary with entries arranged according to their pronunciation. One of the best dictionaries designed primarily for non-native Arabic learners is “Al-Taleb Al-Siyaghi Dictionary” by Mahmoud Ismail Sieny and Haymour Youssef, which is limited to three thousand common words in Arabic and includes tables of Arabic verb conjugations and other helpful resources. Another useful dictionary is “Al-Mujam Al-Arabi Bayna Yadayk” by Abdul Rahman Al-Fawzan, Mohammed AbdulKhaliq, and Al-Tahir Hussein, which was prepared to accompany the “Al Arabiya Bayn Yadaik” (Arabic Between Your Hands) instructional series.

For non-Arabic speakers, some useful dictionaries include “Al-Mujam Al-Siyaghi lil Ta’birat Al-Istilahiyya” by Mahmoud Ismail Sieny and others, which is the first Arabic dictionary dedicated to idiomatic expressions, as well as “Mujam Al-Amthal Al-Arabiyya” by Dr. Mahmoud Sieny and others, which is also aimed at students.

Other dictionaries that are helpful for Arabic learners include “Al-Raid wa Ra’ed Al-Tulab” by Jibran Masoud, and “Al-Mujam Al-Arabi Al-Muyassar” by Ahmed Zaki Badawi and Saddiqa Youssef Mahmoud, both of which are easy to use. However, some dictionaries, such as “Al-Mujam Al-Asasi” by a group of experts in the field, are more difficult for non-native Arabic speakers/students to use because the entries are arranged according to word roots.

#### 4. When did the Arabs first become acquainted with writing?

The Arabs became acquainted with writing in the third century AD. The origin of Arabic writing is attributed by some to the “Khatt al-Musnad al-Hamiri” script, while others attribute it to the “Nabataean script.” This is confirmed by the existence of some shared phenomena between the Arabic and Nabataean scripts, such as the presence of some letters of Nabataean origin that are not connected to what comes after them, namely: Alef, Dal, Thal, Waw, Zay, and Ra (أ، د، ذ، و، ز، ر). Additionally, ancient Arabic inscriptions had undotted letters, consistent with Nabataean writing. These inscriptions also feature the use of “ta” with the “ta marbuta” (ة) and “ha” (هـ) to represent the feminine gender, as is the case in Nabataean writing, although most Arabs pronounce it as “ha” when pausing, as evidenced by later Arabic writings<sup>(1)</sup>.

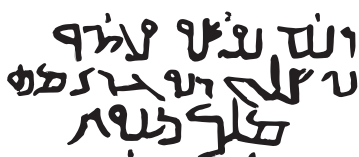
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(1) See Question 27: How many letters are there in the Arabic Language?

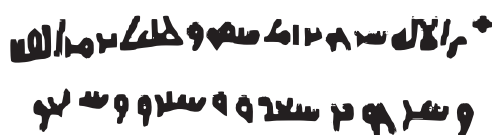


## 5. What is the oldest text written in Arabic?

The oldest remaining inscription written in Arabic is the “Um al-Jimal Inscription,” which was dated by the French Orientalist Melchior de Vogue to the year 270 CE. This shows that Arab kings used the Nabatean script, indicating that this writing was widespread before 270 CE. Another later inscription (Zabed Inscription) was found in northern Syria, written in three languages: Greek, Syriac, and Arabic <sup>(1)</sup>. It dates back to the year 511 CE and is close to the advent of Islam. Its script is similar to Islamic Kufic calligraphy, although some of its words are unreadable <sup>(2)</sup>.



Um al-Jimal Inscription



Zabed Inscription

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(1) See Question 1: To which language family does the Arabic language belong?

(2) See Question 4: When did the Arabs first become acquainted with writing?



## 6. When did the history of printed Arabic script begin?

Printing in the Arab world began with the “Maronite Press,” which was established in northern Lebanon in 1610 CE and renewed eight years later. It continued to print ecclesiastical books and a few Arabic books until near the end of the 18th century CE. In 1720 CE, the monk Abdallah Zakher established the “Monastery of St. John Press” and crafted the press’s Arabic typeface himself.

As for Egypt, the first printing press entered in 1798 CE with Napoleon’s campaign, but he took it back after his defeat at the hands of the Egyptians. In 1821 CE, the “Bulaq Press” or “Public Press” was established. It began as a printing press for Muhammad Ali’s army, printing on military science, engineering, weapons manufacturing, medicine, veterinary medicine, and more. This press was like a vast portal through which the Arabs entered the modern Renaissance.



## 7. Who was the first to develop grammar in the Arabic language?

Most researchers tend to say that the first to begin developing Arabic grammar was Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali (69 AH). In his work, he focused on establishing principles in the grammatical categories of the “subject” and “object,” and perhaps added the “exclamation form” due to the error made by his daughter, who said, “Ma Ajmalu [Ajmala] Alsama'a!” (How beautiful is the sky!) with the end of the word “Ajmal” being pronounced with a “dhamma/u/ sound” (Ajmalu) instead of a “fat'ha /a/ sound” (Ajmala). He corrected her by explaining that if she wanted to express an exclamation, she should pronounce the “lam” in “Ajmal” with a “fat'ha” to become “Ajmala.” He is also credited with adding dots to Arabic letters <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 27: What is the number of letters in the Arabic language?

## 8. What degree of knowledge should I have of Arab-Islamic culture to succeed in dealing with native speakers?

To succeed in dealing with native Arabic speakers, it is crucial to have knowledge of both general Arab and Islamic values and customs, as well as the customs specific to the particular Arab community where you live or visit. It is important to know the appropriate greetings, avoid criticizing beliefs, and be cautious in your interactions with women. In some Arab societies, it is not customary to initiate a greeting or handshake with a woman unless she is a close relative like an aunt, mother, or sister. Additionally, it is important to show respect for elders, observe dining and drinking etiquette, understand cultural dress codes, and demonstrate appreciation for teachers. It is also advisable to be cautious when discussing opinions that are highly valued by Arabs and Muslims <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 42: What are the most common real-world language situations that I should learn about before visiting an Arabic-speaking country?



## **9. What are the cultural models that I can present to my Arabic language learners, or can I ensure that they are included in the textbook?**

There are many cultural models that can be included in Arabic language learning textbooks for non-native speakers, such as examples of famous Arabic foods, national clothing and fashion, the currencies and flags of Arab countries, postage stamps, the Holy Quran, important books (such as the history of Arabs and Muslims, famous stories, etc.), pictures of famous figures, sacred and archaeological sites (such as Makkah, Medina, Arab capitals, Islamic architecture, the pyramids, etc.), maps showing the locations of the Arab and Islamic worlds, samples of famous Arabic newspapers or pictures of them, and the most important institutions and organizations in the Arab world (such as the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, etc.) <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 42: What are the most common real-world language situations that I should learn about before visiting an Arabic-speaking country?



## 10. What are the expressions and phrases that are recommended to be said when initiating a conversation in Arabic?

The most common phrases that can be said when starting a conversation in Arabic are <sup>(1)</sup>:

Translation	Transliteration	Arabic
Peace be upon you	"as-salamu alaykum"	السلام عليكم
And upon you be peace	"wa alaykum as-salam"	وعليكم السلام
Good morning	"sabah al-khair"	صباح الخير
Morning of light (response to "Good Morning")	"sabah al-noor"	صباح النور
Good evening	"masaa al-khair"	مساء الخير
Evening of light (response to "Good Evening")	"masaa al-noor"	مساء النور
Hello and welcome	"ahlan wa sahan"	أهلاً وسهلاً
Welcome	"marhabaan"	مرحباً
Hello	"ya marhabaan"	يا مرحباً
Pleased to meet you	"saeed bimuqaabalatik"	سعيد بمقابلتك
We welcome you	"nurahhibu bik"	نرحب بك
Please come here	"tafaddal huna"	تفضل هنا
Please come from here	"tafaddal min huna"	تفضل من هنا
What is your name?	"ma ismuk?"	ما اسمك؟
My name is...	"ismi..."	اسمي...

(1) See questions 95,98, 97, 96, 99, 100: What are the most common phrases when I want to talk about/in...?

Translation	Transliteration	Arabic
Where are you from?	"min ayna ant?"	مِنْ أَيْنَ أَنْتَ؟
What is your nationality?	"ma jinsiyyatuk?"	مَا جَنْسِيَّتُكَ؟
I am from...	"ana min..."	أَنَا مِنْ...
Where do you live?	"ayna taskun?"	أَيْنَ تَسْكُنُ؟
I live in...	"askunu fi..."	أَسْكُنُ فِي...
What is your job/ profession?	"ma wa ʿiʿfatuk/ mihnaturuk?"	مَا وَظِيفَتُكَ / مِهْنَتُكَ؟
How many members are in your family?	"kam 'adad afraad 'usratik?"	كَمْ عَدَد أَفْرَاد أُسْرَتِكَ؟
Thank you very much	"shukran jazeelan"	شُكْرًا جَزِيلًا
I introduce you to the family members: father, mother, grandparent...etc.	"u'arifuka bi afraad al-usra: al-ab, al-um, al-jadd...etc."	أَعْرِفُكَ بِأَفْرَاد الْأُسْرَةِ: الْأَب الْأُمُّ الْجَدُّ...إِلْخ
What is this? (masculine)	"ma hadha?"	مَا هَذَا؟
What is this? (feminine)	"ma hadhih?"	مَا هَذِهِ؟
I am pleased to meet you	"ana saeed bimuqaabalatik"	أَنَا سَعِيد بِمُقَابَلَتِكَ
I am honored to know you	"tasharraftu bi ma'rifatik"	تَشَرَّفْتُ بِمَعْرِفَتِكَ
Directions: east, west, north, south, front, behind, right, left	"Al-jihat: sharq, gharb, shamal, janub, amam, khalf, yamin, yasar"	الْجِهَاتُ: شَرْق، غَرْب، شَمَال، جَنْوِب، أَمَام، خَلْف، يَمِين، يَسَار

Translation	Transliteration	Arabic
Pronouns: he, she, I, we, you (masculine), you (feminine), you (dual), you (plural masculine), you (plural feminine)	" Al-dama'ir: huwa, hiya, ana, nahnu, anta, anti, antuma, antum, antun"	الضمائر: هو، هي، أنا، نحن، أنت، أنتم، أنتن
come	"ta'al"	تعال
sit	"ijlis"	اجلس
Please (allowing to do something)	"tafaddal"	تفضل
take	"khudh"	خذ



## 11. Why should a teacher of Arabic for non-native speakers also teach its culture?

- Teaching the culture of a second language helps learners effectively communicate with native speakers of the language they wish to learn and fosters a positive attitude towards it.
- Teaching the culture of a second language makes the learning process enjoyable and engaging, as learners are introduced to new cultural patterns that differ from their original culture. This leads to increased interest and motivation for learners to become familiar with the new cultural patterns in the target language.
- Every language has its own cultural identity, and when some words are translated into another language, they may lose their unique cultural meaning.
- Teaching the culture of a language helps reduce ethnocentrism and racism among learners by enabling them to accept other cultures and allowing learners to adapt and interact with people from different backgrounds despite the differences in their cultures and language.
- Teaching a second language in the context of its culture gives the language meaning when studied, as it helps learners meet their needs and desires in a manner that is accepted by the native social environment of the language <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 8: What degree of knowledge should I have of Arab-Islamic culture to succeed in dealing with native speakers?



## 12. What are the methods and procedures that a teacher can use according to the communicative approach?

In this approach, the teacher presents the language through communicative situations that a person might encounter in various social situations. The teacher should focus on activities that create authentic, real-life situations for using the language, such as asking questions, reading instructions, watching a TV show, etc. This is based on the learners' communicative needs, linguistic, cultural and social backgrounds. The teacher also designs an interactive and collaborative learning environment that fosters communication and negotiation among learners, as well as between learners and the teacher, and learners and the available textbooks or learning materials. This is achieved through the utilization of diverse audiovisual aids, with the aim of creating an immersive and authentic language learning experience. In addition, he or she should choose vocabulary and linguistic structures that are closely related to communicative situations <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 29: What are the criticisms of the communicative approach?



### **13. Which countries in the world speak Arabic as a first or second official language?**

Arabic is an official language in all countries of the Arab world, in addition to Chad, Eritrea, and Occupied Palestine. It is also taught formally or informally in Islamic countries and other Islamic communities around the world. Arabic is one of the six official languages of the United Nations. Here is a list of the most prominent countries where Arabic is spoken: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Kingdom of Bahrain, Sultanate of Oman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Somalia, Eritrea, Chad, Republic of Tunisia, People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Union of the Comoros, Republic of Djibouti, Republic of Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Republic of Iraq, Palestine and its occupied territories, Lebanese Republic, State of Libya, Arab Republic of Egypt, Kingdom of Morocco, Mauritania, and Republic of Yemen <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 18: What non-Arab countries have Arabic as an official language?



## **14. Is it necessary for me to understand every word I hear or read? And is it necessary for me to know the corresponding translation in my language for every word in Arabic?**

No, it is not necessary. In fact, being overly concerned with understanding every word and finding an equivalent for each word can be distressing and may contribute to the belief that the language is difficult and cannot be learned <sup>(1)</sup>. Many studies suggest that a certain degree of tolerance for ambiguity in understanding vocabulary is a factor in success and progress <sup>(2)</sup>.

Regarding translation, it is not necessary to search for the corresponding translation of every word because languages differ in their vocabulary based on cultural differences. There are words in Arabic that represent certain cultural concepts and meanings that have no equivalent in other languages. Translation is an attempt to explain meaning, not the meaning in all its cultural nuances that may be unique to the target language, and learners should be aware of these nuances to avoid cultural mistakes when using the language.

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(1) See Question 83: Is it true that learning Arabic is more challenging compared to learning other languages?

(2) See Question 94: What are the factors that contribute to success in speaking Arabic?



## 15. What is the rank of the Arabic language among the languages of the world?

There is disagreement about the ranking of languages in the world, but there is near consensus on the top ten languages. The reason for this is that there is no globally agreed-upon official statistic on the number of speakers of the world's languages. There are a large number of sources, which differ in the number of speakers and the ranking of languages. However, generally, the Arabic language comes in fourth or fifth place among the ten most used languages in the world <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 21: What is the number of Arabic speakers in the world?



## **16. Is it possible to learn Arabic on my own without a teacher?**

Self-learning is a fundamental pillar for success in language acquisition, and rarely does a language learner excel if they rely solely on what they learn in the language class. Therefore, learning Arabic without a teacher is entirely possible, provided that the learner is committed to dedicating a specific amount of time to learning the language consistently, utilizes educational materials designed for self-study, balances all language skills during their learning process, uses what they have learned in a real communicative language environment, and attempts to receive feedback on their language level, trying to identify and correct their mistakes. It can be said that the more advanced the language learner's level is, the more capable they are of self-learning.



## 17. What languages have influenced Arabic?

Despite the interaction of Arabs with other peoples, the rules and structure of the Arabic language have remained unchanged. However, like all other languages, Arabic has borrowed many words from other languages. In the early Islamic ages, Arabic was influenced in terms of vocabulary by languages such as Persian, Syriac, and Greek. In modern times, Arabic has borrowed from well-known European languages, particularly English and French.

### Here are some examples of borrowed words:

- **From Latin:** البلاط (Al-Blat - "tiles"), الدينار (Al-Dinar - "dinar"), البطريرك (Al-Batriq - "patriarch").
- **From Hebrew,** especially related to the names of prophets, such as: إسماعيل Isma'il - "Ishmael"), إسحاق Ishaq - "Isaac"), إسرائيل (Isra'il - "Israel").
- **From Amharic (Ethiopian):** الحواري (Al-Hawari - "disciple"), المنبر (Al-Minbar - "pulpit"), المحراب (Al-Mihrab - "mihrab"), المصحف (Al-Mus'haf - "manuscript"), المشكاة (Al-Mishkah - "niche").
- **From Hindi:** فوطة (Futa - "towel"), ساج (Saj - "teak"), الرُط (Al-Zutt - "caste"), البهتة (Al-Bahtah - "a kind of food, which is rice cooked with milk and ghee").

## 18. What non-Arab countries have Arabic as an official language?

There are several non-Arab countries that have adopted Arabic as an official language, whether as a primary or secondary official language. These are: Eritrea, Pakistan, Chad, the Comoros, Djibouti, Somalia, Gambia, Senegal, and Mali. Additionally, Arabic is also an official language in the Arab territories occupied by Israel. This is in addition to the widespread use of Arabic in many regions of some countries, such as Nigeria, Guinea, Ethiopia, and Niger <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 13: Which countries in the world speak Arabic as a primary or secondary official language?



## 19. What international organizations use Arabic as an official language?

Arabic is an official language in all countries of the Arab world, which consists of 22 countries (10 countries in Africa and 12 countries in Asia), and in all international institutions affiliated with these countries. Additionally, it is an official language in Chad, Eritrea, Senegal, Mali, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories <sup>(1)</sup>.

**Arabic is also one of the six official languages of the United Nations and its affiliated international organizations, such as:**

- World Health Organization (WHO),
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO),
- International Labour Organization (ILO),
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF),
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

**In addition to these, Arabic is also an official language in other organizations such as:**

- The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC),
- The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO),
- The African Union,
- The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)... among others <sup>(2)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 13: Which countries in the world speak Arabic as a primary or secondary official language?

(2) See Question 18: What the non-Arab countries have Arabic as an official language?



## 20. Is Arabic recognized in all international organizations?

Arabic is one of the six official languages in the United Nations, as well as in UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), WHO (World Health Organization), FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), ILO (International Labour Organization), ISESCO (Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), ALECSO (Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization), and also in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Muslim World League, the Islamic Development Bank, the African Union, the World Tourism Organization, the World Meteorological Organization, the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States, and the World Assembly of Muslim Youth <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 19: What international organizations use Arabic as an official language?



## **21. What is the number of Arabic speakers in the world?**

The number of Arabic speakers in the Arab world today exceeds 500 million people not including Muslim speakers, some of whom are proficient in speaking and reading Arabic. Their exact number is difficult to determine, but they constitute a significant number.

Arabic unquestionably ranks first in terms of the number of speakers in countries bordering the Mediterranean from the south and the countries located on the Red Sea. The global ranking of the Arabic language among the world's languages fluctuates between fourth and fifth place.



## 22. How do we learn Arabic?

**To learn Arabic, we should follow the following guidelines:**

- Determine the pathway through which you will learn, either the regular pathway by enrolling in Arabic language teaching programs at centers that specialize in teaching Arabic or the self-learning pathway where you rely on your personal effort; where you utilize the internet, interact with native speakers, ask them about what you do not know, and try to continuously communicate using what you have learned.
- Rely on modern, trustworthy educational series that are well-designed to suit you and meet your linguistic needs <sup>(1)</sup>.
- Allocate time for learning the language in such a way that it is not occupied with anything else, so that you can continue the learning process in a good and sequential manner.

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(1) See question 69: Where can I find resources for teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages?



## 23. What are the easiest ways to learn Arabic?

**To learn Arabic easily, it is recommended to engage in daily communicative practices, such as:**

- Listening frequently to Arabic from multiple sources (radio, television, the internet/online websites, and YouTube).
- Interacting as much as possible with native Arabic speakers.
- Listening to daily conversations and trying to memorize them.
- Try reading the headlines in Arabic newspapers every day and looking up their meanings.
- Try to learn at least two new words every day.
- Initially, focus on communicative fluency, not linguistic accuracy.
- Write the new words you've learned on a board that hangs on the wall, so you see them frequently throughout the day. Then erase them after memorizing them and write newer words on the same board.
- Start by learning the aspects of the language that are easy for you, and leave the difficult aspects for later stages <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See question 69: Where can I find resources for teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages?

## 24. What is the timeframe needed for mastering Arabic?

It is impossible to specify a timeframe that suits every learner's ability to master Arabic or any other language. The time you need to master Arabic depends on several factors, such as your current level in Arabic, your linguistic and cultural background, how similar or different it is from Arabic, your purpose for learning Arabic, the time and effort you devote and expend daily in learning Arabic, the place where you learn, the method and curriculum you use, as well as your motivation... etc. However, it can be said that the more time and effort you put into learning Arabic, the faster you will learn and master the language. Remember, language learning is a continuous process.



## 25. How many sounds are there in the Arabic language?

The Arabic language has a total of 34 basic sounds. There are 28 consonant sounds, starting with “hamza” (ء) and ending with “yaa” (ي). In addition to these, there are three short vowel sounds, “fatha” (/a:/ as in “bat”), “damma” (/u:/ as in “boot”), and “kasra” (/i:/ as in “beat”), as well as three long vowel sounds, “alif mad” (/a:/ as in “father”), “ya’ mad” (/i:/ as in “see”), and “waw mad” (/u:/ as in “moon”). These are the basic sounds of the Arabic language. If any of these sounds are replaced with another basic sound, the meaning of the word changes. Therefore, it is essential for learners to practice the correct pronunciation of these sounds. Otherwise, they may not be understood when speaking with native speakers, and if understood, they might not be socially accepted.

## 26. In Arabic, are there sounds that are pronounced but not written?

**Yes, in Arabic, there are sounds that are pronounced but not written.**

**For example:**

- The “long alif” sound after “haa” in demonstrative pronouns like “hatha” (هَذَا), pronounced (\*هاذا) “haathaa” for ‘this’, “hathihi” (هَذِهِ), pronounced (\*هاذه) “haathihi” for ‘this’ in feminine), and “ha’ulaa’i” (هَؤُلَاءِ), pronounced (\*هاؤلاء) “haa’ulaa’i” for ‘these’. The long “aa” sound is pronounced but not represented in the written form.
- The “alif” sound in the word “lakin” (لَكِنْ), which is pronounced as (\*لاكِنْ) “laakin” (meaning ‘but’). The first “a” sound is pronounced but not written.
- The word “ar-Rahman” (الرَّحْمَنُ), pronounced as (\*الرحمان) “ar-Rahmaan” (meaning ‘The Compassionate’). The second “a” sound is pronounced but not written.
- The word “kathalika” (كَذَلِكَ), pronounced as (\*كذالك) “kathaalika” (meaning ‘thus, so’). The second “a” sound is pronounced but not written.
- The word “hakatha” (هَكَذَا), pronounced as (\*هاكذا) “haakatha” (meaning ‘like this, so’). The first “a” sound is pronounced but not written.

Also, some phonetic features like the shadda (a diacritical mark used to indicate gemination, or doubling of a consonant) and tanween (a diacritical mark used to indicate nunation, or ending a word with the sound /n/) are pronounced but not explicitly represented in the written form <sup>(1)</sup>.

(1) See Question 28: Are there letters in the Arabic language that are written but not pronounced?



## 27. What is the number of letters in the Arabic language?

The Arabic language has 29 letters. In order of articulation, they are: hamza (ء), alif (ا), haa' (هـ), 'ain (ع), haa (ح), ghain (غ), khaa' (خ), qaaf (ق), kaaf (ك), dhad (ض), jeem (ج), seen (س), yaa' (ي), laam (ل), raa' (ر), noon (ن), taa' (ط), daal (د), taa (ت), saad (ص), zay (ز), seen (س), dhaa' (ظ), dhaal (ذ), thaa' (ث), faa' (ف), baa' (ب), meem (م), and waw (و). Their alphabetical order is as follows: (alif/hamza (ء/ا), baa' (ب), taa' (ت), thaa' (ث), jeem (ج), haa' (ح), khaa' (خ), daal (د), thaal (ذ), raa' (ر), zay (ز), seen (س), sheen (ش), saad (ص), dhaad (ض), taa' (ط), dhaa' (ظ), 'ain (ع), ghain (غ), faa' (ف), qaaf (ق), kaaf (ك), laam (ل), meem (م), noon (ن), haa (هـ), waw (و), yaa' (ي)).

Most linguists consider Arabic to have 28 written letters, where hamza (ء) and alif (ا) are combined. These letters are grouped in the following words: abjad (أبجد), hawaz (هوز), hutti (حطي), kalaman (كلمن), sa'fas (سعفص), qarshat (قرشت), thakhuth (ثخذ), dhað'agh (ضظغ). This order is called 'abjadi' order, named after the first word.



## 28. Are there letters in the Arabic language that are written but not pronounced?

**Yes, in the Arabic language there are letters that are written but not pronounced, such as:**

- Alif Al-wasl: This is a type of alif that is written but not pronounced when it is in the middle of a sentence, but it is pronounced when the word is at the beginning of a sentence. For example, in the sentence “خُذَ الْقَلَمَ” (khuth al-qalam), “القلم” is pronounced “ilqalam” when it is in the middle of a sentence.
- The alif (ا) after the plural waw (و): In certain plural forms, an alif is written after a wāw but is not pronounced. For instance, the word “ذَهَبُوا” (they went) is written with an alif at the end, but it is pronounced “thahaboo,” not “thahabooa”.
- The extra wāw (و) in certain words: Some words have a waw that is written but not pronounced, like in the name “عَمْرُو” (Amro), which is pronounced “Amr,” and the word “أُولَئِكَ” (those), which is pronounced “olaa’ika,” not “oolaa’ika”.
- The solar lam (lām al-shamsīyah): This refers to the Arabic letter ل (lam) when it comes before one of the 14 following letters (t, th, d, dh, r, z, s, sh, ṣ, ḍ, ṭ, ẓ, n, l). When this happens, the lam is not pronounced. For example, in “الشَّمْسُ” (the sun), the lam is not pronounced, so it sounds like “ash-shams”. wāw



## 29. What are the criticisms of the communicative approach?

The communicative approach is criticized for its focus on communicative competence while neglecting linguistic competence. It emphasizes the use of language and communication without focusing on training students to understand advanced linguistic structures and use them to produce new sentences and expressions. Another criticism is that it is more suitable for beginners or intermediates than for advanced learners. Furthermore, the broad scope, numerous applications, various activities, and divergent perspectives associated with it can undermine confidence in this approach.

Many teachers mistakenly believe that it is limited to the oral aspect of the language, finding it difficult to envision comprehensive communication in its integral concept of the four skills. This misunderstanding often results in inadequate implementation of the approach by a significant number of teachers <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 12: What are the methods and procedures that a teacher can use according to the communicative approach?

### **30. What universities and institutions are involved in teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages?**

Most universities in the Arab world have institutes or centers for teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages, or they designate programs specifically for them. Saudi universities top the list in terms of quantity and quality. These include Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University (Riyadh), King Saud University (Riyadh), Islamic University (Medina), Umm Al-Qura University (Mecca), King Abdulaziz University (Jeddah), and Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University (Riyadh).

In Egypt, there are Al-Azhar University, the American University, and Fajr Institute. In Sudan, there's the Khartoum International Institute for Arabic Language under the auspices of Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALESCO) and the Arabic Language Institute at the International University of Africa.

In Tunisia, there's the Bourguiba Institute for Modern Languages. In Iraq, there is the Mustansiriya University and the University of Baghdad. In Morocco, there's the University of Agadir. In Syria, there's the Institute for Teaching Foreigners in Damascus. In Jordan, there's the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University. In Kuwait, there's the Language Center at Kuwait University, and in Qatar, there's the Language Center at Qatar University.

Outside the Arab world, many renowned universities offer programs for teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages. These include certain American, British, French, German, Italian, Dutch, and Spanish universities, among others in Europe. In Asia, there are universities in Indonesia, China, Malaysia, Japan, and Korea.

There are also institutions dedicated to teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers. In Saudi Arabia, the most notable ones are King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language, Arabic for All, International Curricula, and the Arabic Institute, all located in Riyadh. Other organizations include ALECSO, ISESCO, and Sheikh Zayed Center, among others.



## 31. What are the best programs/institutes for teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages in: Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and the Americas?

There are centers for teaching Arabic in most countries around the world. In America, for example, there has recently been an increased interest in establishing centers, institutes, and departments for this purpose. These exist at universities such as Georgetown (Washington DC); the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor); Indiana University (Bloomington); the University of Texas at Austin; Emory University (Atlanta); Harvard (Cambridge); Princeton University; the University of Arizona (Tucson); the University of California, Los Angeles; Berkeley; Yale (New Haven); the University of Utah, and others.

In France, there is the College of Humanities for Teaching Arabic at the Sorbonne University as well as the Arab World Institute in Paris. In Britain, there are many centers and programs dedicated to teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, especially at the universities of London, Leeds, Manchester, Oxford, and Cambridge.

In Asia and Africa, there are university centers and departments for teaching Arabic. Below are some of these centers:

Institute	Location
King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language	Saudi Arabia
The Institute of Teaching Arabic, Imam University	Saudi Arabia
College of Language Sciences, King Saud University	Saudi Arabia
Lesan Ul-Arab Center	Cairo, Egypt

Institute	Location
Center for Teaching Arabic to Non-Native Speakers	Tripoli, Lebanon
Arabic Language Center, Zarqa University	Jordan
Arabic Islamic Institute	Tokyo, Japan
Nile Language Center	Cairo, Egypt
The Arabic Language Center	United Arab Emirates
Egyptian Center for International Cultural Cooperation	Cairo, Egypt
Bourguiba Institute	Tunisia
The Department of Arabic Instruction, The American University	Cairo, Egypt
The Center of Teaching Arabic to Speakers of other Languages, Damascus University	Damascus, Syria



## 32. What are the best newspapers that can expand my vocabulary and improve my reading and communication skills?

Most of the official newspapers in every Arab country are beneficial, as they often use standard Arabic, which aids in learning Arabic <sup>(1)</sup>. We will choose one newspaper from each Arab country in the following. These include, for example: Al-Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), Al-Ahram (Egypt), Al-Siyasa (Kuwait), An-Nahar (Lebanon), Al-Ittihad (United Arab Emirates), Al-Zaman (Iraq), Al-Dustour (Jordan), Al-Khabar (Algeria), Al-Ayam (Sudan), Al-Massa (Morocco), Al-Raya (Qatar), Al-Shorouk (Tunisia), and Al-Ayam (Yemen). And among useful newspapers are those that are published outside the Arab world, known as the “emigrant press” because they are written in contemporary standard Arabic. These include, for example: Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, and Al-Hayat.

We highly recommend you to browse the main articles, editorials, and cultural articles in these newspapers because they are usually written in an eloquent style without an overflow of colloquialisms or the roughness or specificity of other articles. Most of these newspapers have cultural supplements issued weekly, enriching your information with what they contain, including poems, stories, literary articles, and so on.

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(1) See Question 48: What are the different varieties of the Arabic language?



### 33. What are the best radio stations that can improve my listening skills?

Most of the official radio stations in Arab countries are beneficial; as they typically broadcast most of their programs in Modern Standard Arabic <sup>(1)</sup>. Examples of these stations include Al-Quran Al-Kareem and Nidaa Al-Islam radio stations (Saudi Arabia), as well as all Al-Quran Al-Kareem radio stations across the Arab world. Also, some programs broadcast in Standard Arabic on radio stations such as those in Damascus, Amman, Baghdad, Cairo, and others.

There are also radio stations broadcasting from outside the Arab countries, like the Arabic sections on international radio stations. We recommend that you particularly follow news broadcasts, as well as some talk shows, because their language is of a high standard, and they can greatly enrich your knowledge of Arabic and Islamic culture.

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(1) See Question 48: What are the levels of the Arabic language?



## 34. What are the best satellite channels that can enhance my proficiency in Arabic?

Most of the official channels in Arab countries are beneficial, as they broadcast most of their programs in Modern Standard Arabic <sup>(1)</sup>. Examples of these channels include: The Channel One (Saudi Arabia), as well as channels such as Al-Ekhbariya, Al-Arabiya, and others that feature a variety of programs in Standard Arabic. There are also numerous foreign satellite channels that employ Standard Arabic in their programs, which vary in content and presentation methods.

We recommend that you particularly follow the news broadcasts, as well as some talk shows (but not all), because their language is of a high standard, and they can greatly enrich your knowledge of Arabic and Islamic culture. Be sure to watch some documentary channels, such as Al-Arabiya Al-Hadath, and the Arabic National Geographic Channel; their language is sophisticated and their content is beneficial and educational.

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(1) See Question 48: What are the levels of the Arabic language?



### **35. I have a strong desire to learn Arabic; should I start by learning the alphabet or the grammar, or...?**

Language is an integrated unit, and every component of it (sounds, vocabulary, structures) and its skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) is interconnected. Therefore, focusing on only one element or one skill for learning Arabic will not greatly benefit a beginner language learner. Hence, language learning for beginners should be approached through comprehensive linguistic lessons, which include all skills and linguistic elements that are appropriate for the learner's level. For instance, learners can begin by acquiring basic sentences, such as greetings, through listening and comprehension. Subsequently, they can practice using these sentences in spoken communication, familiarize themselves with their spelling, and eventually learn to write them.



## 36. How can I master reading in Arabic?

**Mastering reading in Arabic can be achieved through several aspects, the most important of which are understanding the text and reflecting on it. This can be accomplished through:**

- Comprehension of the text: This involves identifying the main idea in the text, determining the literal meaning of the vocabulary, and identifying the sequence of ideas or events as presented in the text.
- Interpretation of the text: This includes interpreting unknown vocabulary and structures in the text and explaining the relationships between the ideas it contains.
- Text critique: This can be done by distinguishing between fact and opinion, distinguishing between what is relevant to the topic and what is not, distinguishing between fact and fiction, and then expressing an overall opinion about the text.
- Appreciating the written text: This involves identifying aspects of admiration in the text, the prevailing emotions and feelings within it, as well as its aesthetic and rhetorical elements<sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 37: How can I improve my reading skills in Arabic? and Question 38: How can I increase my reading speed in Arabic?

## 37. How can I improve my reading skills in Arabic?

**You can enhance your reading skills in Arabic through several methods:**

- Learn and memorize a wide range of Arabic vocabulary and understand its meanings.
- Start by reading texts that include diacritical marks (harakat) to ensure correct pronunciation. Once you are comfortable with that, you can move on to texts without diacritical marks.
- Practice reading both out loud and silently. This can improve your pronunciation and comprehension skills.
- Read a variety of Arabic texts from different sources, such as books, stories, novels, newspapers, articles, and websites.
- Dedicate a specific amount of time each day to reading. Gradually, try to increase your reading speed without compromising comprehension <sup>(1)</sup>.
- Test your comprehension after reading by closing the book or turning off the screen, and then ask yourself questions about what you have just read <sup>(2)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 38: How can I increase my reading speed in Arabic?

(2) See Question 36: How can I master reading in Arabic?



## 38. How can I increase my reading speed in Arabic?

**There are several strategies that can contribute to enhancing reading speed in Arabic, including:**

- Increasing personal motivation to read in Arabic. An intrinsic desire to improve will help you progress faster.
- Defining the purpose of reading. Knowing why you are reading can help you focus and read more quickly.
- Implementing fast reading strategies such as quickly scanning the text, reading the title carefully, focusing on main headings, identifying key words, formulating questions based on the text, answering those questions, and reviewing the text.
- Practicing silent reading. This can often be faster than reading aloud.
- Minimizing potential distractions. The less you are distracted, the faster you will be able to read.

It is important to note that speed reading may not be suitable for all circumstances or purposes. For deeper comprehension or enjoyment, slower and more careful reading might be more appropriate.

### 39. How can I improve my Arabic language skills outside the classroom?

**This can be achieved through various methods, such as:**

- Reading authentic Arabic texts, such as newspapers, billboards, and simplified Arabic stories, among others <sup>(1)</sup>. This can expose you to a wide range of vocabulary and sentence structures.
- Listening to authentic Arabic texts and watching short Arabic films <sup>(2)</sup>. This can improve your listening comprehension and pronunciation.
- Recording conversations using a recording device, listening to them, and continuously improving your speaking skills. This can help you identify areas for improvement in your spoken Arabic.
- Practicing writing topics in Arabic, reviewing them, and enhancing them. This can improve your written Arabic and your ability to express complex ideas.
- Benefiting from Arabic language learning software and online resources available on the internet. These can provide structured learning outside of the classroom.
- Making a conscious effort to practice Arabic (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) outside of the classroom <sup>(3)</sup>. Immersion and consistent practice are keys to language mastery.

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(1) See Question 32: What are the best newspapers that can expand my vocabulary and improve my reading and communication skills?

(2) See Question 33: What are the best radio stations that can improve my listening skills?

(3) See Question 34: What are the best satellite channels that can enhance my proficiency in Arabic?



## **40. If my pronunciation is good, and I have a good grasp of the grammar, how can I improve my listening skills?**

**This can be achieved through several strategies:**

- Familiarize yourself with the sounds and rhythms of the Arabic language by frequently listening to Arabic texts, both inside and outside the classroom.
- Start by listening to slower-paced texts, then gradually move on to faster ones. This gradual increase can help your ear adjust to the speed of spoken Arabic.
- Initially, it might be beneficial to listen to audio clips only, not video clips. This can help you focus purely on the language without visual distractions.
- Practice self-comprehension by asking yourself questions about what you've heard and answering them. This active engagement can help improve your understanding.
- Utilize some of the listening skill tests available in certain Arabic language learning programs or websites. These can provide a structured way to practice and improve your listening skills.



## 41. What is the best way to improve my speaking skills?

**To enhance your speaking skills, you might consider the following strategies:**

- Listen to fluent speakers. This can provide you with a model for how the language is naturally spoken.
- Expand your Arabic vocabulary and related grammatical and morphological knowledge. A large vocabulary and a good understanding of grammar will allow you to express a wide range of ideas.
- Continuously practice speaking and conversing in Arabic. Like any skill, the more you practice, the better you will get.
- Employ effective speaking strategies, such as the “Dialogue Strategy”: think before you speak, determine your objective for the conversation, start your speech confidently, use evidence and examples during your speech, and review and evaluate your speech.
- Try recording yourself speaking in Arabic; identify your strengths to reinforce them and your weaknesses to avoid them. This self-evaluation can help you identify areas to work on.



## 42. What are the most common real-world language situations that I should learn about before visiting an Arabic-speaking country?

The language situations required by an Arabic language learner don't differ significantly from those needed by learners of any second language. Typically, these situations are selected and organized in language textbooks according to their commonality and learners' (communicative) needs and their language level. Some of the most important ones include:

- Everyday topics and situations that a foreign visitor encounters in daily life, such as: matters related to accommodation, restaurants, transportation, classrooms, mosques, airports and travel, banks, hospitals, pharmacies, etc.
- Situations involving introductions, courtesy, greetings, farewells, thanks, apologies, permissions, and requests.
- Arab family life: the family and its members, relatives, the house and its components.
- Popular foods and drinks, table manners and tools, as well as games, hobbies, trips, clubs, parties, and invitations.
- Knowledge about certain cities, capitals, and famous Arabic and Islamic places.
- Information about some Arabic and Islamic universities and famous mosques.
- Prominent figures: scientists, thinkers (ancient and contemporary), writers, celebrities, etc.
- Arts: calligraphy, mosques, architecture, engravings, museums, etc.
- Values and ethics including: honesty, trustworthiness, cleanliness, order, filial piety, etc.
- Some customs in: generosity, marriage, celebrating holidays, etc.
- Features of Arabic Islamic culture, including various patterns related to general behavior, food, clothing, etc <sup>(1)</sup>.
- Some aspects of modern life and scientific progress in the Arab and Islamic world.

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(1) See Question 9: What are the cultural models that I can present to my Arabic language learners, or can I ensure that they are included in the textbook?



**43. Are there gradual and simplified books available for extensive, additional, or independent reading in Arabic, as is the case in other languages, catering to different proficiency levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced?**

Reading enriches the language of learners, equipping them with new expressions and structures and thereby enhancing their linguistic vocabulary. Therefore, second-language reading programs ought to offer both extensive and intensive reading. However, the reality of Arabic language teaching programs seems to focus only on intensive reading, unfortunately neglecting extensive reading. There is a lack of professionally prepared extensive reading books that are designed to parallel intensive reading programs and enrich the linguistic repertoire of learners in a scientifically precise manner. There are a few exceptions, such as some books published by the Arabic Language Teaching Institute at Umm Al-Qura University, the simplified reading books from the publications of the College of Language Sciences at King Saud University, and the “Arabic Reading Series for Muslims” by Lebanon Library in Beirut, authored by professors from the College of Language Sciences at King Saud University; the series gradually increases in difficulty.

Nevertheless, there are some language programs that prioritize teaching extensive reading, but these often rely on the personal effort of both the teacher and the student in selecting certain topics or books and reading them extensively. Even though these books or reading materials may not have been originally prepared for this purpose, it is a step in the right direction.



#### **44. Where can Arabic language courses for specific purposes (such as diplomatic, religious, medical, military, etc.) be found?**

Diplomatic and journalistic courses, tailored to the client's request, are available at the (Arabi) Institute in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Courses for individuals working in the medical and diplomatic fields can be found at King Saud University and King Abdulaziz University. Most institutions and universities are open to designing and implementing specialized courses based on client requests. Books authored by experts in teaching Arabic for specific purposes are used in military, media, medical (such as the book "Arabic for Medical Professionals," published by King Saud University), diplomatic ("Arabic for Diplomatic Professionals," also published by King Saud University), and religious courses (such as "Arabic Reading for Muslims").

## **45. What are the prerequisites that should be met by a learner and teacher of Arabic for specific purposes?**

### **Firstly, requirements for the learner:**

- The learner is expected to have a general linguistic background that aids effective communication.
- They should possess a strong motivation to learn Arabic for specific purposes.

### **Secondly, requirements for the teacher:**

- Identifying the specific purpose sought by the learners (diplomatic, political, media, religious, medical, commercial, military, etc.) in order to focus on it in the provided content.
- Conducting a survey study through which the vocabulary and structures presented in this specific program are calibrated.
- Identifying the concepts, scientific terms, and structures that should be presented to the learners through:
  - Reviewing a sample of books, notes, and other scientific materials used by the learners in their work, in order to create a list of concepts, terms, and structures that are common in this sample and their frequency of repetition.
  - Referring to the original texts themselves - the teacher selects from them sections containing the concepts and terms they wish to teach.
  - Conducting a field study to identify the needs of the learners or the institutions they belong to (such as a company, hospital, or other establishment).



## **46. How can I overcome the feelings of embarrassment and shyness that arise when I make a mistake in front of my colleagues?**

You must understand that making linguistic errors is a natural process in the course of learning a second language. Language learners, especially at the initial levels, make many linguistic mistakes, often due to language transfer from the mother tongue or shortcomings in understanding the systems of the second language. Therefore, you should not feel ashamed or embarrassed about something that every learner of a second or foreign language has experienced. Remember, your linguistic mistakes are your pathway to learning the language. If you handle them well and look at them positively by continually correcting them, you can improve your language proficiency <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 51: What are the linguistic challenges encountered in the field of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, and what are the strategies and approaches used to address them?



## 47. What is the difference between the Arabic language and its multiple dialects?

The Arabic language encompasses all communication systems used by its speakers, whether they are Classical or Vernacular. However, the Arabic used in everyday life activities differs from both Classical and Modern Standard Arabic in some of its functions and formal features (such as the phenomenon of case assignment system *l'rab*”, and certain terms found in Standard Arabic but not in dialects). As a result of this divergence, what is known as diglossia has arisen, which refers to the existence of two language levels. The first is described as ‘High’ and the second as ‘Low’. The first is designated for formal performance activities (such as in speeches, lectures, lessons, religious rituals, statements, official decisions, correspondence, and legal agreements), while the second is designated for informal communication situations (such as in daily interactions at home, on the street, and in public places).



## 48. What are the different varieties of the Arabic language?

**There are several varieties in the Arabic language:**

- Classical Arabic (Al-Fus'ha), which is the language of the Quran and heritage, is essential for those who want to delve deeply into these aspects.
- Modern Standard Arabic, which is the closest to Classical Arabic and represents its modern form. This level also specializes in formal aspects related to education, journalism, official government decisions, and so on.
- The level of Vernacular or Colloquial Arabic, which is used for everyday transactions and informal communication situations.
- Some researchers add the language of cultural dialogue (or Shared Arabic) and consider it an additional level that falls between Colloquial Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 47: What is the difference between the Arabic language and its multiple dialects?



## 49. What are the most common writing mistakes in Arabic?

Arabic is characterized by its consistency and generally regular rules of orthography and spelling, with a significant similarity between what is pronounced and what is written. This regularity and significant similarity alleviate the difficulties of writing for learners in the orthographic aspect. However, some beginners may encounter problems related to the writing direction from right to left, a system that contradicts what some of them are accustomed to, as well as the changing shapes of letters depending on their position in the word (such as the writing of “Hamza” (ء) and some other letters) <sup>(1)</sup>. Some of them also occasionally make mistakes in substituting the root letters (the alphabetic letters from which the word is built, and the letter does not have an independent meaning) due to some phonetic issues.

Among the grammatical problems that many learners face are proper case assignment “I’rab”, rules of agreement between the verb and the subject, the noun and its adjective, and distinguishing between the two elements of the genitive construct “idafa”. Many of them also have problems generating ideas and organizing them into paragraphs, in addition to errors in the use of conjunctions and prepositions.

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(1) See Question 51: What are the linguistic challenges encountered in the field of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, and what are the strategies and approaches used to address them?



## 50. What are the most difficult sounds in the Arabic language?

According to some scholars, foreign language learners tend to find certain sounds in the language they are learning easy to pronounce, particularly those that are common between their mother tongue and the target (foreign) language. However, the sounds that pose difficulty are typically those that are unique to the foreign language and do not exist in their mother tongue.

There are ten sounds in Arabic that are not without some difficulty. These are: ' /ʔ/ (أ), h /ħ/ (ح), kh /x/ (خ), ʿ /ʕ/ (ع), gh /ɣ/ (غ), q /q/ (ق), ṣ /sˤ/ (ص), ḍ /dˤ/ (ض), ṭ /tˤ/ (ط), ḏ /ðˤ/ (ذ). Many languages do not have these sounds or some of them; therefore, it is assumed here that a non-native Arabic language learner would find them difficult. Consequently, the teacher should concentrate training on these sounds from the beginning.



## **51. What are the linguistic challenges encountered in the field of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, and what are the strategies and approaches used to address them?**

Firstly, phonetic difficulties: these include sounds that are pronounced but not written <sup>(1)</sup> as well as the inability to distinguish between long and short vowel sounds <sup>(2)</sup>. The solution for these issues is to choose appropriate exercises and intensify them.

Secondly, lexical and semantic difficulties: these can relate to omission, addition, or substitution. The abundance of synonyms in Arabic can confuse the learner when selecting the appropriate vocabulary for the context. Here, it is preferable to gradually introduce vocabulary, starting with common words, while ensuring they are properly formed and their meanings are clearly explained.

Thirdly, writing difficulties: these include the similarity in writing certain letters and letters that are written but not pronounced <sup>(3)</sup>. It also involves learning how to properly form certain letters and recognizing the different forms of each letter.

Fourthly, grammatical and morphological difficulties: these can involve issues like grammatical agreement, sentence order, the definiteness and indefiniteness of nouns, among other things. It is best for the teacher to start by introducing grammar functionally through linguistic structures before presenting theoretical grammar lessons. The teacher should start with the easiest concepts and gradually progress to the more difficult ones. Additionally, words should be fully vocalized (with all the diacritical marks) <sup>(4)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 26: In Arabic, are there sounds that are pronounced but not written?

(2) See Question 50: What are the most difficult sounds in the Arabic language?

(3) See Question 28: Are there letters in the Arabic language that are written but not pronounced?

And Question 49: What are the most common writing mistakes in Arabic?

(4) See Question 75: When should I start teaching grammar to my students?



## 52. What is the difference between Al-Qamus” a dictionary”, Al-muʿjam “a lexicon”, and Al- mosouʿah “an encyclopedia”?

The term Al-muʿjam “lexicon” is broader and more comprehensive than Al-Qamus “dictionary.” The term Al-Qamus “dictionary” is often used as a generalization of the name of the lexicon authored by Al-Fayroozabadi called “Al-Qamus Al-Muheet” <sup>(1)</sup>. The use of the word “dictionary” is mostly confined to lexicons of vocabulary only. In terms of usage, the word “lexicon” is used for a monolingual Arabic lexicographical reference, while the word “dictionary” is used for bilingual or multilingual references (i.e., those that include two or more languages, such as Arabic and English).

**On the other hand, an “encyclopedia” differs from a “lexicon” and a “dictionary” in terms of:**

1. Entries: An encyclopedia includes a large number of proper nouns in addition to various topics (historical, geographical, scientific, etc.), while lexicons focus on vocabulary and their meanings and uses.
2. Number of entries: Encyclopedias generally have far fewer entries than lexicons, as they focus on providing a large amount of information.
3. Information provided within entries: Encyclopedias are not concerned with linguistic information, while this is a major focus for lexicons.

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(1) See Question 92: Who are some of the most prominent non-Arab scholars who have served the Arabic language in the past and present?

### 53. Are there available options for both in-person or online training courses for Arabic language teachers?

Several institutions indeed specialize in providing training programs to enhance the skills of teachers of Arabic for non-native speakers. Among these are institutes affiliated with Saudi universities: the Khartoum International Institute for Arabic Language, the Institute of Arabic Language at the University of Africa, and the Institute of Arabic Language in Fes, Morocco.

Moreover, the Saudi Electronic University is on the verge of introducing a series of online training courses. Another notable platform, “Arabic for All,” delivers robust live training sessions online, reaching participants in various countries.

For more comprehensive details and further information, visit the official websites of these institutions.

Training course provider
College of Language Sciences, King Saud University, Saudi Arabia
Institute of Arabic Language Teaching, Imam University, Saudi Arabia
Institute of Arabic Language Teaching, Um Al-Qura University, Saudi Arabia
Institute of Arabic Language Teaching, The Islamic University, Saudi Arabia
Khartoum International Institute for Arabic Language, Sudan
The Institute of Arabic Language, the University of Africa
Saudi Electronic University, Saudi Arabia
Arabic for All, Saudi Arabia
The Department of Arabic Instruction, The American University, Cairo, Egypt
The Institute of Arabic Language in Fes, Morocco.



## 54. Where can I find resources for learning Arabic for specific purposes (diplomatic, religious, medical, military...etc.)?

These resources can be obtained by contacting the following entities:

Academic Material	Publisher
Arabic for Medical Workers اللغة العربية للعاملين في المجال الطبي	College of Language Sciences, King Saud University
Arabic for Diplomatic Workers اللغة العربية للعاملين في المجال الدبلوماسي	College of Language Sciences, King Saud University
Arabic for International Relations Students اللغة العربية للدارسين في العلاقات الدولية	Johns Hopkins University, Washington, DC
Arabic for Business and Commercial Affairs (two parts) اللغة العربية للأعمال والشؤون التجارية (جزءان)	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Arabic Bridge to Islamic Culture: Teaching Arabic for Religious Purposes العربية جسر للثقافة الإسلامية: تعليم اللغة العربية لأغراض دينية	The American Open University in Washington, DC
Arabic Reading for Muslims (3 parts) القراءة العربية للمسلمين (٣ أجزاء)	Authored by professors from the College of Language Sciences at King Saud University, and published by Lebanon Library in Beirut
Teaching Arabic in the Diplomatic, Medical, Business and Commerce, Journalism and Media Sectors (Series) سلسلة (تعليم اللغة العربية في القطاع الدبلوماسي، والطبي، والتجارة والأعمال، والصحافة والإعلام)	The Arab Institute in Riyadh, KSA

## 55. What are the essential criteria that an Arabic teacher for non-native speakers should have?

According to the majority of educational literature pertaining to Arabic teaching, there are three fundamental competencies that are widely regarded as essential for an Arabic language teacher. These competencies include the following:

- Professional Competency: This refers to the theoretical and applied knowledge of modern trends in language teaching and learning as a second language. It includes planning and implementing educational activities, identifying the most prominent language learning problems and finding solutions for them, using different technologies for language teaching, and understanding the types of assessment processes and tests that the teacher employs to measure the various linguistic competencies of their students <sup>(1)</sup>.
- Linguistic Competency: This includes mastering language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), mastering the elements of language (sounds, vocabulary, structures, mechanical writing/spelling and lettering), using the language correctly, and understanding the characteristics and heritage of the language <sup>(2)</sup>.
- Cultural Competency: This pertains to knowledge about the cultural aspects of the Arabic language, how to convey them to learners, and understanding the culture of the learners.

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(1) See Question 73: What types of assessments and tests should I utilize to evaluate my students' competencies?

(2) See Question 60: What are the main characteristics of the Arabic language?



## **56. What competencies should a teacher possess to effectively teach cultural aspects in Arabic?**

The cultural component is a fundamental part of teaching any language, as abstract linguistic knowledge alone is insufficient to achieve successful communication and learning. There is a significant divergence in the details concerning the definition of culture, the method of presenting it, and the adequate quantity of it in language education programs. In addition, learners' needs also vary.

Despite the fact that the vast majority of Arabic learners are Muslims, who learn it for religious purposes due to its association with Islam, there are others who wish to learn Arabic for academic, political, and economic needs. Some may even desire to reside in some Arabic countries. All these factors should be taken into account when incorporating the cultural component into the Arabic language curriculum <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 8: What degree of knowledge should I have of Arab-Islamic culture to succeed in dealing with native speakers?

## 57. What resources and references are available to assist teachers of Arabic as a second language?

In the realm of language education, it is advantageous for educators to amalgamate specialized academic knowledge with practical pedagogical content. This combination equips educators with the necessary skills and tools to effectively teach and further develop their professional competencies.

Foremost among useful resources for educators are those within the field of Applied Linguistics and Language Education. These include scholarly works on teaching methodologies, second language acquisition, the integration of technology in teaching, and approaches to assessment and evaluation.

**The following is a list of recommended references in relevant fields that are essential for teachers of Arabic to non-native speakers:**

#	Book Title	Author/Translator	Publisher and Year
1	"Foreign Languages: Learning and Teaching" اللغات الأجنبية: تعلمها وتعليمها	Naif Khurma and Ali Hajjaj	National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, Kuwait, 1988
2	"Methods and Approaches in Language Teaching: Description and Analysis" مذاهب وطرائق في تعليم اللغات: وصف وتحليل	Jack Richards and Rogers Theodore. Translation: Mahmoud Sieny and others	Alam Al-Kutub, Riyadh, 1990
3	"The Integrative Theory in Language Teaching and its Practical Outcomes" النظرية التكاملية في تدريس اللغات ونتائجها العملية.	Hector Hammerly. Translation: Rashed Al-Duwish	Safir Printing Press, Riyadh, 1994
4	"Language Tests" اختبارات اللغة.	Dr. Mohammad Abdul Khaliq Mohammad Fadl	King Saud University, 1996, 2nd Edition

#	Book Title	Author/Translator	Publisher and Year
5	"Methods and Principles in Language Teaching" أساليب ومبادئ في تدريس اللغات .	Larsen-Freeman. Translation: Aisha Al-Said	King Saud University, 1997
6	"Theories of Second Language Learning" نظريات تعلم اللغة الثانية .	Rosamond Mitchell and Florence Myles. Translation: Issa Al-Shreyofi	King Saud University, 2004
7	"Methods of Teaching the Arabic Language" طرائق تعليم اللغة العربية .	Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Asaili	Adwa Al-Montada Press, Riyadh, 1423AH
8	"Curriculum Development in Language Education" تطوير مناهج تعليم اللغة .	Jack Richards. Translation: Naser Al-Ghali and Saleh Al-Shuweirikh	King Saud University, 2007
9	"Computer Applications in Second Language Acquisition: Foundations for Teaching, Testing and Research" تطبيقات الحاسب الآلي في اكتساب اللغة الثانية: أسس للتعليم والقياس والبحث العلمي .	Carol Chapelle. Translation: Saad Al-Qahtani	King Saud University, 2007
10	"Essentials of Assessment in Language Education" أساسيات التقييم في التعليم اللغوي .	Dwight Atkinson. Translation: Khaled Al-Damgh	King Saud University, 2008
11	"Applied Linguistics" علم اللغة التطبيقي .	Guy Cook. Translation: Yusuf Al-Shemimry	King Saud University, 1429AH
12	"Second Language Acquisition" اكتساب اللغة الثانية .	Susan Gass and Larry Selinker. Translation: Majed Al-Hamad	King Saud University, 2009



#	Book Title	Author/Translator	Publisher and Year
13	<p>"Dimensions of Computer-Assisted Language Learning: Options and Issues in Computer-Assisted Language Learning"</p> <p>أبعاد تعلم اللغة بمساعدة الحاسوب: خيارات وموضوعات في تعلم اللغة بمساعدة الحاسوب.</p>	<p>Michael Levy and Glenn Stockwell. Translation: Mohammed Saad Al-Alam Al-Zahrani</p>	King Saud University, 2010
14	<p>"Facilitator in Test Preparation for Foreign Language Teachers"</p> <p>الميسر في إعداد الاختبارات لمدرسي اللغات الأجنبية.</p>	<p>Khaled Al-Damgh and Mohammed Abdul Khaliq Mohammed Fadl</p>	Self-Published, 2012
15	<p>"Teacher's Guide in Teaching Arabic to Non-Native Speakers"</p> <p>مرشد المعلم في تعليم العربية لغير الناطقين بها.</p>	<p>Mahmoud Ismail, Nasif Abdulaziz and Mukhtar Al-Tahir Hussein</p>	Arabic Education Office for the Gulf States, Riyadh
16	<p>"Insights in Teaching Arabic to Non-Native Speakers"</p> <p>إضاءات في تعليم العربية لغير الناطقين بها.</p>	<p>Abdulrahman Al-Fawzan</p>	Islamic Waqf Foundation, Riyadh
17	<p>"Principles in Language Teaching and Learning"</p> <p>مبادئ في تعليم وتعلم اللغات.</p>	<p>Douglas Brown. Translation: Ibrahim Al-Qa'id and Eid Al-Shammari</p>	Arabic Education Office for the Gulf States, Riyadh



## 58. What is meant by language skills and its elements?

Language skills are comprised of four main areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Some add a fifth skill, which is viewing (like watching television). There are also subsidiary skills, commonly referred to as “elements of language.” These include sounds (pronunciation), structures and rules (in grammar and morphology), vocabulary (words and idiomatic expressions), and spelling (writing mechanics). Each of them performs an important function in communication at some point. The function of each skill is determined by two things: your students’ level and their needs for the skill.

Generally, beginners benefit greatly from the skills of listening and speaking in the early stages, with a relatively lesser focus on reading and writing. As they progress, the amount of time devoted to these latter two skills increases, and what’s allocated for writing skills may reach half of the program’s time if necessary, despite the fact that some learners may wish to continue prioritizing oral communication if they need the speaking skill.



## 59. I am an Arabic teacher; how can I develop my skills in Arabic?

One of the most crucial methods in this regard is to enroll in educational and training courses and programs organized by teacher training institutions <sup>(1)</sup>. Joining professional associations and groups for Arabic language teachers can also be beneficial. It is important to familiarize yourself with references in applied linguistics and language teaching <sup>(2)</sup>.

Additionally, reading specialized journals in Arabic teaching and networking with experienced colleagues for knowledge exchange and learning from their experiences can be very helpful. Continuous self-development through reflecting on one's teaching experiences, trying to extract lessons, and building on what is beneficial can also be beneficial.

It is also useful for both teachers and learners to frequently listen to Arabic radio stations, watch channels broadcasted in Arabic, and read as many available books, newspapers, and magazines as possible. All these activities can assist you in improving your level in the Arabic language and in Arabic culture as well.

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(1) See Question 53: Are there available options for both in-person or online training courses for Arabic language teachers?

(2) See Question 57: What resources and references are available to assist teachers of Arabic as a second language?



## 60. What are the main characteristics of the Arabic language?

**Among the most significant characteristics are:**

1. Derivation: Arabic excels in this aspect more than any other language in the world. Examples of this include: the active participle (اسم الفاعل), the passive participle (اسم المفعول), The elative (اسم التفضيل), noun (of time) (اسم الزمان), noun (of place) (اسم المكان), noun (of tool) (اسم الآلة), and others. All these words return to models of measures from which Arabic words and their roots are formed. This facilitates learning and saves time. For example, from the root (ب ك ت - 'k t b') and the measures (فاعل, مفعول, فعالة - 'fa'el, maf'ool, fi'aala'), the words/derivations like 'kaatib' (كاتب - writer), 'maktoob' (مكتوب - written), and 'kitaaba' (كتابة - writing) are formed, and so on.
2. Case assignment system (I'rab): This is one of the strongest elements of the Arabic language, and carries great importance in expressing ideas, conveying concepts, and dispelling ambiguity. It allows the speaker and the writer to accurately express ideas and opinions by adjusting the order of words.
3. Sounds: Arabic has the widest sound range known to languages, where the origins of letters spread from the lips to the farthest part of the throat. A characteristic of Arabic is the precision of its sound origins, such as the precision we notice in the emphatic sounds. This precision allows us to distinguish between the letters: t (ت), t (ط), s (س), and s (ص).
4. Precision of Expression: Arabic is the most precise language in expressing states and properties due to the abundance of synonyms in Arabic to distinguish between these states and properties.
5. Arabization: Arabic has a superior ability to assimilate foreign words and Arabize them according to its forms. Examples of this include: 'al-qintaar' (القنطار quintal), 'al-firdaws' (الفردوس paradise), 'al-yaqoot' (الياقوت ruby), 'al-saaboon' (الصابون soap), 'al-baqdoonis' (البقدونس parsley), and 'al-filfil' (اللفل pepper). These words have been borrowed from other languages and Arabized.

## 61. Does teaching Arabic to non-native speakers differ from teaching it to its native speakers?

Yes, there is a significant difference. If we look at the language elements (sounds, vocabulary, structures, and spelling), language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), and language culture, we will clearly perceive this difference <sup>(1)</sup>.

A learner of Arabic who is a native speaker has already mastered the sounds of Arabic, understands most of its vocabulary, knows its structures, and when they listen to an Arabic text, they understand it. They also have the ability to communicate in Arabic and understand its culture (all according to their linguistic level and age). In their early school years, they learn to read and write.

On the other hand, a learner of Arabic who speaks other languages needs to acquire all the skills, language elements, and culture of Arabic. Therefore, caution must be exercised when using books written for Arabs, especially for beginners from non-Arabic backgrounds.

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(1) See Question 58: What is meant by language skills and its elements?



## **62. Are there any tests available in the Arabic language specifically designed to evaluate the proficiency of Arabic learners?**

There are a number of standardized and non-standardized tests aimed at measuring the proficiency of Arabic language learners. These tests are administered at several specialized centers both within the Arab world and beyond. These tests vary in terms of their prevalence, regularity, and recognition.

Most of these tests are primarily designed to serve the educational centers and institutions that created them. The College of Language Sciences at King Saud University is one of the earliest entities producing such tests. King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language is working on developing a standardized test to measure the competencies of non-native Arabic learners. The test will measure the four skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking) in accordance with international practices.

Additionally, the National Center for Assessment and Measurement in Saudi Arabia has embarked on an ambitious project to provide proficiency tests in the Arabic language for all relevant entities <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 73: What types of assessments and tests should I utilize to evaluate my students' competencies?

### **63. Are there any tests available in the Arabic language specifically designed to assess the professional proficiency of Arabic language teachers?**

Assessing the professional proficiency of those involved in language education is a significant mechanism that helps in selecting qualified teachers to be employed in this intricate, specialized field. As of now, there are no such tests in the field of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. However, the Institute of Arabic Linguistics at King Saud University has recently embarked on a project that lays the groundwork for such an exam, termed the “Professional Standards Project for Teachers of Arabic Language for Non-Native Speakers” <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 55: What are the essential criteria that an Arabic teacher for non-native speakers should have?



## 64. Are there any officially recognized tests in the Arabic language that can be used to assess proficiency levels?

Proficiency assessment tests are indispensable tools for any entity specializing in second or foreign language education. Properly placing learners at their actual proficiency levels is essential to allowing the learning process to progress at an appropriate pace. Predominantly, teaching centers for non-native Arabic speakers rely on their own internal tests, which align with their vision of categorizing the levels of study and determining the appropriate number of levels, as well as with the nature of the target language. Therefore, it is not feasible to assert the existence of universally recognized proficiency tests that can be used broadly across all institutions. This is largely due to the variability in educational environments and diverse proficiency levels among different educational institutions (1).

However, there are tests specifically designed for general purposes that have been accredited. These include the 'Proficiency Test' offered by the College of Language Sciences at King Saud University, the test prepared by the National Center for Assessment in Saudi Arabia, and the "New Arabic Proficiency Test" provided by the Center of Applied Linguistics in the United States. Among the recent developments in this field are the initiatives of King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language, which aim to develop a universally standardized Arabic language test. This test contributes effectively to the evaluation of learner proficiency and offers invaluable feedback to both learners/end users.

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(1) See Question 73: What types of assessments and tests should I utilize to evaluate my students' competencies?



## **65. What are some effective strategies for simplifying or approximating the meanings of challenging words for my students?**

There are several primary general guidelines that teachers are advised to follow when teaching vocabulary. The most important of these are ensuring the introduction of new vocabulary in meaningful communicative contexts and encouraging learners to use beneficial cognitive and metacognitive strategies. These strategies include encouraging learners to guess meanings by understanding the root of the word, its form, derivations, context, and cues accompanying the vocabulary, as well as reducing reliance on translation.

Another important aspect is the emphasis on designing and implementing educational tasks that push learners to use and apply new vocabulary in their own style. Also, using language games, intensifying language input through reading, presenting enjoyable reading texts appropriate for learners, and showing learners the appropriate way to use dictionaries can all contribute to a more effective vocabulary teaching experience.



## 66. How should I address linguistic errors made by my students at the preliminary and beginner levels?

Students at the beginning of these two levels often make many mistakes when trying to speak, read, or write in Arabic. These errors are a good indicator that they are learning Arabic and that the teaching strategies you are employing are effective. The errors at these two levels are of various types, including:

- Slip-ups (mistakes): In such instances, it is advisable to bring the student's attention to the error that occurred and provide them with an opportunity for self-correction.
- Minor errors: If you believe that the student cannot self-correct, invite their peers to assist.
- Persistent errors: If you find that no one in the class was able to correct the error, this indicates that the error is not the students' fault but rather a flaw in the teaching method. Therefore, you need to consider re-teaching this point in a different way.

It is also advisable to distinguish between errors that lead to a change in meaning and simple errors that do not affect the meaning, with particular attention to the former and overlooking minor errors, especially in the beginner stages. One of the good practices in correcting oral errors is indirect correction, such as the teacher repeating the sentence correctly. For example, if the student says: **السَّيَّارة جَدِيد**\*

\* Al-Sayyara (feminine) jadid (masculine)

\*The car (feminine) new (masculine)

**The teacher can respond:**

نعم، السَّيَّارة جَدِيدَة

Na'am, Al-Sayyara (feminine) jadida (feminine)

Yes, the car (feminine) new (feminine)

**Or:**

تقصد السَّيَّارة جديدة

Taqsid, Al-Sayyara (feminine) jadida (feminine)

You mean, the car (feminine) new (feminine)

**Or:**

هل نقول: السيارة جديد أم السيارة جديدة؟

Hal naqul: \* Al-Sayyara (feminine) jaded (masculine), am: Al-Sayyara (feminine) jadida (feminine)?

“Do we say: \* The car (feminine) is new (masculine), or: The car (feminine) is new (feminine)?”



## 67. How do I teach a class that includes both beginner and advanced students?

**This can be accomplished by considering the individual differences among learners and addressing them through the following strategies:**

- Use language that is accessible to all learners, ensuring that it doesn't overwhelm beginners or bore advanced students.
- Implement teaching strategies that allow for student grouping. Techniques such as cooperative learning, reciprocal teaching, and collective brainstorming can be effective. Divide the class into groups, ensuring a mix of different proficiency levels. Role-playing and sensory learning can also be beneficial.
- Use a wide range of language activities to engage students at different levels of understanding.
- Employ a variety of instructional aids that cater to the needs and preferences of all learners.
- Assign homework at different levels of difficulty to match each student's proficiency. Encourage students to study independently outside the classroom, utilizing resources like reference books, digital tools, and the internet.
- Utilize advanced learners as peer educators. They can assist in carrying out activities, explaining linguistic content to their peers, and helping others with exercises and assignments.

## **68. What are the key factors that can contribute to the success of my students in language learning?**

**Success in language learning can be attributed to many factors. Some of the most prominent actions a teacher can take to enhance the language learning process include:**

- Fostering a positive motivation towards the language and its learning.
- Cultivating positive attitudes towards the language and its culture.
- Creating an enjoyable and engaging learning environment by presenting various learning activities and tasks.
- Providing educational linguistic content that meets the students' needs and interests.
- Promoting the concept of self-learning among students and its practical application.
- Going beyond just teaching students the language, it is crucial to teach them how to learn the language by introducing specific strategies and methods.
- Encouraging students to rely on themselves for further language enhancement, such as watching Arabic channels and reading a wide range of materials (advertisements, books, magazines, newspapers, signs, and websites).



## 69. Where can I find resources for teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages?

**There are numerous resources available for teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages. Some suggested sources include:**

- Public and large commercial libraries: these places often have sections dedicated to language teaching materials, including books specifically for teaching Arabic.
- Arabic language institutes: many institutes specialize in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. Visit these institutes or their websites for resources.
- Arabic teaching websites: There are numerous online platforms specifically designed to teach Arabic. These sites often provide a range of resources, from beginner to advanced levels.
- Internet forums: Online forums dedicated to Arabic language learning can be a great place to find resources and advice from other language teachers and learners.
- E-books: A search on the internet can yield numerous electronic books focused on teaching Arabic.
- Scholarly databases: Online academic databases often contain research papers and articles about teaching Arabic, which could provide theoretical and practical insights.
- Non-profit organizations: There are many non-profit organizations focused on language learning, including Arabic. Visit their websites for potentially useful resources.

## 70. Are there any strategies that can assist my students in comprehending reading materials?

**Yes, there are several strategies that can potentially enhance your students' reading comprehension:**

- The SQ3R strategy, introduced by Robinson, stands for Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review. This approach encourages students to first skim the text, then generate questions, read the material, recite the content, and finally review what they have read.
- The PQ4R strategy, proposed by Thomas and Robinson, stands for Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, and Review. Like SQ3R, this method also emphasizes the importance of questioning, reading, and reviewing the material, but it adds the steps of previewing the text before reading and reflecting after reading.
- The 'ATQN' strategy, proposed by Ali Al-Hadibi (the Arabic acronym 'أتقن' pronounced 'Atqan'), stands for 'Aqra' (Read), 'Tafakkar' (Think), 'Qawwim' (Evaluate), 'Nāqish' (Discuss). This approach encourages students to read the material, think about its content, evaluate what they have understood, and then engage in discussions about it.
- Miller suggested several strategies, including mind mapping, creating mental images, deeply thinking about the text, inferring, asking questions, and assimilating information.
- Another useful strategy involves guessing the meaning of a word based on its form (root and pattern), its context in the sentence and the overall text theme. Additionally, the use of Arabic-Arabic dictionaries and Arabic dictionaries in a language the student knows can also be beneficial.



## **71. Are there strategies that can assist a teacher who does not speak their students' first language in communicating with them?**

**There are indeed numerous methods that can facilitate your communication with students, including:**

- Body language: Utilizing gestures, miming, and movement can help convey messages even without a shared spoken language.
- Visual aids: The use of images and other visual aids can greatly assist in conveying meaning and facilitating understanding.
- Simplified language: It is advisable to use a natural and simplified form of your language, spoken at a slower pace. Keep in mind that students often understand more language than they can produce in speaking or writing.
- Persistence: It is crucial to maintain communication with your students, even if they do not understand everything you say.
- Bilingual students: If possible, enlist the help of bilingual students to convey your instructions and directives. They can act as a bridge between you and the other students.
- Bilingual dictionaries: Having access to bilingual dictionaries can be highly beneficial for both teachers and students. They serve as a valuable resource for looking up unfamiliar words and phrases, aiding in comprehension and vocabulary development. <sup>(1)</sup>

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(1) See Question 67: How do I teach a class that includes both beginner and advanced students?



## 72. Are there reliable and secure digital resources or websites that I could recommend to my students for learning the Arabic language?

Indeed, there exist numerous resources available online, including:

Institution
Interactive Arabic, King Saud University
Al-Madinah International University, Malaysia
Islamic University of Madinah
Lootah for Teaching Arabic
Madinah Arabic

### Online resources:

Online resources	
Arabic in your Hands	e-book series
The way to Arabic Language	e-book series
Arabic Language Lessons for Non-Native Speakers	e-book series
Teaching Arabic to Non-natives (The Basic Book)	e-book series
Teaching Arabic to Non-natives, Institute of Arabic Language, Imam University	e-book series
Arab Academy	Website
Rosetta Stone	Application



## **73. What types of assessments and tests should I utilize to evaluate my students' competencies?**

### **Firstly, types of evaluations:**

- Self-evaluation: This involves students assessing their own performance as well as that of their peers. Each student is responsible for evaluating the work of their classmates.
- Formative and diagnostic evaluation: This type of assessment is employed during the execution of a program, aiding in immediate decision-making for remedial actions throughout the language program.

### **Secondly, types of tests:**

- Aptitude and speed tests: These tests often combine elements of both ability and speed, such as in screening and selection tests, language aptitude tests, and most other academic examinations (at the school or university level).
- Achievement tests: These measure what students have learned over a specific period of study, that is, the knowledge they have acquired from a particular curriculum or course.
- Linguistic competency tests: These evaluations measure a student's general grasp of a language and are not tied to a specific curriculum or course.
- Preparatory and placement tests: These are administered before or at the beginning of a language program.
- Final examinations: These are conducted upon completion of a language instruction program. If they carry significant weight, they are referred to as "high-stakes tests."
- Language skills tests and language elements tests: These are typically conducted as in-class evaluations and are designed to measure each language skill or element separately. Examples include vocabulary tests and grammar tests.

## **74. How can the problem of a lack of Arabic language teaching materials for speakers of other languages be solved?**

Firstly, we need to identify the currently available resources. These are not as scarce as some may believe. For instance, Saudi universities and institutions have published numerous books (such as “Arabic for Life,” “I Love Arabic,” “Arabic for the Young,” “Learn Arabic,” “Easy Arabic Reading,” “Easy Arabic Rules,” “Arabic in Your Hands,” “Arabic for the World,” “The Basic Book,” among others). There are also many published books and educational materials in various languages, but there is a need for more.

Secondly, this can be accomplished by developing educational materials that are specifically tailored to the needs of students. This includes selecting authentic language texts, creating exercises based on these texts, and utilizing them as unique teaching resources. Language materials can be:

- Custom-made (specifically prepared for the purpose of language teaching).
- Adapted (natural texts that are modified to suit non-native language learners).
- Authentic (not specifically intended for language teaching, but used in genuine linguistic contexts, such as newspapers, scientific articles, book excerpts, etc.).

While the first type may be necessary for beginners, the majority should be of the second and especially the third type for intermediate levels and beyond.



## 75. When should I start teaching grammar to my students?

It is important to understand that grammar is a description of language, not the language itself. Therefore, its status should be adjusted without exaggeration or negligence. Consequently, grammar should be taught as grammatical structures implicitly at all language levels by targeting a number of structures and teaching them through practical language skills. Explicit grammar instruction, however, should be introduced at advanced levels for some common key issues that learners need. This instruction should be functional and practical, not purely theoretical. This is because purely theoretical teaching of grammatical issues does not benefit language learners <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 79: What are the most effective exercises that can facilitate rapid Arabic language acquisition for my students?

## 76. Are there non-physical games that assist in teaching Arabic (like playing cards, Monopoly, etc.)?

The field of foreign language education places significant emphasis on the use of language games in instruction. These games aren't confined to teaching letters, vocabulary, structures, or facilitating communication in various scenarios. They also encourage thinking and creativity. However, the deployment of such language games in teaching Arabic generally requires considerable effort, and the existing literature tends to be more theoretical than practical.

Among board games, there's Arabic Scrabble, which promotes competition in forming Arabic words. Crossword puzzles also offer valuable learning opportunities.

There are several initiatives and projects that have begun to apply these principles practically. Some notable ones include the Arabi Institute in Riyadh, the International Islamic University in Malaysia, and various online platforms. These entities provide valuable insights into the practical use of language games in Arabic language instruction <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 78: How can I benefit from language games in teaching my students according to the communicative approach?



## **77. Have computer games been developed specifically for teaching the Arabic language?**

Yes, there are some games available on the internet and in applications for devices and smartphones. A useful resource in this regard is the website of the International Islamic University in Malaysia, which teaches Arabic vocabulary through computer games. The site includes games for letters, words, synonyms, antonyms, grammar, structures, and sentences. There is also a website for teaching Arabic in Indonesia. However, as of now, there isn't a professional and highly specialized entity in this field <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 76: Are there non-physical games that assist in teaching Arabic (like playing cards, Monopoly, etc.)? and Question 78: How can I benefit from language games in teaching my students according to the communicative approach?

## 78. How can I benefit from language games in teaching my students according to the communicative approach?

Language games play a fundamental role in language teaching to students through actual communicative situations and in providing all students with opportunities for interaction, cooperation, and participation. To benefit from language games in teaching Arabic communicatively, the following steps should be undertaken:

- Clearly and specifically define the objectives of the language game.
- Identify or design the appropriate language game for the language skill or the linguistic element you intend to develop.
- Establish rules for the language game that stimulate and excite learners to participate and interact in the communicative language situations they encounter while playing the language game.
- Link language games to natural communicative situations that students might encounter outside the classroom.
- Choose the right timing to implement the language game so it aligns with the educational scenario.
- There are books in many familiar languages (like English and French) dedicated to language games. We can benefit from their ideas, and from the book "Language Games in Teaching Arabic to Non-Native Speakers" by Nasif Abdulaziz, published by Dar Al-Mareekh in Riyadh. We can also benefit from some social games (like the Rumor Game and games of identifying hidden objects or a profession through questions directed by students to the teacher).
- Measure the impact of the language game on achieving the lesson objectives related to the linguistic elements and skills embedded in the educational scenario <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 76: Are there non-physical games that assist in teaching Arabic (like playing cards, Monopoly, etc.)?



## **79. What are the most effective exercises that can facilitate rapid Arabic language acquisition for my students?**

Exercises play a crucial role in the learning process. Whenever language exercises are designed with careful attention to educational and technical aspects, they become more suitable in terms of quality and relevance to meet the learners' needs, and effectively reinforce and consolidate what the learners have already learned. Learners must be trained on language elements: sounds (including different intonation patterns accompanying the speaking skill, such as intonation patterns used in situations of greeting, farewell, introduction, and questioning), vocabulary, structures, and spelling. They also have to practice the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in addition to the skill of watching audio-visual media (like TV and movies) that depict examples of different language use situations and help in understanding spoken language.

Among the best exercises at the elementary and intermediate levels are pattern drills (to solidify the student's knowledge of linguistic structures) and communicative exercises that emphasize using the language for various purposes. At the advanced level, we can combine communicative exercises with exercises that deal with topics related to grammatical, morphological, and rhetorical (pragmatic) information.





## 80. What is the influence of Islam on the Arabic language?

**Among the significant influences of Islam on Arabic are the following:**

- The preservation and widespread distribution of the Arabic language for over fourteen centuries, as Arabic is the language of the Holy Quran, the sayings (Hadith) of the Prophet Muhammad, and the primary sources of Islamic knowledge. Understanding these foundational texts of the Islamic faith necessitates knowledge of the Arabic language.
- The incorporation of specific Arabic terms associated with Islamic religious practices, such as Salah (prayer), Hajj (pilgrimage), Zakat (almsgiving), Masjed (mosque), Janazah (funeral), Duaa (supplication), Nikah (marriage), and Talaq (divorce).
- The adaptation of the Arabic script in certain languages of Islamic communities, such as Persian, Malay, Hausa, and Urdu.
- The use of Arabic as a medium in religious practices that require vocalization, such as recitation during prayer, rituals of Hajj, uttering supplications, and Islamic remembrances.
- The creation of new fields of study (like syntax, morphology, rhetoric, jurisprudence, logic, and philosophy) inspired by the needs of the Islamic scholarly tradition.



## **81. What are the organizations or institutions that offer services to study the Arabic language for speakers of other languages?**

- In Saudi Arabia: Institutes for teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers at: The Islamic University of Madinah, King Saud University, Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University, Umm Al-Qura University, Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University, King Abdulaziz University, "Al-Arabiyyah Lil Jamee" (Arabic for All), King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Center for Language Planning and Policies, and King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language.
- In Sudan: The Institute for Teaching Arabic at the International University of Africa, and The Khartoum International Institute for Arabic Language.
- In Egypt: Sheikh Zayed Center for Teaching Arabic at Al-Azhar University, Al-Azhar Islamic Sciences College for Foreigners, Fajr Center for the Arabic Language for Non-Arabic Speakers, and The Arabic Language Institute at the American University in Cairo.
- In Malaysia: The Language Center at the International Islamic University, and the Institute for Teaching Arabic at Al-Madinah International University.
- In the United States: most major universities, such as Harvard University, University of Maryland, Indiana University, University of Texas at Austin, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, University of California in Los Angeles and Berkeley, among others.
- In Europe: many major universities, such as those in London, Cambridge, and Oxford in the UK, the Sorbonne in France, and the Avicenna Institute for Humanities in Lille, France, and others in Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, and Spain, have produced many famous Orientalists <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 53: Are there available options for both in-person or online training courses for Arabic language teachers?

## 82. What are the organizations, universities, or institutions that offer scholarships for studying the Arabic language? <sup>(1)</sup>

#	Organization/University	Location	#	Organization/University	Location
1	King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language	Riyadh, KSA	13	Fajr Center	Cairo, Egypt
2	University of Africa	Sudan	14	ICESCO	Morocco
3	Umm Al-Qura University	Makkah, KSA	15	Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University	Riyadh, KSA
4	The Islamic University	Madinah, KSA	16	Qassim University	Al-Qassim
5	Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University	Riyadh, KSA	17	Khartoum International Institute for Arabic Language	Sudan
6	Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University	Indonesia	18	Arabic for Non-Native Speakers Program, Qatar University	Doha, Qatar
7	Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University	Djibouti	19	Arabic Language Center, Kuwait University	Kuwait
8	Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University	Japan	20	Saleh Al Rajhi Endowment	Riyadh, KSA

(1) See Question 30: What universities and institutions are involved in teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages? And Question 53: Are there available options for both in-person or online training courses for Arabic language teachers?



9	King Saud University	Riyadh, KSA	21	Al-Azhar University	Cairo, Egypt
10	King Abdulaziz University	Jeddah, KSA	22	Language Center, The University of Jordan	Amman
11	College of Islamic and Arabic Studies, Dubai	UAE	23	University of Sharjah	UAE
12	Taibah University	Madinah, KSA			



### **83. Is it true that learning Arabic is more challenging compared to learning other languages?**

This general assertion is not entirely accurate. The relative difficulty or ease of learning a second language depends on a variety of factors, and it is incorrect to categorize a specific language as difficult or easy without considering the individual circumstances of the learners. However, it can be said that the ease or difficulty of learning a particular language is influenced by several factors, including the relationship between the learner's native language and the target language, the proximity or distance between these languages, the relation between the culture of the native language and the target language, the methodology used for language instruction, the age of the learner, their motivation, their linguistic orientations, and their linguistic readiness for learning a second or foreign language.



## 84. Which is more beneficial: to learn Modern Standard Arabic or Classical Arabic?

The answer depends on the intended purpose of learning Arabic. If one is specializing in Arabic studies or wishes to study the language used in the Arabic tradition, then in this case, it is better to study Classical Arabic. However, if one intends to use Arabic for communication, both spoken and written, and for understanding modern texts, then it is more beneficial to learn Modern Standard Arabic.

Modern Standard Arabic is more closely aligned with the cultural and intellectual realities experienced by Arab societies today, allowing for effective interaction with these realities. It is also closely connected to the foundational system of Classical Arabic, enabling efficient communication with the texts of the Arabic tradition. <sup>(1)</sup>

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(1) See Question 85: Which is more challenging: learning Modern Standard Arabic or Classical Arabic?

## 85. Which is more challenging: learning Modern Standard Arabic or Classical Arabic?

When learning Arabic, Classical Arabic is generally considered more challenging than Modern Standard Arabic because Classical Arabic includes a large number of words that are not used in contemporary times. However, this does not mean that learning Classical Arabic is impossible or should be avoided. Once proficiency in Modern Standard Arabic has been achieved, advanced learners can progress and successfully acquire proficiency in Classical Arabic as well.

This perspective aligns with several widely recognized strategies in language instruction, such as the Functional-Notional Approach, Communicative Language Teaching, and Task-Based Language Teaching. These methodologies emphasize the importance of focusing language learning on what the learner will use in their daily life <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 84: Which is more beneficial: to learn Modern Standard Arabic or Classical Arabic?



## 86. What is the relationship between the Arabic language and Arab-Islamic culture?

A strong connection exists between a language and its corresponding culture. Some experts view culture as a fifth dimension (in addition to listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in the teaching of foreign or second languages. Arabic is unique in that it serves as the language for both Arab and Islamic cultures. The revelation of the Quran in Arabic has significantly influenced its association with Islamic culture <sup>(1)</sup>.

Certain aspects of Arab and Islamic culture that are tied to the Arabic language include the style of greeting, marriage rituals, funerals, celebrations, conventions surrounding food and drink, conversing with others or listening to them, specific religious practices, and the customary phrases that accompany these activities before, during, or after they take place.

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(1) See Question 80: What is the influence of Islam on the Arabic language?





## 87. Are all Arabs Muslims?

No, not all Arabs are Muslims. They represent a small minority when their numbers are compared to the number of non-Arab Muslims in the world. There are Arabs in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Palestine, Sudan, and other countries who practice different religions, such as Christianity, Yazidism, Mandaism, and Judaism. There are also other ethnic groups living among Arabs, such as Kurds in northern Iraq and Syria, Amazigh in the countries of the Arab Maghreb region (the western part of the Middle East starting from Libya), and Nubians in northern Sudan and southern Egypt.



## **88. Which is the more appropriate term: “Teaching Arabic to non-native speakers” or “Teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages”?**

This field employs several phrases, including the ones specified in the question, as well as “Teaching Arabic to those who do not speak Arabic” and “Teaching Arabic to non-Arabs.” The phrase “speaker of the language” in this context typically refers to a native speaker. When we use the phrase “Teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages,” the implication could be that the student might be fluent in languages other than Arabic, possibly including Arabic. As such, it is more accurate to use the phrase “Teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages”, even though it is a bit longer. The equivalent phrase in English is “Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)”, which encompasses teaching English as a foreign language (in a non-English speaking country) or as a second language (to non-native speakers in an English-speaking country). Some researchers show a preference for “Teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages” over “Teaching Arabic to non-native speakers” or “Teaching Arabic to those who do not speak it,” mainly to avoid the connotations of negation.

## 89. What is the relationship between dialects and Modern Standard Arabic?

The connection between dialects and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is longstanding. This relationship is exemplified by the revelation of the Holy Quran in multiple dialects, as well as the various dialects used by the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, in his Hadiths, which were not solely in the dialect of the Quraysh tribe.

Historically, colloquial dialects were known as the “spoken language” and were primarily oral; hence, their potential for misinterpretation was minimal. However, the prevalence of colloquial dialects has increased in contemporary times as they are now frequently used in written form, particularly in digital communication.

In every language, there are formal varieties used for official communication and education as well as colloquial dialects for everyday conversation. However, the disparity between Classical Arabic and colloquial Arabic dialects may be more pronounced than the difference between the Modern Standard Arabic and colloquial dialects.

All Arabic speakers understand Modern Standard Arabic, which is the medium for formal communication, education, and all forms of cultural, political, and administrative activities across the Arab world. On the other hand, dialects are closely tied to specific tribes, regions, and countries. Therefore, emphasizing Modern Standard Arabic is more beneficial, as it provides a unified standard for all speakers, unlike dialects, which vary substantially depending on the region <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 48: What are the levels of the Arabic language?



## **90. Is it accurate to say that the Arabic language is incapable of keeping pace with modern scientific civilization?**

Such assertions are merely based on cultural and ideological biases that hold no weight in the realm of serious scientific research. This is a false perception stemming from unfounded claims that were propagated and promoted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries for colonial and political purposes.

The accurate scientific understanding regarding the status of languages is that all languages are equal in terms of their capabilities and their ability to meet the communicative needs of the communities that use them. There is no language that is inherently scientific or unscientific; the differences between languages are due to civilizational reasons related to the status of the societies that speak these languages, not the languages themselves. Languages are capable of expanding and developing to suit the needs of their communities and reflect their conditions.

Arabic, like all other languages, is subject to the same principles and laws in this regard. Arabic is the only language in the world that has remained vibrant for over fifteen centuries, and thousands of scholars in various fields of knowledge have written in Arabic since the first Hijri century (the seventh century CE) <sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Question 83: Is it true that learning Arabic is more challenging compared to learning other languages?

## **91. Are there concerted efforts to augment the volume of Arabic content available on the Internet?**

Arabic is distinguished as one of the top ten languages, constituting more than 80% of the digital content available on the Internet. It ranks seventh in terms of its digital presence, outpacing numerous other languages.

Moreover, Arabic ranks among the most globally recognized languages and exhibits one of the fastest growth rates on the internet. Despite the initial scarcity and limited scope of Arabic content at the Internet's inception, there has been an exponential expansion over the past decade. This remarkable growth is attributable to a myriad of projects and initiatives. Among the most significant is the King Abdullah Initiative for Arabic Content, which is supervised by the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology in Riyadh.

This initiative has sparked a multitude of projects and fostered numerous partnerships with diverse institutions. Its primary objective is to enhance the prevalence of the Arabic language on the Internet. Prominent projects under this umbrella include the translation of the internationally renowned "Nature" journal, the establishment of the Arabic blog, the Arabic Wiki project, the development of the Arabic search engine "Naba," the creation of the Arabic Syntax Analyzer, and the inception of an automatic translation engine that translates from various languages to Arabic, among others.



## 92. Who are some of the most prominent non-Arab scholars who have served the Arabic language in the past and present?

There are scholars of non-Arab origins who have made significant contributions to the Arabic language in both the past and the present. Some of the most notable among them include:

- Sibawayh (140–180 AH, / 760–796 CE), a student of Khalil ibn Ahmad, known for his work “Al-Kitab”.
- Ibn Faris (unknown–360 AH, / 971 CE), most famous for his work “Al-Majmal”.
- Ibn Jinni (322–392 AH, / 934–1002 CE), renowned for his work “Al-Khasais”.
- Al-Jawhari (died in 396 AH, / 1006 CE), most recognized for his work “Al-Sihah Fi Al-Lugha”.
- Ibn Sidah (398–458 AH, / 1008–1066 CE), celebrated for his works “Al-Mukhassas” and “Al-Muhkam”.
- Al-Zamakhshari (476–538 AH, / 1084–1144 CE), known for his work “Al-Kashshaf”, a commentary on the Quran.
- Al-Firuzabadi (729–817 AH, / 1329–1415 CE), renowned for his work “Al-Qamus Al-Muhit” <sup>(1)</sup>.
- In the present, there are also many scholars, such as:
- Sheikh Abul Hassan Ali Hassan Al-Nadwi from India, who founded the Islamic Literature Association.
- Sheikh Noor Muhammad Haqqani, the author of “Al-Qaida Al-Noorania”.
- Sheikh Muhammad Ahid bin Idris Al-Bogori from Malaysia.

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(1) See Question 52: What is the difference between Al-Qamus «a dictionary», Al-muʿjam «a lexicon», and Al-mosouʿah «an encyclopedia»?

### 93. How can student motivation be stimulated to learn the Arabic language?

Researchers have identified a range of factors that motivate learners in their pursuit of studying the Arabic language. These incentives can be religious, educational, cultural, personal, societal, or professional in nature. To effectively stimulate these motivations among your students, psychology experts recommend the following strategies:

- Ensure your students understand the intended objectives of the program they are studying. This helps them see the relevance and importance of their learning journey.
- Information should be presented to them in meaningful contexts, leveraging their previous experiences to enhance comprehension and engagement.
- Diversify the types of activities used, especially cultural activities. This can stoke interest and facilitate a deeper understanding of the language in its cultural context.
- Provide immediate reinforcement for their achievements and progress. This can boost their confidence and encourage them to persist in their learning.
- Ask them about their educational needs. This allows you to tailor learning approaches to suit their individual requirements, enhancing their commitment to the learning process.
- Involve them in planning objectives, choosing teaching methods, preparing some educational tools, and evaluating processes. This active engagement can generate a sense of ownership and personal investment in their learning outcomes.



## 94. What are the factors that contribute to success in speaking Arabic?

**Firstly, it is important to let go of the following negative thoughts and beliefs:**

- Speaking Arabic is difficult.
- I am not proficient in Arabic.
- I get nervous when I speak Arabic.
- I must master Arabic for every topic I discuss.
- I must not make mistakes.
- There is one correct answer to every question.
- It is impossible for me to speak Arabic easily and quickly.
- To succeed in speaking Arabic, I need to memorize a lot of grammar rules <sup>(1)</sup>.

**Secondly, try not to...**

- Begin by studying grammar and vocabulary books.
- Carry negative ideas about yourself or the Arabic language.
- Memorize grammar rules by heart.
- Enroll in institutions that teach Arabic through traditional programs.

Thirdly, use your ears more than your eyes in the initial stages of learning Arabic. You use your eyes to read the textbook, learn vocabulary, and study grammar, but none of these will develop your speaking skills. Instead, try to learn primarily through your ears and aim to learn grammar in a functional and spontaneous manner.

Fourthly, pay attention to Arabs when they speak on TV, radio, movies, public occasions (such as parties, Friday sermons, etc.), and private occasions (like family gatherings), and observe facial expressions and hand movements during speech.

Lastly, seize every opportunity to speak Arabic, and do not hesitate or feel embarrassed. Confidence is key to language acquisition.

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(1) See Question 75: When should I start teaching grammar to my students?



## 95. What are the most common phrases when I want to talk about shopping?

### Asking about time:

- "Fi ayi waqt yuftah almahall/aldokkan/alsouq?" (في أي وقت يفتح المحل/الدكان/السوق؟) translates to "At what time does the shop/store/market open?"
- "Mata yuftah almahall/aldokkan/alsouq?" (متى يفتح المحل/الدكان/السوق؟) translates to "When does the shop/store/market open?"
- Asking about the prices of goods/merchandise:
- "Min fadlak, bikam hatha/ hathih...?" (من فضلك، بكم هذا/هذه...؟) translates to "Please, how much is this...?"
- "Law samaht, kam yukallif hatha/hathih...?" (لو سمحت، كم يكلف هذا/هذه...؟) translates to "Excuse me, how much does this cost...?"
- "Hatha rakhees/ma'qool." (هذا رخيص/معقول) translates to "This is cheap/reasonable."
- "Hatha ghali jiddan." (هذا غالي جداً) translates to "This is very expensive."

### Payment methods:

- "Ayn adfa' alhisab?" (أين أدفع الحساب؟) translates to "Where do I pay the bill?"
- "Sa adfa' bishak masrafi." (سأدفع بشيك مصرفي) translates to "I will pay with a bank check."
- "Sa adfa' naqdan." (سأدفع نقداً) translates to "I will pay in cash."
- "Sa adfa' bilbitaqah almasrafiyah/alitimaniah." (سأدفع بالبطاقة المصرفية/الائتمانية) translates to "I will pay with a bank/credit card."
- "A'tini aleesal min fadlak." (أعطني الإيصال من فضلك) translates to "Give me the receipt, please."



- “Odkhul arraqam assirri alkhas bik. Alraja alintizar. Ishab/okhruj albitaqah. Khudh almablagh.” (أدخل الرقم السري الخاص بك. الرجاء الانتظار. اسحب/أخرج البطاقة. خذ المبلغ.) translates to “Enter your PIN. Please wait. Remove/Eject the card. Take the amount.”

### Complaints and returning purchases:

- “Oreedu an urji/astabdil hathih... biqyas akhar.” (أريد أن أرجع/أستبدل هذه... بقياس آخر.) translates to “I want to return/exchange this... for a different size.”
- “Alqyas gheir munasib.” (القياس غير مناسب.) translates to “The size is not suitable.”
- “Hatha aljihaz la ya'mal.” (هذا الجهاز لا يعمل.) translates to “This device does not work.”
- “Hal astati'u an astard naqodi?” (هل أستطيع أن أسترده نقودي؟) translates to “Can I get my money back?”

### Signs you see in shops:

- “Tanzilat mawsimia, takhfidat kabira bisabab altasfia/ighlaq almahall.” (تنزيلات/تخفيضات موسمية، تخفيضات كبيرة بسبب التصفية/إغلاق المحل.) translates to “Seasonal sales, big discounts due to clearance/closing of the shop.”
- “Ishtari wahidan wa ihsal ala wahid majanaan/binosf alqima/binosf alsi'r.” (اشتر واحدًا واحصل على واحد مجانًا/بنصف القيمة/بنصف السعر.) translates to “Buy one get one free/half price/half off.”
- “Almahall mughlak.” (المحل مغلق.) translates to “The shop is closed.”
- “Almahall maftooh (24 saa'a).” (المحل مفتوح (24 ساعة).) translates to “The shop is open (24 hours).”

## 96. What are the most common phrases when I want to talk about food and restaurants?

To politely get the waiter's attention, you could say:

- "عذراً/ لو سمحت/ من فضلك" ("Uthran/ Law samaht/ Min fadlak..."): translates to "Excuse me/If you please/Could you...?"
- "مزيد من الخبز/السلطة/الماء" ("Mazeed min al-khubz/al-salata/al-maa."): translates to "More bread/salad/water."
- "أعطني قائمة الطعام/الحلوى/المقبلات من فضلك" ("A'tini qaimat al-ta'am/al-hulwa/al-muqabbilat min fadlak."): translates to "Please give me the menu/dessert menu/appetizer menu."
- "ما الطبق الرئيس؟" ("Ma al-tabaq al-raees?"): translates to "What is the main dish?"
- "هل تفضل/تحب؟" ("Hal tufaddil/tuhibb?"): translates to "Do you prefer/like...?"
- "ماذا تقترح؟ أقترح..." ("Matha taqtarih? Aqtarih..."): translates to "What do you suggest? I suggest..."

When it is time to pay the bill:

- "الفاتورة، من فضلك" ("Al-fatura, min fathlak."): translates to "The bill, please."
- "أريد الفاتورة/الإيصال، من فضلك" ("Ureed al-fatura/al-isal, min fathlak."): translates to "I need the bill/receipt, please."
- "هل أستطيع أن أدفع بالبطاقة المصرفية؟" ("Hal astati'u an adfa' bil-bitaqah al-masrafiya?"): translates to "Can I pay with a bank card?"
- "هل تقبلون بطاقات ائتمانية؟ هل أدفع نقداً؟" ("Hal taqbalun bitaqat i'timaniya? Hal adfa' naqdan?"): translates to "Do you accept credit cards? Can I pay in cash?"
- "كم المبلغ المطلوب؟" ("Kam al-mablagh al-matlub?"): translates to "How much is the total?"



- “كم الباقي؟” (“Kam al-baqi?”): translates to “How much you owe me?/ How much I owe you?”

### Phrases you might hear or use while eating:

- “هنيئاً بالهناء، / صحّة وعافية” (“Hani’an/ Bil-hanaa/ Sihha wa ‘afiya!”): translates to “Enjoy! / To your health!”
- “تذوّق هذا/ جرّب هذا.” (“Tathawwaq hatha/ Jarrib hatha.”): translates to “Taste this/ Try this.”
- “هذا لذيذ.” (“Hatha lathith.”): translates to “This is delicious.”
- “ماذا طلبت؟” (“Matha talabt?”): translates to “What did you order?”
- “لم أطلب هذا/ هذه.” (“Lam atlub hatha/hathihi.”): translates to “I didn’t order this.”
- “هذا الطعام/ لحم/ شاي/ أرز... بارد/ حار/ مالح/ طعمه مرّ غير جيد” (“Hatha al-ta’am/ lahm/ shai/ arroz... barid/ har/ malih/ ta’amuhu murr/ ghair jayyid.”): translates to “This food/ meat/tea/rice... is cold/hot/salty/bitter/not good.”

## 97. What are the most common phrases when I want to talk about tourism?

### Looking for accommodation:

- "أبحث عن... فندق/ شقة/ شقة مفروشة/ مكان للإقامة" ("Abhath 'an... funduq/ shaqqa/ shaqqa mafroosha/ makan lil'iqama."): translates to "I'm looking for... a hotel/ apartment/ furnished apartment/ place to stay."
- "هل لديكم قائمة ب...؟" ("Hal ladaykum qaima b...?"): translates to "Do you have a list of...?"
- "هل يمكن أن تحجز لي غرفة بسرير/ بسريرين؟" ("Hal yumkin an tahjiz li ghorfa bisareer/ bisareerayn?"): translates to "Could you book me a room with a bed/ with two beds?"

### Exploring the city:

- "هل لديكم خارطة للمدينة/ البلدة/ المعالم المهمة؟" ("Hal ladaykum kharita lil'madinah/ al-balda/ al-ma'alim al-muhimma?"): translates to "Do you have a map of the city/ town/ important landmarks?"
- "أين مركز المدينة/ صالة العرض/ المتحف/ منطقة التسوق الرئيسية/ السوق/ محطة القطار؟" ("Ayna markaz al-madinah/ salat al-'ard/ al-mat'haf/ mintaqat al-tasawwuq al-ra'eesa/ al-souq/ mahattat al-qitar?"): translates to "Where is the city center/ exhibition hall/ museum/ main shopping area/ market/ train station?"
- "ما أفضل وسيلة للتنقل في المدينة؟" ("Ma afdal wasila littanaqqul fi al-madinah?"): translates to "What is the best means of transportation in the city?"
- "أين أستطيع أن أستأجر سيارة/ أستوقف سيارة أجرة؟" ("Ayna astati'u an asta'jir sayara/ astawqif sayarat ujra?"): translates to "Where can I rent a car/ hail a taxi?"



### Events and activities:

- “ما هي المعارض/ الفعاليات الثقافيّة/ الفعاليات الرّياضيّة التي تُقام حالياً؟” (“Ma hiya al-ma’arid/ al-fa’aliyat al-thaqafiya/ al-fa’aliyat al-riyadiya allati tuqam haliyan?”): translates to “What are the exhibitions/ cultural events/ sporting events currently taking place?”
- “هل هناك أية جولات/ رحلات سياحية (بالقارب/ القطار أو الحافلة...؟” (“Hal hunak ayya jawlat/ rihalat siyahiya (bil-qarib/ al-qitar aw al-hafilah...?”): translates to “Are there any tours/ trips (by boat/ train or bus...?”
- “هل لديك أية منشورات دعائية عن المراكز/ المعالم السياحية؟” (“Hal ladayk ayya manshurat di’aiya ‘an al-marakiz/ al-ma’alim al-siyahiya?”): translates to “Do you have any promotional materials about centers/ tourist landmarks?”

## 98. What are the most common phrases when I want to talk about personal matters?

### Phone number:

- " (ما رقم هاتفك/ جوالك/ هاتفك الثابت (الأرضي) ("Ma raqam hatifak/ jawalak/ hatifak al-thabit (al-ardi)."): translates to "What is your telephone/ mobile/ landline number?"
- "كيف نتصل بك؟" ("Kayf nattasil bik?"): translates to "How can we contact you?"
- " (ما رقم الناسوخ (الفاكس) ("Ma raqam al-nasukh (al-faks)?"): translates to "What is your fax number?"

### Address:

- " (ما عنوانك الدائم/ المؤقت؟" ("Ma unwanak al-da'im/ al-mu'aqqat?"): translates to "What is your permanent/ temporary address?"
- "هل يمكن أن تعطيني بريدك الإلكتروني؟" ("Hal yumkin an tu'tini baridak al-ilektroni?"): translates to "Can you give me your email address?"
- "هل يمكن أن أتواصل معك عبر الفيسبوك/ الواتس آب/ تويتر...؟" ("Hal yumkin an atawasal ma'ak 'abra al-facebook/ al-whatsapp/ twitter...?"): translates to "Can I communicate with you through Facebook/ WhatsApp/ Twitter...?"

### Age:

- "كم عمرك؟" ("Kam 'umruk?"): translates to "How old are you?"
- "فلان كبير/ صغير/ شاب/ عجوز... إلخ." ("Fulan kabir/ saghir/ shab/ 'ajuz...ilakh."): translates to "So-and-so is adult/ child/ young/ old...etc."

### Salary and Accounts:

- "كم تتقاضى/ تأخذ يومياً/ أسبوعياً/ شهرياً/ سنوياً؟" ("Kam tataqada/ ta'khudh yomian/ usbu'ian/ shahrian/ sanawian?"): translates to "How much do you earn daily/ weekly/ monthly/ annually?"



- “كم دخلك في اليوم/ الأسبوع/ الشهر/ السنة؟” (“Kam dakhluḡ fi al-yawm/ al-usbu’/ al-shahr/ al-sana?”): translates to “What is your income per day/ week/ month/ year?”
- “ما رقم الحساب المصرفي؟” (“Ma raqam al-hisab al-masrafi?”): translates to “What is your bank account number?”
- “أدخل الرقم السري لبطاقتك الائتمانية” (“Udkhul al-raqam al-sirri li bitaqatik al-i’timaniya.”): translates to “Enter the PIN for your credit cards.”



## 99. What are the most common phrases when I want to talk about general matters?

You might encounter some difficulties when answering very simple general questions. Here are some commonly used questions in such situations, each is accompanied by three typical responses.

1. ماذا تعمل؟، ما مهنتك؟، ما وظيفتك؟

“Matha ta’mal? Ma mihnatak? Ma wadheefatuk?”: translates to “What do you do? What is your profession? What is your job?”

- “أنا طالب/ مدرس/ ممرض... إلخ.” (“Ana talib/ mudarris/ mumarrid...ilakh.”): translates to “I am a student/ teacher/ nurse...etc.”
- “لا أعمل الآن/ أنا عاطل/ ما عندي عمل.” (“La a’mal al-an/ ana ‘atil/ ma ‘indi ‘amal.”): translates to “I’m not working right now/ I’m unemployed/ I don’t have a job”.
- “أنا متقاعد الآن، كنت مهندساً/ طبيباً... إلخ.” (“Ana mutaqa’id al-an, kunt muhandisan/ tabiban...ilakh.”): translates to “I’m retired now, I was an engineer/ doctor...etc.”

2. هل أنت متزوج؟

“Hal anta mutazawwij?”: Are you married?

- “نعم، أنا متزوج، وعندي أطفال.” (“Na’am, ana mutazawwij, wa ‘indi atfal.”): translates to “Yes, I am married, and I have children.”
- “لا، أنا أرمل/ مطلق.” (“La, ana armal/ mutallaq.”): translates to “No, I am a widower/ divorced.”
- “لا، أنا أعزب.” (“La, ana a’zab.”): translates to “No, I am single.”

3. لماذا تتعلم/ تدرس العربية؟

“Limadha tata’llam/ tadrus al-arabiya?”: translates to “Why are you learning/ studying Arabic?”



- "لأتواصل بها مع العرب." ("Li atawasal biha ma'al 'Arab."): To communicate with Arabs.
- "أود العمل في العالم العربي." ("awadd al-'amal fi al-'alam al-arabi."): translates to "I would like to work in the Arab world."
- "لأفهم القرآن والسنة." ("Li afham al-Qur'an wa al-sunnah."): translates to "To understand the Quran and the Sunnah."

#### 4. أين/ كيف تعلّمت اللغة العربية؟

"Ayna/ kayf ta'allamta al-lugha al-arabiya?": translates to "Where/ How did you learn Arabic?"

- "تعلّمتها وحدي، بدون مدرس." ("Ta'allamtuha wahdi, bidun mudarris."): translates to "I learned it by myself, without a teacher."
- "تعلّمتها من القنوات الفضائية/ الأفلام العربية/ الأصدقاء." ("Ta'allamtuha min al-qanawat al-fada'iya/al-afلام al-arabiya/al-asdiqa."): translates to "I learned it from satellite channels/ Arabic movies/ friends."
- "في معهد اللغات/ الجامعة." ("Fi ma'had al-lughat/al-jami'a."): translates to "In a language institute/ university."

#### 5. هل تحتاج إلى مساعدة؟، أي خدمة؟

"Hal tahtaj ila musa'ada? Ayyu khidma?": translates to "Do you need help? Any service?"

- "لا، شكرًا. أنفج." ("La, shukran. Atafarraj."): translates to "No, thanks. I'm just looking."
- "Na'am, 'indakum maqas akbar min hadha?": translates to "Yes, do you have a larger size than this?"
- "أريد أن أجرب القميص." ("Urid an ujarrib al-qamis."): translates to "I want to try on the shirt."

## 6. كيف تسير الأمور؟

“Kayf taseer al-umoor?”: translates to “How are things going?”

- “الحمد لله، على ما يرام.” (“Alhamdulillah, ‘ala ma yuram.”): translates to “Praise be to Allah, everything is fine.”
- “بخير، ولكن لدينا مشكلة صغيرة.” (“Bikhair, walakin ladayna mushkilah saghirah.”): translates to “Fine, but we have a small problem.”
- “لا بأس.” (“La ba’s.”): translates to “It is okay.”



## 100. What are the commonly used phrases in greetings and introductions? And should I shake hands with the person I meet regardless of his/her age or gender or...?

The customs and rituals of greetings differ from one culture to another, and it can be confusing and perplexing when it comes to the differences in greeting styles between men and women. In Arab countries, relatives and friends hug each other, kiss each other (on the cheeks) if they meet after a long separation, and shake hands; no one bows to anyone, and men do not shake hands with women, except if they are first-degree relatives <sup>(1)</sup>.

### Common greeting phrases include:

- In the morning: صباح الخير - "Sabah al-khair" (Good morning). The response is: صباح النور - "Sabah al-noor" (Literal translation: Morning of light).
- In the evening: مساء الخير - "Masa' al-khair" (Good evening). The response is: مساء النور - "Masa' al-noor" (Evening of light).
- At night when saying goodbye: تصبّحون على خير - "Tusbihun 'ala khair" (Literal translation: May you wake up to goodness). The response is: تصبّحون على خير - "Tusbihun 'ala khair" (Literal translation: May you wake up to goodness).
- أهلاً وسهلاً - "Ahlan wa sahlān": To welcome a person.
- أهلاً وسهلاً ومرحباً - "Ahlan wa sahlān wa marhabān": To welcome a person face to face (directly), or over the phone.
- مع السلامة - "Ma'a al-salama": Said at farewell. The response is: مع السلامة - "Ma'a al-salama", and also: في أمان الله - "Fi aman Allah" (In God's protection).
- السلام عليكم - "As-salamu 'alaykum": The most common greeting, it replaces all of the above, and is used at all times, in all situations, and with all people regardless of their status or position.

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(1) See Question 8: What degree of knowledge should I have of Arab-Islamic culture to succeed in dealing with native speakers?

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