The Reality of the Arabic Language in the Era of Globalization and Westernization

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Abstract:
This research paper examines the current status of the Arabic language in the face of significant technological advancements. Despite encountering various challenges from both external adversaries and its own speakers, the Arabic language has demonstrated remarkable resilience, preserving its integrity even during the darkest periods of decay and colonization. Historically, attacks on the Arabic language have been marked by ideological and cultural dimensions, employing psychological and social doctrines to link setbacks in cultural, intellectual, and societal development with the Arabic language. What is particularly concerning is the infiltration of linguistic intrusion, deeply rooted in the new generations through auditory and visual media. This exacerbates the challenges faced by the Arabic language, introducing foreign words and expressions. Hence, it is imperative for the nation to cultivate and possess sufficient resilience to bear witness to its civilization and societal achievements. This necessitates self-construction through the acquisition of sciences, knowledge, experiences, pathways, and qualities. Additionally, it calls for the innovation of means and tools for communication with all its components.

Keywords: Linguistic reality, Arabic language, globalization, Westernization, challenges.

INTRODUCTION

It comes as no surprise that contemporary efforts are more targeted than ever toward safeguarding the Arabic language, the linguistic tapestry intricately weaving the scientific and cultural history of the nation into a connected chain of events. Language functions as the threads of the social fabric, uniting hearts despite diverse social appearances and geographical spaces. It serves as the legal conscience of the people, embodying the stability of the nation's psychological virtues. Within it lies the essence of belonging, the roots of identity, and the reasons for survival. However, the Arabic language faces dilution, disrupting the intellectual life of the nation and fostering various forms of disturbance and confusion. Adversaries infiltrate various fields, causing a mix-up of meanings, concepts, and symbols, hindering projects of development and progress.

Language plays a fundamental role in the cultural struggle, intensified in the era of globalization more than ever before. The historical oppression and forms of historical bypass that our Arab nation has faced and continues to face go beyond the boundaries of military, economic, and media pressures. They extend to an attempt at linguistic assimilation and shifting the historical mass of culture and national existence, where our Arabic language historically represented the strongest fortifications for defending selfhood and Arab identity.

The current era compels human societies, with their diverse languages and cultures, to not just communicate but coexist. Technological advancement and digitization have

made the vast geographical world culturally and intellectually interconnected. Communication tools accelerate the transfer of information across countries, surpassing the basic capacities of individual countries, their cultures, and languages.

Preserving cultural identity in the age of information dominance and electronic invasion has become a challenge for third-world countries, especially the Arab world. The sense of threat to their culture, coupled with the dominance of information and the widening knowledge and technological gap between them and the West, arises from several factors. These nations suffer from high illiteracy rates, limiting their ability to produce information and knowledge. They also grapple with poverty and modest economic resources, lacking suitable communication technology.

These nations experience unidirectional communication flow from North to South, denying them the ability to resist the flood of information arriving through various communication forms and hindering opportunities for mutual interaction between world populations. Thus, what we face in the Arab world specifically represents a historical dilemma, always linked to the limitations of those who possess and those who do not, those with power and those without it, with the conqueror's dominance and strength impacting the invaded.

Therefore, this article will focus on the challenges facing the Arabic language in the era of globalization and ways to confront them. We begin with the issue: How can the Arabic language confront the implications of the digital age imposed by globalization? From this issue, questions arise: What challenges does the Arabic language face in the era of communicative globalization? What are the ways to confront these challenges? And how can the world of globalization be harnessed to serve the Arabic language and enhance its status?

To answer this issue, we will address the following elements: the concept of the Arabic language, the concept of globalization, the impact of globalization on the Arabic language, and ways to confront the challenges of globalization on the Arabic language.

CONCEPT OF LANGUAGE
Linguistically
The term "language" refers to a system of communication that involves the use of words, symbols, and rules to convey meaning between individuals or groups. It encompasses both spoken and written forms of expression, allowing for the exchange of ideas, thoughts, and information. Language plays a crucial role in human interaction, facilitating communication, understanding, and the transmission of culture and knowledge. It is a dynamic and evolving aspect of human behavior, reflecting the diversity and richness of different cultures and societies.[1]

In "Lisan al-Arab," it is mentioned: "Lagha yalghu laghwan: to speak. In the hadith: Whoever speaks on Friday while the Imam is delivering the sermon to his companion has 'lagha,' meaning spoke... It is a verb derived from laghawt, meaning spoke. Its root is laghwah, like a ball, a handful, and an ascent."[2] From the above, it can be concluded that language, in linguistic dictionaries, means speaking or dialect.

Technically:
The Arab linguist Ibn Jinni (d. 392 H) defined language as: "Sounds used by each group to express their purposes." [3]This definition, according to Mahmoud Fahmi Hijazi, includes the essential elements for teaching language. It aligns with many modern definitions, explaining the sound nature of language and its social function in expression

and conveying thought. Additionally, it highlights the diversity of linguistic environments from one society to another.[4]

Ibn Khaldun (d. 808 H) defined language as: "Know that language, as commonly understood, is the speaker's expression of his intended meaning. This expression is a linguistic act arising from the intention to convey speech, inevitably becoming a determined possession in the active organ, which is the tongue. It varies in each nation according to their terminologies."[5]

From the above, it is clear that language is a means of communication and interaction among humans, with two aspects: natural, like body movements and neglected sounds, and positional, as a set of agreed-upon symbols, signs, or words to convey feelings and thoughts.[6]

As for the Arabic language in this context, it is one of the well-known Semitic languages since ancient times. It is the literary language shared among different Arab tribes, recorded by poets expressing their thoughts and aspects of life. The Quran, revealed in Arabic, elevated the language to its highest level.[7]

CONCEPT OF GLOBALIZATION

Globalization Globalization is a term derived from the verb "عولم" in the pattern of "فَوْعَلَ," also derived from the morphological form "فوعلة," indicating the transformation of something into another form. It is a concept that defies easy linguistic definitions, encompassing deep and multidirectional descriptions of the continuous process of change.[8]

Globalization is the act of making something, whatever that may be, global or endowing it with the quality of universality. This meaning has been endorsed by the Arabic Language Academy in Cairo[9]. Dr. Sadiq al-Dajani sees globalization as derived from the verb "عولم," suggesting that the action requires an actor to perform it. In other words, globalization needs someone to universalize it in the world.[10]

The term "globalization" is a translation of the French word "Mondialisation," meaning making something global. This French term is, in turn, a translation of the English word "Globalisation," which first appeared in the United States. It conveys the idea of universalizing something and expanding its scope to encompass everything, making the world one directed entity within a single civilization.[11]

Globalization is a term shrouded in ambiguity, laden with mystery and debate, embodying major phenomena with dimensions and manifestations that defy precise definition. It is described more than it is known, lacking a universally agreed-upon definition. The formulations are approximate, and we find ourselves faced with numerous definitions beneath the looseness of this term due to the multitude of perspectives through which researchers view it and the variation in their understanding of the concept and its intricacies.

The prevailing definition in Western literature characterizes globalization as the increase in mutual interconnection between human societies through the processes of the movement of goods, capital, production techniques, individuals, and information[12]. Meanwhile, Arab expatriates and secularists define it as the global generalization of economic, social, and cultural exchanges on a global scale. It is a process of moving things, ideas, and people with unprecedented ease, fluidity, and inclusivity.[13]

GLOBALIZATION AND UNIVERSALITY

Many of us confuse two important terms: globalization and universality, considering them two sides of the same coin. However, this is incorrect. Globalization differs

significantly from universality, and we find that the term globalization is a relatively recent concept compared to universality. The term has been adopted from the concept of universality.

To understand the difference between globalization and universality, it's essential to first look at the terminology of each. Universality is the openness to the world and substantial interaction with diverse cultures worldwide while retaining the nation's uniqueness, thoughts, and principles. In essence, universality means openness to others while preserving one's identity.

As a result of this openness, universality is a characteristic that has distinguished Islamic religion, as it was sent to all humanity, not to a specific race or ethnicity. Allah addresses all people in His wise book collectively, without favoring a specific group. The reason for lagging behind in current civilization is the exclusion of Islamic religion from universality and not incorporating it into various aspects of life.[14]

On the other hand, globalization is far removed from the term universality. Globalization involves the detachment of a nation from its values and principles, working to erase the nation's individuality and assimilate it into other nations. It eliminates the specificities of a nation and solidifies the love of individualism.[15]

Objectives of Globalization:

Globalization has cultural, political, economic, and social objectives, which can be presented in the following points:

−   Reconfiguring human thinking and changing their concepts and moral values to replace them with materialism and consumer culture.[16]

−   Nations abandoning their identity, beliefs, and principles, adopting Western behavior patterns.

−   Destruction of the cultural depth of a nation, nullifying its identity, stripping it of its spiritual and cultural depth, and transforming it into raw material subject to reshaping.

−   Exploitation of the world's resources, presented on a silver platter to a few families controlling the economy of the United States and the entire world.[17]

−   Elimination of the other, achieving dependency, wealth, and influence.

−   Changing the concept of the family based on religious and natural social values, encompassing patterns of behavior adopted in Western society in general.

−   Imposing Western political control on some governing systems and their affiliated peoples.[18]

−   Elimination of Islamic education and culture.

−   Exclusion and marginalization of Islam from governance, legislation, education, and ethics, paving the way for Western systems, laws, and values derived from materialistic, secular, and pragmatic philosophies.[19]

Impact of Globalization on the Arabic Language:

The Arabic language has faced invasions and challenges throughout its long history in various ways and forms that attempted to undermine it. One of these challenges is Western colonization, which, from the outset, aimed to erase Arab identity in an attempt to eliminate the Arabic language because it knew that the Arabic language is a source of danger. Therefore, it mobilized all resources to separate Arabs and work on undermining their constants, with the Arabic language at the forefront.

In contemporary challenges, the spread of globalization has permeated every aspect of life, including economic, political, social, cultural, and linguistic domains. It entails the dominance of a single language worldwide—English. In this dominance, other languages, including Arabic, are marginalized in fulfilling their communicative roles among the speaking communities. The Arabic language has not been immune to the threats and challenges posed by globalization, evident in the following aspects:

Proliferation of Education in Foreign Languages:
Foreign languages have significantly overshadowed the Arabic language in Arab schools and universities, leading to a partial exclusion of the mother tongue. Implicitly, this suggests the claim by its adversaries that Arabic is an archaic language unfit for sciences and technology; rather, it is a language reserved for poetry, literature, and humanities. This impact persists despite the richness and depth inherent in the Arabic language. The burden placed on students learning in a foreign language hinders their comprehension of scientific material, limiting them to reception rather than fostering creativity and innovation. The inadequacy of many teachers and students in foreign language proficiency exacerbates the problem.[20]
The dilemma of bilingualism in education has caused a disruption in social structures that will intensify over time if the issue is not addressed. Two generations will emerge, each with allegiance to the country that speaks its language.[21]
Granting foreign languages more significance than necessary and elevating them to official status in commercial, legal, academic, and international transactions has repercussions on the educational, social, cultural, and linguistic levels in Arab countries. It erects barriers against creativity, progress, and prosperity.

Spread of Foreign Terms:
Language interaction is an inevitable result of societal interactions. The use of foreign words has become prevalent in both spoken and written Arabic, resulting from the inevitable collision between different linguistic communities. This phenomenon induces psychological and social changes in individuals, leading to a loss of self-confidence and a diminished sense of belonging to the nation because language is entwined with cultural and social conditions.
The danger posed by this trend is evident in the disregard for the Arabic language by its speakers. Pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammatical structures have become distorted due to the amalgamation of foreign words. Arabic words are now heard with incorrect pronunciation and lacking linguistic precision, accompanied by weakened grammatical rules and an extensive influence of foreign melodies, resulting in a devouring of letters.[22]

Attempt to Consolidate Arabic Dialects in Writing:
It is undeniable that Arabic, like other languages, has two levels: the formal or standard level, prevalent in official, literary, and scientific expressions, and the colloquial or non-standard level, dominant in daily life and informal communication. While language enthusiasts strive to bridge these levels to reach a balanced language akin to those in advanced nations, some writings on online platforms employ colloquial dialects to intentionally create a distinction between these two levels.
The danger lies not only in the use of colloquial language, as colloquialism has coexisted with the formal level since pre-Islamic times, but in the writing of colloquial dialects.

[23]The voices, expressions, and letter forms change, paving the way for the transformation of these dialects into a language divergent from the mother tongue.

Exclusion of Standard Arabic from Media Outlets:
Visual, written, and auditory media have influenced the Arabic language due to the prevalence of colloquial dialects in television through movies, series, programs, and advertisements broadcasted in various dialects. Additionally, the large number of Western satellite channels has impacted Arab recipients, disseminating foreign cultures that are alien to Arab societies. This has resulted in the fragmentation and destabilization of Standard Arabic.

Strategies to Confront the Challenges of Globalization on the Arabic Language:
The risks and challenges facing the Arabic language, such as the promotion of local dialects and the alteration of its structure and meaning through the use of foreign terms, call for serious consideration of means to protect and develop the native language to keep pace with the contemporary era. This can be achieved through the following proposals:

A **- Promoting education in correct Arabic at all levels,** starting from kindergarten to universities. Education in foreign languages or colloquial dialects would come at the expense of the mother tongue, negatively affecting both written and oral communication.
B - **Reforming education at all levels,** especially at the university level, to produce competent teachers and educators. This reform should involve updating curricula and teaching methods, incorporating audio-visual aids, and focusing on artificial intelligence-based language processing systems to enhance linguistic skills.
C **- Producing programs and series in Standard Arabic** to align with intellectual and cultural developments and compete with dominant Western programs, films, and series on satellite channels.
D - **Harnessing media and communication** as a winning card by introducing our language into the global communication realm, leveraging technological advancements to develop the Arabic language.[24]
E - **Benefiting from the principles of organization and arrangement** achieved in the fields of mathematics, statistics, and engineering.[25]
F - **Increasing Arabic digital content on the Internet,** including educational, informational, and cultural websites, as well as Arabic e-libraries and more.
G **- Promoting Arab culture and human values** through various means and methods in the age of technology and information, introducing others to our authentic values and dispelling misconceptions—all in the Arabic language.

In summary, the preservation of the Arabic language is a matter for the entire nation. It requires the strong will of its people to resist the cultural and linguistic invasion of globalization, to halt the encroachment of foreign languages within its own borders, and to recognize the Arabic language's ability to interact with modern scientific experiences and keep pace with technological advancements. As the renowned science fiction novelist Jules Verne stated a century ago, "Arabic is the language of the future."[26]

CONCLUSION

Upon addressing the issues surrounding this topic, it becomes evident that globalization is a term rooted in the Western context, carrying elements of control and arrogance. It is an industry originating in America, which has meticulously formulated its strategies over an extended period. Relentlessly, it seeks to undermine our Arabic language through various means. Therefore, it is crucial for us to recognize and avert the imminent danger that has permeated our Arabic language, presenting formidable challenges. Mobilizing all available resources is essential to effectively confront this threat.

The authentic and pragmatic approach to the process of language development and modernization relies on the emergence of a new renaissance at both the civilizational and political levels. This, in turn, will foster progress in various fields and domains. The prerequisite for such a renaissance lies solely in the civilizational will, complemented by actions that align with that will and its spirit. Without this, development loses its essence, becoming distorted and yielding outcomes that are diametrically opposed.

The central issue resides in political power, its will, and its aspirations. Any attempts to seek justifications and reasons beyond the confines of this problem are merely distractions that lead to further failure, regression, and despair. Language represents a branch of the problem, not its root. Treating the branches won't bring about healing if the origin remains corrupted. The sole effective remedy lies in an intellectual and political renaissance grounded in a distinct and unwavering civilizational vision.

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