

## Principles of Teaching Arabic Language in the Indian Context: Teachers' View

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### Abstract

Teaching a non-native language aims to equip students with fundamental language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This investigation concentrates on enhancing the teaching of Arabic in India. Based on a qualitative study employing descriptive experiential analysis, this paper proposes strategies for teaching Arabic as a foreign language in Tamil Nadu, India, and discusses associated challenges. Papers presented at conferences in India, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia, as well as relevant journal articles, books, and research papers, were mined for data. The study provides a comprehensive case analysis of a highly experienced Arabic instructor and identifies essential principles for effective Arabic instruction, namely 1. Principle of Speech before Writing; 2. Principle of Gradation; in teaching Arabic and 3. Principles of Teaching Skills of Arabic. Findings indicate areas for development in the pedagogical competence of Arabic professors in colleges and universities in Tamil Nadu, highlighting the need for greater teaching awareness. That can be developed through intensive practical workshops to be conducted to develop the teaching-learning process. Nonetheless, the study highlights the ability of dedicated instructors to foster a rich learning environment. This research provides insights that can be implemented and applied qualitatively to enhance Arabic language education in India, leading to a more effective and engaging learning environment for students in India, ultimately resulting in a more impactful and engaging learning experience for students.

**Keywords:** Arabic; Pedagogical Competence; Sociocultural Context; Classroom Interaction

### INTRODUCTION

Arabic is the mother tongue of about 135 million Arabs in some 20 Nations stretching from the Atlantic coast of North Africa in the west to the Sultanate of Oman in the East and from Syria in the north to Sudan in the south. The Arabic language became one of the recognised languages in many reputed organisations such as UN, UNESCO, etc. Arabic is a rich language in its context, structures, and constructions. Most words are derived from roots, which consist of three consonants called radicals. The addition of vowels, prefixes, and suffixes to the root makes words. 70 word patterns are created, each with its own meaning. For example, different words with different meanings are derived from the root "k-t-b" as given below (Zubair 2018, 37)

Kitaabun - book

Maktabun - office/desk

Kitaabatun - writing

Maktabatun - library

Kaatibun - writer

Makaatabatun – correspondence

Maktoobun - written material

We can also observe the change in meaning in the two sentences given below:

Al-rajulu Alladi *Nasara* Abee - The man who helped my father

Al-rajulu Alladi *Nasarahu* Abee - The man whom my father helped

As one of the elements of managing education as a teacher in an educational institution that is directly involved in the learning process, he must be able to maintain his class, formulate learning objectives operationally, determine learning material, establish methods that are appropriate to the learning objectives, evaluate learning outcomes, and have other professional abilities so that the learning process can run according to the goals to be achieved (Bin-Tahir & Rinantanti, 2016; Rinantanti et al, 2017). A teacher is also the spearhead of the learning process, and the competency role of the teacher is crucial to the successful implementation of educational programmes, and it is mostly determined by the function and pedagogic competence of the teacher (bin Tahir, 2008). This article sheds light on the principles of teaching Arabic in the Indian Context in an experiential way.

## METHOD

This research is based on a qualitative study under descriptive experiential analysis to find out how to adopt the teaching principles of Arabic and its learning in the Institutions of Tamil Nadu, India. The secondary data were collected from my papers presented at regional, national, and international conferences and seminars organised in India, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. Journal articles, books, and research papers are used for data collection.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study is a case study of an efficient teacher with 24 years of teaching experience carried out in an institution, in which the researcher tries to find all the essential principles in the development of Arabic studies. It requires thorough study in collecting data about the subject from the encountered teaching experience and environment. The outcomes of the study found that the pedagogical competence of Arabic Professors in the colleges and universities of Tamil Nadu State, India. The lack of teaching awareness can be perceived. However, the lack of awareness is not a threat to the failure of learning, because this lack of awareness can be embellished by the affinity of teachers in creating a good learning process.

### Arabic In India

Arabic was the mother tongue of many reputed Indian Scholars like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Union Education Minister of independent India, and Muhammad Khalji of Tamil Nadu and his descendants. The masterpieces of Shaik Sadaqatullah, Shaik Salahuddin, al-Imam al-Aroos in Arabic literature, running thousands of stanzas and couplets in Arabic, were considered on par with the Arab bards of the Arabian Peninsula for their literary talents, excellences, and artifices (Zubair 2017, 42).

Arabic is the linking language. Most of the sources of petrol available in the countries of the Middle East, such as the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Libya, and nations of the Arabian Gulf like Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. The Non-

Arab community began to depend to a great extent on the import of petrol from the Islamic world. And this dependence increased greatly during the first half of the 20th century. This concern created strong connections between the Non-Arabs and the Arabs, and one of the results of these connections was the interest of the non-Arabs in the Arab language culture and their religion. And this created many assignments and human resources required in the Arabian Peninsula, and hence, Arabic plays a vital role in their daily lives and work. The next section deals with the principles of teaching Arabic based on the researcher's experience as a faculty member for about 24 years.

### **The Principles Of Teaching Arabic**

1. Principles of Practise; an important psychological Principle of Learning a foreign language is a principle of practise. The mother tongue is learned by practise, and such practise is needed for learning the Arabic language. In learning the mother tongue, speech habits are formed without any conscious effort on the part of the individual. On the other hand, framing new speech habits in a language like Arabic requires persistent effort through practise.
2. Principle of Speech before Writing; in teaching Arabic, listening and speaking should be taught first, followed by reading and writing. Language is completely expressed in speech. When teaching Arabic as a foreign language, speaking skills are posted last with negligible importance, which is prevalent in India. A student has to master the basics of Arabic orally before he attempts writing.
3. Principle of Concreteness; this principle is essential to learning the Arabic language. The teacher should proceed from the basic level to the advanced level. A number of examples should be given. These examples should be related to the actual environment of the students who experience Arabic learning practically.
4. Principle of Contextualization; language is the product of context, and without the appropriate context, there can never be any language in its true sense. An attempt to teach a language without providing the appropriate context is bound to fail. Only in proper contexts do the words and constructions become meaningful. Such a meaningful context makes language learning easy, effective, and logical.
5. Principle of Gradation; in teaching Arabic, one should follow the principle of gradation. The Arabic material should be arranged in a suitable order. It should be passed from the known to the unknown in stages. Each of their stages will serve as preparation for the next.
6. Principles of Teaching Skills of Arabic; certain basic principles should be followed in order to teach Arabic language skills in an effective way. They are:
  - a. Teach the language, not about the language  
The teacher is expected to teach the language, not about the language. It means that the teacher should teach only the use of language and not try to describe it.
  - b. Teach Speech first  
Listening and speaking come first, and reading and writing follow. Language is primarily a spoken thing, so teachers have to begin with speech.
  - c. Teach the language, not its vocabulary  
The mere teaching of vocabulary is not sufficient. It is only a part of the language. One should teach only controlled vocabulary. The extent of the vocabulary does not matter much.

## d. Teach the language, not its literature

In learning Arabic, a student should require mastery over the four language skills LSRW. So the emphasis should be on the teaching of language skills, literature comes only next. It will gain importance in due course.

## e. Teach Arabic as such

In teaching Arabic, the teacher is expected to teach the current uses of the language and not the finer points of grammar at the beginner's level.

The desert Arabs said	qaala al-arab	Singular Masculine Verb	قال الاعراب
The desert Arabs said	qaalat al-arab	Singular Feminine Verb	قالت الأعراب
The Sun has ascended	tala al-shams	Singular Masculine Verb	طلع الشمس
The Sun has ascended	talat al-shams	Singular Feminine Verb	طلعت الشمس
The men stood	qaama al-rajul	Singular Masculine Verb	قام الرجال
The men stood	qaamat al-rajul	Singular Feminine Verb	قامت الرجال

The researcher opines that one should teach both cases to the learning students, even though both forms are correct.

7. Give emphasis to drill. Arabic language learning is essentially a matter of building up the correct habits, which are formed by internship practise. Drilling is therefore of the utmost importance. The advanced, finer points of grammar should not be taught at the beginner's' level. For example, the five types of diacritical marks / declension اعراب are permitted in the text *laa hawla walaa quwwatta illa billahil aliyil azeem* لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله العلي العظيم (This may be taught to the learners at advanced level)

laa hawla walaa <b>quwwatta</b>	لا حول ولا قوة
laa <b>hawlu</b> walaa <b>quwwattun</b>	لا حول ولا قوة
laa <b>hawla</b> walaa <b>quwwatan</b>	لا حول ولا قوة
laa <b>hawla</b> walaa <b>quwwattun</b>	لا حول ولا قوة
laa <b>hawlu</b> walaa <b>quwwata</b>	لا حول ولا قوة

8. The Direct method of teaching Arabic with a structural approach. The mother tongue is considered an obstacle to the establishment of a direct bond between experience and expression. Therefore, the use of the mother tongue for giving the meaning of words and phrases is reduced to the minimum if necessity arises. The Phrases and Constructions shall be maintained in a base language like English It may help a

student understand the Arabic language effectively. On the other hand, a teacher should not always rely on such base languages. This direct method follows the principle that the unit of speech should be the sentences, not the words. All expressions should be in sentence form. New words are taught by using them in sentences. In fact, listening precedes and provides material for speaking. Speaking and listening precede and provide matter for reading, and reading precedes and provides matter for writing. If one tries to miss listening and speaking and reach reading and writing. then he will not grasp the four basic language skills. That is why the direct method places much emphasis on listening and speaking.

9. The Place of Grammar in the Direct Method. There is no place for teaching theoretical grammar in this method. This Method ignores grammar and follows the system of acquiring language by using it. Even though this method ignores grammar, it is grammatically correct. An approach tells what to teach, and a method tells how to teach. In a structural approach, the structures have to be taught. The different structures of the subject matter are to be taught. Any method can be used for the purpose of presenting the structures to the learners. No two languages are structurally alike. Each language is structured uniquely. In this respect, the approach is indeed an improvement over the direct method.

a. Regarding the word order. The most approved word order in grammatical Arabic is verb + subject + object. The verb is always in the *he* or *she* singular form

The scholar wrote the lesson on the blackboard      *kataba al-aalim al-darsa ala al-sabooraah*      كَتَبَ الْعَالِمُ الدَّرْسَ عَلَى السَّبُورَةِ

Following the above word order, the verb is placed first in the sentence. It must always be singular, even though the subject may be Plural or Dual. For example

The thieves have stolen the merchant's property      *sarraqa allusoos maal al-tajir*      سَرَقَ اللُّصُوفُ مَالَ التَّاجِرِ

But if the subject precedes the verb, then the verb must agree in number as well as in gender. For example

The thieves have stolen the merchant's property      *al-lusoos saaraqoo maal al-Tajir*      اللُّصُوفُ سَرَقُوا مَالَ التَّاجِرِ

b. The syntax of any language is best learned through intensive reading, which enables the student to acquire a natural feeling for the correct construction without overloading his memory.

c. An objective with accusative or a verbal noun + adjective with accusative is the most common way of rendering an adverb.

He walked Quickly      *masha sareean*      مَشَى سَرِيعًا  
She studied the subject widely      *darasat al-mawdoo' dirasa waasia*      دَرَسَتِ الْمَوْضُوعَ دَرَاةً وَاسِعَةً

- d. The use of structural words is the main element of a sentence. They are all keys to all Arabic constructions. All the prepositions, pronouns, relatives, and conjunctions are structural words. There are also structural adjectives and structural adverbs.
- e. The Other characteristic is almost inflection, since they are changes or differences in the form of words to show the function they are doing in a sentence. The variation is intended to express case, number, gender, tense, and so on.
- f. Each lesson from the reader or text book should be introduced in few sentences. The sentence may consolidate what has been taught already and also prepare the way for what is to be taught. So words are carefully chosen to combine easily with each structure. Words should be presented in actual, meaningful situations.
- g. The teacher should avoid the confusing Arabic passages for grammatical application, explanation, or clarification. They can prefer simple passages to complex language.
- h. Regarding the prepositions, there is no need to explain their types or classifications. One can explain these prepositions in words or applied sentences, then their meaning, and finally their classification. The kinds of prepositions /حروف are 14 and they are as follows:

Prepositions/Particles	حرف الجر
Prepositions resemble like verbs	الحروف المشبهة بالفعل
The Conjunctions	حروف العطف
Particles for Resemblance	حرف التشبيه
Particles for Calling	حروف النداء
Particles of Inflection	حروف الإعراب
Particles as Additions	حروف الزيادة
Particles for Explanation	حرفا التفسير
Particles for Infinitives	حروف المصدر
Particles for Specification	. حروف التحصيل
Particles for Expectation	. حروف التوقع
Interrogative Particles	. حرفا الاستفهام
Particles for Condition	. حروف الشرط
Particle for deterrence	. حرف الردع

## CONCLUSION

Thus the teacher of one element in learning has a multi-role not only limited as a "teacher" who conducts the transfer of knowledge, but also as a mentor who encourages potential, develops alternatives, and mobilizes students in learning (Mufidah & Bin-Tahir, 2018). As the heart of teaching and learning, pedagogy has undergone impressive changes from its traditional form. The teachers have been the primary source of knowledge to its more recent form, the technology-supported pedagogy, where technology is used to facilitate the teaching and learning processes. This transformational change requires teachers' creative thinking to adopt appropriate technology for the delivery of content knowledge during their teaching (Rahimi et al, 2021).

The teacher plays an important role to influence the students to attain their attitude towards learning, especially for the Arabic language. Designing the proper module is the need of the hour and improve the performance of the Arabic teaching-learning process (Zubair 2022, 24) Teacher is the most important element in education. An Ideal teacher in the teaching of Arabic to non-native speakers should be the conscious teacher of the digital era. The teacher should reconcile all educational processes, its competencies and capabilities. Then only the teacher will become the mentor, guide and facilitator of learning. Arabic teaching to Indian students, requires suitable strategies and methodologies. Each and every faculty member has his own problems and limitations. This study will serve as reference for other researchers, who wish to explore the issues of Arabic teaching in Indian context in the forthcoming period.

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