ARABIC, WRITTEN ARABIC, AFRICAN LANGUAGES, LITERACY, THE MEDIA pdf

1: Arabic Without Walls

Most students learning Arabic as a foreign language tend to get exposure to this standard written language first before they learn a dialect. Educated speakers of Arabic do mix the standard language and their own dialects to varying degrees depending on the situation.

Reviewed by David Roberts Prepublication manuscript. As writing systems go, Arabic script is not particularly old. It emerged for the first time around the 4th century CE, being consolidated in the early Islamic period and being applied for the first time to other languages around the 11th century CE Daniels, It came about through the increasing influence and diffusion of Islam. There are few institutions coordinating or standardizing the process â€" a notable exception being the National Alphabet of Chad Warren-Rothlin, , â€" so Ajamis tend to be diverse and idiosyncratic, exhibiting a high degree of variation between languages, writers Luffin, , and manuscripts Bondarev, Ajamis often jostle for space with other scripts: The extensive list of references to Arabic script usage in Africa Mumin, 1 References to the book under review are cited with page numbers only. In Africa, official statistics tend to be blind to literacy efforts in anything but Roman script. Although the use of Ajami is well documented in Hausa, Swahili, and Fulfulde, it is usually thought of as being quite a rare and isolated phenomenon. Mumin puts paid to this myth, listing â€" and illustrating with a colour map 45 â€" no less than 80 attested languages and a further 15 cases that need further verification. And tantalisingly, contributors repeatedly express their confidence that many more sources are waiting to be discovered Mumin, 49; Bondarev, ; Humery, ; Vydrin, From then on, the book is structured geographically, with North, West, East, and South Africa treated in turn. Unsurprisingly, it is West Africa that dominates. Granted, it does make a natural grouping with some of the SW Algerian Berber languages that are the focus of the only other contribution in this geographical area Souag, Overall, the geographical spread is impressive and not limited to the African continent. There is also evidence from Brazil and the 2 Caribbean Dobronravin, , not to mention a passing reference to some Swahili correspondence discovered in Goa, India Vierke, Since Ajami spread with the influence of Islam, most sources are religious texts. But there is an array of other genres too several of which are published as appendices: These latter two genres are reminders that new media are generating an unprecedented quantity of new and easily accessible written Ajami data Souag, And of course, it is perfectly possible, using traditional field methods, to elicit new written Ajami texts expressly for the purpose of linguistic research Vydrin, With a diversity of sources comes a diversity of field conditions and methods. The book is not devoid of human interest. In a Brazilian plantation, an African slave killed in an uprising is found with a small book of prayers left dangling around his neck Dobronravin, Could they have foreseen that it would eventually be the women again who would eventually be the custodians of Ajami, memorising long poems and jealously preserving manuscripts ? Idiosyncratic transcription and transliteration conventions can make comparison of linguistic data between publications onerous. And Ajami, with its complex mixture of linguistic, orthographic, calligraphic, and exegetical variation, not to mention spelling mistakes and degraded texts, presents particularly formidable challenges. All the existing traditions actually transcribe realisations of pronunciation, but the method adopted here is a specifically graphemic transliteration. Established traditions also have a tendency to reflect the phonology of the language of the readership, whereas here every meaningful unit of the writing system is accounted for. Any graphic variant of a baseline letter is coded in transliteration by means of a subscript number. The introduction untangles these complexities with great clarity and the ensuing chapters apply the transcription and transliteration conventions in a thoroughly systematic way, with a fine attention to detail, accuracy, and readability. Any writing system that is invented for one language undergoes changes when it is borrowed to represent another, to take into account the linguistic structure of that language. In Africa, this may include phenomena such as seven- and nine-vowel systems, vowel length, diphthongs, syllabic nasals, palatal affricates, retroflex and labio- velar stops, palatalisation, labialisation, nasalisation, and tone. Interestingly, additional letter shapes are rarely added

to the basic inventory Daniels, 30; Bondarev, Instead, there is a strong preference for amplifying the basic stock by the addition of diacritics Souag 99; Breedveld, The book is packed with the minutiae of grapheme-phoneme correspondences, exploring the relationships between writing, speech, and meaning in Ajami, local Arabic, and standard Arabic. There are numerous cases of overspecification: Underspecification is common too: At the same time, in Fulfulde, Arabic graphemes take on a chronogrammatic value Breedvelde, Word breaks are also an issue, some orthographies or individual writers preferring to eliminate them. Mandinka Ajami tends to agglutinate postpositions, auxiliaries, and quantifiers to the content words, sometimes resulting in entire sentences being written as one word Vydrin, These linguistic choices are inherently different from the aesthetic choice of scriptura continua in Pulaar Ajami 5 Humery, , although the visual effect is similar. It is often claimed that because Arabic script is an Abjad, it is not suitable for writing non-Semitic languages Mumin, 50; Vierke, Yet the reader is left with the overall impression of a pliable raw material that has ably demonstrated its capacity to represent the linguistic structures of at least some African languages. There is sometimes evidence of a correlation between linguistic suitability and motivation for literacy. Warren-Rothlin , , on the other hand, considers Ajami to be eminently suitable for representing Hausa, Fulfulde, Chadian Arabic, and Kanuri in some cases, perhaps more so than Roman script and notes a correspondingly high motivation for using Ajami in that region. But it would be simplistic to imagine a direct cause and effect in all cases. Clearly, Ajami is never chosen primarily for its linguistic efficiency, but for its social role as an emblem of Islamic civilisation Hemery, Researchers in several domains will find this collection a useful addition to their libraries. It invites grammatologists to look beyond the usual pre-occupation with Roman script and takes Semiticists to the peripheries of their linguistic family. Several of the articles adopt an ethnographic approach which will appeal to anthropologists and the social context that forms the backdrop to all the contributions will speak to sociolinguists and historians. I conclude by suggesting four areas that are ripe for further research with regard to Ajami script for African languages: Bondarev briefly discusses orthographic depth in his contribution, pointing out in Old Kanembu, vowels and tones are shallow representations while consonants, because they are underspecified, are deep. Elsewhere in the collection, the subject of orthographic depth is often implicitly present, but more overt, intentional discussion situated within the framework of the recent literature e. This is novel, since the bulk of existing Africanist tone orthography research to date focuses exclusively on Roman script e. Bird ; Kutsch Lojenga ; Mfonyam ; Roberts Another interesting angle would be to explore the suitability of Ajami from the point of view of the psychology of reading. What if the same research question were to be 7 extended to the use of Arabic script for African languages with their vastly different linguistic structures? For anyone interested in the subject this is virgin territory. Typically, Africans learn Arabic script through Classical Arabic and then apply it to their own local language. With this in mind, the Ajami field is wide open for classroom experiments comparing performance of learners who acquire Arabic script through the medium of their L1 first, transitioning later to Classical Arabic, and those who acquire it in the opposite direction. The effect of orthographic depth on reliance upon semantic context for oral reading in English and Hebrew. Journal of Research in Reading Strategies for representing tone in African writing systems. Written Language and Literacy 2. The effects of orthographic depth on learning to read alphabetic, syllabic, and logographic scripts. Reading Research Quarterly Bilingual is as bilingual does: Final report study on medium of instruction in primary schools in Ethiopia, 22 January Ethiopian Ministry of Education. Language status and hemispheric involvement in reading: How does type of orthography affect reading in Arabic and Hebrew as first and second languages? Open Journal of Modern Linguistics 3. Kutsch Lojenga, Constance Multilingualism on the ground. Mfonyam, Joseph Ngwa Tone analysis and tone orthography. Journal of West African Languages Mwinsheikhe, Halima Mohammed Science and the language barrier: Mother-tongue language and concept development in science: Language, Culture and Curriculum 7. A tone orthography typology. Association for the Development of Education in Africa. Orthographic depth and its impact on universal predictors of reading: David Roberts rbrdvd gmail.

ARABIC, WRITTEN ARABIC, AFRICAN LANGUAGES, LITERACY, THE MEDIA pdf

Such an approach to Arabic literacy has led to literacy rates in the UAE and other Arabian Gulf countries far below other developed countries and even lower than developing countries where children learn to read in a language variety that closely resembles the spoken language in their community (see Myhill, Myhill, J. ().

The social use of literacy and the values attached to different scripts are explored here through a combination of methods of survey, unstructured and structured interviews with lay and key informants, observation and photography. As various ethnolinguistic groups view and value literacy in specific scripts differently, interventions at the levels of policy, policy implementation and classroom instruction have to take into account these cultural discrepancies in the way literacy and scripts are valued and viewed. Introduction Eritrea, a newly independent African country, has a mother tongue education policy that allows delivery of elementary education to all its language groups in the nine different languages they speak. English is also taught in elementary schools in preparation for English medium instruction in secondary and higher-level education. The nine languages of the ethnolinguistic groups, originating from different language families, have three different writing systems. This means, within one national curriculum, three different writing systems are taught. Outside the educational institutions, the scripts and the languages of the country are in use in public broadcast media, in business, and local informal commerce. A simple observation in the main streets of most of the Eritrean towns reveals the use of three scripts and languages in naming businesses like shops, bars and restaurants. The social and educational use of the three scripts in the multilingual context of Eritrea is the focus of this presentation. After 10 years as a British protectorate, it was federated with its southern neighbour, Ethiopia. Formal independence was declared in after a UN supervised referendum where the majority of Eritreans voted for independence. The EPLF, during its guerrilla days, had tried to provide to inhabitants of areas that fell under its control social services that included mother tongue basic education and adult literacy. Textbook production efforts, started in the movement times, continued in all the nine languages after Woldemikael, For some of the languages Nara and Bidhaawyeet , the EPLF effort in the s was the start of their written history; others had a much older history as written languages, going back more than years for Kunama, Afar, Bilen, Saho and Tigre, and over a thousand years for Tigrinya and Arabic Dutcher, In a short period of time, the EPLF and later on the Ministry of Education have accomplished enormous tasks in committing languages to writing and standardizing them Hailemariam, Despite these successes, education in the mother tongue has faced several problems. Reluctance to embrace mother tongue education from some language communities was one of these problems Hailemariam, At the moment the educational system is undergoing a major change to address issues of reach and quality Menesey, The proposed transformation will bring changes over the entire educational system and will affect the mother tongue education at the elementary level. The changes in curriculum mean new textbooks for elementary instruction in nine languages, new teaching approaches and, for some groups, new orthographies. These amendments were partly the result of low reading levels reported in a huge survey of reading skills in most of the Eritrean languages as well as in English carried out in The Tigrinya are predominantly Christians while the Tigre are mostly Moslems. Arabic is the mother language of the Rashaidas, who make up around 1 percent of the Eritrean population that stands at about 3. Arabic, as the language of the holy book in Islam half of the population of the country are Moslems , carries religious significance. Around 20 percent of the population are speakers of the languages of Afar, Saho, Kunama, Nara, Bidhaawyeet and Bilen, which use Latin-scripted orthographies. Speakers from these smaller language communities usually have a substantial percentage of multilinguals who can use their mother tongue and one or two of the languages in wider use in the country. The use of Latin script dates back to the advent of missionaries around years ago and in the case of Nara and Bidhaawyeet to the mother tongue education efforts a couple of decades ago. The social use of Latin-scripted orthographies is still limited. Besides its use in the respective elementary education programs for the six languages, Latin has a limited

function in the public media and in the Catholic and Protestant churches. Some orthography specific problems and some social issues regarding the use of Latin are still evident in this process of writing and standardizing the languages. For instance, the Afar orthography in use in Eritrea differs in its representation of three sounds written as dh, x and c from those used in Djibouti and Ethiopia written as x, c and q Interview Wedekind, Different Kunama orthographies, reflecting the Catholic and Protestant churches heritage, are in use in the Kunama areas Interview Oddi Gagasi, The introduction of tone and vowel length markers in the Kunama orthography by the Ministry of Education in the new primers still needs to be spread out into the wider community. Similar issues exist with the newly introduced tone markings in Nara. Most of the orthographies may still be better served by finding simpler ways of representing one or two of their unique sounds Interview Wedekind, Social Use of Literacy After describing the prevailing multilingualism and multiple scripts literacy context in the country, this section looks at the different cultural practices and values associated with literacy use and the three scripts in different communities. A sociolinguistic survey explored the use of literacy, the values attached to literacy and preferences expressed regarding scripts. Prior to this structured survey, an unstructured exploratory assessment posing open-ended questions to 25 respondents was conducted. Observations and photography of literacy practices supplemented this literacy practice study in an effort to combine quantitative data with ethnography. Although the illiteracy rate among adults in Eritrea is estimated at 50 percent Ministry of Information, , higher percentages in the sample around 60 percent allow closer examination of the literacy activities of literate Eritreans. The literates use their skills in different domains of their life to a varying degree. Respondents reported reading and writing at work, while engaged in entertainment, in functional activities of seeking or giving information, in religious ceremonies and in activities related to citizenship. Most of the reading and writing is being done in the work place and around activities related to the functional use of literacy. If the effect of most regular but routine practices of literacy like signing in for work are excluded by differentiating between the fluent readers with higher education thus likely to have clerical jobs requiring literacy skills and the beginning readers, a clearer picture of literacy practice appears. The beginning readers show substantially lower frequency of literacy practice. However, the overall frequency of engagement in literacy activities by respondents is low, with most respondents reporting engaging in literacy activity rarely, less than once a month and sometimes once in a year. The lowest frequency of literacy activity is observed in the domain of citizenship. Contacts with the state and local governance, represented by instances of writing complaint letters, for example, are low, originating from the weak, sometimes non-existing, institutions or the low civic traditions of communities in developing countries like Eritrea. There are differences among the language groups in their overall use of literacy. Use of literacy on religious occasions reveals differences among the religious groups with the Catholic-Protestant respondents reporting the highest frequency of religious literacy activity followed by Orthodox Christians and Moslems. Respondents highly value literacy. Views on values of literacy ranged from the functional uses of reading and writing to the power of literacy in bestowing balance and moderation upon its users all the way to the intrinsic values of goodness in literacy. One respondent, for instance, says: Analysis of responses reveals two main arguments related to values of literacy. Respondents attach importance to literacy for its economic value and the social status it confers to its users. Ethnic groups differ in the way they assess the social and economic value of literacy. The language groups with somewhat longer literary tradition put slightly lower economic value on literacy. The majority of the respondents agree literate people have better paid jobs and are more confident in their skills and in themselves. Others prefer to equate better life with hard work independent of whether one is literate or illiterate: On the other hand, illiteracy was equated to darkness and dependency. Arabic is the next widely used script. The limited use of Latin in the different domains corresponds to the lowest rate it gets as the most beneficial script to learn from among the three scripts in use in the country. It also matches with the concerns persistently expressed by speakers of the languages that adopted Latin script. Officials argue the spread of Latin script and the availability of Latin print materials could improve with time Interview Naib, Substantial percentages of respondents from Nara, Bilen, and Bidhaawyeet language groups

would like to see their language make a change of script. Nara, Bidhaawyeet, and Tigre respondents prefer Arabic script. Some speakers of Bidhaawyeet fear their language is not that much used and is threatened by neighbouring larger languages such as Tigre and Arabic Interview Nafee Osman, The first school that uses Bidhaawyeet as a medium of instruction opened only in Conclusions To understand the uses of literacy in general and the different scripts in particular, and the values attached to them by their users and owners, one has to look at a range of factors that include ethnic identity, religion, national and regional status of a script, and literary history of a language. These socio-cultural factors are behind significant differences between ethnic groups in their attitudes to literacy and the three scripts in Eritrea. Despite these inter-group variations, all language groups value literacy highly. Both represent the oldest literary traditions in Eritrea. This mix of use of scripts and the perception of longevity influence opinions and views in such a way that the more widely used and more preferred script increasingly serves populations in bigger geographical locations. The official use of Latin in schools could easily be contrasted to the low use of the script in society at large and the lower position it holds among a significant number of its users. This mismatch between the minimum social use and the lower values attached to Latin and its officially sanctioned use in public institutions attracts attention towards the unique language policy in Eritrea. The study of social uses and values of literacy and scripts may prove helpful in implementing changes to the mother tongue education and the classroom instruction of literacy in multilingual Eritrea. Interventions that target social perceptions could also benefit from studies of the social use of literacy. He is a lecturer at the University of Asmara Eritrea. Her research interests include Acquisition of Literacy and Intercultural Competencies. His area of interest is Multilingualism in the multicultural society. The wonderful people of Eritrea. Developing a Programme of Multilingual Education. Multilingualism and Multilingual Education, eds. Asmara, Government of Eritrea. A case study of Language diversity, policy and practice. Interview with Minister of Education Osman Salh. Menesey Tigringya magazine 1 2: National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students. Policies, Strategies and Prospects.

3: Manding languages - Wikipedia

Arabic, like all other Semitic languages (except for the Latin-written Maltese, and the languages with the Ge'ez script), is written from right to left. There are several styles of script, notably naskh, which is used in print and by computers, and ruqÊ»ah, which is commonly used in handwriting.

Educational Linguists on Parole Jula Ajami: This view is wrong for a number of reasons. They are not dialects of French but are languages in their own right that typologically distinct from the former colonial language. The majority of Islamic scholarship carried out through the various Koranic schooling systems in West Africa was and continues to be carried out in Classical Arabic. That said, for a number of major West African languages there exists a tradition of Ajami , which is a commonly used term to refer to the use of the Arabic script to write in sub-Saharan African languages. Western scholars have become increasingly interested in Ajami practices and texts in recent years as both a new archival source and as a narrative that counters the idea of Africa being on the oral side of a great literacy divide. For certain West African lingua francas like Hausa, spoken primarily in Nigeria and Niger, Ajami practices were quite wide-spread and remain so today. In the case of Manding varieties however the practices have seemed more limited. In the Western Manding varieties of Guinea-Bissau and the Gambia, Ajami practices appear to be rather well-established. In the case of Eastern varieties such as Bamanan and Jula however Ajami practices have been as rather limited. Indeed, the last Western evidence of Jula Ajami for instance stems from a French colonial linguist, Maurice Delafosse , in One market day as I made the rounds around the town-center to say greet friends, I happened upon some friends that I knew to be proficient in Arabic from their ties to the local mosque and Koranic school. Having greeted them and been offered a seat I decided to inquire about this idea of using Arabic letters to write in Jula. Had they ever heard of anyone doing that I asked? Watching the busy market-day pass by, a snicker or two passed between them before one of them spontaneously produced a small piece of cardboard from his wallet. Though I could not and still cannot read those lines, I had just been introduced to Jula Ajami literacy practices that I had been blind to for two years. Anyone brave enough to handle my attempt to more fully analyze Jula Ajami practices is welcome to look the paper. Given its length, jargon and citations though, here I want to really briefly highlight two of the most interesting features of Jula Ajami that I discovered in my research. That is, they were lists and instructions for preparing medicinal treatments using local plants. These recipes also incorporated religious elements from Islam within the preparation instructions. In this sense, the recipes fall under the banner of what scholars have labelled esoteric Islamic sciences Brenner, These kinds of practices are esoteric in the sense that they frequently only circulate in limited circles based around initiation-style learning. They are not secrets because of their illicit-nature but because their efficacy itself depends on their limited circulation. The fact that Jula Ajami seems to be closely tied to these kinds of practices may explain in part why the literacy practice is not widely on display to outsiders or foreigners. Second, my linguistic analysis of the texts suggests that Jula Ajami is not written in the form of Jula that is most widely-spoken in Burkina Faso. Linguists in West Africa typically conceptualize each village or town as having a particular dialect that can be assigned to the people in the place. But language is not tied to a place. Different ways of speaking a language travel every time that someone uses the language. Moreover, these ways of speaking are imbued with a certain social reading. What is interesting in the case of Jula Ajami then is that a certain way of speaking Julaâ€"that is, a certain registerâ€"came to be adopted as appropriate in writing texts. Language and Social Relations.

tion of the Francophone elite and a change in attitudes to African languages as written languages would facilitate their planned introduction in the public educational system. Using languages that the pupils actually understand as languages of instruction is a neces-.

A number of other native languages are also spoken in this part of the world such as Kurdish, Berber, and Mahri. Arabic is therefore also learned to various levels of proficiency, as a venerated, liturgical language, by many Muslims mainly in Asia e. The numerous dialects are purely spoken and are used in parallel to another form of the language that is primarily written but is also spoken in the media today. This co-existence of two forms of the same language to serve different purposes is known as diglossia. While these multiple designations in English seem to offer a breakdown of the different kinds of fuSHa that co-exist today, the Arabic designation sees the different types within a large continuum. This Standard Arabic is standard in that it remains almost exclusively the only recognized language of literacy across the Arabic speaking world. It also enjoys a special position for Arabic speakers because of the large body of texts that has been produced in this form of the language particularly around the golden age of the Islamic civilization. In addition to the Islamic religious texts and the classical Arabic literary texts, major scholarly contributions to the fields of science, medicine, astronomy, mathematics, and sociology for instance were written in the middle ages in this standard Arabic language. Most students learning Arabic as a foreign language tend to get exposure to this standard written language first before they learn a dialect. Educated speakers of Arabic do mix the standard language and their own dialects to varying degrees depending on the situation. While roughly four major regional dialects of Arabic spoken in the Arab world today have been identified, a multitude of dialectic variations can be noted even within one single country. The four regional dialects are divided into the following general categories: These dialects can differ greatly from one another to the point of mutual unintelligibility. In terms of language typology, Arabic belongs to the Semitic family of languages. Some of the members of this language family that are spoken today include Arabic, Aramaic relatively small communities mostly in Iraq and Syria , Amharic the national language of Ethiopia , Tigre spoken in Eritrea , and Hebrew spoken in Israel. There were many other members of this language family which have disappeared over time. These include, for example, Akkadian spoken in ancient Mesopotamia , Phoenician spoken in what is today Lebanon , and Eblaite spoken in ancient Syria. The Semitic languages first came to light in the Arabian Peninsula. Over the course of millennia these languages spread as different groups left the Arabian Peninsula, carrying their languages with them, into various parts of the Middle East and neighboring areas. Beginning in the 7th century CE, the Arab Conquests also known as Islamic or Muslim Conquests carried speakers of various Arabic dialects, with their religion of Islam and their language of Arabic, out of the Arabian Peninsula into almost all of the Middle East and North Africa, west into the Iberian Peninsula and all the way east to China. Over time, as the incoming Arabs intermarried with indigenous peoples mostly in the Middle East and North Africa, the Arabic language became the prominent language of these regions. While some of the native languages such as Kurdish Iraq and Syria , Berber Algeria and Morocco , Mahri Yemen , and Jebali Oman are still spoken in this area, some languages have gradually shrunk. In Egypt, the language that was spoken before the Muslims came was Coptic, a direct descendant of the Anciant Egyptian language. Today it only survives as a liturgical language of the Coptic Church. As a result of the contact Arabic has had with other languages over the past 15 centuries, many languages of the world have borrowed words from Arabic. Persian a member of the Indo-European language family and Turkish a member of the Altaic language family , for example, are replete with Arabic words. The very name of the language "Swahili," spoken in East Africa, is an Arabic word. Spanish and Portuguese have a large Arabic vocabulary approximately words dating back to the eight centuries of contact in the Iberian Peninsula under Muslim rule. English too has its share of words borrowed from Arabic - typically words starting with "al. But the Arabic word itself comes

from Kemet , which was the name of Ancient Egypt, literally meaning the dark, fertile soil irrigated by the Nile.

The second focuses on Ajami in this region, and, in particular, on how Qur'anic literacy and education, which was initiated to spread religious knowledge and Islamic codes of behaviour, was appropriated to write African languages and, along with Arabic, to facilitate communication in West Africa.

Flag of the Arab League , used in some cases for the Arabic language Flag used in some cases for the Arabic language Flag of the Kingdom of Hejaz â€" Arabic usually designates one of three main variants: In practice, however, modern authors almost never write in pure Classical Arabic, instead using a literary language with its own grammatical norms and vocabulary, commonly known as Modern Standard Arabic MSA. MSA is the variety used in most current, printed Arabic publications, spoken by some of the Arabic media across North Africa and the Middle East , and understood by most educated Arabic speakers. Certain grammatical constructions of CA that have no counterpart in any modern dialect e. No modern spoken variety of Arabic has case distinctions. As a result, MSA is generally composed without case distinctions in mind, and the proper cases are added after the fact, when necessary. Because most case endings are noted using final short vowels, which are normally left unwritten in the Arabic script, it is unnecessary to determine the proper case of most words. The practical result of this is that MSA, like English and Standard Chinese , is written in a strongly determined word order and alternative orders that were used in CA for emphasis are rare. In addition, because of the lack of case marking in the spoken varieties, most speakers cannot consistently use the correct endings in extemporaneous speech. As a result, spoken MSA tends to drop or regularize the endings except when reading from a prepared text. The numeral system in CA is complex and heavily tied in with the case system. This system is never used in MSA, even in the most formal of circumstances; instead, a significantly simplified system is used, approximating the system of the conservative spoken varieties. MSA uses much Classical vocabulary e. In addition, MSA has borrowed or coined a large number of terms for concepts that did not exist in Quranic times, and MSA continues to evolve. However, the current preference is to avoid direct borrowings, preferring to either use loan translations e. An earlier tendency was to redefine an older word although this has fallen into disuse e. Colloquial or dialectal Arabic refers to the many national or regional varieties which constitute the everyday spoken language and evolved from Classical Arabic. Colloquial Arabic has many regional variants; geographically distant varieties usually differ enough to be mutually unintelligible , and some linguists consider them distinct languages. They are often used in informal spoken media, such as soap operas and talk shows , [20] as well as occasionally in certain forms of written media such as poetry and printed advertising. The only variety of modern Arabic to have acquired official language status is Maltese , which is spoken in predominantly Catholic Malta and written with the Latin script. It is descended from Classical Arabic through Siculo-Arabic , but is not mutually intelligible with any other variety of Arabic. Most linguists list it as a separate language rather than as a dialect of Arabic. Muhammad spoke in the dialect of Mecca , in the western Arabian peninsula , and it was in this dialect that the Quran was written down. However, the dialects of the eastern Arabian peninsula were considered the most prestigious at the time, so the language of the Quran was ultimately converted to follow the eastern phonology. It is this phonology that underlies the modern pronunciation of Classical Arabic. In the case of Arabic, educated Arabs of any nationality can be assumed to speak both their school-taught Standard Arabic as well as their native, mutually unintelligible "dialects"; [21] [22] [23] [24] [25] these dialects linguistically constitute separate languages which may have dialects of their own. Arabic speakers often improve their familiarity with other dialects via music or film. The issue of whether Arabic is one language or many languages is politically charged, in the same way it is for the varieties of Chinese , Hindi and Urdu , Serbian and Croatian , Scots and English, etc. In contrast to speakers of Hindi and Urdu who claim they cannot understand each other even when they can, speakers of the varieties of Arabic will claim they can all understand each other even when they cannot. A single written form, significantly different from any of the spoken varieties learned natively,

unites a number of sometimes divergent spoken forms. For political reasons, Arabs mostly assert that they all speak a single language, despite significant issues of mutual incomprehensibility among differing spoken versions. The period of divergence from a single spoken form is similarâ€"perhaps years for Arabic, years for the Romance languages. Also, while it is comprehensible to people from the Maghreb , a linguistically innovative variety such as Moroccan Arabic is essentially incomprehensible to Arabs from the Mashriq , much as French is incomprehensible to Spanish or Italian speakers but relatively easily learned by them. This suggests that the spoken varieties may linguistically be considered separate languages. Influence of Arabic on other languages[edit] The influence of Arabic has been most important in Islamic countries, because it is the language of the Islamic sacred book, the Quran. Arabic is considered to be a popular second-language choice in France. Examples of such words include admiral, adobe, alchemy, alcohol, algebra, algorithm, alkaline, almanac, amber, arsenal, assassin, candy, carat, cipher, coffee, cotton, ghoul, hazard, jar, kismet, lemon, loofah, magazine, mattress, sherbet, sofa, sumac, tariff, and zenith. Most Berber varieties such as Kabyle , along with Swahili, borrow some numbers from Arabic. Older Arabic loanwords in Hausa were borrowed from Kanuri. Arabic words also made their way into several West African languages as Islam spread across the Sahara. This process of using Arabic roots, especially in Kurdish and Persian, to translate foreign concepts continued through to the 18th and 19th centuries, when swaths of Arab-inhabited lands were under Ottoman rule. Influence of other languages on Arabic[edit] The most important sources of borrowings into pre-Islamic Arabic are from the related Semitic languages Aramaic , [33] which used to be the principal, international language of communication throughout the ancient Near and Middle East, Ethiopic , and to a lesser degree Hebrew mainly religious concepts. This word was borrowed in several European languages to mean light blue - azure in English, azur in French and azul in Portuguese and Spanish. Arabic alphabet and nationalism[edit] There have been many instances of national movements to convert Arabic script into Latin script or to Romanize the language. Currently, the only language derived from Classical Arabic to use Latin script is Maltese. The major head of this movement was Louis Massignon , a French Orientalist, who brought his concern before the Arabic Language Academy in Damacus in

6: Arabic - Wikipedia

The Arabic script in Africa: studies in the use of a writing system (Studies in Semitic languages and linguistics, 71). Written Language and Literacy , Amsterdam, John Benjamin.

Abdessatar Mahfoudhi Read Writ It provides a basis on which to consider some of the specific issues about Arabic that have interested literacy researchers and which may inform further work in this area. The papers focus mainly on the less-studied period of early literacy development, from kindergarten to grade 3, and, therefore, should contribute to our understanding of this initial, and potentially critical, period of development amongst Arabic learners. Data from these papers should inform theories focusing on the processes that underlie literacy acquisition, for example. This should be both specific to Arabic, but also should inform more general theories of reading and writing across languages. In addition, the papers include work on spelling, of which there are far fewer studies than on Arabic reading acquisition. Therefore, the special issue should provide a basis on which to understand work in Arabic and also advance our knowledge about this relatively sparsely studied orthography. The three areas of focus in the present papers can be considered to relate to 1 language processes particularly A. These are not new areas in reading research; however, studies of Arabic should provide data on which to improve our understanding of the relationship between these processes that data in other languages, particularly English, may not. Share has argued that English, on which most theories of literacy development have been based, is a somewhat atypical orthography and, therefore, research in alternative languages is necessary to support the generalization of theories beyond the English language context. Arabic also has its somewhat unique characteristics. However, the differences, and similarities, between the English and Arabic orthographies make Arabic an interesting language to consider in this respect. For example, although both developed from common alphabetic-based origins, they use different letter characters and the use of dots and diacritics may make Arabic a highly visually complex orthography to learn and a different direction of writing Arabic is written right to left ; although both are based on the alphabetic principle, they show varying relationships between letters and sounds. Similarly, although both require a certain amount of context to support word identification in many written texts, the point in literacy development at which this becomes necessary varies across the two languages. Related to these latter points, Arabic can be considered to have two orthographic forms: Therefore, research on Arabic should inform theories on the basic processes necessary for successful literacy learning. The present introduction starts with some background details to the Arabic language and its orthography before focusing on language, phonological and orthographic processing. Background to the Arabic language and writing system Arabic is spoken as a first language by over million speakers, mostly in the Middle East and North Africa, and ranks fifth1 in the world in terms of the number of native speakers. In addition, Arabic is used by millions of people as an additional language, mainly in the Muslim world, because it is the language of the Quran, the holy book of Islam. Arabic belongs to the Semitic group of languages and, therefore, shows a reasonable degree of similarity of structure in phonology and morphology with the other languages in this family. Other living languages of this group are Modern Hebrew, Amharic and other spoken languages of Ethiopia, Aramaic dialects current in parts of Syria and Iraq, and Maltese. The Arabic script also has a long history, evolving from Nabataean and Aramaic, and along with other Semitic languages, Arabic is written from right to left. Apart from its use in representing the Arabic language, it is used, with some variations, for writing several other languages, such as Kurdish, Persian, Pushto, Sindhi and Urdu. Despite its huge importance as a language of literacy for many people, Arabic has been relatively under-researched compared to other major 1 http: Arabic, with its letter alphabet and 34 phonemes, has been considered a shallow orthography. This refers to the relative ease of deriving phonology from orthography due to the near one-to-one association between letters and sounds. Shallow orthographies also are often referred to as transparent or as high in orthographic transparencyâ€"again the analogy is akin to seeing the language through the orthography. The close

correspondence between phonemes and graphemes is an important feature of the Arabic orthography and one that is expected to have an impact on the accuracy of single word decoding among Arabic speakers. Normal texts read by most older children and adults do not include these diacritical markings. Accordingly, a large number of Arabic words that appear in non-vowelized text are homographic when presented out of context. This means that the reader will have to depend more on context to support word processing. In effect, Arabic has two scripts: The linguistic situation and its relation to literacy is also unique. The spoken variety is different in many aspects from the written variety. This situation, known as diglossia, is discussed in detail in the following section in relation to the relevant papers in this issue. In contrast, Allaith and Joshi focus much more on cross-language influences and phonological information in one language Arabic may affect literacy development in this case in spelling in the other English amongst children in grades 4â€"10 in Bahrain. There is a great deal of interest in first and second language issues in research undertaken in the Arab world as evidenced by half of the papers in this special issue. The main focus of much of this work is on the cross-language influences of, mainly, Arabic and English though there has also been work on Arabic and Hebrew: Therefore, much of this work would A. However, the unique aspects of Arabic may make this particularly interesting language to study in this context. The different features of Arabic compared to English allow an assessment of influence across diverse characteristics. Further research is needed to determine whether morphological awareness is more important in Arabic literacy learning compared to other languages, such as English, as well as its role in both typical development and those presenting evidence of specific difficulties in literacy acquisition. As mentioned above, another, and somewhat under-studied feature of the Arabic language context, is that of diglossia. Diglossia here refers to the use within a community of two varieties of the language for different purposes. It is one of many dialects of Arabic and may be spoken across a whole country or within a specific region. The second variety, Modern Standard Arabic MSA , is the prestigious form of the language that is used in education and the media in both writing and speaking. MSA is the more preserved version of Classical Arabic and is different from the spoken dialects in lexical items, phonology, morphology, and syntax. Hence, Arabic has a somewhat unusual feature of two forms of the same basic language, one of which the child will experience as a purely verbal form and prior to schooling, the other which will be primarily a tool for education and on which the written form is based. For example, in research contrasting the processing of common and unique phonemes within local dialects and MSA, Saiegh-Haddad has argued that the difference between the pre-school spoken and the written language disrupts the construction of phonological representations of MSA. This may lead to less reliance on such phonological representations to support literacy acquisition than might be expected and, hence, to the use of alternative processes in word recognition. Indeed, Saiegh-Haddad found that, even amongst grade 1 children, phonological awareness was only indirectly related to reading fluency in contrast to measures that focus more on a direct route to lexical access; as such, focusing on salient orthographic features may be a more important strategy to learn than the relationship between graphemes and phonemes. This feature of Arabic i. Phonological processes In Taibah and Haynes, aspects of the phonology of Arabic and its influence on early literacy skills are the primary focus, though both Tahan, Cline and Messaoud-Galusi and Allaith and Joshi also consider phonological processes and influences in their papers. The studies of both Taibah and Haynes and Tahan, Cline and Messaoud- Galusi investigate skills that have developed early in literacy development. The paper of Taibah and Haynes finds that phonological awareness, in contrast to other verbal processing skills such as rapid naming and phonological memory, has a strong influence on early Arabic literacy skills, whereas both Tahan, Cline and Messaoud-Galusi and Allaith and Joshi focus on how language background may influence phonological processes and hence literacy. The assumption here is that these phonological skills are important in literacy development; an assumption that has been confirmed in research on Arabic in a number of studies. Overall, then, such work confirms the relationship between phonological processing, particularly phonological awareness and literacy development. Phonological processes are those involved in the identification, storage, manipulation and production of sound forms. Such processes may be critical in the

ability to translate a written letter string into an appropriate pronunciation see Goulandris, ; Snowling, ; Stanovich, Given this, it is hardly surprising to find that investigations of phonological processing and its role in reading development, have been a focus for many studies looking at the relationship between language and literacy, including those investigating Arabic literacy development. Consistent with the importance of phonological processing in literacy development, many have found that phonological measures when applied in the standard variety, i. However, Elbeheri et al. What is clear is that phonological processing does play a part in Arabic literacy acquisition; however, further research is necessary to determine specifically the influence of phonology A. In Tahan, Cline and Messaoud-Galusi, this is considered in a similar light to phonological skills: In Mohamed, Elbert and Landerl, the focus is on a measure of visual processing skills predicting literacy levels. The latter study argues for visual skills to be related to literacy performance and the former found evidence to suggest that Arabic has a complex orthography at least compared to English. Both of these findings are consistent with previous work in Arabic; though they confirm the findings within new populations. One reason why visual or orthographic processes may be important in Arabic is the potential complexity of the orthography. For example, vowelization has been argued to have a positive effect on reading in Arabic e. Indeed, a number of studies have investigated the graphic characters of the Arabic script and concluded that they constitute a specific challenge to Arabic readers, particularly in terms of the ability of the reader to distinguish individual letters. For example, work by Ibrahim, Eviatar and Aharon-Peretz found that Arabic-Israeli participants were slower in processing Arabic letters than Hebrew letters, despite the fact that Arabic was the first language of the individuals tested. These researchers have concluded that such effects are due to the complexity of Arabic script compared to the Hebrew script. Consistent with the importance of orthographic processing in Arabic, measures that require this type of processing have been found to be predictive of Arabic literacy levels. The finding that the influence of orthographic processing is explained by phonological processing measures in the younger cohort but not in the older groups is consistent with several models of reading acquisition that were developed for orthographies other than Arabic. For example, the work of Badian argues for an initial influence of phonology on reading development followed by an emerging influence of orthographic processing. Share also Introduction to the special issue has proposed that reading development progresses from greater reliance on phonological decoding skills to more reliance on orthographic decoding skills as the reader becomes more competent. Clearly, the findings of Elbeheri et al. Alternatively, grade 3 or 4 is the point when these Arabic children are likely to experience text that is non-vowelized and it may be that this leads to more dependency on orthographic processing over phonological decoding; hence, when non-vowelized text is the dominant form, the better reader is the one with additional reading skills to those associated with a phonological decoding strategy. As indicated in previous sections of the introduction, further research on the influence of vowelization and its related aspects of phonology and orthography on Arabic would inform theories of literacy development in this language as well as views about the processes involved in reading and writing across different orthographies. Final comments The reader will note that the factors studied in research on Arabic should be familiar to many working in other languages. Therefore, we trust that the reader will find the contents of this issue both stimulating and informative, and we thank the authors for their contributions as well as the many reviewers for their hard work. The effect of Arabic vowels on the reading comprehension of second- and sixth- grade native Arab children. Journal of Psycholinguistic Research, 28, 93â€" The role of vowels in reading semitic scripts: Data from Arabic and Hebrew. An Interdisciplinary Journal, 14, 39â€" Word recognition and basic cognitive processes among reading-disabled and normal readers in Arabic. An Interdisciplinary Journal, 16, â€" Phonological processing skills as predictors of literacy amongst Arabic speaking Bahraini school children. Diglossia and illiteracy in the Arab world. Language, Culture and Curriculum, 9, â€" Predicting reading ability over the long term: The changing roles of letter-naming, phonological awareness and orthographic processing. Annals of Dyslexia, 45, 79â€" Literacy ability and phonological processing skills amongst dyslexic and non-dyslexic speakers of Arabic. An Interdisciplinary Journal, 20, â€" Orthographic processing and reading comprehension among

Arabic speaking mainstream and LD children. Dyslexia assessment in Arabic. Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 6, â€"

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Asalamo alikom:) "Arabic for All" is is an university teaching Arabic language for non-Arabic professionally and experience for many years. its b.

By Lebo Matshego Not only is Africa the second most populous continent in the world with over one billion people, but it is also home to the highest linguistic diversity in the world, with over different languages. The principle languages on the continent include Arabic, French and English. Arabic was ranked the 5th most spoken language in the world by research group Ethnologue, with over million speakers worldwide. In Africa, there are more than million speakers, with Egypt accounting for more than 54 million. English reached the 3rd spot as the most spoken language in the world, with over million speakers. It is a Bantu language believed to have originated from other languages, mainly Arabic, due to historical interactions between Arabs from the Middle East and East Africans. It is the second most spoken Semitic language in the world after Arabic, and is also the language of over 2 million Ethiopians living outside of the country. The Semitic languages are a branch of the Afroasiatic language family originating from the Middle East. Amharic, along with Arabic, Hebrew and Tigrinya, are the most spoken Semitic languages in the world by way of native speakers. It is the mother tongue of the Yoruba people in Nigeria, and has over fifteen dialects including Awori, Ijesha, Ilaje and Ila. It is a tonal language with three tones: After , the language adopted the Latin alphabet. It falls under the Cushitic branch of the Afroasiatic language family. It originated as the language of the Hausa people in northern Nigeria and southern Niger, and soon spread as the lingua franca of western Africa due to trade. It uses the Boko and Latin alphabet as its writing system, and is also the basic language for most Muslim populations in western Africa. The language has more than 20 dialects, with Central Igbo being the most prevalent. It falls under the Volta-Niger branch of the Niger-Congo family of languages. It is the second most widely spoken Bantu language, after Shona, and is written using the Latin alphabet. It is characterized by unique click sounds within the dialect as a result of influence from the Khoisan language. It is the principle language of Zimbabwe, along with Ndebele and English. These states are also referred to as Lusophone Africa. Portuguese has become a post-colonial language in Africa and one of the working languages of the African Union and the Southern African Development Community. It coexists on the continent with indigenous languages, mainly the Niger-Congo family languages in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau and Portuguese-based creoles in Guinea. There are approximately 14 million people who use Portuguese as their mother tongue on the continent, and over 30 million secondary speakers. There are over million French speakers who use the language as their mother tongue or secondary language. The second largest French speaking country is Algeria, with over 50 percent of the population being French speakers. Chichewa is popular in Malawi with over 6 million speakers, and Spanish is also spoken in Equatorial Guinea by over , people.

8: The principle languages on the continent of Africa

The Arabic script is the writing system used for writing Arabic and several other languages of Asia and Africa, such as Azerbaijani, Sindhi, Pashto, Persian, Kurdish, Lurish, Urdu, Mandinka, and others.

9: Media and Information Literacy Evolves in Arab World | HuffPost

As SMS texts tend to include use of Wolof and other African languages as well as French, the question is whether texting will pave the way for African language literacy practices. The aim of this article is to study texting's potential impact on the status of African languages as written languages through the investigation of SMS messages.

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