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## CONTENTS OF THE ISSUE

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- i. Copyright Notice
- ii. Editorial Board Members
- iii. Chief Author and Dean
- iv. Contents of the Issue
  1. Between Aestheticism and Marxist Literature: A Study of Foregrounding in Festus Iyayi's *Violence, Heroes, and the Contract*. **1-5**
  2. Female Learner Experiences in Accessing University Education in Kenya through Distance Mode: Addressing Constraints, Prospects and Policy Directions. **7-14**
  3. Arab Nations Adopt eLearning to Improve Instruction. **15-24**
  4. Designing Language Proficiency Tests: Linguistic and Socio-Cultural Considerations. **25-34**
  5. A Linguistic Survey of Types of Names among the Babukusu of Kenya. **35-42**
  6. Arabic Traces in Masalha's Language in the Literary Translated Work the Cactus. **43-54**
- v. Fellows and Auxiliary Memberships
- vi. Process of Submission of Research Paper
- vii. Preferred Author Guidelines
- viii. Index



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## Between Aestheticism and Marxist Literature: A Study of Foregrounding in Festus Iyayi's *Violence, Heroes, and the Contract*

By Mohammed Attai Yakubu

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**Abstract-** This study analysed foregrounding in Festus Iyayi's three novels: *Violence, Heroes, and The Contract*. The aim of the study was to discover the function of foregrounding in African literature. A number of passages were extracted from the three novels, beginning with *Violence* followed by *Heroes*, and *The Contract*. These extracts from the three novels were passages that contained foregrounding which revealed the ideological basis of these novels. Images and symbols that projected violence, death, destruction, exploitation, oppression, deprivation, class struggle, etc as well as the plight of the poor revealed Marxism as the ideology that underpinned the three novels. Among the findings are: foregrounding in Iyayi's novels depicts class struggle; the primary purpose of foregrounding in Iyayi's novels is not for aesthetic effect; it portrays the less privileged characters as victims of their society; and it contributes to the success of the three novels studied.

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# Between Aestheticism and Marxist Literature: A Study of Foregrounding in Festus Iyayi's *Violence, Heroes, and the Contract*

Mohammed Attai Yakubu

**Abstract-** This study analysed foregrounding in Festus Iyayi's three novels: *Violence, Heroes, and The Contract*. The aim of the study was to discover the function of foregrounding in African literature. A number of passages were extracted from the three novels, beginning with *Violence* followed by *Heroes*, and *The Contract*. These extracts from the three novels were passages that contained foregrounding which revealed the ideological basis of these novels. Images and symbols that projected violence, death, destruction, exploitation, oppression, deprivation, class struggle, etc as well as the plight of the poor revealed Marxism as the ideology that underpinned the three novels. Among the findings are: foregrounding in Iyayi's novels depicts class struggle; the primary purpose of foregrounding in Iyayi's novels is not for aesthetic effect; it portrays the less privileged characters as victims of their society; and it contributes to the success of the three novels studied.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Festus Iyayi is in the group of Nigerian novelists whom Osundare (1987:159) has described as "ideologically motivated writers whose aim is not just to be read, but to point out the dehumanizing contradictions in the present capitalist system in such a way that would make its overthrow inevitable." Therefore, the use of foregrounding by this group of writers goes beyond aestheticism to functionalism in order to produce utilitarian literature. Osundare as quoted above wants us to believe that Festus Iyayi is a Marxist writer and this study maintains that foregrounding is an aspect of style that reveals the writer's ideology. Thus, the study seeks to investigate Festus Iyayi's use of foregrounding in his novels: *Violence, Heroes, and The Contract* and how it contributes to the ideology that underpins these novels. Furthermore, the researcher is interested in investigating whether Iyayi's use of foregrounding is for aesthetic effect or for effective transmission of his message.

Abrams (2005:3) defines aesthetics as "the systematic study of all the fine arts, as well as of the nature of beauty in any object, whether natural or artificial." He adds that:

Aestheticism... had its chief headquarters in France... French writers developed the view that a work of art is

the supreme value among human products precisely because it is self-sufficient and has no use or moral aim outside its own being. The end of a work of art is simply to exist in its formal perfection; that is, to be beautiful and to be contemplated as an end in itself. A rallying cry of Aestheticism became the phrase "I art pour l'art" – art for art's sake (Abrams 3-4).

This study admits that words can be used in a literary work to induce pleasure but this aesthetic function is secondary. African or Nigerian literature is beyond art for art's sake therefore, the above view of the aesthetic school does not apply primarily to Festus Iyayi's novels. African literature is a utilitarian art.

According to Osundare (1987:140), "nobody says a certain thing in a certain way without a certain reason. A careful explication of purpose is crucial to the study of literature as a social product, and literary communication and style as social acts." The researcher will analyse Iyayi's use of foregrounding for an understanding of the purpose of his novels. Furthermore, Adejare (1992:12-13) has pointed out that "only mad men engage in a linguistic activity without a purpose... the function of form in a text is to transmit that message." This view is a rejection of art for art's sake philosophy. The analysis of foregrounding in this study is for an understanding of how it reinforces the writer's message or messages and reveals his ideology.

From the above premise, the definition of foregrounding as "to estrange or defamiliarize" (Abrams, 108) is not applicable to this study. Furthermore, the idea that the function of poetic language (foregrounding) is to surprise the reader with a fresh and dynamic awareness of its linguistic medium, to de-automatize what was normally taken for granted, to exploit language aesthetically (Wales, 1990:182) does not also apply to this study.

In its treatment of foregrounding, what this study will find suitable is the exposition that: "narratologically, one might argue that within passages which are predominantly narration, any lexical-sequential level of discourse-construction, those lexical selections which are least predictable and therefore, in a sense most distinctively informative are moments of foregrounding" (Toolan, Rpt. 2009:24). Moreover, the analysis of foregrounding of Iyayi's novels that will be

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carried out in this study will be anchored on the proposition that: "we can also have foregrounding of imagery which draws attention to itself" (Yankson, 2008:33). This study will treat imagery that is "distinctively informative" as foregrounding of the act of expression that reveals the writer's ideology.

In the treatment of imagery, Ogunsiiji's (2011:73) definition will be apt and applicable. He says:

Imagery as a term is difficult to describe with precision because of the way it is used loosely. In a broad sense, it can be used to describe any writing which is descriptive, and helps the reader to visualize a scene and so to experience the poet's experience. We have both, aural and visual imagery. Imagery depends on the emotive power of words for its success. The most condensed form of imagery can be found in figures of speech although not all figures of speech involve visual imagery... metaphor and simile, when they are well used, represent imagery of its most concise manner. Other figures of speech that can perform this function are hyperbole, euphemism, irony, personification, metonymy, synecdoche, etc. Another extreme form of imagery is in the use of language in which an image represents something visual.

Therefore, in this study, simile, metaphor, personification, symbolism, synecdoche, onomatopoeia, oxymoron, etc will be treated as foregrounding of imagery. These figures of speech produce visual, auditory, olfactory, or gustatory effect, so, they enhance an understanding of the novelist's message and

ideology. As, Terence Hawks states, "metaphor... is not fanciful embroidery of the facts. It is a way of experiencing the facts" (quoted in Leech and Short, 1981:25).

The analysis in the following sections is aimed at finding out how foregrounding reveals the author's Marxist ideology. Marxism, "according to Eagleton (1970:vii) is a scientific theory of human societies and transforming them; and what that means, rather more concretely, is that the narrative Marxism has to deliver is the story of the struggle of men and women to free themselves from certain forms of exploitation and oppression." In *Violence, Heroes, and The Contract*, words that denote or connote class struggle or struggle, exploitation, oppression and other elements of Marxism such as violence, "consciousness of men" (Fromm, 1961:217), collectivism, etc will be treated under foregrounding.

#### a) Foregrounding in Iyayi's *Violence*

The figures of speech that are deployed for visual, auditory, olfactory, or gustatory effect in *Violence* will be treated as foregrounding of imagery. Words that evoke the above effects are capable of conscientising people and also create Pathos to make them take action. In the novel, there are words that are associated with exploitation, oppression, violence, death, suffering, disease, neglect, suffocation, class struggle, deprivation, etc. suggesting unpleasant experience and dehumanizing condition and hence, the need for a change.

Below are words that are associated with violence and death:

1. There was muted anger on his father's face like clothed blood.
2. On her forehead there was a long ugly gash from which blood gushed out.
3. Adisa was shocked at the sight of so much blood.
4. The man is a butcher
5. It was like eating with the devil.
6. There was venom in her voice...
7. The memory of Obofun hung about her like a shroud.
8. ...a grudge as deep as an ulcer (Iyayi, 1979)

In the above passages, "blood," symbolizes violence. "the devil," "butcher," and "venom" also symbolize violence as well as death and destruction. Furthermore, the comparison with "shroud" and "ulcer" connote danger and death. The images and symbols in

the above passages reinforce the theme of violence and the novelist's Marxist ideology.

Moreover, there are words in the novel that are associated with suffering, exploitation, oppression and deprivation. Examples are:

1. And like any war, the work came to an end.
2. But he couldn't because the ache was back in his head and his body was hot, like a glowing piece of coal.
3. He was like a big tree which a gigantic storm had toyed with.
4. The children were mostly naked, and they were thin and had sores on their legs...
5. The ward itself was crowded, like a war camp.
6. The majority of the patients still shared beds many more slept on the floor. It was like a pigsty this ward, swarming with the sick as pit toilets swarm with flies.
7. ...inside him the cough gathered like a storm and soon it erupted like a volcano.
8. ...the sun fiercely striking at the nape of his neck, like one whose head is held down, waiting for the blades of the guillotine.

9. His neck and throat were wiry, askew and twisted like the neck of a tortoise.
10. It was rough, almost like the carpenter's paper.
11. I was like a vulture picking at the flesh of a dead prey.
12. ...dark tunnel of numberless sick
13. ...bigger market of patients
14. ...people who had been engaged by life in a terrible and fierce struggle and that they had come out of each bout worse... (Iyayi, 1979)

The images and symbols employed in the above extracts show the plight of the less privileged. They show clearly the picture of the suffering masses. The comparisons with "glowing piece of coal," "a big tree which the gigantic storm," "pigsty," "a volcano," "one whose head is held down waiting for the blades of the guillotine," "the neck of a tortoise," "the carpenter's paper," "bigger market," "dark tunnel," "engaged by life in a... struggle... and come out of each bout", etc. give the picture of people who are suffering. Furthermore, "sores" goes beyond physical pain to suggest dehumanizing condition of the poor, pointing out masochism on the part of the government as the order of the day, hence the need for a change.

Moreover, the comparisons with "war," "war camp," and "vulture" project the exploitative and oppressive tendencies of the rich who prey on the

1. The pellets of rain hit the window panes like bullets.
2. The wind acted as a butcher
3. Isn't the whole world a slaughter house
4. ... and the blood still fresh, running out of their mouths and ears or chests.
5. Osime's hands could feel the blood as it soaked through the man's shirt.
6. The river is a death trap.
7. No man should trust his life with this crowd of butchers
8. He carries his grudge like an ulcer
9. The lie has coiled up like a snake and stung its owner.
10. ...we are all caught up in the fight between elephants.
11. What we have on this bridge are the flowers of our motherland, torn rudely from their stems, petals dripping blood.
12. ...guns loaded with certain death
13. The war is the great furnace...
14. The war is like a fire with a lot of dry logs in it.
15. They are beasts. Black beasts (Iyayi, 1986).

The imagery in the above extracts project the poor as victims of their society. The above passages project the gory experiences of the poor. "Blood" symbolizes violence, death, and destruction. All through the novel, connotatively or denotatively, the word "blood" passes across the messages of destruction, death, massacre, violence, torture, etc. Furthermore, the

1. The commanders are busy drinking the blood of the nation, the blood of soldiers...
2. He should get the stench of his parasitism and treachery firmly in his nose and eyes.
3. The whole market was like vomit and the people like vermin feeding on it. The market grounds, the stands, the ware, were nothing but vomit and night soil simultaneously thrown into a pool of muddy red water. The people were the maggots in the night soil or the vermin that fed on the vomit, the wares and the stands were the undigested lumps of food in the slimy vomit.
4. The other vampires will get together and eliminate you. But I am going to kill not one but several generals.
5. They hand over to each other the baton of misery, treachery and parasitism (Iyayi, 1986).

masses. The use of imagery in the novel projects the less privileged members of society as victims.

Iyayi uses foregrounding in the novel to create his characters with emotional attachment so that as we read, we sympathise with them in their plight. This is one of the techniques he has adopted to mobilize his audience to participate in the overthrow of the economic and political system which, Iyayi has described as oppressive and brutalizes the individual and rapes his manhood.

### **b) Foregrounding in *Heroes*?**

In Iyayi's *Heroes*, there are words that are associated with violence, death and destruction thereby reinforcing Marxist ideological basis of the novel. Some of these are:

images of "loaded with certain death," "furnace," "grave," "bullets," "butcher," "death trap," "ulcer," "snake," "elephants," "fire," "beasts," etc. project death, violence and destruction.

Exploitation, oppression, class struggle, and deprivation as elements of Marxism are projected through the following images:

Members of the ruling class are compared to parasites suggesting that they should be eliminated from society. They perpetrate death, violence and destruction described earlier on that cause gory experience of the poor. Iyayi's comparison of the ruling class with parasites is similar to Ngugi Wa Thiong'O's description of this group of people in *Petals of Blood* and *Devil on the Cross*. Nigerian leaders are compared to "parasites" and "vampires." They are drinkers of human blood. Members of the upper class feed on the poor. They prey on the masses and deprive them of their means of livelihood. Connotatively and denotatively the above passages depict class struggle.

Furthermore, "vermin" and "maggots" symbolize the influential Nigerians who prey on the poor represented by "vomit," "stand," and "wares" in the novel. The above extracts further reveal the plight of the poor.

### c) **Foregrounding in Iyayi's *The Contract***

On Iyayi's *The Contract*, Ayinde has observed that:

Literary critics and scholars who have critiqued the novels of Iyayi are almost endless. For instance,

Below are words in the novel that are associated with revolution:

1. The gun probably helped, though, I waved the gun at him...
2. It was a big stone... Chief Ekata saw it and ducked in time and the stone missed him and hit the glass door of the council building.
3. ...it will be like a flood
4. Chief Obala suddenly exploded
5. ...they were cutting down the trees now. It bore a certain resemblance to what he expected the revolution would do, cut down all of them, cut down all those who had lived through and profited by the present decay. (Iyayi, 1982)

"Gun" and "stone" are instruments of violence and hence revolution. Moreover, gun serves several purposes: it is an instrument of liberation and oppression. Workers use it for liberation while the bourgeoisie use it for oppression. Referring to a pistol, Muturi in Ngugi Wa Thiong'O's *Petals of Blood* says: "you can be trusted with a worker's secret... Muturi gave Wariinga the gun and turned away" (Wa Thiong'O, Rpt. 1985:211). "The gun" is referred to as the worker's secret. It is what workers need to overthrow the oppressive system. It is the gun that Wariinga uses at the end of the novel to eliminate Hispandora Greenway

Sophia Ogwude (1996) examines how Iyayi takes one deep philosophical look at the neocolonial Nigerian society where money flows like water in the hand of the privileged few through contract inflation. Okafor (1998) equally argues that Iyayi's novel reveals that the injustice being meted out to the poor is on the high level in Nigeria. The exploitation and oppression of the masses expose their pathetic circumstances as they struggle to survive in a marginalized economic and social setting. (Ayinde, 2011:111)

While Ogunde focuses on corruption, Okafor delves into the themes of injustice, exploitation, and corruption. Ayinde himself says that his paper focuses "on how aesthetically Iyayi ignites the spirit of nationalism and raise (sic) social consciousness with a view to neutralizing the pervasive corruption in Nigeria" (Ayinde, 2011:111). Others whose articles on *The Contract* are also theme based are Tunde Fatunde, Udentia O. Udentia, Catherine Acholonu, Kingston O. Onyijen, among others. This present study that treats the communicative function of foregrounding in *The Contract* represents a paradigm shift.

Ghitahy (Rich Old Man from Ngorika), who is described as "a jigger, a louse, a weevil, a flea, a bedbug!... a mistletoe, a parasite that lives on the trees of other people's lives!" (Wa Thiong'O, Rpt. 1985:254). The killing of the Rich Old Man from Ngorika marks the beginning of the struggle to overthrow the bourgeois class.

In the novel, *The Contract*, the connotation of "gun," "blood," "stone," "flood," "exploded," "cut down," etc. is violence, destruction and death which are the scenario in a social revolution.

Exploitation as an element of Marxism is enunciated in the following images:

1. "You are like the dogs and the vultures. You scavenge in the refuse, in the vomit of the people's misery. You are scavengers."
2. Chief Ekata is a dangerous man. He is like a vulture.
3. No, active living was not merely consumption of resources – not unless you were a parasite (Iyayi, 1982).

The images of "vultures", "scavengers," and "a parasite" project exploitation. Vulture is a bird of prey. A scavenger lives on other creatures and a parasite survives by sucking the blood of an animal or a human being. The characters described in the above passages are members of the upper class who, in the view of the

novelist are undesirable elements of society and so should be flushed out. Therefore, in the above images there is Marxist ideology. From all the discussions so far, we should agree with Osundare that Festus Iyayi is a Marxist.

## II. CONCLUSION/FINDINGS

The functions of foregrounding as treated in this study go beyond aestheticism to functionalism. Foregrounding has aesthetic significance but its primary function in Iyayi's novels as this study has shown is to effectively express the author's feeling, pass his message successfully across to the audience, and reveal his ideology. Some of the findings of this study are:

- Foregrounding in Iyayi's novels depicts class struggle.
- Foregrounding reveals the Marxist ideological basis of the novels treated, therefore, its primary purpose is not for aesthetic effect.
- Foregrounding in the novel expresses the themes of exploitation, oppression, and deprivation.
- It reveals the plight of the less privileged.
- It effectively describes the dehumanizing condition of the poor.
- It is key to the conscientisation and mobilization of the masses.
- It portrays the less privileged characters as victims of their society.
- It contributes significantly to the success of the novels studied.

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## Female Learner Experiences in Accessing University Education in Kenya through Distance Mode: Addressing Constraints, Prospects and Policy Directions

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**Abstract-** This study assessed challenges experienced by 1,400 women distance learners in Kenyan public and private universities. A cross-sectional survey design with quantitative and qualitative approaches guided the research process. Quantitative analysis yielded descriptive statistics and severity scores; while qualitative data were transcribed, clustered into nodes and explored for emerging themes. The results showed that about 77% of the participants believed that irregular and unsystematic supply of course materials disrupted learning continuity and was considered the most severe challenge experienced by learners. Whereas, 66.9% identified the turnaround time for assignments as a problem affecting study plans, 60.7% noted that compulsory submission of assignments was a key challenge. The study recommends the need for institutions to: establish a supervisory system, linking learners with administration to ensure a consistent supply of reading materials; computerize student information system to improve administrative effectiveness; develop a master plan for tutorials; and standardize the turn-around time for assignments.

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# Female Learner Experiences in Accessing University Education in Kenya through Distance Mode: Addressing Constraints, Prospects and Policy Directions

Charles M. Rambo <sup>α</sup> & Paul A. Odundo <sup>σ</sup>

**Abstract-** This study assessed challenges experienced by 1,400 women distance learners in Kenyan public and private universities. A cross-sectional survey design with quantitative and qualitative approaches guided the research process. Quantitative analysis yielded descriptive statistics and severity scores; while qualitative data were transcribed, clustered into nodes and explored for emerging themes. The results showed that about 77% of the participants believed that irregular and unsystematic supply of course materials disrupted learning continuity and was considered the most severe challenge experienced by learners. Whereas, 66.9% identified the turn-around time for assignments as a problem affecting study plans, 60.7% noted that compulsory submission of assignments was a key challenge. The study recommends the need for institutions to: establish a supervisory system, linking learners with administration to ensure a consistent supply of reading materials; computerize student information system to improve administrative effectiveness; develop a master plan for tutorials; and standardize the turn-around time for assignments.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Distance education enables institutions of higher learning to address challenges posed by the high demand for university education world over. It provides a flexible and cost-effective opportunity for people in employment to acquire university education, with advanced skills necessary for vertical mobility [1]. Distance education programs have expanded fast because of inbuilt advantages, including cost-effectiveness and flexibility, which makes it most appropriate for people in full-time or part-time employment [2]. The rapid expansion is also attributed to its modes of delivery, which makes it possible to meet the needs of learners scattered in various locations simultaneously [3, 4].

In view of this, distance education enables institutions of higher learning to overcome the challenges of time and space. Consequently, instructors and learners can engage without necessarily being at the same place and time, depending on the methods

used. To illustrate the point, [5] points out that satellite campuses in Arkansas State University and the Open University of Dar es Salam are increasingly attracting a 'hidden market' of adult learners and high school graduates, which has caused enrolment to grow tenfold over the past two decades. The flexibility associated with distance education makes it most appropriate for female learners who may lack opportunity to attend lessons during regular hours due to employment or child care obligations.

After the 1982 World Conference organized by the International Council of Distance Education in Melbourne, women participants were motivated to establish the Women International Network (WIN) to popularize distance education and influence women to capitalize on the opportunity to improve their education status [6]. Today, distance education systems around the world have made it possible for people in employment, especially women to access higher education [4].

Women's access to higher education yields multiple benefits at the individual, household, community and national levels. Cross-country surveys examining the effect of women's education on Gross Domestic Products (GDPs) have consistently demonstrated positive results [7, 8]. On the social dimension, university-educated women opt to delay marriage, motherhood and likely to restrict family size [9]. Moreover, higher education empowers women to negotiate for sexual relations, thereby reduce their vulnerability to Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) including the HIV/AIDs and gender-based violence within marriage [10].

Despite its advantages to women, various studies such as [11], as well as [12] have revealed that female learners in distance education continue to face number of challenges. Some of the challenges identified by these studies included inconsistent supply of course materials, difficulty of getting tutorial assistance and long duration taken by some instructors to evaluate and return course work assignments. The studies emphasized the need for appropriate measures to cushion female learners against such challenges.

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In Kenya, the history of distance education runs back to 1966 when the Board of Adult Education was established through an Act of Parliament to facilitate the delivery of non-formal educational programs in disciplines such as health, agriculture, family planning, rural development and environment through the mass media [11]. The initiative was stimulated by the post-independence commitment to fight poverty, ignorance and disease to spur socio-economic development [11, 12]. Since then, distance education has grown in terms of the number of institutions and student population.

In response to inherent challenges, some of which were identified by previous studies [11, 12], Kenyan universities have come up with a blended model of distance education, in which learners use modules while at home and attend campus for face-to-face interaction with their instructors. However, a closer examination of the model reveals that it has not effectively addressed the challenges experienced by distance learners, especially women. Consequently, this study assessed the challenges experienced by Kenyan women pursuing higher education through the distance learning mode, with a view to identifying policy measures that should be instituted to improve the quality of distance learning in the interest of women.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The initiation of distance education in Kenya respondent to the increasing demand for university education and necessitated by the need to expand educational opportunities for both men and women for quality human resource and achievement of the country's development aspirations. Given its flexibility and cost-effectiveness, distance education enables low income-earners to access higher education, acquire advanced skills for continuing career development and vertical mobility [4]. Distance education is particularly appropriate for women, whose access to higher education has have been disadvantaged by domestic chores, maternal obligations, child care and employment.

Despite the promises and advantages of distance education, studies conducted by [11], as well as [12] have hinted that distance education is laden with challenges or diverse dimensions, which affect the quality of learning. The issues highlighted by these studies touched on aspects such as availability and quality of course materials, assignments, personal contact programs, quality of instruction, hidden costs, misuse of technology and the attitudes of instructors, learners and administrators; all of which affected the quality of distance education [12].

Such issues continue to raise concern among specialists in distance education as well as gender and development, particularly because distance education is considered a golden opportunity for women to access

higher education [4]. Although the history of distance education in Kenya is deeply rooted, no systematic academic process had ever assessed and documented the challenges experienced by women distance learners in both public and private universities. Hence, this study was conducted to identify challenges experienced by women distance learners, with a view to generating information that would necessitate policy action to improve the quality of learning.

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of the study was to assess and document challenges experienced by female learners pursuing higher learning under the distance education mode. More specifically, the study was guided by the following objectives: -

1. Identify challenges experienced by women in learners regarding course materials.
2. Determine challenges that female learners encounter in terms of assignment system.
3. Establish challenges affecting female learners regarding personal contact programs.
4. Investigate challenges experienced by female learners in accessing tutorial help from their instructors.
5. Assess the personal challenges facing female learners in their pursuit for higher education.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

The cross-sectional survey design was applied to guide the research process in sourcing, processing, analyzing and interpreting data. The design had both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The design was particularly appropriate for the study because data was sourced at a single point in time. The target population included female learners enrolled for undergraduate and post-graduate courses through distance education in public universities, including Moi, Egerton, Kenyatta, Nairobi, Jomo Kenyatta, Masinde Muliro and Maseno. The study also targeted female learners at Catholic and Baraton Universities, which were the only private institutions of higher learning offering distance education as at December 2010.

### a) *Sampling procedures and sample size*

The researcher applied both probability and non-probability sampling procedures to identify the units of analysis, i.e. women distance learners. In situations where a population is too small to be sampled, it is logical to include all the elements in the sample [13]. Based on this, all the nine institutions offering distance education were purposively considered for inclusion in the sample, which included 7 public and 2 private universities. While selecting the institutions, regional representation was observed to ensure equitable geographical coverage. From each institution, 200

learners were randomly selected for inclusion in the sample, which yielded a total sample size of 1,800 learners.

*b) Data collection instruments*

The researcher used a survey questionnaire to source the requisite information. The instrument was divided into six sections – A, B, C, D, E and F, in line with objectives of the study. Section A elicited information on the background profile of participants, section B sought information on challenges arising from course materials, section C covered challenges faced with the assignments system, section D yielded information on challenges associated with personal contact programs, section E focused on the tutorial system, while section F sourced information on personal challenges affecting the quality of distance education.

The survey questionnaire consisted of structured and semi-structured questions. The questions were posed before selected participants and responses jotted down. Responses on key items were standardized using abbreviations, viz. VBP (Very Big Problem); JAP (Just a Problem); and NAP (Not a Problem). The standardization of responses facilitated the tabulation of frequency distributions and determination of severity ranking. In this regard, a score of 2 was assigned for VBP, 1 for JAP and 0 for NAP; and adding all the scores for the subjects in the sample.

The instrument was pre-tested and the reliability computed. In this regard, the pre-test obtained a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.89, suggesting that the instrument's internal consistency was good according to the guidelines developed by [14]. The instrument was mailed to 1,800 women distance learners at the selected universities. At the end of data collection, 1,400 questionnaires were returned to the researcher duly filled, representing 77.8% response rate, which was considered satisfactory according to [15].

*c) Data processing and analysis*

Both quantitative and qualitative techniques were applied to process, analyze and interpret the data. Quantitative analysis yielded frequency distributions, percentages, cross-tabulations as well as severity scores and ranking of the problems; while qualitative data were transcribed, clustered into nodes and explored for patterns of challenges experienced by women in distance education.

**V. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

This section presents the findings, which have been organized under five key thematic areas in line with objectives of the study, including challenges associated with course materials, the assignment system, personal contact programs, tutorial system and personal problems. Details are presented and discussed under the following sub-headings.

*a) Problems associated with course materials*

Distance learners are expected to learn independently with the help of printed course materials provided by instructors. In view of this, the quality of independent learning in distance education largely depends on three factors, viz. the subject content of course materials, presentation style and supply consistency. Whereas an ideal presentation style should facilitate self-learning, the supply consistency should ensure learning continuity and motivation.

In view of this, problem statements 1 and 2 were posed to women distance learners to identify the problems faced in relation to course materials produced for their degree programs. Table 1 presents the frequency distributions and percentages, which are presented under the standardized categorization, including a Very Big Problem (VBP), Just a Problem (JAP) and Not a Problem (NAP). Also indicated in the table is the severity ranking for each problem statement item.

*Table 1 : Severity of problems related to course materials*

Qn	Problem statement	Frequency			Severity	
		VBP	JAP	NAP	Score	Rank
1.	The supplied course materials do not serve as self learning materials and it is difficult to understand each and every concept with their help.	510 (35.9%)	660 (46.5%)	250 (17.6%)	1420	3
2.	The supply of reading materials is not regular and systematic. This disturbs the planning done for learners by the learners.	715 (50.4%)	385 (27.1%)	320 (22.5%)	1420	1

The results in table 1 reveal that irregular and unsystematic supply of course materials disrupted learning continuity under the distance education mode.

This emerged as the most severe problem experienced by women distance learners. More specifically, up to 715 (50.4%) learners rated the irregular and

unsystematic supply of course materials as a VBP, 385 (27.1%) indicated that it was JAP, while 320 (22.5%) were of the view that it was NAP. Overall, the findings suggest that up to 77% of the distance learners hinted that irregular and unsystematic supply of course materials was a serious factor disturbing their study plans. Moreover, the issue emerged atop as the most important challenge faced by women pursuing higher education through distance learning.

Regarding the quality, course materials were not perceived to be serving as self-learning materials; rather most distance learners (82%), found them difficult to understand. In this regard, up to 510 (35.9%) said the materials were a VBP, while 660 (46.5%) indicated that the materials were JAP. The quality of course materials emerged as the third most important challenge experience by women distance learners.

*b) Problems tied to the assignment system*

Submission of written assignments, evaluation by tutors, constructive suggestions form a two-way non-contiguous communication channel in distance education. In turn, the communication channel forms the backbone of efficiency in distance education. However, various studies such as those conducted by [16] and [17] have proved that longer turn-around time of evaluated assignments affects the quality of learning under distance education. Another study by [18] found that compulsory submission of assignments encourages drop-out among distance learners. With this in mind, problem statements 3 and 4 were posed to learners, with the aim of determining the proportion facing problems with the assignment system. The frequencies and percentages of women for whom the given problem statements were a VBP, JAP, and NAP along with severity rank are presented in table 2.

*Table 2:* Severity of problems related to assignment systems

Qn	Problem statement	Frequency			Severity	
		VBP	JAP	NAP	Score	Rank
3.	The compulsory submission of assignment is useless unless constructive suggestions come from tutors.	281 (19.8%)	581 (40.9%)	558 (39.3%)	1420	9
4.	The time gap between date of submission of assignments and the date when they are received back duly marked and commented is so long that not only the planning done for the studies but the entire purpose of assignments is defeated.	260 (18.3%)	690 (48.7%)	470 (33.1%)	1420	6

The results presented in table 2 show that up to 66.9 % (48.7% JAP and 18.3% VBP), of the distance learners indicated that the duration between the date of assignment submission and the date when they are received back, duly marked and commented i.e. turn-around time (TAT) was too long; thereby affecting study plans and defeating the purpose of assignments. This challenge emerged as the sixth most severe problem for women in distance education. Moreover, the findings suggest that irregular and untimely communication between tutors and learners was a critical factor disrupting study plans, particularly for women enrolled in distance education programs. The challenge also hinders timeliness of the two way non-contiguous communication for improvement, which is the sole purpose of assignments in distance education.

Regarding compulsory submission of assignments, 60.7% (19.8% VBP and 40.9% JAP) of the learners opined that compulsory submission of assignments is useless, unless constructive suggestions come from tutors. However, 39.3% women did consider

the issue a problem. Consequently, the test item emerged as the ninth most severe problem experienced by women distance learners. On the basis of these findings, it can be safely concluded that a good majority of women in distance education consider compulsory submission of assignments useless, unless they are properly evaluated, commented and returned within the shortest time possible.

*c) Problems with personal contact programs*

The concept of Personal Contact Programs (PCPs) is a dilution of the principle on which distance education is founded. However, the introduction of PCPs concept is considered a remedy for the challenges experienced distance learners [19]. PCPs enhance learners' convenience; thus, encouraging more people to pursue higher education through distance learning. Contrastingly, [18] points out that compulsory participation at PCPs has been a cause for drop-outs in distance education. To find identify the challenges experienced by women distance learners regarding

PCPs, two problem statements i.e. 5 and 6 were posed to participants. Table 3 presents the frequencies and percentages obtained for each test item.

*Table 3* : Severity of problems related to personal contact programs

Qn	Problem statement	Frequency			Severity	
		VBP	JAP	NAP	Score	Rank
5.	Asking the learners to compulsorily participate in personal contact program is a waste of time and money.	80 (12.9%)	172 (27.8%)	388 (59.2%)	332	10
6.	Though attending a personal contact program is beneficial but there are difficulties of accommodation at the venue of the personal contact program.	144 (23.3%)	250 (40.5%)	224 (36.2%)	538	8

The results in table 3 reveal that though attending a PCP session is beneficial, women distance learners face various difficulties, including lack of accommodation facilities and subsistence at the venue of PCPs, as well as commuter costs. This challenge emerged as the 8th most severe problem experienced by female learners in distance education. In total, about 63.8% (23.3% VBP and 40.5% JAP) of the women distance learners affirmed that although PCPs were beneficial, they had to cope with various challenges, including accommodation difficulties, subsistence, security and insecurity, among others.

Furthermore, the results in table 3 indicate that about 40.8% (12.9% VBP and 27.8% JAP) of the participants felt that making it compulsory for learners to participate in PCPs was a waste of time and financial resource. Consequently, PCP sessions impeded the privilege of 'saving time and finances, which distance education provides to learners [19]. However, the remaining 59.2% learners were of the view that compulsory participation in PCP sessions was not a waste of time and money; thus, the problem ranked 10th in terms of severity.

#### *d) Problems with the tutorial system*

Being a flexible mode, distance education provides tutorial sessions for learners as per their personal choice of time, making it more attractive to female learners than the conventional mode of higher education [20]. However, in most institutions, available tutorial facilities are not able to serve an increasing student population. Pointing out the challenges experienced by female learners regarding tutorial systems provides useful information that may justify institutional changes to improve the quality of learning under distance education. As noted by [18], inadequacy of library facilities is an example of issues that may impede access to tutorials by distance learners, particularly where policies are skewed in favor of conventional learners. Problem statements 7 and 8 were formulated and posed to respondents, with a view to identifying challenges experienced by female learners with regards to the tutorial system. Table 4 presents the frequencies and percentages for problem statements 7 and 8.

*Table 4* : Severity of problems related to the tutorial system

Qn	Problem statement	Frequency			Severity	
		VBP	JAP	NAP	Score	Rank
7.	There is no study centre in my neighbourhood, hence, are difficulties in getting library facilities and tutorial help.	220 (35.6%)	175 (28.3%)	223 (36.1%)	615	4
8.	There is no system of getting tutorial help from my institution when it is really needed	225 (36.4%)	207 (33.5%)	186 (30.1%)	657	2

The results in table 4 indicate that most institutions offering distance learning did not have proper tutorial systems to support distance learners. This emerged as the second most severe problem for

female learners in distance education. More specifically, 220 (36.4%) learners felt that the issue was a very big problem, while 207 (33.5%) said it was just a problem. Overall, up to 69.9% of the women distance learners

were of the view that existing tutorial system was a failure because it did not serve them, despite the high level of need. Arguably, this challenge may demoralize some learners, leading to their dropping out.

Regarding study centres, up to 220 (35.6%) distance learners considered non-availability of such facilities a very big problem, while 175 (28.3%) described it as just a problem. On aggregate, about 61.9% of the distance learners did not have access to study centres within their neighbourhood. The absence of study centres was tied to inadequacy of library facilities and tutorial help in neighbourhoods. In terms of severity ranking, the challenge emerged as the fourth most severe problem of women in distance education.

e) *Personal problems for women in distance education*

As noted by [21], most Indian women are unable to continue with their studies under the conventional mode due to traditional socio-economic biases and gender discrimination. In fact, women attracted towards distance education were either heavily burdened housewives, employed individuals or the neglected lot wishing to further their education [18, 20, 21, 22, 23]. To make distance education more attractive to women, some attention should be focused on addressing their personal problems. Keeping this in mind, problem statements 9 and 10 were posed to distance learners. The obtained frequencies and percentages alongside their severity ranking are presented in table 5.

Table 5 : Severity of personal problems of women in distance education

Qn	Problem statement	Frequency			Severity	
		VBP	JAP	NAP	Score	Rank
9.	Learning in isolation i.e. feeling of loneliness is a big difficulty in distance education.	171 (27.7%)	213 (34.5%)	234 (37.9%)	555	7
10.	Appearing in all the papers along with regular learners in the final exam is difficult and expecting too much from distance learners.	163 (26.4%)	241 (39.0%)	214 (34.6%)	567	5

The results in table 5 reveal that appearing in all the papers along with regular learners in the final examination is difficult and expecting too much from distance learners. In this regard, up to 65.4% (26.4% VBP and 39.0% JAP) of women distance learners experienced a difficulty appearing in final examinations, alongside regular learners. However, 214 (34.6%) learners asserted that appearing in examinations along with regular learners was not a challenge at all. It emerged as the fifth most severe problem for women distance learners.

Another important problem faced by women distance learners arose from the natural human tendency of socializing in groups. Overall, about 62.1% (27.7% VBP and 34.6% JAP) of female learners were of the opinion that learning in isolation i.e. a feeling of loneliness was a big difficulty in distance education. However, 234 (37.9%) participants hinted that they did not suffer from the feeling of learning in isolation and this issue emerged seventh on the severity ranking scale.

## VI. DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The irregular and unsystematic supply of reading materials was considered a key factor disrupting their study plans among women in distance education; it also emerged as the most severe problem undermining the quality of distance learning. This

finding is corroborated by the findings of [24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29], most of who noted that irregular and unsystematic supply of reading materials was a serious problem to all distance learners in various settings, irrespective of gender. However, the challenge is intertwined with other aspects, including socio-economic status and personal obligations to constraint the quality of learning in distance education.

Without adequate reading materials, most learners find it difficult to cope with their study plans; thus, causing delays in course completion and increasing the risk of dropping out. To cope with this problem, institutions offering distance education should consider introducing a supervisory system that connects to learners to ensure that all instructors develop update and disseminate reading materials as often as possible. This should also include evaluated assignments as suggested by [29]. Also suggested by [29], is the use of computers to manage postal communication, with a view to improving administrative effectiveness, as well as streamline the supply of reading materials to learners.

However, the findings of this study seem to refute the notion that in distance education course materials adequately serve the purpose by inducing self-learning. Because women have multiple responsibilities, the fear is that they may not find adequate time to concentrate on reading materials;

hence, it becomes necessary for institutions offering distance education to create opportunities for tutorial help as and when needed. On this note, the absence of tutorial help from the institutions emerged as the second most severe problem facing women in distance education.

The root of this problem entrenches in the findings related to the quality of course materials. In this regard, it was noted that reading materials do not necessarily serve as self-learning materials due to quality issues, which make it difficult for learners to grasp concepts without supplementary support in terms of tutorials. Previous studies by [29, 31, 32, 33] have also expressed similar concerns regarding the quality of reading materials. Under such circumstances, the learners will have difficulties managing independent self-learning and so must be supported through tutorials.

In support of tutorials for distance learners, [29] notes that however effective and pedagogically sound a reading material may be, it cannot replace the tutor. In this regard, the role of tutors is well recognized and established in distance education. This has two implications, viz. one, reading materials should be designed and developed on the basis of sound pedagogy of self-learning and they should also be tried out on learners to ascertain their suitability for independent learning, before being used as course materials; two, institutions of higher learning should arrange and ensure regular availability of tutorial help to enable learners understand the content of their reading materials. In India, the telephone network has made it possible for institutions offering distance education to provide tutorials over the phone. Through this arrangement, one tutor can serve a huge number of learners simultaneously and is considered a relatively cheaper option than setting up study centres and maintaining a huge number of tutors for this purpose.

Furthermore, lack of library facilities and absence of study centres in the neighbourhood, appearing in all papers along with regular learners in final examinations and longer turn-around time of evaluated and commented assignments took the fourth, fifth and sixth positions on the severity ranking scale, respectively. A careful examination of these problems reveal that they reflect the concerns of women about their learning and academic achievement through distance education. Perhaps due to this concern and determination to complete their studies, women are increasingly devising new ways of coping with the problems of learning in isolation, difficulties of accommodation at the venue of personal contact programs; they are also ready to meet the requirement of compulsory submission of assignments and compulsory participation in PCPs. These problems ranked at the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth places,

respectively; hence, may be considered less severe for women in distance education.

Even though this study found that women experience a number of challenges in their pursuit for higher learning through distance education, severity ranking of the identified problems suggests the problems varied significantly in terms of negative effects on the learning continuity and achievement. Personal problems such as learning in isolation and attending compulsory contact sessions, which are traditionally considered to be exclusive to female learners are really not perceived as serious problems. Female learners appear ready to cope with such issues to safeguard their learning, which implies that distance education can serve as a boon for women thirsting to further their education, provided the quality of course materials is improved, their supply streamlined, and adequate tutorial help is available.

In addition, the study has implications for further research. It would be highly pertinent to study the inter-relationship between problems experienced by women in distance education. Besides, there is need for further research on the improvements desired by women distance learners. More still, there is need for research to distinguish between the problems experienced by women and men learners in distance education.

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## Arab Nations Adopt eLearning to Improve Instruction

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**Abstract-** Arab countries have adopted [virtual] e learning to provide interactive education, which characterizes a departure from the traditional classroom setting. Partnerships with Apple, Android, Blackberry, and Windows have resulted in mobile software applications. Researchers indicate that mobile devices inject fun into learning and increase students' motivation. Furthermore, e-learning improves teacher-learner relationship by shelving face-to-face communication, and is most constructive in regions with fewer or less qualified teachers. While surveys show e-learning is effective, students' evaluations are mixed. For instance, students are displeased about untimely posting of grades. Notwithstanding, e-learning initiatives, such as Arabic 'Mathletics' and Arab/English, provide unprecedented learning opportunities for the region.

**Keywords:** education, e-learning, teacher, students, mobile, phone.

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# Arab Nations Adopt eLearning to Improve Instruction

Maurice Odine

**Abstract-** Arab countries have adopted [virtual] e learning to provide interactive education, which characterizes a departure from the traditional classroom setting. Partnerships with Apple, Android, Blackberry, and Windows have resulted in mobile software applications. Researchers indicate that mobile devices inject fun into learning and increase students' motivation. Furthermore, e-learning improves teacher-learner relationship by shelving face-to-face communication, and is most constructive in regions with fewer or less qualified teachers. While surveys show e-learning is effective, students' evaluations are mixed. For instance, students are displeased about untimely posting of grades. Notwithstanding, e-learning initiatives, such as Arabic 'Mathletics' and Arab/English, provide unprecedented learning opportunities for the region.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Middle East environments are suitable for mobile education. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has put together working papers on mobile learning during the past two decades, which explore the potential of mobile technology in education. Accordingly, Arab countries have invested generously in education.

For example, Tunisia (before civil war) set aside seven percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in e-learning initiatives, placing it at the top of the global list in this endeavor. Cherrayil (2010) projects mobile penetration in the Middle East to be 93.9 percent in 2011, to reach 125.5 percent by 2015.

Muttoo (2011) remarks that even poorer countries, such as Yemen and Palestine, have witnessed a surge in mobile penetration due to a burgeoning youth market and emergence of new telecommunications operators. In the Gulf, 87 percent of young Arabs aged 15 to 29 had access to mobile phones in 2010, up from 79 percent in 1979. In Qatar and United Arab Emirates (UAE), the mobile penetration rate exceeds 100 percent.

These developments have sparked attempts at using mobile phones in both formal and informal learning in open and distance learning (ODL) in the Middle East. Mishra (2011) says, "The ubiquity of mobile phones brings opportunities for extending the scope, scale, and quality of education." Traxler (2009) says

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mobile learning in education forms a phenomenon in which mobile devices are increasing access to information and knowledge, anywhere and anytime, and in new forms of learning.

Mobile learning has become a "u-learning" paradigm in certain Arab countries. Hence, Waseda University developed the Japanese Language Learning program. Capitalizing on acquired experience with mobile learning paradigms, the university uses web 2.0 capabilities that include visual and acoustical support for learning. The learner is able to test learned abilities and listen to real life dialogues in either Japanese or Arabic. Meanwhile, Romanization of characters enables learners to master reading.

In the Arab countries of the Gulf Region, Siveco Romania is taking the lead. The company took part in the 2012 Kuwait EduTech Conference under the theme, "Vision eLearning within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Area." Siveco presented newest technologies addressing e-learning solutions in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and UAE.

The company's e-learning products are comprised of 39,000 Reusable Learning Objects that served tens of subjects. Between 2008 and 2011, Siveco delivered 7,000 translated, interactive learning programs to improve instruction in UAE. "We're proud to see that our eLearning solutions bring real benefits to the entire pre-university education system of the United Arab Emirates," declared Alexadru Cobuc, Sivecon vice president for international projects. Cobuc notes that "attractive" and modern digital e-learning materials save time and effort so teachers can concentrate on lesson plans.

Actions by Arab countries to incorporate e-learning into education have not gone unnoticed by the telecommunications industry. In a piece entitled, "Middle East is making the grade in e-learning," and published in *The National*, Glover (2010) reports that Microsoft Corporation has held talks with regional governments and educational institutions to consider high-tech digital systems.

Ascribing quote to Microsoft Corporation, *The National*, writes, "With e-learning, students can learn at their own pace, get immediate feedback and repeat tasks they don't understand." UAE's Advanced Network for Research and Education is developing e-learning proposals consistent with the Middle East E -Learning Association (MEEA) launched in February 2010. MEEA

members include Bahrain, Kuwait, UAE, Jordan, and Palestine.

UAE students are able to register for classes online. Furthermore, they will be able to check their grades, take quizzes, and complete assignments online. Conroy (2011) states that Abu Dhabi University has launched the Blackboard Mobile application. The purpose is to take advantage of mobile phones as a way to improve student involvement in their education and quick notification of grades.

Meanwhile, Abu Dhabi University uses Blackboard online services for online discussion forums, view campus maps, and read announcements. Basically, a teacher can also link media or related class materials to “comment threads,” or send an announcement before class, even if it is just to say, “I’m stuck in traffic.” Teachers are excited about e-learning. Yara Azouqa, an English instructor, explains that e-learning opens up the classroom experience to more students.

Azouqa styles “e-learning” as a new style of learning that allows them [students] to participate, regardless of other personalities, and eliminates the roles they take on in the classroom: the leader; the joker; the speaker; the cautious; and the “less skilled.” Azouqa concludes that e-learning enables students to break out of the rigid classroom environment by allowing them to interact with the material in different ways and at their own pace.

Durham, North Carolina (United States), is home to Urban Planet Mobile. The telecommunications company is under contract to make available the Urban English Language Learning program to 13 million subscribers of Mobily (Saudi Arabia) and Umniah (Jordan). The e-learning program allows each subscriber to receive detailed daily English lessons on their mobile phones via text messages (SMS) prefaced by an attached English-learning ring tone.

The program has unearthed an insatiable quest among Arabs to learn English. Since 2012, Mobily and Umniah have seen subscription jump by more than 30,000. Urban Planet Mobile founder, Brian Oliver Smith, reflects on the partnership: “Tensions between countries arise from a lack of cross-cultural awareness and understanding . . . We equip people with the tools to understand one’s culture and avoid misunderstanding.”

## II. METHODOLOGY

The paper used secondary sources that included databases on e-learning, mobile phones, and mobile devices that support education. Furthermore, books were consulted, plus newspapers, magazines, and electronic sources via the Internet. Published works under the subject were reviewed as well. These sources were used for purposes of interpretation and analysis. “Uses and gratifications” was used as the theoretical framework for the paper.

The paper sought to address seven topics. Topic one set out to establish the rationale for e-learning in the Middle East. Topic two examined to what extent e-learning has been accepted and practiced in the Middle East. Topic three looked at the use and development of mobile e-learning applications for education. Topic four assessed e-learning and students’ analytical and mathematical capabilities. Topic five considered how e-learning has contributed to the teaching profession. Topic six addressed quality e-learning assurance issues in the Middle East. And topic seven concentrated on future e-learning initiatives in the region.

In addressing topic one, the paper sought to lay the rationale for adopting e-learning in the region and to draw examples from other parts of the world that may be replicated. Topic two assessed the gains made in incorporating e-learning into education. In topic three, it was desirable to discuss available mobile e-learning applications without which e-learning would be impaired. Topic four set out to identify e-learning initiatives that benefit students, including examples from other countries. Topic five chronicled ways by which e-learning has transformed teaching. Topic six looked at initiatives to ensure that the quality of education is neither compromised nor undermined. And topic seven addressed future of e-learning in Middle East and beyond.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

### a) *The Case for eLearning in the Middle East*

From a literal perspective, Trinity College (Cambridge, Britain) refers to e-learning as electronic learning that incorporates learning contexts using new information technologies. The college considers e-learning in higher education as a vehicle to enable students to access, investigate, analyze, and evaluate concepts and ideas in their courses.

In the meantime, the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) defines e-learning as a broader concept that encapsulates electronic devices. Segement and Holt (2003) state that, e-learning “enhances the educational experience of students in higher education . . . which requires strategically acquired digital technologies.”

eLearning gives universities a giant step forward in reaching a broader spectrum of clientele. Brown and Duguid (2000) say teaching, research, and service to the larger academy and greater society are the major functions of most universities. The authors stress that, in an era of knowledge-based societies, there remains an urgent need to go beyond traditional methods of delivering education.

James Duderstadt (2000), former president of the University of Michigan, in the book, *A University for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, calls on universities to move past traditional roles. Duderstadt urges teachers to be engaged in producing, conserving, distributing, and

applying knowledge to different contexts; assume leadership roles in learning communities for teachers and learners; and to develop learning-centered systems where learners determine and control what, when, where, and with whom they learn. In this regard, writes Duderstadt, “innovative universities would introduce e-learning as a critical component of teaching and learning.”

A point raised often in colleges and universities is quality education. Another is how quality education can be delivered. Consequently, the consensus is that technological revolution is a viable vehicle in the modern world. Thoms (2008) says the use of technological revolution in higher education has given rise to e-learning. “The growth of e-learning is explosive, it’s unexpected, it’s exciting,” adds Thoms. “We must understand the complexities of learning . . . in order to identify and address the many implications.”

Thoms provides advantages for e-learning. E-learning employs state-of-the-art technology and instructional strategies. Moreover, e-learning makes it possible for participants to share cultures. Technology, too, accommodates disabilities (with or without knowledge of participants); gender ceases to be an issue because the global classroom is ubiquitous.

Referring to the Middle East, KleeBen (2004) declares that, money spent on education is considerably higher than the international average. This, KleeBen argues, is due to a strong interest in quality education motivated by changes in educational demands in a competitive global market. This interest has attracted telecommunications giants to conduct business in the Middle East.

Starting with the first office in 1991, Microsoft Corporation runs five subsidiaries in the region. Sana’a University (Yemen) is home to the Learning Gateway Solution, an advanced e-learning capability serving 70,000 students and technical staff. The resource provides course content services, online examinations, prompt online submission of course work, as well as communicating and collaboration tools.

Another key player is MTC Vodafone in Bahrain. The high-tech giant has spearheaded an e-learning center at the University of Bahrain – Sakhir Campus. In association with WebCT, the e-learning center has developed online services that include e-testing, student e-assessment, and performance e-evaluation. Today, WebCT offers e-learning programs to 45 clients in the Middle East.

#### *b) eLearning Lessons Learned*

In 2004, the Korean Ministry of Education announced an overhaul of that country’s plan for e-learning and the subsequent development of a “learning society.” Many schools, colleges, and universities have welcomed and adopted e-learning because the technology places less limitation on time and space

compared to traditional classes. It makes it possible to offer multiple learning opportunities based on self-regulated learning. eLearning is characterized by individualized interactive learning.

A school in New Mexico uses mobile devices to assess kindergarteners’ reading progress. The school then uses the results and tailor instruction to help students develop oral literacy. Within the first three years, the number of students reading at benchmark levels rose from 29 percent to 93 percent.

In India, primary schools have used mobile-phone games to enable students from rural, low-income households to learn English. Aided by teachers, researchers devised a simple game to develop listening comprehension, word recognition, sentence construction, and spelling. Test scores of students using mobile-phone games improved by 60 percent.

Just as there are advantages to e-learning so, too, are there disadvantages. For instance, students with disabilities may be functioning at a disadvantage for a number of reasons; participants who are technologically overwhelmed may be ill-prepared to enroll or do well. Online discussions may inhibit students from usual face-to-face expressions that have the benefit of body language. A major disadvantage concerns students for whom English is not their native language, or for those students who are not proficient in the language. These students have difficulty communication and being understood, which may adversely affect their performance or assessment.

In Britain, Little (2009) makes known that attitudes toward e-learning are changing. The company, Towards Maturity, did a study that showed 64 percent of organizations are increasing their e-learning technologies budgets to strengthen on-boarding (orientation) training and to improve the quality of learning and to develop a more qualified workforce.

Still, the greatest barrier to successful implementation of e-learning technologies was cited as “people factors.” More than 50 percent of respondents said reluctance to adopt e-learning technologies was the “people factor” problem. Following closely behind (47 percent) said the most significant barriers were cost restrictions and poor infrastructure.

Mobile networks cover nearly 90 percent of the population today. Simply put, the mobile networks are continually creating and updating technology and platform to increase availability for learners worldwide. eLearning is already allowing thousands of people in China, Bangladesh, South Korea, and Indonesia to learn English through SMS and audio lessons to alleviate the shortage of trained teachers.

At the University of Waterloo (Canada), teachers deliver lessons through podcasts that students can access at any time, and anywhere. Students, too, interact with other students via text messages, allowing them to learn independently with peers. In South Korea,

an online company, Megastudy, offers distance-tutoring services, connecting one master teacher with thousands of students at a time.

Even the future of mobile apps is luminous. McKinsey (undated) takes note of the growing success of mobile apps in e-learning. McKinsey describes mobile apps as packaged pieces of software to run on devices, such as computer and smart phones. Apple, Android, Blackberry and Windows offer approximately 80,000 educational apps.

This is in addition to 170,000 apps in the most popular categories that include games and entertainment. 25 million education-related apps were downloaded in 2009, and 270 million in 2011. Paid education apps also increased to 36 million downloads in 2011 at the cost of \$120 million, up from 4.5 downloads in 2009 at the cost of \$15 million

### c) *eLearning Gains Acceptance*

The popularity of mobile phones in education has picked up pace in various regions of the world. Harnell-Young and Heym (2009) comment on mobile phones and student learning in secondary schools. In Britain, the authors reflect, 91 percent of 12 year-olds have mobile phones. Thus, the authors, emphasize, the evolving technological capacities of mobile phones beckon on their use for educational purposes. The argument is that, smart phones come with voice and text, along with still and motion video, spreadsheets and Word-processed files.

The University of Nottingham conducted a study on the use of mobile phones in secondary education. The nine-month study (2007-2008) involved ten secondary school teachers based in two separate schools, and one cluster of three schools in separate counties. The study involved 300 students selected by teachers.

Nottingham results showed that students' use of mobile phones concentrated on the production of images and video clips. 96 percent of the respondents used the still camera to capture evidence of activities in class; 22 percent used the video application for the same purpose; ten percent used mobile phones to transfer data between mobile phones and their own information communication and technology (ICT) resources; and seven percent transferred data to peers or to teachers. Students used certain mobile phone functions for specific subjects: the stopwatch was often used in science and mathematical calculations.

Older students adapted more easily to mobile phones in improving learning; younger students needed encouragement from teachers. In science subjects, students were able to capture an image on camera and to import it into a report.

Teachers, too, expressed satisfaction with mobile phones in the learning environment. They could send timely reminders during the term or break periods. The study revealed that some students preferred text

messages to face-to-face interaction with teachers. In the schools where students used mobile phones 24/7 over a period of months, there was an atmosphere of trust; students' sense of autonomy was assured.

Khwaileh and Al-Jarrah (2010) are professors at the University of Jordan. They conducted a study on Graduate Students' Perceptions Toward Mobile-Learning at the University of Jordan. The authors confirmed that mobile phones have transformed education. Thus, learning is no longer based on theory alone. It is incorporating e-learning into education.

Harriman (2007) upholds the use of hand-held devices as tools of e-learning. Stead (2005) observes Britain, Italy, and Sweden have embraced e-learning as a means to advance youth literacy and numeracy. These countries contend that mobile devices add fun to learning, increase students' motivation, and contribute to lifelong learning.

A 2007 survey by Jordan's Ministry of Information and Communications Technology found that, 86 percent of Jordanian families have mobile phones; 36 percent have computers. This suggests a majority of the younger generation have a mobile phone (at hand) most of the time. Amin et al. (2006) are confident that mobile phones are on the verge of transforming the traditional "lecture style" classroom thanks to technological interactive capability. Another reason, adds Whitsed (2004), is that mobile devices are walking companions that can be taken anywhere, and at anytime.

Jordan's government-sanctioned survey found that, 80.7 percent of the respondents are willing to use mobile phones for learning. The survey also showed that students are willing to use technology if they are familiar with it and if they have experience using it. Results also disclosed there is agreement among students on the advantages of mobile phones in learning.

## IV. FINDINGS

### a) *Mobile eLearning Applications*

Mobile phone applications (apps) can be referred to as "motivators" of interest. They can also be labeled "captivators" of interest. It is not surprising that, the 2013 Horizon Report of New Media Consortium predicted mobile applications in higher education have a one-year or less adoption period. That is to say, mobile applications are developed and marketed with such rapidity and frequency that users are tantalized to shift gears or risk succumbing to "apps saturation."

Chen and Denoyelles (2013) reiterate the importance of apps in e-learning. The authors believe the multiplicity of mobile devices is an impetus for the telecommunications industry to keep pace with developing apps to meet demand. Apps, the authors say, transform e-learning with tremendous influence within and without the classroom.

A survey by Chen and Denoyelles at the University of Central Florida (US) revealed that, laptop use among students was rated at 85 percent; mobile device use was 45 percent; smart phone use was 37 percent; and e-books was 31 percent. Overall, 67 percent of students' smartphones and tablets are used for academic purposes.

Results displayed a negative relationship between students' grade point average (GPA) and academic use of mobile applications. Students with lower GPAs tended to use their mobile devices for academic purposes more frequently than those upper GPAs. The results corroborate students' use of mobile applications outside the formal learning environment.

More specifically, students reported using mobile apps most frequently: checking for social network sites, listening to music, and playing games. The academic apps students reported using the most were UCF Mobile, Tegrity, Mobile Learn Apps, Flash Cards, Khan Academy, and iTunes. Apps for books were CourseSmart and InKling; reference apps were Dictionary, Wikipanion, WolframAlpha; and productivity apps used were Evernote, Dropbox, Pages, Keynote, and Notes. Of the 16 teachers surveyed, ten said they would use mobile apps in the future.

Initiatives with good results are duplicated wherever feasible. The American University of Kuwait (AUK) is taking the lead in maximizing benefits of apps to mobile devices used by students. The market explosion of smart phones has created a climate in which students are flaunt their devices and take pride in demonstrating use of installed apps.

Ellucian (2012) is AUK's partner in the mobile apps initiative. The university can deploy "starter" apps that come with a provided framework to access course schedules, grades, campus maps, and events. AUK and institutions contracted with Ellucian can download apps through shared arrangements with the company's code repository.

Bader Alessa has developed MyU smart phone app. A Kuwaiti graduate of the University of Miami (US), Alessa says the initiative rose from his fascination to "bridge" mobile technology with the Internet as an e-learning capability. Launched in 2012, MyU was modified in 2013 to take advantage of feedback. It started as iOS version; the Android counterpart was launched on April 11, 2014. MyU app is now available on the App Store, an open market for developers.

There are presently 1,000 active MyU users at Gulf University for Science & Technology (Kuwait) and the College of Business Administration at Kuwait University. "I thought of a mobile technology platform whereby faculty and students can interact," recalls Alessa. The app, the originator explains, permits faculty to communicate with students outside the classroom

about campus events, announcements, assignments, and is a forum to discuss course content.

#### b) *eLearning Simplifies College Algebra*

It is unnecessary to administer a survey to ascertain students' feelings about mathematics (math), as in college algebra. Despite their sworn "abhorrence" of the subject, math [monster] is a graduation requirement. So, every student must take it, live or die.

Why do students struggle with math? One argument is that, "mathematical intuition depends on linguistic competence and visuo-spatial representations." Simplistically, the human brain does encounter conflict when dealing with calculations and problem solving that are mediated by language. If all this reads esoteric, it definitely is. After all it is about math. To the students, it reads like "Greek." Then imagine the intricacies of college algebra!

Really, an e-learning environment simplifies math. Silander and Rytönen (2005) reason that, e-learning brings a new dimension to math education. It allows students to learn in authentic contexts, and by so doing extends knowledge to real environments. Daher (2010) echoes that, although mobile phones are used in education, they have been used especially in teaching math. Daher comments, "We are at the beginning of a new era for mobile phone integration into the mathematics classroom."

In their research, Genossar et al. (2008) studied the processes and experiences taking place within a mobile phone environment by examining how socio-cultural and situated learning aspects are reflected in these processes and experiences. They made two findings. First, the contribution of the mobile phone environment makes available a dynamic mathematical application more available. Second, the mobile environment supports the execution of tasks that are closer to the students' experiences within the context of experiential learning.

Mobile devices used in mathematics e-learning include, a) distribution: sending the same document to all students, b) differentiation: sending different parametric definitions to each student in a systematic way, c) contribution: forwarding a function or mathematical data constructed by one student to a friend or teacher, d) harvesting: following the collaborative work of several students, constructing a set of functions or data that are related to each other, but different, and e) aggregation: combining functions or data that are related and presenting it in public.

Eble (1988) welcomes e-learning in teaching math, calling it, "authentic learning." The author maintains students understand math better, and apply study materials, when they are engaged in real world issues and situations. Authentic [real] situations stimulate student learning, thereby creating greater motivation and excitement for math. Creating real world

problems and contexts, Eble explains, provides an important environment for students' thinking.

Herrington et al. (2008) provide characteristics for authentic learning when solving (mathematically) world problems with mobile phones:

- Authentic contexts that reflect the way the knowledge will be used in real life,
- Authentic activities that are complex, ill-defined problems and investigations,
- Access to expert performances enabling modeling of processes,
- Multiple roles and perspectives providing alternative solution pathways,
- Collaboration allowing for social construction of knowledge,
- Opportunities for reflection involving metacognition,
- Opportunities for articulation to enable tacit knowledge to be made explicit,
- Coaching and satisfying by the teacher at critical times, and
- Authentic assessment that reflects the way knowledge is assessed in real life.

#### c) *Improving Teaching through eLearning*

Just as e-learning is being adopted to improve education, the need to recruit more teachers becomes dire. UNESCO (2012) data shows the world is facing a massive recruitment problem. According to the international agency, the world will need approximately 8.2 million teachers by 2015. Of this number, 6.1 will be replacements; 2.1 million will be newly hired teachers.

These numerical challenges are compounded because they are more severe in developing countries where there is high unemployment, poverty, and unreliable infrastructure. Indeed, the teacher crisis extends to all levels of education.

Besides, a large number of classroom teachers around the world are underprepared to meet the educational goals of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. And notwithstanding emphasis by educational institutions to incorporate e-learning into education, many teachers remain dogmatic to the status quo, which asks students to memorize information from textbooks. Parenthetically, teachers who do not embrace e-learning fail to impart to students technological skills for success in life.

As UNESCO and other international organizations have put forth, enrolling and teaching students in the classroom is only half of the challenge in education. The other half is to adopt e-learning. To combat the imminent shortage of "technology savvy" teachers, UNESCO is leading the way for "Mobile Learning for Teachers," based on the use of mobile phones.

Preparing teachers gives the latter the opportunity to do their job in a satisfying way, even against odds. In certain developing countries, many

students do not even have books. But "miraculously," they own mobile phones. This setting is mostly common among students in traditional schools or those who cannot afford to attend "privileged" private schools. In the final analysis, teachers have a charge: use e-learning to provide education for disadvantaged students.

In Lahore (Pakistan) a NNESCI project aids teachers to use short message service (SMS) mobile phone technology to send educational content to disadvantaged learners. The sole requirement is that students complete face-to-face literacy training at designated education centers.

Through SMS technology, teachers help students retain and solidify newly acquired literacy skills. Teachers in Bangladesh rely on the Boat School to bring education to 87,000 students (and families) in marginalized communities who rely on mobile phone technology.

Teaching sometimes yields unintended positive benefits. In the Middle East, students participating in different mobile learning initiatives teach their parents how to use mobile devices more productively. The acquired knowledge gives parents a sense of empowerment and connectedness. In Kuwait, parents or guardians of students at Gulf University for Science & Technology can use online resources to check the academic progress of their sons and daughters and relatives.

Undeniably, teaching does not end in the classroom. It extends to other forms of learning vital to human development. European Union (EU) countries have launched the project, Bite-sized Learning Opportunities Mobile Devices (BLOOM). BLOOM targets "brick-and-mortar" schools based on learners' needs. The project is in response to learners whose regular work schedules make it impractical or impossible to attend traditional classes.

At the University of Leeds School of Medicine (Britain), educators use mobile phones to carry out speedy assessment tutoring modules. This development is intended to accommodate students working in health clinics and hospitals, but scattered throughout the region. This accommodates students' inability to attend courses or communicate directly with on-campus professors.

Communication is a prerequisite in education. It forms an invaluable part of professional development. UNESCO papers confirm that mobile phones can assist the teacher with more complex tasks, particularly in providing professional development and in-service training. The use of mobile phones is most effective when used to facilitate or mentor. Mentoring requires a "master teacher" to observe the practice of less experienced teachers in order to provide constructive feedback.

Mobile phones also serve two purposes, a) They alleviate costs associated with mentoring by increasing the number of teachers a mentor can support, b) They reduce the time required for observations and meetings. Additionally, mobile technology empowers teachers to participate in online professional communities and to collaborate with peers. They are able to pose questions and share video images and lesson plans. Teachers use platforms such as Facebook, Google+ or Twitter.

#### d) *Middle East eLearning Quality Assurance*

Elango et al. (2008) attest that Bahrain, Oman, UAE, Saudi Arabia and other countries in the Middle East are assessing e-learning initiatives to attain international standards. The researchers concede that the region's virtual universities are "directly on the computer networks to offer online education."

In a survey directed by professor Elango et al., and jointly administered at Majan College (Oman) and Skyline College (US), the respondents said they were not able to indulge in any kind of "malpractice," such as cheating. The investigators conclude the results demonstrate a unique strength of e-learning.

In compliance with course requirements as a component of e-learning, the survey found that students submitted their assignments on time. However, a shortcoming of e-learning is that, teachers and students do not meet to discuss course content and subject matter frequently.

The knowledge level of the teachers is equally important in an e-learning environment. In their responses the students stated that, teachers displayed knowledge of their subject matter, prepared well for class, and possessed good communication skills. It was not uncommon to establish that, majority of students make use of e-books and e-journals to prepare for classes. They also use Blackboard/WebCT/KEWL. Students admit that e-learning is innovative, fun, and contemporary.

eLearning assessment is a serious undertaking at the University of Manchester (Britain). For the second consecutive year, Middle Eastern languages (chiefly Arabic) have introduced an online portfolio assessment with customary end-of-year examination and in-class activities. Three reasons motivated online portfolio assessment, a) The need to keep students on their toes when learning, b) Avoiding dropout by spreading assessment throughout the year, and c) Promoting learning autonomy (especially outside classroom) necessary for language training.

To assess the three-prong e-learning initiative, short and regular online tests were introduced during the first and second semester, along with reflection tasks. The tests were aimed at alerting students on specific gaps in their knowledge, while keeping a

learning journal to help them develop self-evaluation and reflective skills.

Students completed the tests in their own time, and from home. The exception was translation where students could easily take unfair advantage from web translators and similar tools. Invigilated (proctored) tests were used in the second semester to ensure fair assessment. Oral tasks (students recording themselves in Arabic) were favorably received by students. Pools of questions were created to avoid identical tests.

Feedback showed that regular tests challenged students' learning (85 percent); made students revise more seriously than non-assessed exercise (70 percent); and tasks increased student awareness (75 percent). Other benefits included development of Arabic keyboard skills. The completion of tests (off-campus) and students' ability to use mobile devices minimized errors.

#### e) *Future of Middle East eLearning*

It is simplistic to say the future of e-learning in the Middle East is bright. Truly, it is brilliant and awash in resources as governments and private organizations support e-learning programs. Saad (2013) states the Middle East, "Is a thriving hub of e-learning, with governments and private schools avidly investing in e-learning content, tools, and platforms."

Saad welcomes the sharp increase in academic digitization programs and adoption of e-learning by higher education to give students opportunities to learn at their own pace. The writer believes the Middle East has become a "dynamic leader in the e-learning market." Unsurprisingly, Middle East e-learning revenues for 2011 reached \$378 million. Ambient Insight estimates that e-learning revenues will reach \$560 million by 2016. Increased spending spells the popularity enjoyed by e-learning in the Middle East.

Aware of today's prescriptions, 3P Learning has unveiled a worldwide popular "Mathletics" program in Arabic. The program is in response to students' engagement with e-learning to improve their mathematical knowledge computer skills. "Mathletics" has advanced features: Students can alternate between English and Arabic. 3P Learning has an Arabic/English (bilingual) feature to further enhance the users' experience and improve students' numerical skills.

Besides, teachers benefit from "Mathletics." Apart from controlling students' learning space, the program allows teachers to set the relevant curriculum for students and to tailor the course to suit teaching needs. Another teacher's feature is an interactive "mark book" that allows teachers to monitor students' progress. Presently, 3.5 million students use "Mathletics" in about 150 countries, including Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, and Kuwait.

## V. CONCLUSION

Middle East countries are not idle when it comes to incorporating e-learning into education. The governments have continued to provide indispensable resources to put in place e-learning technology to establish a first-class education for their citizens. On their part, the universities are incorporating e-learning into education, making it possible for students to study and complete assignments and to take tests or examinations at remote locations.

eLearning has also benefitted learners who are not able to attend traditional classes due to work schedules. For instance, workers receive additional professional training through interactive learning to improve their skills and to advance in career. Other learners have utilized e-learning in English and Arabic language learning and have furthered translation aptitudes. That e-learning has simplified math for students thanks to "Mathletics" is phenomenal.

In a world plagued with inequality and poverty, e-learning has made a difference. In some parts of the world, underprivileged students have no choice than to attend traditional schools. On the other hand, privileged students attend schools that are infused with modern technology to support learning. With e-learning, underprivileged students, too, receive instruction with the use of mobile phones that even their parents have learned to use.

Since teaching needs teachers, e-learning contributes to teaching effectiveness. An important component of teaching, faculty development enables the teacher to acquire enrichment through further discovery and by learning from peers. In this regard, e-learning is suited for the "master teacher" to interact with a group of congregated teachers, instead of individual teachers paying for the prohibitive training costs. And at a time where there is a shortage of qualified teachers, e-learning provides a technological remedy.

The technology enables teachers to establish two-way communication with students and to monitor students' success. Students, meanwhile, are freer in their communication because they are not impaired by the physical presence of their teachers, thus giving them self-pride and a degree of independent thought. In fact, the teacher can send announcements to students, including during break periods.

eLearning has its critics. It is said the technology eliminates conference or discussion times when teachers and learners can address issues pertaining to courses or subject matter. Students, likewise, have raised questions about late submission of grades on tests/exams and assignments. And in certain cases, institutions have been slow or shown little interest in incorporating e-learning into education. There are instances where teachers are yet to use apps to take advantage of e-learning.

In mid-2013, Lithuanian Eruditus began early stages on Loomideck, an integrated e-learning platform. Maynard (2103) recounts the company's interest in the Middle East. In partnership with Young Digital Planet, Eruditus in Dubai (UAE) launched Cloud Campus at Hamdan Bin Mohammed University (Saudi Arabia). The aim of Cloud Campus is to increase literacy in the Middle East through e-learning. After six months in service, the program's future is promising. More Middle East institutions are lined up to be clients.

In the Middle East, e-learning is not a luxury. Nor is it a nuisance. Rather, e-learning is a curriculum imperative to bring about quality education and to raise education standards. Chanchary and Islam (undated) are computer science professors at Najran University (Saudi Arabia). The professors welcome Saudi Arabia's policy requiring universities to provide excellent education for an increasing population. Chanchary and Islam refer to a 2008 survey, which calls for a national plan to incorporate e-learning into education. The trend is loaded with "goodies" and goes beyond Saudi borders to other Middle East countries.

Transformation education is the future. Digital culture is influencing e-learning. Most currently used e-learning programs were designed for the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The future belongs to e-learning programs designed for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. eLearning systems of the future should, consequently, surpass reading, writing, math, and science. They should explore the role of digital literacy, critical thinking and problem solving, and new approaches to collaboration, communication, and creation.

Nagel (2011) accepts that worldwide higher education leads e-learning expansion through technology purchases and services. In the US, the rule is that e-learning schools must meet the requirements for all enrolled students, which translates into future e-learning resources. On the other hand, spending for pre-kindergarten to secondary school e-learning was \$2.2 billion in 2010, and is expected to hit \$4.9 billion in 2015. A leader in education, other countries are likely to follow US moves for their own e-learning priorities.

Evolving e-learning trends will dominate education. One developer, Ferriman (2012), e-learning developer and founder of LearnDash (WordPress based provider), writes in the article, "The Future of E-Learning," that e-learning products include Articulate Storyline and Adobe Captivate 6, and WordDash.

Meanwhile, MOOCS (Massive Open Online Courses) is in contract with reputable colleges and universities to use MOOCS. Although the start has been rocky for the e-learning software provider, analysts claim MOOCS can only get better. Ferriman goes on, "My prediction is that e-learning software providers and instructional designers will be in high demand as MOOCS grows in size and familiarity."

Middle East countries do not always need to reinvent wheels in the domain of e-learning. There are concrete initiatives with documented results. In Mexico, e-learning has improved literacy levels, and in India, underprivileged students attending deprived schools receive competitive education thanks to mobile devices. Britain and South Korea have implemented e-learning programs that can be replicated. In one survey, 67 percent of students responded they use smart phones or tablet for academic purposes.

In the main, e-learning has made significant advances in the Middle East. Countries are open to evolving technology and to have it available to institutions. Contracts have been signed with giant telecommunications giants, and others are on the horizon. Middle East countries consider it a national priority to provide excellent and competitive education for its citizens.

To this end, funding for e-learning is estimated to be nearly \$600 million by 2015, while mobile phone penetration is projected to reach 125 percent during the same period. This is all music to the ears of telecommunications companies doing business in the Middle East. Exceedingly, the region is a reliable clientele for the telecommunications industry and e-learning technology.

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## Designing Language Proficiency Tests: Linguistic and Socio-Cultural Considerations

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*Abstract-* Language proficiency tests for first, second or foreign language are designed for various purposes. Firstly, they may be part of the curriculum of a school or a university where students have to fulfill the requirement of the academic programme they have chosen. Secondly, they may also be a requisite in getting a particular type of job, and such like. In most of these tests, especially in the second type, the focus is on the candidate's linguistic ability, whereas the social and cultural factors which form part of language usage is often sidelined. This paper discusses the significance of these three factors – linguistics, social and cultural - in the formulation of language proficiency tests. An illustration is given in the proficiency tests for Malay for foreigners intending to study or work in Malaysia, consisting of three groups - the professionals, the students, and the workforce. The tests are designed against the backdrop of the socio-cultural milieu of Malaysia. Principles taken into consideration in the design of these tests are simplicity versus complexity, the choice of domains and register, authenticity, and sensitivity.

*Keywords:* attainment, skills, proficiency, code, appropriacy, context.

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# Designing Language Proficiency Tests: Linguistic and Socio-Cultural Considerations

Asmah Haji Omar

**Abstract-** Language proficiency tests for first, second or foreign language are designed for various purposes. Firstly, they may be part of the curriculum of a school or a university where students have to fulfill the requirement of the academic programme they have chosen. Secondly, they may also be a requisite in getting a particular type of job, and such like. In most of these tests, especially in the second type, the focus is on the candidate's linguistic ability, whereas the social and cultural factors which form part of language usage is often sidelined. This paper discusses the significance of these three factors – linguistics, social and cultural - in the formulation of language proficiency tests. An illustration is given in the proficiency tests for Malay for foreigners intending to study or work in Malaysia, consisting of three groups - the professionals, the students, and the workforce. The tests are designed against the backdrop of the socio-cultural milieu of Malaysia. Principles taken into consideration in the design of these tests are simplicity versus complexity, the choice of domains and register, authenticity, and sensitivity.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Language tests are carried out for various purposes. For citizens or permanent settlers in a country, these tests are part of the educational system of that country, where a pass in the language paper at a certain level of attainment is a prerequisite for admission into a certain level of employment or academic study. In many parts of the world language proficiency is required of foreigners who stay as non-permanent settlers for the purpose of working in industries or studying in educational institutions in the countries concerned. The most widely known language proficiency tests are those of English, designed for foreigners who intend to study in educational institutions in English speaking countries, especially the US and UK, for example, TOEFL (Tests of English as a Foreign Language) for the former, and IELTS (International English Language Testing System) for the latter. This is not to say that other English speaking countries do not have their own qualifying tests for the language, but that they are less well-known compared to the two mentioned above. For example, Malaysia has her own English qualifying tests for local as well as foreign students seeking admission into universities in the

country, and this test is known as MUET (Malaysian University English Tests).

The focus of this paper is the designing of tests for proficiency in the Malay language, for foreigners working or intending to work in Malaysia, as well as for students applying for admission into universities and colleges in the country. The need for such tests has been motivated by the transformation undergone by the country in various aspects of its socio-economic and educational development.

## II. MEETING OF COMMUNITIES

The process of one community influencing another in terms of language and life style has been going on since mankind came into being, forming ethnolinguistic communities all over the surface of the earth. There have always been movements of people crossing the shared borders of their communities, either for a short stay for some social or commercial purpose, or for a longer sojourn motivated by the attraction of job opportunities and better living conditions which are available in the other community.

Malaysia is a very good example of a country whose history of socio-economic development has its beginning with the opening of rubber plantations and the tin mining industry; the former bringing in Indians mainly from South India, and the latter Chinese from main land China. Their arrival towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century forming their own ethnolinguistic communities all over the Malay Peninsula, or Malaya, marked the first phase of a linguistic and cultural landscape that was never seen previously in this part of the world. (See Asmah Haji Omar, 1992, particularly Chapter 1).

As permanent settlers and citizens, the Chinese and the Indians, and even groups that arrived after them, became absorbed into the systems in the governance of the country, and one of these was the education system. In carrying out their day-to-day life, the early immigrants of one particular group managed to communicate with members of the other group as well as with the native Malays, using the Malay language, the main lingua franca not only of Malaysia but also of insular Southeast Asia. The system of education in Malaysia beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the days of British colonial rule through to the Malayan independence in 1957, provided for the establishment of schools using three separate vernaculars, namely

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Malay, Chinese and Tamil, each with its own language medium and curriculum. In this sort of situation, there was no necessity for children of the Chinese and Tamil vernacular streams of education to learn to speak Malay, the language of their adopted country, Malaya.

In addition to the vernacular schools, there was the English school, an elite educational institution, which was supposed to be a meeting place of all the three races. But contrary to this objective, this institution was selective in its policy of student intake, in that entry was possible for those living in the urban areas and with financial means to meet the high fees and subscriptions incurred. The implication of the situation was that there was an imbalance in the proportion of the racial mix, such that a majority, about 80%, of students of English schools were Chinese, while the Malays and the Indians together made up the remaining 20%. Malay was not taught in these schools until after the Second World War, when it was incorporated in the secondary curriculum as an elective teaching subject for Malay students.

All this goes to show that in the governance of the country before the Malayan independence there was no requirement for any level of proficiency in the Malay language for the placement of an individual in the system of education and in the job sector. There was an exception to the rule during the British colonial period imposed by the British colonial government on their officers working in the Malayan Civil Service, who had to pass every single one of the three stages of proficiency in the Malay language, in order to get a promotion in the government service<sup>1</sup>.

### III. THE NEED FOR LANGUAGE TESTS: ACADEMIC MOBILITY, EMPLOYMENT, AND CITIZENSHIP

The need for a qualification showing one's proficiency level in Malay was only realized when Malaya became independent in 1957. It was then that Malay became a compulsory subject in all government and government-assisted schools. Levels of attainment in the language were determined for examinations at the end of three significant phases in the education system: Primary school (6 years of education), lower secondary school (3 years after the primary school), and upper secondary school (2 years after the lower secondary school). Those seeking jobs in the government service had to take examinations designed by the Public Service Department, as a pass in the language examination at a designated stage of attainment would ensure their permanency in the service and rise in rank. Such requisites were imposed on everyone, native and non-native speakers, without exception to the rule. This may be interpreted as a method of integrating government staff who are citizens of the country so that they could function in their workplace using a common language

medium, as well as in socialisation within as well as outside their work environment. Special tests in the Malay language as prerequisites in the government service such as these had been made redundant and were pushed into the pages of history when the national language policy in the schools and universities was fully implemented in the first half of the 1980's, which means that the main medium of instruction in these institutions was Malay.

The above is a delineation of the institution of Malay-language tests as requisites for two categories of needs prior to the present situation. One was academic mobility, and the other was in the employment sector where recruitment and rise in rank in the government service stipulated a designated level of proficiency in the Malay language. In the first category of needs, the designated level of language ability was described in the objective as given in the common curriculum of the schools, which had to be attained at the end of the three phases of the students' school career. As for the latter category, the objective was more of an ability to use the language as a medium in office administration and in dealing with clients. While the tests thus described were designed in compliance with the national language policy in upholding the Malay language, their *raison d'être* was to integrate the population of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds in such a way that they could connect with one another in a country which they called their home.

At this juncture it should also be mentioned that at the time of the Malayan independence in 1957, a great majority of the Chinese and Indian settlers were not yet citizens of the country. In order to become citizens, one of the stipulations was that they had to have "an elementary knowledge of Malay" as stated in Article 17 of the Constitution of Malaya 1957. (See also Asmah Haji Omar, 1979: 7). This means that they had to be able to write their name and simple sentences in Malay in the Roman script, and were able to read simple texts which were equivalent to those used in the primary school.

### IV. NEW WAVE OF ARRIVAL OF FOREIGN SPEAKERS

In the 1980's about a century after the beginning of the first phase of the arrival *enmasse* of non-native speakers of Malay in Malaya, from China and India, there came another wave of foreign arrivals in the country. This time, they came, to use a Malay metaphor, from "every direction of the wind". Their arrival was in response to the "internationalisation" of Malaysia, which was a programme of Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the fourth Prime Minister of Malaysia (1982 – 2003). This programme is given in great detail in his speech, *The Way Forward: Vision 2020*, tabled at his presentation of the Sixth Malaysia Plan in 1991. The

speech contains measures that should be taken by the country to arrive at the ultimate objective which was to transform Malaysia into “a fully developed nation”. He identifies nine objectives which have to be achieved in order to arrive at the ultimate objective, and the one that is relevant to the discussion in this paper is the ninth, which is “establishing a prosperous society, with an economy that is fully competitive, dynamic, robust and resilient.” This type of economy is described as follows:

A diversified and balanced economy with a mature and widely based industrial sector, a modern and mature agricultural sector.... (www.wawasan2020.com/vision) in the education sector meant that universities and colleges had to open their doors to foreign students.

This led to the establishment of private universities which could use English as a medium of instruction (a diversion from the national language policy), whereas before this there was no such institution. Among these private universities are branches of well-established universities of other countries, for example those of the United Kingdom and Australia, which draw students from all over the world to Malaysia. The attraction is not just due to quality education these universities offer, but also that the cost of living in Malaysia as students, even in the big cities, is much cheaper than in the homelands of these universities.

With this reform in higher education, public universities, i.e. those established by the government, were given a relaxation in the strict implementation of the national language policy in that English could be used in teaching their courses, especially those popular with foreign students. However, at the point of admitting the students both public and private universities do not have any regulation that stipulates that these students should have a level proficiency in the Malay language. To compensate for this lack, foreign students have to take a course in Malay and pass in the examination for the language before they completed their degree programme, to enable them to be awarded their academic degree. Each institution is given a guideline for the Malay language course, but as each is free to adopt its own level of attainment of proficiency among its students, there is no standard benchmark that applies to foreign students studying in Malaysian universities.

In the economic sector, internationalization has transformed Kuala Lumpur, the capital of the country, into a meeting place of multinational conglomerates and financial houses with headquarters and branches beyond the shores of Malaysia. This situation has given rise to an increase in the density of the use of English specifically in the city areas where grand high-rise buildings are to be found. The speakers of English comprise a mixture of locals and foreigners who are in

the professional class, i.e. managers, engineers, architects, bankers etc. This group can go about doing their business in Malaysia without any necessity or motivation of learning the local lingua franca, Malay. It is safe to assume that after five years of staying in Malaysia, the knowledge of Malay among foreigners of this class does not go beyond the restricted code, to use Bernstein’s term, in greetings and a few other types of linguistic routines. (Bernstein, 1966: 259).

The process of transforming Malaysia into an industrialised country as envisioned in *The Way Forward* included making Malaysia a car manufacturer and exporter, an undertaking which was never dreamt of prior to the 1980s. This is one of the developments which have attracted the work for cefrom foreign lands to come to Malaysia in large groups. This group consists of workers in factories, plantations (of rubber, oil palm, pineapple, and cocoa), the hospitality sector, and industries (building, manufacturing, and timber). Also included in the workforce are office cleaners and housemaids whose presence in the demography of the country cannot be ignored.<sup>2</sup> Except for the Indonesians who speak *bahasa Indonesia*, which is a variety of Malay, foreign workers in these categories may not know a word of the language at the time of their arrival in Malaysia. Their form of verbal communication is English, but the level of proficiency varies among them based on their country of origin. Those workers who are from countries where English is spoken as a second language, such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Philippines, are able to function in the workplace and to socialise with the local population using some form of English. Others might have attainment levels according to the education backgrounds in their home countries before coming to Malaysia; the code they use may just be restricted to greetings and simple sentences of making statements and requests, and asking questions.

Foreigners in the workforce are placed in environments where they are surrounded by locals (Malays and other indigenous groups, Chinese, and Indians), who interact in Malay and Malaysian English. The latter speech system is a creolised form of English, featured by English words with a sprinkle of Malay placed in Malay, Chinese and Tamil structures, and it is this form of communication that can be said to assist them in their communication with the locals before they acquire Malay. Another channel which has come their way in the recognition of words and phrases in Malay is the Malay-English code-switching, known locally as *bahasarojak*, which can be freely translated as “fruit salad language”. While Malaysian English is common among Malaysians whose school education does not reach the post-secondary level, the *bahasarojak* is used in informal interactions traversing all social classes.<sup>3</sup> These two lingua franca substrates, Malaysian English and *bahasarojak*, are frowned upon by language educators, but in reality they prove to be of

some assistance to first-time foreigners arriving in Malaysia with some knowledge of English and without a word of Malay.

Employers have been silent on the question of the need of the ability of their foreign employees to speak in the local lingua franca. In general there has not been any move on their part to provide Malay language classes to their foreign workers. It appears that there was no necessity for such a provision for the workforce as they were not going to be permanent settlers, and that their type of job did not require a formal assessment of their ability to fulfill their job descriptions. The workers, who usually get an initial two-year contract which is renewable to a further term of two years or more, seem to acquire the Malay language as a result of interaction with the local people in their job environment, places of worship, shopping and service centres etc.<sup>4</sup>

Foreign managers in the multinational firms and financial houses, whose stay in Malaysia is for a relatively short period, are a class of their own, and with their fluency in English they would not want to waste their time in learning Malay, unless they are linguistically inclined. As for the students, although they enter the country on student visas, and are likely to return to their home countries after their graduation, they have to fulfill the Malay-language requirement in order to be awarded the degree for the programme they registered for, as stated above.

In sum, of the three groups of foreigners under discussion, the professionals and the workforce appear not to have any necessity of having some level of proficiency in the Malay language in carrying out their jobs. The third group, comprising college and university students, are bound by a requirement that they should pass the level of the test prescribed by their place of study.

## V. THE IDEA OF HAVING STANDARD PROFICIENCY TESTS FOR MALAY FOR FOREIGNERS

Having a standard assessment in proficiency in the Malay language among foreigners came into being in 2012 with the appointment of Datuk Dr. Awang Sariyan as Director General of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Institute of language and Literature). This institute, established as a department in the Ministry of Education in 1956 (the eve of the Malayan independence from British rule), has been entrusted with the development of the Malay language so that as national language it can be used as the official language in government departments, and the main language of instruction in all spheres of education. (Asmah Haji Omar 1979). Dr. Awang Sariyan was concerned with the disparity in the standard of proficiency attained by foreign students graduating from Malaysian universities.

Hence, at the beginning the idea was to have a single standard set of tests for these students, but as discussions developed it was decided that assessment of Malay language proficiency should be extended to the other two groups, the professionals and the workforce. The decision was made based on a projection that there could be requests in the future from employers and individuals for some form of Malay language assessment for some purpose or other.<sup>5</sup> This means that the tests had to take into account a broad spectrum of foreign speakers of Malay.

## VI. SURVEY OF EXISTING STANDARD TESTS

As mentioned above, there had not been standard proficiency tests for the Malay language for any purpose whatsoever that are similar to TOEFL and IELTS. At the end of 1990's, Malaysia introduced her own standard test for English for all students applying to enter universities in the country. This is the MUET, already mentioned above. It is administered by the Malaysian Examination Council of the Ministry of Education, and is recognised only in Malaysia and Singapore.

TOEFL, IELTS, and MUET have been designed with a clear profiling of target candidates who are non-native speakers of English, and who have had formal teaching of English during their school days. TOEFL and MUET each has one version which has to be taken by candidates at one go, for all the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The attainment levels of students are placed in band scores in both tests. For TOEFL, the scores range from 9 (the highest) to 0 (the lowest).<sup>6</sup> MUET has six band scores, from 6 (the highest) to 1 (the lowest), each with its own description of the target level of proficiency.<sup>7</sup>

IELTS has two versions. One is the academic version meant for those who wish to enroll in universities and other institutions of higher education as well as for professionals, for example medical doctors and nurses who intend to study and practise in an English-speaking country. The second, which is the general training version, is meant for those planning to undertake non-academic training or to gain work experience, or for immigration purposes. There are nine band scores from 9 (the highest) to 1 (the lowest).<sup>8</sup>

## VII. DESIGNING A FRAMEWORK FOR THE TESTS

The three groups of the projected population of candidates for the Malay language tests as delineated above differ one from the other in all aspects of social and educational backgrounds, as well as in the irpur poses in being in Malaysia. To arrive at a suitable model, the first step was to re-examine the three groups would-be candidates based on their knowledge and

needs for Malay. The following factors were taken into account:

- i. The groups vary greatly in terms of levels of educational background.
- ii. Almost all of them came to Malaysia with very little knowledge of Malay or none at all.
- iii. Their needs for Malay vary according to the requirement of their place of employment or study.
- iv. All the three groups would need to have all the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Factors (i) – (iii) indicate that there could not be one test for all the groups, as the case is with the TOEFL, IELTS, and MUET which are directed at a more or less uniform category of candidates. At the same time, having three sets of tests would bring about complication in their administration. A close examination of factors (ii) and (iii) shows that the types of code required by the groups differ in varying degrees one from the other. Given the situation of language use in Malaysia among professionals as described above, one could not say that they needed a higher form of Malay compared to the workforce, or that those in the workforce may not want to achieve a level of proficiency beyond speaking in simple sentences in Malay with their colleagues or neighbours. On these grounds, the concepts of restricted and elaborated codes are found to be useful as the basis for the design of the model. An explanation as to the meaning of these codes is given by Bernstein, the originator of these concepts, as follows:

These two codes may be distinguished on the linguistic level in terms of the probabilities of predicting, *for any one speaker*, which structural elements will be used to organize meaning. In the case of an *elaborated* code, the speaker will select from a relatively extensive range of alternatives, therefore the probability of predicting the pattern of organizing elements in *any one sequence* is considerably reduced. If a speaker is using a *restricted* code then the range of these alternatives is severely limited and the probability of predicting the patterns is greatly increased. (Bernstein 1966: 259a).

The term *restricted code* was coined by Bernstein to replace *public language* which he used in previous writings. Why he calls it public language is that,

... it is marked off by the rigidity of its syntactical structure and the limited and restricted use of structural possibilities for sentence organization. It is a form of condensed speech in which certain meanings are restricted and the possibility of their elaboration is reduced. (Bernstein, 1966: 252b).

He goes on to explain that in a restricted code “the lexicon is wholly predictable and therefore, also, the

organizing structure”. (*Ibid.* 259a). This means that in this type of code it is not only the same vocabulary items that recur in expressions, but recurrence in such contexts is also a feature of the sentence structure.

Examples of restricted code (or public language) are linguistic routines in interactions when speakers greet or take leave of one another, express felicitations or condolence, and open or close a speech or an event etc. At the same time we can include in this category sentences in discourse that are used by beginners of a foreign language, where in the early stage of their learning it is the same set of simple sentence structures that recur with vocabulary items belonging to the same systems or subsystems functioning in these structures.

Among the features of elaborated code, previously named by Bernstein as formal language, structures are more complex and are not easily predictable in their usage. There is a “discriminative selection” from a range of vocabulary items. “Accurate grammatical order and syntax regulate what is said.” (*Ibid.* 253b). It is obvious, then, that this code is a property of expressions used by speakers who are already proficient in the language, compared to those using the restricted code.

With our understanding of the restricted and the elaborated codes, we had to figure out the candidates’ needs for the Malay language. The hypothesis was that all of them had experienced the early stages of Malay language learning, by which they were able to acquire the restricted code. Some may not be interested to go beyond using this code, but there may be others who are interested in acquiring a higher level proficiency, as a requirement for a job or for admission into an academic programme of study.

With the professionals and the academics, English is the main language in their workplace, academic institutions, and their social milieu. The professionals may want to acquire the ability to make small talks in Malay with Malays of their own social standing though, as it often happens, conversations in a situation of this nature even among Malaysians would drift to English. If there are among the foreign professionals those who are interested in attaining a proficiency in Malay at a much higher level, it may just be for a purpose of fulfilling a personal interest.

For the academics, levels of proficiency to be attained are determined by the universities and colleges. Whatever the level is, it would be higher than the restricted code, so that they are able to comprehend and interact in lectures and seminars that are delivered in Malay, and may want to refer to texts in their own academic disciplines that are available in Malay.

As for the workforce, the needs for Malay are to survive and function in various situations: in the workplace with employers and colleagues; in the community of neighbours and friends; and in public

places, such as in shopping and service centers. Their attainment level would also have to be higher than the restricted code they pick in the course of their mixing with Malaysians, but may not be of the level of the elaborated code of the academics.

After considering the profiling items (i) – (iv) above, a decision was made to have one set of tests divided into three main levels of proficiency: Beginners' Level; Intermediate Level; Advanced Level. Each of these main levels is again divided into two, which for convenience is labelled as *stages*, deriving a totality of six stages. For passing all the tests in Stage 1 of any level, the candidate is given a statement of attainment. With this statement he can move on to Stage 2 of the same level. A certificate of proficiency for any level is awarded after he passes Stage 2 of the said level, as shown in the schema below:

*Beginners' Level:* Stage 1 (Statement of Attainment)  
Stage 2 (Certificate of Proficiency, Beginners' Level)  
*Intermediate Level:* Stage 1 (Statement of Attainment)  
Stage 2 (Certificate of Proficiency, Intermediate Level)  
*Advanced Level:* Stage 1 (Statement of Attainment)  
Stage 2 (certificate of Proficiency, Advanced Level)

With every statement of attainment and certificate, there is a description of the ability achieved by the candidate in all the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

There is no prerequisite which states that a candidate must have the certificate of a lower level of proficiency in order to sit for the tests leading to the certificate of a higher level. This means that if a candidate through his self-assessment wishes to sit for the Intermediate Level, even without the certificate at the Beginners' Level, then he is free to do so. The same goes for one who intends to go straight to the Advanced Level; he does not have to show proofs that he is already in possession of certificates below that level.

With this framework an employer or a head of an academic institution can stipulate that his employees or students should have a certificate of proficiency at a pre-determined level for a particular purpose, such as confirmation in the service of his department, a raise in salary, a renewal of contract, or a requisite for the registration in or award of a diploma or a degree. Employers and institutions are at liberty to benchmark the attainment level of those within their employment or educational institution. The certificates at all levels do not have an expiry date.

## VIII. OBJECTIVE AND DESIGN OF THE TESTS

The objective of the tests is to assess candidates' linguistic competence and the way this competence is handled by them to encode and decode language in the skills tested. This type of competence is generally known as proficiency.

Language is very much part of the social and cultural life of society. In the British school of linguistics, which has its roots in Malinowski's Ethnolinguistic theory, language is defined as follows:

Language is activity, activity basically of four kinds: speaking, listening, writing and reading. These activities entail certain material processes which are observable. When we speak, the bodily movements we perform can be observed and measured .... In writing, the link between the movements and the resulting marks, on paper or blackboard, is fluid: you cannot tell what movements of what organs are responsible for producing certain letters written, still less typed, on a page. In written language therefore it is only the result we are interested in observing.... (Halliday et al. 1964: 9).

The above passage from Halliday et al. provides a guideline to the practical side of arriving at the objectives in assessing candidates' productive or encoding skills: speaking and writing. The material processes mentioned in the passage are the language produced, as well as the body movements that accompany its production in the speaking skill, and the production of the graphics in the writing skill.

The language itself consists of three principal levels: substance, form, and context. The definition for each of these levels is as follows:

The substance is the raw material of language: auditory (PHONIC substance) or visual (GRAPHIC substance). The form is the internal structure. The context is the relation of language which is in fact a relation of its internal patterns, its 'form', to other features of the situations in which language operates. (Halliday et al, *ibid.*10)

These three principal levels are aspects of language usage: the auditory and visual substance (in pronunciation and writing), the form (in morphology and syntax), and the context in lexicogrammar, all of which are tested for proficiency. These are also known as the phylogenetic aspects of language. In the tests, the production of language on the part of the candidates is assessed based on their ability to relate these phylogenetic forms to meaning in sentences and in discourse, while in listening and reading this type of relationship is observed through their ability to decode texts given for the purpose.

Usage of Malay, as that of any other natural language, is also subject to sociolinguistic rules. This means that the forms used in discourse should be appropriate and acceptable in the social and cultural contexts of the community concerned. For example, linguistic routines should be appropriate for the occasions in which they are used. Jargons and slangs may be commonly used for certain informal occasions depending on who speaks what to whom, but their usage may not be appropriate in other contexts.

Languages have their own systems of honorifics, and Malay is a language which has quite a large inventory of honorifics which are based on age difference, relationship (family, professional, acquaintanceship), and rank (in community, politics, workplace). At the same time there is a significant number of people in the Malaysian Malay community who hold various titles which they carry from birth showing their origins as royals or as members of a lineage connected to one of the nine sultanates. On top of this, there are those who are conferred with titles of honour at the federal and state levels every year. To speak proper Malay means to be able to use the appropriate form of address in a given social context.<sup>9</sup> Appropriacy as defined by Grundy (2000: 5) is "One of the features of language use ... in relation to those who use it and those they address." Appropriate behaviour, then, is a reflection of politeness, which is "one manifestation of the wider concept of etiquette or appropriate behaviour." (Grundy 2000: 146).

As human activities are related to culture and social rules, assessment of candidates' ability in speaking the language has to take into account the material processes in terms of physical movements. These are observable in the paralinguistic behavior of candidates in interaction with the tester, in answering questions, and in narrating events or experiences which are given as components of the tests for the oral skill. This means that paralinguistic behaviour is also part of etiquette.

Candidates come from different cultural backgrounds. There are rules of etiquette which they carry with them which are universally accepted, such as using the proper type of linguistic routines when meeting another person or parting from him in a certain context, not cutting off another person's speech in mid-sentence, or looking the other way when a person is talking to him, etc. At the same time, each culture has its features of cultural behaviour which may be considered taboos, but are permitted in other cultures. In Malay culture there are certain body movements which are forbidden in an interaction, for example, pointing at something with one's pointer finger, putting the hand(s) on the hip(s) even in informal conversations, or sitting cross-legged in front of one's superior. Observation of these rules is important in the test of oral proficiency when the candidate comes face to face with the examiner.

## IX. PRINCIPLES IN THE PREPARATION OF MATERIALS FOR THE TESTS

The preparation of materials for the tests take into consideration principles based on the backgrounds and the needs of the candidates, and the sociocultural rules that underlie the use and usage of language. These are simplicity versus complexity, choice of domain and register, authenticity of text, and sensitivity.

### a) *Simplicity versus complexity*

Since the tests were planned for candidates whose knowledge of Malay could be at any of the levels, from the Beginners' to the Intermediate and to the Advanced, the materials and the questions set for the purpose had to reflect this broad spectrum. This means that the materials had to start from the simple restricted code at the Beginners' Level, moving gradually to the most elaborated one. In this sense, there is no visible division between the two codes, made by the gradual movement from stage to stage, and level to level. Movement from simplicity to complexity is applied in all the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in terms of form and structure at the grammatical and lexical levels.

Simplicity and complexity of structure are seen in morphology and syntax. In the aspect of morphology, Malay is an agglutinative language, which makes use of various types of affixes: prefix, infix, suffix, and split affix (i. e. an affix whose components are intervened by the root word). Each of these types may occur in a simple or complex form. This being the case, the materials used in the tests for listening and reading reflect this movement from simplicity to complexity. The same principle is applied in the tests for the productive skills of speaking and writing. Candidates on their part are expected to form their sentences as expected for each level.

Malay syntax is of the typology SVO (Sentence – Verb – Object), except for passive sentences which are of two variants: OVS, and OSV. Movement from simplicity to complexity means that as the level moves upwards candidates have to show their ability to produce and comprehend the more complex structures of the hypotactic and paratactic types, and the combination of both.

The principle of simplicity moving to complexity applies at the lexical level as well. In terms of lexical form, the morphological structure of a word reflects the type of its meaning. The more complex the morphology of a word is, the more complex is its meaning; in this aspect we are looking into the candidates' ability of production and reception of the Malay language in the aspect of lexicogrammar.

### b) *Choice of domain and register*

On the whole, the candidates are tested primarily in their ability to use general language, that is, the language which is not specific in usage to a particular field of knowledge. Since the language concerned is Malay, it is the standard variety that underlies discourses in all situations in all walks of life seen in terms of domains, such as family, social life, workplace, service centres, and gatherings of the community they are in etc. Domains are defined by Fishman as "classes of situations" in a speech network. According to him,

...there are classes of events recognized by each speech network or community such that several seemingly different situations are classed as being of the same kind. No speech network has a linguistic repertoire that is as differentiated as the complete list of apparently different role relations, topics, and locales in which its members are involved. Just *where the boundaries come* that do differentiate between the *class of situations* generally requiring one variety and another class of situations generally requiring another variety must be empirically determined .... Such classes of situations are referred to as *domains*. (Fishman, 1971: 255).

Examples of domains given by Fishman are Home, School and Culture, Work, Government, Church. (*Ibid.* 235).

The varied backgrounds of the candidates regarding their interests, living environments, workplace etc. make domains the basis of the principle of choice. A particular domain may be inclined towards the usage of certain lexical items and sentence structures, and even linguistic routines, more than the other. These linguistic aspects of language usage are generally known as register.

A register is a semantic concept. The definition given by Halliday is as follows:

It can be defined as a configuration of meanings that are typically associated with a particular situational configuration, a configuration of field, mode and tenor. But being a configuration of meanings, a register must also, of course, include the expressions, the lexicogrammatical and phonological features that typically accompany or REALIZE these meanings. (Halliday, 1980b: 64).

Based on the definition given above, the market place has certain features of register represented by lexical items and the structures which are used in exchanges between buyer and vendor. The whole exchange is a text which consists of "its grammar and semantics on the one hand and the context of situation on the other". (Halliday, *Ibid.* 62).

The social configuration is realised from the social context of situation which is given a conceptual framework of field, tenor, and mode. (Halliday 1980a: 12). In brief, *field* means field of discourse, referring to what the participants are engaged in; *tenor* refers to the participants, their statuses and roles, and their role relationship; and *mode* refers to "what part the language is playing, what the participants are expecting the language to do in that situation". (Halliday, *Ibid.*) Hence, the concept of field, tenor and mode as given by Halliday is approximately equivalent to domain given by Fishman.

It is necessary that candidates such as those in this broad sociocultural spectrum be given a choice of domain for the four skills designed for the tests, so that

the tests are seen to be assessing the type of language that they need and are likely to use. As far as the target groups under discussion are concerned, their experiences and needs for Malay differ, as are their objectives in coming to Malaysia.

For listening, speaking, and reading, candidates are asked to make the choice at the start of the examination. For writing, the choice is given in the question paper. For example, people working in the restaurant are more familiar with the vocabulary used in this domain, such as names of dishes and utensils, than they are with the names of the tools and activities in the building sector. Giving a choice to the candidates on the subject of a conversation or a narration in the tests means that we are aware of the types of language usage that a candidate is more familiar with. At the same time we are also aware that an individual is able to understand and produce language in more than one domain. When he goes higher in the professional or academic ladder, his repertoire of domains may include one which is characterised by linguistic elements which are the privy of specialists.

#### c) *Authenticity of texts*

Whenever a text is used for the purpose of evaluating the listening and reading skills, authentic texts are used, and these are texts which are published in the printed media (for reading), and in audio or audio-visual form (for listening). This means that texts are not composed purposely for the tests. These texts are properly selected so that they represent the standard (and hence, respected) type of language that is spoken in schools and educational institutions, and in government departments. Care is taken that no element of Bazaar or Pidgin Malay is used in the texts chosen.

## X. SENSITIVITY

The principle of authenticity may pose a problem in that the texts chosen may trigger the sensitivity of certain groups of candidates, in terms of their culture, religious belief, and political ideology. At times it is not just the subject matter that may be taken as sensitive, but also the way language is used in discourse, and this may also apply to texts which are considered as non-sensitive. Sensitivity is not an area that is easy to deal with, especially when the candidates are from a broad spectrum of culture and belief system. But including it as a principle in materials preparation is a show of considerateness towards the candidates.

## XI. CLOSING REMARKS

This paper shows that the purposes of language proficiency tests are social and educational in nature. In the context of foreign users of a language there is no standard need for all the groups, as shown in the Malaysian case. There is an obvious difference between the needs of the three groups of projected

candidates, as well as differences between levels to be attained in each group.

It can also be seen that the choice of domain given to candidates in the test for proficiency results in an overall ability in language usage, not one that is restricted to forming correct sentence structures. At the same time this type of test is relevant to their vocation.

## XII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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### Notes

- The language proficiency test for the British officers in the colonial government consisted of speaking, reading and writing. In reading and writing, they were also tested in their ability to read and write the language in the *Jawi* script. (See Taylor, 2006: 39 – 40; 75 – 76). This script has its origin in the Arabic system of writing and has become part of the literacy history of the Malays. With Western influence, the Roman script was adopted, first as an alternative system to *Jawi*, for writing Malay. But now it has become the main system, with *Jawi* as the minor system used in Islamic religious texts. See Taylor, 2006: 39 – 40; 75 – 76).
- Malaysian households, especially those of the upper middle class, had always have maids, even before the period under consideration but they were locally recruited from the villages. Socio-economic progress and educational opportunities for local women had opened the doors for them to participate in the development of the country alongside the men. This led to another social situation which sought for domestic help from abroad. And neighboring countries such as Indonesia and the Philippines were in full supply.
- For a discussion on this topic, see Asmah Haji Omar, 2010: Chapter 13, *Taksonomi Pertemuan Bahasa: Di Manakah Letaknya Bahasa Rojak? [A Taxonomy of the Meeting of Languages: Where is the Place of the Salad Language?]*. See also Elaine Morais 1994, and Maya David 1996.
- There has not been any formal study on this topic. This information is gathered from my observation of and interaction with foreign maids (hired by friends and neighbours), and workers in the building industry.
- In Singapore there has already been a stipulation that foreign workers should take and pass a qualifying test in English before they are recruited. For the renewal of a contract, they have to do the same but with a higher level of proficiency.
- N TOEFL, each skill carries a full mark of 30. For reading and listening, the scores are categorized as High (22 – 30), Intermediate (15 – 21), Low (0 – 14). For speaking: Good (26 – 30), Fair (18 – 25), Limited (10 – 17), Weak (0 – 9). For writing: Good (24 – 30), Fair (17 – 23), Limited (1 – 16). <https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/scores/understand>, 14 January 2015.
- The MUET scores are translated in brief into the following levels of proficiency: 6 – Very good user; 5 – Good user; 4 – Competent user; 3 – Modest user; 2 – Limited user; 1 – Extremely limited user. ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaysian\\_University\\_English\\_Test](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaysian_University_English_Test), January 6, 2015)
- The band scores in IELTS mean the following levels of attainment: 9 – Expert user; 8 – Very good user; 7 – Good User; 6 – Competent user; 5 – Modest user; 4 – Limited user; 3 – Extremely limited user; 1 intermittent user. ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_English\\_Language\\_Testing\\_System](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_English_Language_Testing_System), January 6, 2015)
- For a comprehensive typology of Malay honorifics, see Asmah Haji Omar, 2009: Chapter 4; 2004.

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## A Linguistic Survey of Types of Names among the Babukusu of Kenya

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# A Linguistic Survey of Types of Names among the Babukusu of Kenya

Sarah Marjie-Okyere

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Names give us our identity as individuals. They are even more unique when they are given in relation to the tribal background: events, settlements, history, etc. and language of the person. It is a common phenomenon in most African countries to give names against such backgrounds. Among the Bukusu tribe of Kenya, such may be the case where naming the individual is concerned. Thus, the type of name and the language in which the name is given are two very important components of their naming patterns. This paper therefore describes types of names among the Babukusu of Kenya within some morphological contexts.

Our everyday lives are rife with the use of language. Language is simply the human ability to acquire and use complex systems (Pinker, 1994). It is a very important fiber of human existence. Some scholars (Hauser and Fitch 2003 and Pinker 1994) view language as the mind that allows human beings to undertake linguistic behavior; which is to learn and to produce and understand utterances. Another point of view is that language is a 'formal system of signs governed by grammatical rules of combination to communicate meaning' (Trask 2007:93). The socialist sees language as a system of communication that enables humans to exchange verbal or symbolic utterances. This point

stresses the social functions of language and the fact that humans use it to express themselves and to manipulate objects in their environment (Van Valin 2001). This view of language is connected to the study of language in pragmatics, sociolinguistics, cognitive as well as linguistic anthropology. We use language in many different ways and for many different purposes. We write, speak, and sign it. We work with language, play with language, and earn our living with language. We court and seduce, buy and sell, insult and praise, all by means of language.

In the African context and in our local communities, we can plausibly say that language is used to communicate with our societies during events such as marriage, death, naming ceremonies and any other activity or event that requires the use of language amidst drumming and dancing. With regard to naming in our part of the world, names given to children, places, things and objects are very essential because a lot of factors are taken into consideration during such activities. According to Agyekum (2006:2), in the Akan cultural context we name to differentiate, to recognize and to know. He continues that the Akans of Ghana attach so much importance to names so that knowing and understanding an Akan name, is knowing their culture, philosophy, thought, language and environment. So when some titles of books and articles ask 'What's in a name?', I begin to wonder what points they are driving at. From a linguistic perspective, Rubanza (2000:11) argues that 'the scope and diversity of human thought and experience places great demands on language creativity' and so names can be analyzed linguistically. All these factors support the argument that there exists a word, which might be termed a name. It is against this background that we examine types of names in Kibukusu linguistically. However, we note here that what the native speaker perceives to be a name still differs from community to community.

In the sections that follow, we review literature on types of names, and go on to present a background information on the Babukusu; a tribe in western Kenya. We briefly glance through our data collection method. Then finally, we discuss the types of names in Kibukusu looking at some morphological patterns.

<sup>1</sup> This is one of the phrases taken from Shakespear's Julius Ceasar sayings.

a) *Anthroponomy, Toponymy and Names for Tools and Things*

The study of the origin, history and use of proper names is embedded in a root term known as Onomastics or onopatology. Anthroponomy, otherwise called anthroponomastics, is that branch of onomastics which deals with the study of personal names. Toponymy, also known as toponomastics, is the branch of the same root study that refers to the study of place names. We also name tools and things surrounding us. Naming has several processes and factors in the African community such as happen among the Babukusu. The process however differs from society to society. This paper examines native Babukusu names given to people and places as well as some names of tools and things. It looks at the structure of such names as well as what we termed as 'direct' and 'indirect' reference types.

i. *Personal names*

Like in many African communities, the elders of the Bukusu community (such as parents of the child, uncles, head of the family) perform rites and agree on a name to be given to a child. Many writers such as Ogechi and Ruto (2002), Agyekum (2006), Akinyemi (2005) and Atawneh (2005) have elaborated several rites that are performed during child naming in different communities. They further illuminated that these rites are significant depending on the nature and manner in which a particular child is born. Names given to children depend on circumstances surrounding the birth of a child such as events that took place at the time the child was born or the day the child was born. It could be the already existing family names, theophoric (embedded in a god or deity) names, flora and fauna names such as physical appearance of the child, weird and reincarnate names, achievement names, stool names, religious, occupational, insinuating and proverbial names, kinship etc (see Agyekum 2006).

Certain events may occur during the time a woman conceives and /or at birth. These events are so seriously considered that they are added to the name of the child. Among the Akans of Ghana, Agyekum (2006) refers to these events as circumstantial and explains that there may be certain occurrences on the day the child is born such as time and manner, or that some days are even considered to be traditionally 'sacred'. Ogechi and Ruto (2002) give an example of a person with a name of 'Bomblast'. This name<sup>2</sup> was given to the child because the child was born on a day when the U.S Embassy in Nairobi suffered a terrorist attack by way of bombing. Names may also be given to a person sometimes on a day a king or a great person dies. Some clan, ancestry or father's names could also be given to children. This practice is very common among

Africans and some places in the west (Avigad, 1987; Asserti, 2001 and Asante 1991). Other scholars refer to these names as surnames, clan and family names (Caffarelli, 2005 and Brown et al,1983). There is also what is referred to as occupational names (Fowkes, 1993). These are titles or names that people acquire during their career lives (see Agyekum 2006).

ii. *Place Names*

Places must have names for easy identification. Every community, area and / or place in the world has a name. There should therefore be uniformity and accuracy in referring to a place to prevent confusion in everyday business and recreation. Some scholars have found that study of place names provide valuable insight into the historical geography of a particular region. Place names do not only point up ethnic settlement patterns, but they can also help identify periods of immigration of particular settlers (Mc David, 1958; Kaups,1966 and Kharusi, & Salman, 2011).

In Ghana, among the Akans, there are places that are named after people. These are believed to be people who first settled or discovered the place. These names could be read as *Donkorkrom*, Donkor is the name of the person, then *krom* is 'town' which literary means 'Donkor's town'. Others are *Kojo krom* meaning 'Kojo's town', *Kwame krom* meaning 'kwame's town' etc. Sometimes, some place names may be less official than others. For instance, at the University of Ghana campus, un-officially; students have often attributed names to some places based on events happening around the time the place is built. An example is a recreational oval that has been named 'Tsunami' (built around 2004-2005). This place was put up just around the period when the infamous tsunami incident occurred somewhere in the South East Coast of Asia.

Most studies on place names have settled on the use of surnames to determine the geographical locations of migrants (Degioanni et al, 1996, Dolley, 1983) or vice-versa. King'ei (2002) argues that the non-Swahili speaking Kenyan in up-country communities have adopted and used names in Kiswahili to name places as a sign of intercultural communication. He further states that a 'deliberate socio-cultural and political preference for Kiswahili names is not just to denote borrowed Kiswahili concepts in the up-country communities, but to forge a 'nationalistic' culture as opposed to a localized and ethnic culture' (King'ei 2002:1). He gives examples of place names that have been 'swahilized' to buttress his assertion.

iii. *Names of tools and things*

We are surrounded by things, which are essential to our very existence. These things must have names for easy identification. Let us not forget that we name these things ourselves. We have houses, umbrellas, tables, cups, machines, food, cloths, weather etc. King'ei (2002) , discussing inventory of names of

<sup>2</sup> Ogechi and Ruto (2002) say that this practice is common among the Luo's in Kenya/

things that have been swahilized by the people living in Kenya up-country, explains that Kiswahili names that are given to places, buildings, organizations or institutions in contemporary Kenya represents a form of linguistic creativity rather than a conventional practice. He explains further that it is not convention because these names already exist in the language. This he classifies under Hudson's (1993) categorization of kinds of social knowledge expressed through language. In this categorization, Hudson posits that there is a shared non-cultural knowledge by people within the same community or geographical area, and that this knowledge is not inherited. As the community grows, new things come up or are invented and so the people in the community create terms for such concepts or items. He gives some examples of products that have been swahilized such as *Imara Kama Simba* 'as strong as Lion', *Ushindi* 'Victory', *Jamii* 'society', *Uji Tayari* 'porridge is ready'.

In this paper, we want to investigate types of morphological processes used in Babukusu names to derive for example traditional male and female names or place names and names of things and tools (although they are not proper names). Our desire is to look at types of names in the language. In this paper, Babukusu is the name of the people; Kibukusu is referred to the language and Bukusu is the name of the community or tribe.

#### b) *The Babukusu of Kenya*

The Babukusu are from the Bantu speaking group and is one of the sub-tribes that constitute the Luhya community, the third largest tribe in Kenya after the Gikuyu and the Luo. They are mostly found in the Western part of Kenya. The Babukusu<sup>3</sup> predominantly occupy Bungoma County in western Kenya. They are bordered by Kakamega District to the east, Busia District to the south, Mount Elgon to the north and Uganda to the west. A large number of the Bukusu are also found in the Kitale area of Kenya's Rift Valley province, as well as in Lugari-Malava district (Were, 1967). The Ba Masaaba of Uganda are very closely related to the Babukusu, with many shared customs and a common dialect of the Luhya language (Makila, 1978). They are part of the larger Luhya community and pride themselves as the largest in the country.

The Babukusu have a strong nature that has been manifested in their political and religious affiliations. They are strong believers in the spiritual self hence the emergency of the '*Dini ya Musambwa*'. (This is a Diviner's priest or their religious leader). The Babukusu are believers in cultural traditions and therefore hold fast unto them. They religiously follow the advice of their elders and are strongly influenced by the 'Diviner Priests' who formed an integral part of the

mentoring system. History explains that, the Babukusu lived in fortified villages, and did not have a structure of central authority. The highest authority was the village headman, called *Omukasa*, who was usually elected by the men of the village. There were also healers and prophets who acquired great status because of their knowledge of tribal traditions, medicines, and religion. Elijah Masinde, a resistance leader and traditional medicine man, was revered as a healer in the early 1980s (Ayot, 1977). Among the most recognized Babukusu personalities were warriors and diviners. Political icons came later for the Babukusu.

Ceremonies in the Bukusu society are very important and have different intents for each gender. Women often celebrate their coming of age, marriage and childbirth. There is also a rite of passage for young men as they transit into adulthood. Bukusu family structure is typically modeled on the generic Luhya family structure. The families are usually polygamous, with the first wife accorded a special status among her co-wives. Babukusu society is entirely patrilineal: women are present only as child-bearers and as an indication of status. In addition, being polygamous meant more hands to work on the fields, which is an advantage in a society founded on agriculture. Agriculture is the major economic activity in the district, with about 70% of the population depending directly or indirectly on farming for their livelihoods (Barker, 1975).

## II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Since the aim of this paper is to look at the pattern of morphemes of these names in Kibukusu, we will apply a descriptive approach by analyzing the names within a morphological context looking at whether these names are derivationally or inflectionally derived.

In word formation processes, words are either derived or inflected to form other words from one category of word to another. By derivational morphemes, when combined with a root, change either the semantic meaning or part of speech of the affected word; that is, changing a noun to a verb in the process of word formation. In English, in the word *happiness*, the addition of the bound morpheme *-ness* to the root *happy* changes the word from an adjective (*happy*) to a noun (*happiness*). For example, we have observed that in the Bukusu society, place names are usually derived from events and shape of the places.

Inflectional morphemes on the other hand, modify a verb's tense or a noun's number without affecting the word's meaning or class. Examples of applying inflectional morphemes to words are adding *-s* to the root *dog* to form *dogs*. (for example, case, number, person, gender or voice, mood, tense, or aspect) (Widdowson, 1996; O'Grady et al, 1996 and

<sup>3</sup> The people are referred to as Babukusu.

From kin et al, 2007). Inflections are affixes that are added to words. These affixes could be in the form of prefixes or suffixes or even sometimes infixes depending on the language. We intend to look at how morphemes are put together to form for examples, male and female names through prefixation. We have also observed that names of things and tools are from Kiswahili but have Kibukusu prefixes in order to make the words Bukusu in nature.

It is in the light of the above that we wish to analyze Kibukusu names. From the aforementioned, we realize that Kibukusu names are derived, thus from one category of part of speech to another for instance place names, or are inflected for gender especially personal names or names of things and tools. We have observed that the usual practice of analyzing names for most scholars is by explaining the meanings of names within a sociolinguistic context or explaining naming ceremonies. However, from a different perspective this paper looks at the word form or structure of Kibukusu names. This analysis is undertaken because we believe that names are words, which form the larger part of language of a given community such as Kibukusu, hence, our desire to look at such names within a linguistic context.

a) *Method of Data Collection*

The data consists of personal names, place names as well as names for some things and tools. These names were gathered through the help of a native speaker of Kibukusu. The Research Assistant consulted some elders of the community with the help of some

b) *Indirect Reference names*

Table 1: Kibukusu personal names: Indirect Reference names

No.	male	female	prefix	root	meaning
1.	Wa-njala	Na-njala	Wa/Na	njala	born during famine
2.	Wa-ngila	Na-ngila	Wa/Na	ngila	born along the road
3.	Wakesa	Nekesa	Wa/ Ne	kesa	born at harvest time
4	Wa-fula	Na-fula	Wa/Na	fula	born during rainy season
5.	Wa-nyama	Na-nyama/ Nanjekho	Wa/ Na	nyama	born during a festival when there is a lot of meat
6.	Wa-swa	Na-swa	Wa/Na	swa	born during the season of harvesting white ants ( <i>chiswa</i> )
7.	Simiyu	Na-simiyu	Na	simiyu	born during the dry or hot season
8.	Na-malwa	Wa-malwa	Wa/Ma	malwa	Born during the preparation of local beer

The names above are what we will refer to as Indirect Reference names. As we discussed above, because such names have affixes plus parts of the names of the events or activities; we refer to such names as indirect reference; because the names of events are not directly lifted and given to the child but part of the name of the activity. For example, the name for hunger in Kibukusu is *enjala*, but the name of the person is *Wanjala* or *Nanjala*. The prefix attached is the

prefix for human in the language then the name of the event.

III. DISCUSSIONS OF TYPES OF NAMES IN KIBUKUSU

The Babukusu have personal names, place names and names for things and tools.

a) *Kibukusu personal names: Direct and Indirect Reference*

Among the Babukusu, children inherits the clan of their father, and are not allowed to marry spouses from either their own clan, or their mother's clan. The first son of the first wife is usually the main heir to his father, and he had a special name denoting this status: *Simakulu*. At birth, children are usually named after grandparents or famous people, after the weather or events (Makila, 1978 and Were 1967). There are two types of names that we shall discuss. There are names that have affixes and parts of the names of the events or activities; we refer to such names as *Indirect Reference*, because the names of events are not directly lifted and given to the child. Another type of names is the *Direct Reference*, where names given to people are names referring to other things but are lifted directly to refer to

prefix for human in the language then the name of the event.

i. *Morpheme pattern of Indirect Reference Names*

Concerning personal names in Kibukusu, there is an inflectional pattern so that names are inflected for gender. As the introduction in 3.1 stated, Kibukusu personal names have roots and affixes. These affixes are usually prefixes: male names frequently begin with

*Wa*, while female names usually began with *Na*. Thus, for example, a boy born during famine is named *Wa-njala*, while a girl is named *Na-njala*. Both names share the same root word, *njala*, from *eNjala*, the Kibukusu word for 'hunger'. The *Wa* or *Na* is the prefix whereas the root word is the name of the event or period the activity took place. These events or periods are usually nouns such as hunger, road, meat etc. These prefixes when added to the root words do not change the grammatical categories of the names, but changes the gender, hence an inflectional approach. There is another name *Nekesi* from our data which did not take *Na* as its prefix, but rather *Ne*. This occurred as a result of pronunciation where the vowel 'e'<sup>4</sup> in *kesi* affects the vowel before it in *Na* making it *Ne*.

ii. *Direct Reference names*

These are names given to children / people who come after children who never survived. These names are words that are used to refer to other things in the language, but are used directly to refer to such children. These are what we term direct reference names. The

*Wangwe* 'leopard', *Kwena* 'crocodile', *Wepukhulu* 'dust', *Kundu* 'a thing', *kuchikhi* 'stump'. There are also female names *Werengekha* and *Khatundi* meaning 'a delicate balance'. There is another female name *Simuli* meaning 'flower'. These names as we observe are not partitioned into morphemes such as prefix and root words. There are also some names termed 'unisex names' that is, they are names that could be used for both male and female children and or twins. Examples in such regard are *Mukhwana* and *Mulongo*.

It is also worth noting that most Babukusu are named after their ancestors'. That is why some of the names among the Babukusu may generally look like they are just words or names without specific meaning. These according to the informant are ancestral names.

IV. PLACE NAMES IN KIBUKUSU

Place names in this language are names of events, design of the place, agriculture and borrowed words.

Table 2 : Kibukusu Place names

No.	male	Prefix	root	meaning
1.	E-bungoma	e-	-bungoma	A place where the Bungoma people settled initially before they were pushed up Mt Elgon by Babukusu as they migrated from Uganda. The Bungoma are Sabaots (Kalenjins) who today are Bukusu neighbours.
2.	E-ka-ka-mega	e-	kakamega	In Kiluhya specifically Maragoli, kakamega is a phrasal verb meaning 'to cut little of ugali' (morsel). One time a white man visited a family around the present place called Ekakamega 'the head quarters of Ekakamega county'. The host family prepared Ugali 'the main meal in Luhya land'. They didn't know the white man would eat. They were surprised when he pinched some ugali. They all said 'ka-ka-mega' [ka-demmutive, ka- present tense, mega-pinch].
3	E-kapchai	e-	kapchai	A place where the white settlers first experimented the growing of <i>chai</i> meaning 'tea'.
4	E-si-kusi	e-	si-kusi	A land which has dome shape. On each side of the village are rivers.
5	E- mapera	e-	mapera	The place was full of guavas or a place of many guava trees
6	E- kolomani	e-	kolomani	it is a borrowed English word 'Gold mine' It is a place where the colonialist discovered gold :where they used to mine gold.
7.	Mabanga	∅	mabanga	A place meaning blood
8.	Lugulu		lugulu	A hilly or mountainous
9.	kabulu		kabulu	A boundary separating two communities
	Mwibale	mw	mwibale	A place where there is a huge rock

<sup>4</sup> This is a vowel harmony rule, where vowels from the same set co-occur.

### a) Morpheme Pattern of Place Names

There are some place names from our data with prefixes whereas others do not. Those that have prefixes are the types that have place prefix plus name of the former place of settlement or event (see Table 2 above). Those that do not have prefixes are names that are directly lifted from the language to name the places such as with personal names. In this language, generally, the place prefix is *e-* and so these names of places usually have *e-* plus the root word. Some examples are *E-bungoma*, *E-kapchai*, *E-si-kusi*, *E-kolomani* (please refer to the table for more examples) etc. The examples show that there is *e-* with *bungoma*, *kapchai*, *sikusi* and *kolomani* respectively.

### b) Event Place Names

There are some names of places that came into existences as a result of historical events that took place. Place names such as *E-bungoma*, *E-kapchai*, *E-si-kusi* etc. (Please refer to table for meanings of the places). They are usually affixed with nouns such as *bungoma* (name of town), *chai* (tea) and *sikusi* (name of a river) etc. There is another example of a place name, which is a phrasal verb *e-ka-ka-mega* where the verb is *mega*. There is the place prefix *e-* then a diminutive morpheme *ka*, then the present tense *-ka* and then the verb. Here according to the informant the name of the place means 'to cut small' which is now used as a noun, place name. In addition to this, there is also a place name, which is an English borrowed word 'Gold mine' and has been bukusalized to become *E-kolomani*. This could be a form of borrowing from two languages; swahilized word which has further been bukusalized. These names as observed have the place prefix *e-* plus the name of the event.

There are also other place names without prefixes and they are examples of direct reference types. Below are some examples.

- i. *Chesamisi* - In Kalenjin this means Buffalo. This place has many buffalos hence the name Chesamisi. In addition, a school (boys) was named after the town.
- ii. *Kimilili*- This is a borrowed from Kalenjin word kemilil which means leopard. It is a place which have many leopards located around the slopes of Mt Elgon.
- iii. *Kamusinga* - The word Kamusinga in Kibukusu means a beehive.

History says that, the Kimisinga (beehives) where hung on trees along the bank of the river so that the bees could make use of the water from the permanent River Kamusinga especially during dry season. When the white missionaries came to Bukusu, they established a school and named it Kamusinga High because it shares border with River Kamusinga. This place is in the Kimilili town, so they sought the origin of the name Kimilili. After realizing that the word means leopard, they decided to have the leopard as

part of the emblem of the school. That is how the village and the famous schools came to acquire their names. The school until date has a picture of the leopard on the crests of the school uniforms.

From the above, we observe that these names are directly lifted from names of towns, animals and from neighboring native languages. They do not have place prefixes because the Babukusu wanted to keep the original meaning of the words borrowed.

### c) Agriculture Place Names

Some places also came into existence as result of the agricultural products that were harvested in the area. Such names from our data are *E-mapera* and *E-kapchai*. These names also have the place prefix *e-* then the name of the product *mapera* and *kapchai* meaning 'guava' and 'tea' respectively.

### d) Place Names Resulting from Nature/Shape of the Place

There are also names of places that are given because of the shape of the town. The place *E-si-kusi* is in between two rivers *Kusi* and is presumed by the people to have a dome-shape: *e-* is the prefix and *si-kusi* are the names of the rivers. To add to this, *Mabanga* in Kibukusu means 'blood', which is a place that has red soil. In this example, *ma-* is the prefix for plural whereas *banga* means 'blood'. There is also *mwibale* where *mw-* is a prefix for rock then *ibale*, name of rock. Other examples of places that exist in the language because of the nature of the places are *Lugulu* and *Kabula*. These do not have place prefixes and are examples of direct reference types.

## V. NAMES OF THINGS AND TOOLS

Names of things in Kibukusu reveal an interesting scenario and have a particular pattern. Most of the names of the things are borrowed from Kiswahili and English. What is done is that the names begin with prefixes of class of things plus the name of the borrowed word depending on the thing that is being talked about. Here it is also noted that some of the words although they are borrowed from Kiswahili, they have Kibukusu names for them.

a) Names of things beginning with e-

There are number of things that begin with the e- prefix but have a Kiswahili root (just two words did not have Kiswahili root words) word origin in our data.

Name in Kibukusu	prefix	Root (Kiswahili origin)	English meaning
e-nguo	e-	nguo	Dress
e- Longi	e-	Suruali (not Kiswahili but has 'e' prefix)	Trousers
e-nguo ya mkari-	e-	Nguo ya mkari	Under wear or dress of under
e-mesa	e-	meza	Table
e-bakuli	e-	bakuli	A large bowl
e-sahani	e-	sahani	Plate
enyama esike	e-	nyama + esike (choma)	Smoked meat
e-taa (lumuli)	e-	taa	Light later became etaa
e-umma	e-	umma	Fork

The observation above is that all the words except 'longi' and 'esike (attached to 'nyama) are not Kiswahili words (refer to table). Apart from those two words, all the words have e- as the prefix for thing then word from Kiswahili. Some examples are e-nguo, e-mesa, e-bakuli, e-sahani, e-umma etc.

b) Names of things that begin with si- prefix

Our data also found names of things that begin with si- prefix. Kibukusu words are in italics, Kiswahili in brackets and English words in quotation marks. Some examples are:

- h) *sijiko* (kijiko) 'spoon'
- i) *sikombe* (kikombe) 'cup'
- j) *sitambala* (kitambaa) 'cloth'

These words are mostly realized to be words which begin with ki- prefix in Kiswahili but change the prefix to si- in Kibukusu. The reason is that because the words are bukusulized, the si kibukusu is rather preferred so as not to make the word look Kiswahili.

c) Names of things that are borrowed from English

There are also names of things that are borrowed from English. Some of these words begin with the li- and others with e- prefix. It is realized that such names with the li prefix are usually meta-borrowed. This means that these words have been borrowed from English into Kiswahili, then borrowed again into Kibukusu. An exception is the word *lisimu* where simu is a Kiswahili word for phone. Examples of words that begin with li- in this regard are:

- k) *likoti* (koti) 'Coat'
- l) *lishati* (shati) 'Shirt'
- m) *lisimu* 'phone'

Those that begin with e- prefix are:

- n) *efriji* (friji) 'fridge'
- o) *etelevisheni* (televisheni) 'television'
- p) *ekompyuta* (kompyuta) 'computer'
- q) *eradio* (radio) 'radio'. This word has a Kibukusu name *nakhalondo*.

r) *esikiria* (baisikeli) 'bicycle'. Another word for bicycle in this language is *endika* which is an expanded word for a donkey.

For words that begin with the e-prefix, the words are English words borrowed into Kiswahili and into Kibukusu. Our data shows that although there are Kibukusu words for 'radio' *nakhalondo* and *endika* 'bicycle', Kiswahili words are still borrowed. According to the people, the Kibukusu word *nakhalondo* is the name of a bird and so the name was used to refer to radio. Later, as a result of modernization, *eradio* was used instead. *Endika* is also a name for a donkey that was used for cultivating farms back then and so was used for bicycle because it could serve the same purpose as the donkey, but again the name was changed to *esikiria* a borrowed form of *baisikeli* from Kiswahili due to modernization.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This paper has looked at types of names in Kibukusu because the aim of the paper was not to only look at proper names. We discovered that names in this language be it personal, place or names of things and tools have a particular morphological pattern although a few exceptions exist. Names in this language could be direct or indirect reference types especially with personal and place names. In this language, place names referred to activities that took place such as with personal names. This means that much importance is placed on place names as much with personal names.

Traditional male and female names are still in vogue in Kibukusu although modernization is creeping in every society or community. Although, most people have Christian names, they would always have a native or traditional name in addition because they are so obsessed with their culture so much that they believe such names are their only source of identity. In Kenya, your name will quickly tell where and from what tribe you belong to especially with the traditional ones. Anybody you asked of the name will always tell you the native or traditional one. With this introduction, the person is

indirectly telling you the tribe he or she belongs. Christian names are used mostly in schools and official settings.

Sometimes, some children are not given Christian names but take up one when they grow due to schooling or when they find themselves in other environments. Names of things and tools are basically borrowed from Kiswahili which is the parent Bantu language of the other East African languages. Here, there is the addition of prefixes for things in Kibkusu just to bukusulize them, in other words, to make them sound Kibukusu.

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## Arabic Traces in Masalha's Language in the Literary Translated Work the Cactus

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**Abstract-** The main target of this article is to examine the impact of Arabic on the Masalha's literary translated work *The Cactus* from Arabic into Hebrew, focusing on the lexical effects. Specifically it examines his use of words and phrases borrowed from Arabic and loan translations of idioms and proverbs, specially from colloquial Arabic. These words and phrases serve to increase the authentic sense of the Arab culture that the text depicts.

This article reports also on the phenomenon of Arab authors in Israel writing in Hebrew. "Writing in Hebrew" refers to literary works originally written in Hebrew or translated from Arabic to Hebrew. The article examines the status of the Hebrew for Israeli Arabs, the scale of the phenomenon of writing in Hebrew, the bilingual literary works of Arab authors in Israel, and Israeli society's acceptance of Arab authors writing in Hebrew.

Methodologically, the article contributes to the teaching of the general topic: "The linguistic contact between Hebrew and Arabic in the state of Israel" as it presents a broad background to the status of Hebrew language in Israeli Arab society. The article also contributes specifically to teaching the topic: "Bilingualism in Arab authors in Israel who write in Hebrew".

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# Arabic Traces in Masalha's Language in the Literary Translated Work *the Cactus*<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Adel Shakour

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Minorities living under the rule of a majority are influenced by such external forces as culture, customs, and language. Examples of such influence are found throughout history, for example in Spanish society which came under Muslim Arab rule for centuries. Spanish was strongly influenced by Arabic and hundreds of Arabic words entered Spanish. Similarly, in Arab countries during the Ottoman era, Turkish elements entered the Arabic language (Dana 2000:13). The same phenomenon is evident today in the Israeli Arab community, a minority community living alongside a Hebrew-speaking Jewish majority. The minority's proximity to the majority has resulted in clear influences in many areas, particularly language (many members of the Arab minority speak fluent Hebrew).

Languages frequently borrow words and phrases from one another. There are a number of reasons for this: to fill in lexical gaps in a language; direct or indirect intercultural contact; influence of the dominant language in a region for social reasons, trade or occupation relations, and so on (Basal 2004:33).

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Word borrowing is a sociolinguistic phenomenon reflecting the cultural characteristics of both the borrowing and the lending cultures. We therefore need to clarify the conditions in which words are borrowed from different languages, who the borrowers are, how they borrow, the words they borrow, and how long the borrowing language uses them. Higa (1979:278) maintains that although the borrowing process begins at the level of individuals<sup>2</sup>, ultimately it is the society which determines what it wishes / does not wish to assimilate.

Linguists disagree over the resilience of linguistic systems to withstand the impact of foreign languages: some researchers maintain that there are inter-lingual influences on aspects of languages, including grammar. Others put less stress on the impact on grammar because they see it as an independent area which is almost impervious to foreign influences (Weinreich 1968: 29-30).

Words and phrases can be borrowed and used in speech or writing. Speech borrowing is characteristic of all inter-language contact and it is a clearly sociolinguistic phenomenon (Gluska 1999:110). A borrowed speech form enters directly into the spoken language of the borrower, becomes embedded in it, and often enters into the written language as well. In contrast to Jespersen's (1962:30) argument that the main words borrowed from speech are technical and pertain to a particular knowledge domain and industry. Gluska (1999:111) shows that many words are borrowed from culture, literature, and art<sup>3</sup>. The transfer of concepts and terms between languages often takes place during the process of translating works from one language to another, thus enriching the vocabulary of the borrowing language. An example of this was the contact between Arabic and Greek and Aramaic literature: Syrian translators translated scientific and philosophical works written in Greek and Syriac into Arabic, or from Greek via Syriac into Arabic, while incorporating a fairly large

<sup>2</sup> See de Saussure 2005:255.

<sup>3</sup> See also Kaufman (1974:166), who examined the influence of Akkadian on Aramaic and found groups of words from the spheres of culture and religion in general, and Bloomfield (1976:465), who found words that are borrowed from religion, ethics, hunting, and sport. It seems, therefore that the needs of the society of speakers will dictates what is and is not borrowed, and that the groups of borrowed words will vary for each language.

<sup>1</sup> This article is based on the author's Ph.D. dissertation, written under the supervision of Dr. Tsvi Sadan (Tsuguya Sasaki). See Shakour 2010.

number of concepts and words from the original language in their translations. Similarly in the scientific Arabic literature of the Middle Ages we find abundant borrowings from contemporary scientific works.

Almost all Israeli Arabs have some Hebrew proficiency, and the language is taught in Arab schools. For Israel's Arab citizens, Hebrew is the key to the dominant Jewish majority and most of its social, financial, and educational resources. It is therefore essential for smoothing the daily lives of Israeli Arabs (Amara 2002:86-101). The fact that it is a basic necessity has raised its status in Arab society.

Contact between Hebrew-speaking Arabs and Jews occurs in many different contexts, for example governmental offices, work, and recreational settings, such as restaurants. As a result, Arabic has borrowed many Hebrew words and even entire sentences. Israeli Arabs routinely use words like *Beseder* 'okay', 'arūṣ' 'TV channel', *Mivṣa'* 'sales discount', *Kanyon* 'shopping mall', *Maṣṣil* 'lifeguard', and many others.<sup>4</sup>

Still, not all Israeli Arabs speak Hebrew fluently, and fluency is not evenly distributed, depending rather on such factors as gender, age, locality, and frequency of contact with Jewish Israelis.<sup>5</sup> Arab males speak Hebrew better than Arab females since they are in touch with Jewish society more than Arab females, especially through work and in contact with government bureaucracies, and younger Arabs also speak better Hebrew than their elders (Amara 2002:87). Young Arabs nowadays are more exposed to Hebrew because they use leisure and entertainment facilities in Jewish cities and read Hebrew publications, especially the press. This contact greatly improves their Hebrew fluency and increases adoption of Hebrew words and phrases in Arabic (Amara 2002:87). As for locality, the closer an Arab person lives to Jewish centers, the more strongly he or she will be influenced by Hebrew. For example, Arabs living in the Negev and the "Triangle" speak more Hebrew than Galilee Arabs. Also, in mixed cities and neighborhoods Arabs and Jews share the same public services, which leads to routine contact between Arab

and Jewish citizens, something which has improved Israeli Arabs' regard for Hebrew and elevated Hebrew's status. Another key factor responsible for the use of Hebrew among Israeli Arabs is that many work for Jewish businesses and most are employed by Hebrew-speaking Jews, encouraging them to study Hebrew. Hebrew is thus a significant factor in their lives, a lack of which makes it extremely difficult for them to achieve anything in Israeli society, and they would be unable to learn many of the things that demand fluent Hebrew. In the workplace, management and staff all speak Hebrew, customers speak Hebrew, tools and equipment have Hebrew names, and instructions for use are all in Hebrew. So, Arab employees have to know Hebrew to integrate at work and succeed Amara and Kabha (1996:60-62); Mar'ī (2002-2003:133-136); Kohen (1968:670). Hebrew is also relatively easy for them because Arabic and Hebrew belong to the same linguistic family. Furthermore, the fact that Hebrew and Arabic have many lexical elements in common helps Israeli Arabs to learn Hebrew quickly, sometimes simply from being spoken to (Dana 2000:165-170).

Although Hebrew is the second most important language for Israeli Arabs, allowing communication with Israeli Jews in all areas of life, and although it acts as an agent of modernization, various sociolinguistic obstacles limit its convergence with Hebrew. Ben Rafa'el (1994:176) points out that:

... the dual identity (Palestinian and Israeli) is reflected in the linguistic repertoire of Palestinians in Israel. The tension between the two identities, the Israeli and the Palestinian, has restricted their approach to Hebrew, the language of the dominant Jewish culture. In other words, the Arabs employ a strategy of linguistic integration. On the one hand, they try to connect with the wider social network which is shaped by the majority culture by learning to speak Hebrew well. On the other hand they maintain their identity by retaining their mother tongue.

Snir (1990:248-253) gives a detailed analysis of efforts by Israel's majority culture to dominate the Israeli Arab minority following the establishment of the State of Israel, which the Palestinians call *Nakba(h)* 'Tragedy' and which was a traumatic event for Israeli Arabs. The Israeli establishment attempted to install a system of re-education and reculturalization aimed at distancing local Arabs from their Palestinian heritage and integrating them into the life of the state<sup>6</sup> because nationalist inclinations within the Israeli Arab community were considered dangerous. Before he left Israel, the poet

<sup>4</sup> Mar'ī (2002-2003:143) and Dana (1983:47-49) discuss the linguistic merger *d-damḡi l-laḡawī* in spoken Arabic. This refers to the adoption of Hebrew words and sometimes full sentences in spoken Arabic—a known phenomenon among Israeli Arabs. An example is: *كُفَت* *Ṭavlat Liga* 'football league'. This phenomenon is known as *linguistic interference* and is found when a bilingual minority lives within a majority culture. The use of Arabic words in spoken and written Hebrew is integral to the linguistic repertoire of Arabs in Israel. This phenomenon is evident in all aspects of life. It is not artificial and has given rise to a new language in Israel, recently studied in a comprehensive work by Mar'ī, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Amara (1986:3) points out that Arabic has also borrowed from English. The fact that science and technology developed in English explains why Arabic, like so many languages, borrows much of its science and technology terms from English. Israel's close relationship with the USA has also led to Israelis borrowing from English, which is subsequently absorbed into the Arabic spoken by Israeli Arabs.

<sup>6</sup> The main argument advanced by policy shapers of the Hebrew studies curriculum was that Hebrew not only contributes to the financial development of the minority, it also encourages integration with the majority and reduces gaps between Israel's Arab and Jewish communities (Spolsky & Shohamy 1999:108).

Mahmoud Darwish asserted that the premise of the Israeli establishment and public was that every Arab was both suspect and guilty.

The strategy of the Israeli establishment for achieving this goal was harsh and produced a strong negative reaction from the Arab community. For example, Michael Assaf, a Jewish Israeli Middle East expert, a key figure in the Arabist arm of the Israeli establishment in the 1950's, and the editor-in-chief of establishment journals such as the weekly *Ḥaqīqat l-'amr*, daily *l-yawm*, and the Arabic journal of the teachers union *Ṣadā t-tarbiya(h)*, suggested that more hours of Hebrew study should be added to Arab elementary schools at the expense of Arabic. As a result of Michael Assaf became persona non grata in the Arab community (especially among the communists) and is often described as a disseminator of hatred, incitement, and bias against the Arab minority and as someone with a hostile attitude toward Arabs inside and outside Israel.

The majority culture's efforts to achieve symmetry between the political hegemony and cultural hegemony and to assimilate the minority culture has goaded the minority into an intense national cultural activity that cannot compare to that of any other Palestinian community. This cultural debate is taking place under a somewhat equivocal reciprocity: the Arab-Palestinian minority was the majority before Israel's establishment and can still maintain that it is the majority if the balance of Middle East power is considered. On the other hand, not only is the current Jewish majority a minority in a region which is entirely Arab, but its collective consciousness remains permeated with the memory of having been a minority during most of its history, both in the Land of Israel and in the Diaspora. No wonder, then, that it continues to fall back on the characteristic patterns of a minority struggling for existence, and uses these patterns to mask its personality.<sup>7</sup>

Another example where words and phrases were borrowed from other languages in the process of translation involved the Arabicized Hebrew of the Middle Ages. during the fourth decade of the seventh century, Muslim Arabs embarked on the conquest of the region from Persia in the east to Spain and North Africa in the west, spreading the Arabic language as they went. The local populations, including the Jews, adopted the language of the conquerors in various spheres of life (excluding liturgy, poetry, and *halacha*—Jewish religious law). Eventually Arabic even became the main language used for writing about subjects in which a Hebrew vocabulary was lacking (Maman 1991:106)<sup>8</sup>. As a result,

the Jews of Europe and Asia Minor were unable to enjoy the literary riches produced by their brethren in Hebraized Arabic, and so a movement of interpreters arose (Maman 1991:107)<sup>9</sup>. That movement was responsible for many Arab terms entering the Hebrew language.

Some eleven Arab novelists are currently writing in Hebrew in Israel, an apparently growing trend among Arab authors. The choice of these Arab authors to write in Hebrew is a conscious aesthetic choice, a reflection of their natural gift for writing, a mastery of Hebrew and a political choice. The eleven writers are: Salman Masalha<sup>10</sup>, Anton Shammas<sup>11</sup>, Naim Araidi<sup>12</sup>, Sayed Kashua<sup>13</sup>, Atallah Maṣṣūr<sup>14</sup>, Geris Tannous,

and 'agron intended for use in versification and his book of philosophy and theology *Kitāb l-'amanāt wa-l'i'tiqādāt*. Rabbi Yehuda Halevi (1075-1141) did the same in his book *Kitāb r-rad wa-d-dalīl fī d-dīn d-ḡalīlī*, and Maimonides (1204-1135), in his philosophical work *dalālatu l-ḥā'irīn*.

<sup>9</sup> For example, in 1040 the Karaite sage Tuvia Ben-Moshe arrived from Byzantium to Israel. The everyday language of the Karaites in Byzantium was Byzantine Greek, and therefore they could not read the writings of the important leaders of the Karaite movement in Israel, who wrote in Arabic. Ben Moshe was fluent in Arabic, and during his stay in Jerusalem he studied philosophy and theology at the Karaite yeshiva under Yūsif l-baṣīr 'Joseph Ben Abraham, Joseph the Seer' and translated his writings and those of Jeshua ben Judah into Hebrew.

<sup>10</sup> Masalha was born on November 4, 1953 to a Druze family in Magar, a village in the Galilee in northern Israel. After graduating from high school he moved to Jerusalem, where he has been living since 1972. Masalha studied at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and holds a Ph.D. degree in Arabic literature. He wrote his thesis on the mythological elements of ancient Arabic poetry. He taught Arabic language and literature at the Hebrew University and served as co-editor of the *Concordance of Early Arabic Poetry*. One volume of the concordance titled *Six Early Arab Poets: New Edition and Concordance* was published in 1999.

Masalha is the author of eight volumes of poetry. Some of his Arabic and Hebrew poems have been performed to music and recorded by leading Israeli and Palestinian musicians, among them: Marwan Abado, Kamilya Jubran, Micha Shitrit, Yair Dalal and others. In 2006, Masalha won the President's Prize for his collection of Hebrew poetry *In Place*.

<sup>11</sup> Anton Shammas was born in 1950 in the village of Fassuta in Galilee. He is still renowned for his translation of Emile Habibi's work from Arabic to Hebrew, for articles in the Israeli press, and especially for his first novel, *Arabesques* (1986), a very significant work of fiction written by an Israeli Arab. Not only was the original novel not written in Arabic, it was not even translated into Arabic even though its author is one of the foremost translators from Arabic to Hebrew (Margolin 1996:18). The name *Arabesques* embodies the essence of the book in both content and style. Content-wise, there are shifts in time and place, while the thread of memory forming the book's leitmotif winds through it like a curling, colorful *Arabesques* pattern. Stylistically, the work is frequently adorned with Arabic influences on the author's Hebrew.

<sup>12</sup> Naim Araidi, a Druze, was born in the Druze village of Magar, where he still lives with his family. He has a Ph.D. in Hebrew literature and the topic of his dissertation was the poetry of Uri Zvi Grinberg. Araidi is a leading poet and the recipient of several prizes. Many of his poems, which are partly in Arabic and partly in Hebrew, have been translated into different languages and appear in poetry anthologies throughout Europe. His first novel was *Fatal Immersion*.

<sup>13</sup> Sayed Kashua was born in Tira. His father was a bank clerk, his mother a teacher. He was the second child in a family of four. At the age of 15 he enrolled in the boarding school Jerusalem High School

<sup>7</sup> See Grosman (1992:19) & Kayyal (2006:15-16).

<sup>8</sup> For example, Rabbi Saadia Gaon (882-942) lived and worked in Egypt, the Land of Israel, and Babylonia and wrote his important works on Hebrew linguistics in Arabic *Kutub l-luḡa(h)* on Hebrew grammar

Muhammad Ganayim, Osama Abu-Ghosh, Odeh Bisharat, Ayman Sikseck, and Salman Natur (Shakour 2013:1).

The corpus includes one novel translated from Arabic into Hebrew. I do not discuss Arabic Traces written in prose which was originally written in Hebrew because the author, Salman Masalha, does not write Hebrew prose.

## II. THE BILINGUAL LITERARY ACTIVITY OF ISRAELI ARAB AUTHORS

Many of the most highly regarded authors in the world today write their fiction, prose, or poetry in a language that isn't their mother tongue. For a number of them, the second language has been bound up with personal experiences of exile or colonialism. Some use one language for private or emotional expression and another for public, formal presentation. Others reflect on how the cultural and aesthetic possibilities of a second language offer options they could never have experienced in their first language. Most struggle with maintaining a coherent sense of self. Taken together, these reflections shed new light on the creative process and the complex ways identities are forged in the contemporary, globalized world (Buchweitz, Mar'i & Fragman 2010:10).

An example of an author writing in a second language is Algerian novelist Assia Djebar, who set out specifically to write in French—the language of the French colonialists in Algeria. Djebar was impelled to write about the brutality of French colonialism and document the uprising of the Algerian people who bravely fought against colonialists in Algeria. Djebar was impelled to write about the brutality of French colonialism and document the uprising of the Algerian people who bravely fought against the French enemy. She explains that when you write in the language of the other you make the other felt; the other becomes felt and seen (Djebar 2003:19-27.)

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for Science and Arts, reputedly one of Israel's finest schools. On completing high school, he attended Hebrew University, studying philosophy and sociology. After graduation, he began writing for the newspaper *Kol Ha'ir* before becoming a television critic with his own personal column. His charming manner and insistence that he was not a "pet Arab" with a kind of synthetic Israeliness, and various statements he made, placed him and his editors in the "firing line" of Israeli patriotic nationalism, ironically drawing greater esteem for him from the journalistic world.

<sup>14</sup> Mansour was born in Gush Halav, a village in Lower Galilee. He studied in Lebanon from 1946-1950. He made his way back to Israel in 1950 as an infiltrator and was only granted Israeli citizenship after ten years. On his return, he spent a year in Kibbutz *Sha'ar HaAmakim* where he began studying Hebrew. He worked as a youth instructor and then as a journalist for *HaOlam HaZeh* magazine between 1954 and 1958. From 1958 to 1991, he wrote for *Haaretz* newspaper. Mansour writes in Arabic, Hebrew, and English.

Snir (1997:141-153) provides an in-depth analysis of the question of Israeli Arab authors writing in Hebrew and the underlying reasons. He maintains that this phenomenon is linked to the wider narrative of majority-minority reciprocity and the impact of the balance of political power on the literary sphere. In terms of their background, bilingual Israeli Arab writers are part of the Israeli Arab minority culture that lives in Israel within the Israeli Jewish majority culture. Minority cultures generally adopt an oppositional stance toward the majority culture, and in the case of the Israeli Arabs, this was inflamed by the majority culture's attempt in the 1950's and up to 1965, to gain control of the minority culture.

We can only try to understand the complex mental and cultural state of those lonely authors against the background of the dialectics of this complicated political and cultural debate. Unlike most of the minority community, and certainly the educated among them, these writers were not satisfied with using Hebrew for the purposes of practical communication, but went even further to produce literature in Hebrew. Snir (1992:6) emphasizes that linguistic literary dualism is common in societies where a minority culture is crystallized alongside a majority culture as a consequence of political power relations. In Israel, however, the high status of Arabic in the cultural and religious tradition of the minority, which is predominantly Muslim, has tended to limit creativity in Hebrew to marginal groups only, in particular the Christians and Druze.<sup>15</sup> Such writing only assumed importance in the Hebrew literary domain in the 1980's with the work of Naim Araidi, a Druze, and Anton Shammas, a Christian.<sup>16</sup>

## III. OTHER ARAB AUTHORS TO ATTRACT MEDIA ATTENTION

Beside Sayed Kashua, who have written in Hebrew since 2000 and attracted media attention, several other Arab writers have caught the eye of the Israeli media. One of them is Sayed Kashua who received the Prime Minister's Prize for Hebrew Writers for his two novels *Dancing Arabs*<sup>17</sup> (2004, Ben Shemen, Keter Publishing) and *Let It Be Morning*<sup>18</sup> (2005, Lexicon of Modern Hebrew Literature, Jerusalem). These novels

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<sup>15</sup> Since Arabic is the mother tongue, the language of religion, language of the Qur'An, language of science and scientists, and the language of history (Mar'i 2002-2003:130).

<sup>16</sup> See Shakour 2009.

<sup>17</sup> The book describes Kashua's traumatic meeting with the Jewish street. *Dancing Arabs* was high on the best seller list for eleven weeks and sold many copies abroad. It was translated into Italian, German, French, Dutch, and English.

<sup>18</sup> In *Let it be Morning*, Kashua portrays the experiences of a young family moving back to the village where the parents were born. Moving back to the village is described as a disaster, the end of all hopes and dreams. The narrator reveals this the moment he arrives in the village, and begins describing his village in very depressing terms.

were translated into several languages and garnered considerable praise. The most recent novel written in Hebrew by an Arab author<sup>19</sup> is *In the Shade of the Jujube Tree— Pictures of my Neighborhood*, by Geris Tannous,<sup>20</sup> which was self-published in 2007, Nazareth.<sup>21</sup> Another noteworthy Arab writer is Salman Natur,<sup>22</sup> who published *Walking on the Wind – Conversations at Home*, which he wrote in Hebrew in 1992.

Araid and Shammas' writing reflects the fact that they belong to two alienated cultures: Arab culture, where they were born and took their first steps in literature, and Hebrew culture, where at first they were thrown reluctantly, but which they came to prefer, for identifiable personal, aesthetic reasons. It is no wonder that their main work focuses on the demarcation between Hebrew and Arab literature. Both are acknowledged as remarkable translators. Their natural talents, sensitive intellects, articulateness, mastery of Hebrew, unique linguistic style, and modern techniques allow them to write fluidly in Hebrew, sometimes on a higher level than in their native language, Arabic.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The novel *Zetunya Streets* (2009, Tel Aviv, Am Oved Publishing) is not listed, as it was written in Arabic by Odeh Bisharat, and later translated by the author with the help of Moshe Ron, but is not the sole work of the author, Odeh Bisharat.

<sup>20</sup> Geris Tannous was born in 1937. His parents were farmers from Magar village. Since 1956 he has lived in Acre. A senior teacher, for 48 years he was involved in the teaching of Hebrew language and literature in Arab high schools. He graduated from Haifa University after studying Hebrew and Arabic language and literature. He writes poetry and prose in both languages and has authored three novels and two dictionaries in Arabic, and also two dictionaries focused on similarities and differences between Hebrew and Arabic – one Hebrew-Arabic and the other Arabic-Hebrew.

<sup>21</sup> *In the Shade of the Jujube Tree* is written from the perspective of a child of farmers, whose life largely fluctuates between one prank and another and the punishments that result. Between stealing figs and catching thrushes and releasing them, the abundant episodes of violence in the book – kicks from a big brother or a whipping from a teacher, almost in every page of the book – still have a certain pastoral character.

<sup>22</sup> Natur was born in 1949 in Daliyat al-Karmel. He studied philosophy at Haifa University and Hebrew University and is an author, journalist, playwright, and lecturer in Arab philosophy and culture. He is director of the Emil Toma Institute for Palestinian and Israeli Studies in Haifa and editor of the journal *Israeli Issues*, published in Ramallah. Natur has written 25 books, including novels, short stories, critical articles, and documentary literature about Palestinian memory. Natur translated from Hebrew to Arabic David Grosman's novel *Yellow Wind and Conversation on Science and Values* by Prof. Yeshayahu Leibowitz.

<sup>23</sup> Tannous claims that he expresses himself better in Hebrew than in Arabic: "My Hebrew is far more rich than my Arabic.... Hebrew has several synonyms for every word. I felt freer." For Tannous, writing in Hebrew is not just the product of long years of expertise and a love of the language. It is also ideological. Tannous explains: "It is not just that I like writing in both languages as your esteemed Jewish medieval writers did. I would also like to contribute ... to sweeten a bitter pill. Many have contributed to this argument, but not to reconciliation." When Tannous waves hello to his neighbor Ofra and she smiles back at him it is easy to become addicted to the feeling of coexistence that surrounds him. And Tannous adds: "See how we live here together, this is not just coexistence: it's living together."

Snir (1990:258) cites Hever (1989:193-196), who maintains that, while most local Arabic literature has remained outside the Hebrew literary canon, the past two decades have witnessed a slow process of penetration into the Hebrew canon, bringing it from the periphery of the minority culture into the majority culture's authoritative mainstream. The most important part of this process is the growing tradition of translation into Hebrew, topped by Arab authors' efforts to write in Hebrew, the majority language.<sup>24</sup> Hever characterizes this development as a dramatic moment in the cultural confrontation between the minority and the majority in which the dialectic of power relations has shifted. In order to realize the option of breaking into the canonic center, the minority has identified weaknesses in the majority culture and strikes at them in an attempt to force the majority's cultural apparatus to lend it legitimacy, gravity, and importance.

Snir (1997:142-143) also notes that, whereas in their natural Arab milieu Araid and Shammas are conspicuous for their conscious aesthetic affinity with Hebrew culture, in Hebrew literary circles they stand out not only as newcomers and foreigners, but chiefly as representatives of a minority with access to the circle of the majority. Almost the only reason they are accepted in Hebrew literary circles is because they fit into the slot which the Israeli cultural system allocates for minorities (as it does also in the political system). They therefore find themselves working inside a culture which, to put it mildly, does not see the minority culture as its top priority. Still, as writers working on the fringes of Palestinian literature, while trying to penetrate the canonic center of the majority culture, they mostly address Jewish Israeli audiences and deal almost exclusively with the question of cultural identity. In addition, the penetration of such authors into Israeli culture is never planned and invariably involves single individuals with specific cultural preferences; it is only in retrospect that one can see the commonality between them. When we examine how Araid and Shammas operate within Israeli culture, we see emerging two alternative models of the Palestinian minority representative active in Israeli culture.

<sup>24</sup> It is noteworthy that Arab authors such as Anton Shammas, Muhammad Ganayim, and Salman Natur, whose formal education was via the Israeli education system, are clearly faithful to the original Hebrew text, which can be seen from the mixture of Hebrew used in their translations and the various inconsistencies in linguistic style. This approach, positioning Hebrew culture as the hegemonic culture, served to further distance the translations from the Arab audiences who refused to accept Israel's hegemonic status. It is no wonder therefore that two leading exponents of the policy of translating Hebrew works into Arabic, Shammas and Ganayim, ceased producing translations. Apparently this silence followed the acrid political censure drawn by their work from Arab sources both in and outside Israel and the discomfort that accompanied their efforts to mediate between the two alienated cultures (Kayyal 2005:132; Shammas 1985:18-19).

#### IV. ISRAELI SOCIETY'S ACCEPTANCE OF ARAB AUTHORS WRITING IN HEBREW

Amir (1992:40) disagrees with Snir and others who have reservations about Arabs being accepted as "Hebrew" authors, and see the work of authors like Shammas and Araidí as out of the ordinary and impermanent.<sup>25</sup> Amir dismisses the "alarm" shown by Snir, Oren, and others over Shammas and Araidí's acceptance as bona fide Hebrew writers: Snir's view is that only Jews can write Hebrew literature. Yosef Oren<sup>26</sup> argues that Hebrew literature must have a "Jewish national" character; we surmise that this means that the only acceptable vision is a Zionist Jewish vision.<sup>27</sup>

Amir (1992:39) quotes Oren to the effect that it is dangerous to allow the identity of Jewish literature, which less than fifty years ago was Jewish Zionist literature, to become indistinct: according to Oren the problem with writers like Shammas and Araidí is that they are part of an "inexorable process" of mutual assimilation between "Jewish writers and writers with other national backgrounds," which, if it persists, will divest Hebrew literature of its Jewish-national character. In support of his doom laden prophecy and grim reading of the current process, he cites the fact that "most Israeli Jewish authors" have already stopped writing about the problem of national cultural continuity and that writing which embraces values, ideals, issues, and "authentic Jewish experiences" has again come to be seen simply as "old-fashioned, redundant, ethnic literature".

According to Amir (1992:40), on the other hand, the fact that Arab authors write in Hebrew points clearly to the realization of the Canaanite vision. He maintains that it does not show Israel as a melting pot of nations but rather its evolution, over time and with the utmost simplicity, into a national, territorial, secular, democratic society. He goes on to argue that all nations and languages, all national cultures, all cultures of groups with some amount of territorial and linguistic uniqueness, irrespective of religion and race, and with almost no differences associated with ideology, are open to some extent to accepting the "other". The world of nations, especially in the modern world, is no place for a "nation that dwells alone," and in the end no

cultures will reject "others" for reasons of religion, race, gender, or ideology.

Amir argues that the present generation is seeing a far-reaching process in which values are being revised and renewed – a process that is due to the acceptance of foreigners into the literary, artistic, musical, and intellectual circles of cultures such as those of Britain and France, which once had a monolithic national and linguistic uniqueness, and of course the United States. In the same way, Muslim Arab culture, whose value and achievements were admired by many, at least prior to the Ottoman Empire, only became what it was thanks to the strengths and skills of the cultures it occupied, oppressed, and digested. Without all these Aramaic, Persian, Greek, and Coptic speakers, the various ethnic groups and sects of the Iranian Zoroastrians and Eastern Christians from India to Ethiopia, as well as Jews and so-called barbarian cultures with their ancient traditions and various cultural appurtenances, there would be no written historic or cultural evidence of the camel riders who appeared from out of the Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century under the banner of Islam.

Shammas and Araidí came through an Israeli education system that tried to teach Arabs to identify with the country's goals, even though the country's national ideology made them second-class citizens. Shammas (1986:212) recalls the humiliation of having to display the occupier's symbols. For example, on the school principal's orders, one of his teachers fashioned a giant Star of David from six wooden beams to impress the Jewish school inspector who came to assess the pupils' achievements after their first year in an Israeli state school. Snir (1992:7) maintains that Shammas and Araidí's work is driven by their sense of mission and by a profound belief that they can influence Israeli society. Back in the 1970's, Shammas talked about his younger colleagues who were "breaking through" the wall, beating the Hebrew language barrier, and trying to break into new spheres. The younger generation has the benefits of both worlds: its fluency in Hebrew puts it in touch with new experiences through both Hebrew literature and world literature translated into Hebrew; its knowledge of Arabic, on the other hand, puts it in touch with the newest achievements in modern Arabic literature. Kashua (2002:1) also talks about a new generation which has crossed the language barrier and is trying to make its way in other areas of life:

It is hard for Arabs to write in Hebrew. The problem is not the language but speaking to the Israeli reading public as an equal. Arab writers who write in Hebrew are very aware that they are addressing an Israeli audience. Moreover, it is quite rare to find Arabs who are experts in Israeli culture and know the right language to communicate with Jewish readers. I sincerely hope Israeli Palestinian citizens are not

<sup>25</sup> Poet Mahmoud Darwish (2004:2-3) considers the question of Palestinians writing in Hebrew a "fashion" and thinks it may be an attempt at cultural assimilation within Hebrew culture or perhaps even a revolt against the Israelis using their own language.

<sup>26</sup> Yosef Oren is a veteran Israeli researcher, essayist, literary critic, and lecturer in contemporary Hebrew literature.

<sup>27</sup> Amir argues that this implies that there is no place among us for non-Jews (especially those born in the country and raised in the Arabic language and culture). Not even the offerings and love of "loving step-sons," as Snir affectionately calls them, will be accepted.

going to be extinct soon, and [if they remain] I am sure there will be a lot of good writers. I believe that repression gives rise to creation or at least the need to be creative. The problem is that Arab society tends to push its successful offspring into the free professions, and doesn't see art and literature as important yet. This happens in minorities, which concentrate on professions that can help it survive. I believe the second or third generation of the Palestinian enlightenment in Israel will be creative and it will occupy the Israeli cultural platforms. If we continue to co-exist I feel sure we will play a similar role to the American blacks. As for me, I still dream of being the Arab Bill Cosby.

As authors who write in both languages, Araidi and Shammas have each more than once been seen as a steppenwolf, a lone wolf of the steppes, suffering a similar hell to those in whom two cultures and two belief systems intersect.<sup>28</sup> For example, since his earliest days as a writer, Shammas has felt that the path he pursues hides an important statement about his Arab-Palestinian identity. He explains that, although through lack of choice he decided to treat Hebrew as a stepmother-tongue, he feels that deep down it "is a form of cultural trespass for which I might be punished." Because of their identity crises and emotional schisms it is easy to understand their desire to act as a kind of bridge between cultures. This desire is merely latent in the case of the sophisticated Shammas, though there are allusions to it in, say, *Arabesques*, where Shammas shows us his childhood village; Araidi, on the other hand, misses no opportunity to stress that he represents a crossroads between two cultures. We see this emphasis not only bluntly in his collection of poetry *I Return to the Village* (1986), but also in his dual critical and research preoccupation with both Arabic and Hebrew literature.

According to Somekh (1993:41-42) Shammas can handle extremely difficult translation tasks:

Shammas has attempted the impossible translation task of translating Ḥabibi's rather complex works, especially the difficult and complex novel *سرايا بنت الغول* *Sarayā, the Ogre's Daughter*. This is a difficult work because Emile Ḥabibi is not the easiest author to translate since he does not use fusha, the standard modern literary language of our time, but instead writes in a very idiosyncratic style not found to this degree in many Arabic authors.

## V. USE OF ARABIC WORDS AND PHRASES IN HEBREW TEXTS

Israeli Jewish society appears to perceive Arab culture as inferior and less modern compared to its own

culture than cultures such as Russian and Western European culture, which they see as more sophisticated. Arab writers who translate literary works from Arabic into Hebrew have this issue in mind as they try to show the value of the neighboring Arab culture. These translators have always believed that it is extremely important for Arab culture—the culture of the "nearby-stranger"—to be seen in a positive light, more often than not for political and compassionate reasons as opposed to the purely aesthetic goal of making translations of belles lettres in Arabic available for others' esthetic delectation<sup>29</sup>. One can therefore regard the use of Arabic words in Hebrew works by Arab authors as a deliberate attempt to bridge what these authors see as an intercultural division separating the target culture from their own.

As a component of human civilization, literature is an important vehicle for conveying concepts and terms with and without the presence of physical contact between cultures. It also provides an important channel through which languages can influence one another, especially when works in one language are translated into another, and when nations and individuals share cultural encounters (Basal 2004:34). The Arab writers not only regard themselves as writers of Hebrew literature or translators of Arabic literature into Hebrew, but also as emissaries, intermediaries, and mediators between Arab and Hebrew culture, as well as possible contributors to resolving the Israeli Arab conflict. So, their strategy of including words in Arabic in their Hebrew literary texts is a conscious choice. Geris Tannous, whose work is credible picture of Arabic culture<sup>30</sup>. It is obvious that the Arab authors could easily have found an alternative to the Arabic words they use since their Hebrew is fluent and in some cases their Hebrew writing is more developed than their Arabic<sup>31</sup>. But these authors have a reason for using Arabic in their Hebrew writing, namely that they wish to present an authentic view of Arab society and make the characters' speech seem real<sup>32</sup>.

Horvits (1998:57-59) describes the phenomenon of using Arabic words and phrases in Hebrew writing as *עִבְרִיט* [Ivrvit], noting that other literary works also use words from their heroes' native tongue to create authentic seeming characters. When a writer chooses to use *עִבְרִיט* in various linguistic contexts, it is no random choice but rather a deliberate act with both a meaning and a goal, like any other

<sup>29</sup> See Kochavi, 1992: 270-271.

<sup>30</sup> A personal meeting (January 15, 2012).

<sup>31</sup> For example, Tannous has stated that his capacity to express himself in Hebrew is richer and more developed than his ability to express himself in Arabic. He adds that "in Hebrew I was able to find several synonyms for each word, I felt freer."

<sup>32</sup> On Authentic Language and Authentic Reported Speech in Hebrew and Yiddish, see Iben Zohar and Shmeruk, 1981: 82-87; see also Margolin 2003:53-60.

<sup>28</sup> Hesse 1971:26.

unique language usages. According to Schwarzwald (1994:39-41), the use of עֵבְרִיּוּת in certain linguistic contexts indicates, among other things, that the author regards non-Hebrew linguistic expressions not simply as an artistic component which can help to create an authentic literary linguistic experience in the discourse and conversation of Israeli Jews, they also express the social and ethnic essence of eastern Jews. Hofman (1970:5-14) stresses that the various functional divisions of עֵבְרִיּוּת and their linguistic elements not only convey the atmosphere of the story and underscore its reliability

### [ḥamūla(h)]

1. אחרי הצהרים עזבו את ביתם הקטן בשדרות אלסעאדה והלכו לבית החמולה (משפחה) (הצבר:28).

'In the afternoon, they left their small house on Alsa'āde Street and went to the family's house'.

Original: وَفِي الْعَصْرِ عَادُوا مَنَازِلَهُمَا الصَّغِيرِ فِي حَادَةِ السَّعَادَةِ وَتَوَجَّحَ لِذَارِ الْعَيْلَةِ (الصَّبَار:31).

[wa-fi l'asri ġādarū manzilahumā ṣ-ṣaġīra fī ġādati s-sa'ādati watawaġahā lidāri l-ṭīlati].

### [fallāḥ]

2. אביך היה פלאח (איכר) כל חייו (הצבר:33).

'Your father was a farmer all his life' (The Cactus:33).

Original: كَانَ وَالذَّكَ مُزَارِعًا طَيْلَةً عُمُرِهِ (الصَّبَار:35).

[kana wāliduka muzāri'an ṭīlata 'umrihi].

### [ka'kim]

3. ... ומוכר הביצים כעכים (עוגיות) מכריז על סחורותיו שאין קונה להם (הצבר:39).

'... And the seller of eggs and bagels calls out his wares that nobody buys' (The Cactus:39).

Original: وَتَابِعُ الْكَعَكِ وَالْبَيْضِ يُنَادِي عَلَى بَضَاعَتِهِ أَلَيْ لَا تُكُونُ رَابِحَةً فِي الْعَالِبِ (الصَّبَار:43).

[wa-bā'i'u l-ka'ki wa-lbayḍi yunādī 'alā biḍā'atihi l-lati lā takūnu rā'īġatan fī l-ġālibi].

### [inšall(h)]

4. ומה שלום אביך, יא שחאדה, שאל עאדל בעדינות. בסדר, אנשאלה (אם ירצה האל) (הצבר:76).

'And how is your father, Shḥade, Adel asked gently. Alright, if Allah wills (The Cactus:76).

Original: وَمَا أُخْبِرُ الْوَالِدِ يَا شَحَادَةَ لَعَلَّهُ يَحْتَرِّ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ؟ (الخيز الحاي:79).

[wa-mā 'axbāru l-wāliḍi yā šḥādi(h) la'allahu bi-xayrin 'inšall(h)].

### [yā ḡamā'a(h)]

5. אני לא מרגל יא ג'מאעה (הצבר:106).

'I'm not a spy, guys' (The Cactus:106).

Original: أَنَا لَسْتُ جَاسُوسًا يَا جَمَاعَةَ (الصَّبَار:107).

[ʾanā lastu ḡāsūsan yā ḡamā'a(h)].

### [tfaḡḡalū]

6. תפדלו (בבקשה), אמרה האישה (הצבר:68).

'Please, said the woman' (The Cactus:68).

Original: قَالَتْ الْمَرْأَةُ تَفَضَّلُوا (الصَّبَار:107).

[qālat l-mar'atu tfaḡḡalū].

### [yā rabb]

7. תציל אותנו, יא רב, (אלוהים) מהמצב הזה (הצבר:84).

'Save us, O Lord from this situation' (The Cactus:84).

Original: تَبَّ عَلَيْنَا يَا رَبِّ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْحَالِ (الصَّبَار:87).

[tubb 'alaynā yā rabb min hāḡīhi l-ḥāl].

### [marḥaba(h)]

8. אף אחד לא אמר לי מרחבא (שלום) (הצבר:).

'No one said Hello to me' (The Cactus:110).

Original: لَمْ يُقَالْ لِي وَاحِدٌ مِنْكُمْ مَرَحِبَةً (الصَّبَار:111).

as a transmitter of a certain reality (poetic function), but also (and perhaps first and foremost) they resonate the "ethnic identity" of Jews from Yemen, Ḥalab or Baghdad.

When writing in Hebrew, Masalha sprinkles his literary translated work *The Cactus* with Arabic words and phrases. The use of Arabic seems a distinct feature of their writing in Hebrew, and its purpose is to convey the flavor and atmosphere of the culture described in the text:

[lam yaqul lī waḥīdun minkum marḥaba(h)].

[‘ahlan wa-sahlan]

'Welcome. Where is Adel?' (The Cactus:37).

[‘ahlan wa-sahlan. wa-‘ayna ‘ādil].

[walla(h)]

'Really, a polite boy from a good family!' (The Cactus:131).

[lā walla(h) mu‘addab ‘ibin ‘akābir]

9. אהלן וסהלן. איפה עאדל? (הצבר:37)

Original: أهلاً وسهلاً. وأين عادل؟ (الصبار:40).

10. ואללה (באמת), מנומס בן טובים! (הצבר:131)

Original: لا والله مُؤدّب ابن أكابر (الصبار:132).

## VI. LOAN TRANSLATION

Loan translation involves creating a new lexical value (lexeme) in the borrowing language which has the same lexical meaning of the constituents of the original form in the lending language. Nir (1978:32) defines loan translation as a new form (word or phrase) which imitates the equivalent form in the foreign language. Maman (1991:106-115), who dealt with Arabized Hebrew and types of Arabacizm, describes loan translation as the creation of a completely new Hebrew word or phrase using the pattern of a word or phrase in another language. To hone his definition, Maman differentiates between loan translation and borrowed meaning between Hebrew and Arabic. Regarding borrowed meaning, the word or phrase already exists in Hebrew and acquires an additional meaning. However, in loan translation the word or phrase enters Hebrew for the first time through Arabic.<sup>33</sup>

When Hebrew was first revived as a language, it lacked vocabulary for expressing everyday matters and Hebrew culture. Words and phrases thus needed to be borrowed from various sources, chiefly Yiddish and spoken Arabic. Yiddish contributed to the expressions of contempt and insult, wit and humor, cuisine, and other areas of life for which language is needed. Spoken Arabic enhanced the language of play and the language of Israel's younger generation social interactions (which had no language for social exchange). Arabic also contributed to Hebrew's system of invectives, greetings, exclamations, socializing, language of sex, terms for oriental cuisine, and so on. It can at times be fairly complex to ascertain the historical source of loan translations Bar-Adon (1967:252-254).

### a) *Loan translation of idioms and proverbs*

Proverbs allow us to express wisdom succinctly and clearly in just a few words; they can be created at any time, anywhere. The history of Arab proverbs goes back to beginnings of Islam, and in the same way that Arabic poetry was influenced by the desert lifestyle, so

proverbs were, with their melodious rhythm, comparisons, and internal rhyming schemes. Islam produced sayings with a moral and religious character, and other proverbs came into the language through local influences. Both types of sayings contributed to the ancient treasury of proverbs without excluding it. The Arabs nurtured their proverbial literature which they collected in special books, especially under the Umayyads, who were renowned for their Arab nationalist inclinations (Dana 2006:6).

According to Dana (2006:29), the main purpose of a proverb is to convey a didactic message. Indeed, almost all Arab proverbs contain words of advice, commands, or indicate preferences (of the type "this is better than that"). The didactic goal may sometimes be hidden, but it is almost always present on some level.

The idioms and proverbs identified in Masalha's Hebrew political discourse seem to indicate that he relates to these forms in two ways: first, as linguistic material which faithfully reflects the source culture; second, as national-cultural elements reflecting the uniqueness of the nation that uses them and that nation's ethnic and historical characteristics.

Unlike loan translation, which can be naturally interspersed within the literary text, the use of translated idioms and proverbs is a relatively overt way of introducing a speaker's culture to the target culture<sup>34</sup>. Here are some examples:

<sup>34</sup> Some of the idioms will possibly be familiar to Jewish readers of Middle East origin. Guri (1994:13) notes that idioms with national-cultural elements reflect the unique character of the nation speaking the language as well as its historical and ethnic characteristics, etc. According to Guri, a literal translation may suffer from a lack of semantic transparency and will not be comprehensible to the reader, thus making it invalid.

<sup>33</sup> Regarding Loan translation in the Hebrew writing of Israeli Arab authors see Shakour (2010:45-76); (2014:83-94).



ethnicity qualities. For many of the writers, these words provide snapshots of Arab culture and faithfully portray a true sense of its character. Good example of this is the word *fallāḥ* (since in Arab society working the land and devotion to the soil are supreme cultural values).

Masalha views loan translations of idioms and proverbs specially from colloquial Arabic as linguistic material that accurately reflects his culture of origin and conveys didactic educational messages. He also perceives the idiom as material which contains national-cultural elements that reflect the uniqueness of the nation that speaks the language and the ethnic and historical qualities of that nation. In some cases, loan translations and translating idioms feels foreign to the Hebrew reader because the composition of the words in the loan translation is not always obvious and gives rise to a special meaning which the reader does not always know.

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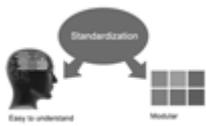
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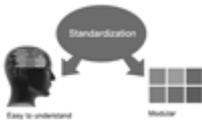


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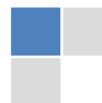
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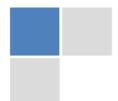
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<i>References</i>	Complete and correct format, well organized	Beside the point, Incomplete	Wrong format and structuring



# INDEX

---

---

## **A**

Aestheticism · 1, 2  
Alexadru · 18  
Asserti · 40, 47

---

## **B**

Babukusu · 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47

---

## **C**

Cherrayil · 18, 26  
Cobuc · 18, 26  
Creolised · 30

---

## **D**

Denoyelles · 21, 22, 26  
Duguid · 19, 26

---

## **E**

Elango · 24, 26  
Ethnolinguistic · 28

---

## **H**

Hispancora · 7

---

## **M**

Marxist · 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9  
Mathletics · 18, 24, 25

---

## **N**

Narratologically · 2

---

## **S**

Sivecon · 18

---

## **T**

Toponymy · 40

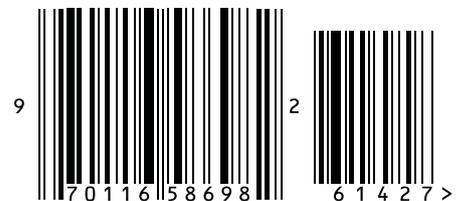


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