

DIFFICULTIES OF READING ARABIC AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to investigate the problems associated with reading Arabic as a foreign language. Any researcher in the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language must have noticed that learners of Arabic face some problems that lead to hindering or slowing down their progress in reading as a language skill. Anderson (1999) defines reading as an active, fluent process which involves the reader and the reading material in building meaning. Meaning does not reside on the printed pages nor is it only in the reader. In the same direction, Urquhart & Weir see reading as a process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language form via the medium of print (1988, p. 22). It means that the role of the shape of the print is crucial in facilitating or hindering the reader's progress. This paper tried to pinpoint the difficulties that face non-native Arabic learners, and the different factors pertaining to those problems.

An empirical tool, to be described below, was used to achieve the objectives of this paper. Despite the fact that a lot of work has been done on this area of study, the overwhelming majority of the findings of this paper were not shown or mentioned in earlier works. The scope of this study covered the orthographic, phonological, lexical, syntactic, semantic, and contextual factors that shaped the accuracy, fluency, and comprehension of the texts read by the students participating in this study. The results showed that there are some areas in the Arabic language that posed real challenge to the reader; (1) Determining the correct vowel that goes with second consonants of the verb-root. (2) Determining the correct vowel that goes with the tense-subject morpheme of the present tense. (3) The grammatical case endings of verbs and nouns according to the grammatical function they carry in the sentence. This paper is organized as follows. Section 1 introduces some basic discussion and related work. Section 2 is devoted to the main research point and section 3 introduces the conclusion of the paper.

KEYWORDS: Foreign Language, Language Economy, Reading Comprehension