

The Contribution of E-Learning Techniques in Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language to Non-Native Speakers

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To Cite This Chapter:

Abu Al-Rish, M. (2023). The contribution of e-learning techniques in teaching Arabic as a foreign language to non-native speakers. In F. R. Dar & N. Kucukgencay (Eds.), *Current Studies in Social Sciences 2023* (pp. 91-99). ISRES Publishing

Introduction

Arabic language has, throughout the long history, spread widely in conditions of war and peace. Besides, during a certain period of time, it was the first language for reading, writing and publishing. Teaching it to non-native speakers through modern electronic technologies has become one of the most important basic steps to spread and introduce it to the world. As there are many schools and universities in the world and also in the Arab countries, Arabic language is presented to non-native speakers of different ages and levels and for many purposes being for research, exploratory, education and/ or tourism.

Time and space horizons are open to those who are jealous to Arabic language and its dissemination because demand for it is increasing, and a lot of efforts have been exerted to include it within the global educational system based on electronic media and platforms, especially that we live in a world where educational media and platforms are widespread.

In order for this process to succeed, serious researchers must take advantage of electronic media and platforms. They are also encouraged to focus on information technologies used while teaching Arabic, methods and tactics for the success of learning Arabic for non-native speakers, especially as Arabic language is facing major challenges. Shedding lights on teaching it to non-native speakers using these methods, strategies, technologies, techniques and platforms.

Concerted efforts and participation in presenting clear educational curricula on this subject lead to the advancement and promotion of Arabic language through modern electronic space, and bringing it to the ranks of other leading languages in this world. Not to forget the role of the teacher of Arabic as a second language; training and developing him professionally, encouraging and motivating him to play his role to the fullest, and co-operate with specialized experts with experience in designing electronic curricula in line with technological development and keeping pace with the spirit our time with its technologies, media and platforms – e.g.:

- What are the information technologies used in teaching Arabic as a foreign language?

- What is the role that educational technologies play in the distance- learning process?
- Are self-learning and e-learning tools important in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers?
- Does the use of educational technology and e-learning increase the learning of Arabic language for non-native speakers?
- What is the extent of the impact of e-learning and educational technologies on the culture of non-Arabic speakers?
- To what extent can non-Arabic speakers benefit from electronic educational programs?
- What are the difficulties that non-Arabic speakers encounter when learning Arabic?
- What are the useful solutions to help the process to succeed and what are the ways to overcome obstacles and difficulties?

This requires us, being interested in Arabic language, to define concepts and terminology to set the theoretical framework for the research, such as:

Education technologies, educational technology, e-learning, media, platforms and their role in improving the teaching of Arabic to non-native speakers and paying attention to terminology that is related to e-learning and selecting criteria, and taking into account the quality and not the quantity.

Learning techniques and their importance

It is the processes, procedures and strategies that students use in order to improve their ability to obtain, store and save information and concepts i.e. increase language competence. This way, the student can retrieve and recall information from his memory in order to apply and use it. I.e. improve their performance. Hence, the gap between the learners' competence and performance would inevitably be narrowed.

The concept of information techniques (information technology) includes all areas related to information management and processing, whether within small or large institutions, as it is used to describe computers and their networks extensively (Salama,1996).

Information technology is used in wide areas of society in business, finance, health care, protection, employment and education, which is what interests us in this research.

Information technology has been developed from teachers' communication with students, in addition to helping students learn new things and ease of access to information away from the classroom using mobile phones and smart tablets. (Salem,2004)

Obstacles hindering information technology include

- Data overload.
- The need to increase teamwork skills.
- Protection and security issues.

Information technology is an integrated system based on a structure of knowledge and sciences specialized in human learning and the use of a group of learning resources, whether human or non-human. This way, it enhances and supports the activities of learners by relying on the application of the “systems approach” that achieves the goals of education and helps to target effective learning. . Information technology also has an important role in the educational environment, and its use and application in education depends on a set of means known as educational technology means. These include educational tools and devices used in the application of this technology (Rahim, 1998).

Virtual education: It is an educational method that can be applied in or outside the classroom by using visual recordings (videos) that students watch using over-head projectors or smart boards in their classrooms or using smart devices. Education techniques and technologies have a fundamental importance in the educational environment. This importance includes:

- Supporting sensory perception, through which the use of illustrations is employed to clarify written words, and contribute to enhancing students' understanding of how to distinguish between things.
- Developing student skills by teaching them a set of specific skills such as the skill of proper pronunciation and utterances.
- Developing student thinking rendering technology to teaching students sound ways of thinking and correct methods of how to solve problems.
- Contributing to establishing correct concepts, promoting linguistic growth and developing positive attitudes among students towards education techniques because its importance is double:

The learner benefits from it by providing him with the opportunity to learn Arabic as a second language consistent with what modern educational philosophies and learning theories propose through educational technology.

- Providing the opportunity for non-Arabic speaking students to get acquainted with a variety of resources through technology and modern educational techniques, and to acquire the necessary information related to learning Arabic as a second language.
- This type of learning helps to overcome the difficulties and render obstacles that hinder learning Arabic as a second language.

As for the teacher, he can get benefitted by saving time and effort, which makes it easier for him to collect scientific materials related to the language according to the needs of its recipients as well as developing his intellectual wealth and identifying the sources that enable him to make the teaching process successful. (Khazneh Katbi, 2012).

Advantages of education using educational technologies

There are many benefits provided by educational technologies and technology. These include:

- Achieving learning targets and goals with high competencies.
- Taking into account the physical, mental and emotional characteristics of the learner.
- Providing a linguistic wealth from the learning resources.
- Powering the teacher with motivation to keep abreast of progresses, achievements and developments of the times.
- Supplying the teacher with motivation to aspire after always being updated with development and knowledge of all that is new.
- Fitting in with the requirements and data of the time to prepare generations and train them for self-learning.
- Saving time and effort (Noureddine, 2007).

Teaching Arabic to non-native speakers and contemporary education

The technical field is one of the most vital and growing fields, and its developments have come in line with human aspirations and renewable needs. It has been employed in many fields, the most important of which is the electronic media through the world-wide web, which is a feature of this era. This web has linked the world to each other and made it look like a small village through electronic correspondence that transcends the sides of the world. This network promotes an advanced stage, especially in the field of e-learning and teaching for the sake of individuals who do not speak the mother tongue (Mathkour, 2006).

As it has become a very important method in the field of distance education, and, therefore, e-learning and all its means have become necessary to provide learners with the skills necessary for the future. This education will open new horizons for learners that were not available before. It makes available a solution to the needs of learners in the future, and encourages the application of the benefits and advantages of e-learning along with face-to-face education.

Mixing the written, audio and video forms a message of information reinforcement. For this reason, teachers should be trained to use educational techniques and educational technology in teaching Arabic language as a language of dialogue and

communication, As well, they need to introduce the Arab heritage on more practical and objective bases because humans, by nature, like to be involved in events in areas outside their motherland, and this requires knowing the language of the other that he seeks to reach. Here, technology and information technology are harnessed to serve all mankind (Akram, 2012).

The economic prosperity experienced by the Arab Gulf states, thanks to the studied economic successes, has made these countries a destination for millions of people prompting tens of thousands to learn Arabic, whether in their countries (There many prestigious universities in several countries such as Korea, Japan, Turkey, European and Scandinavian countries have created Arabic language departments for students to learn Arabic), or in Arab countries such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the Arab Republic of Egypt, which offer Free scholarships for non-native speakers of Arabic to learn this language. Just as sustainability aims at development that takes into account well-being and increasing capabilities for future generations, language has a fundamental role in the three axes of a sustainable result:

- The economic ax: it means the continuity of economic growth by relying on cultural characteristics, knowledge and its content (language), and thus leading to the continuity of growth.
- The social ax: This is the continuation of human development and raising the quality of life, interdependence, cohesion, harmony and societal integration through interest in language, culture and values, education and scientific culture.
- The environmental ax: The culture of preserving the environment and guaranteeing it for future generations.

These three axes are not integrated except in the society of knowledge. Language, in the knowledge society, plays a major role in improving the quality of life and raising the standard of living towards the welfare, prosperity and well-being of the citizen. Here, language has two roles from the economic and social point of view of states and nations as an industry and a commodity (Al –Mousa, 2005).

The information market in Arabic language is an important market as it covers many products in the education sector, research and development, documentation, libraries, management, pricing, e-commerce, e-government, health, security, entertainment, industry, and others sectors. The intellectual development that the world feeds on today is purely intellectual and technological development, and teaching Arabic as a second language must follow this path.

Foreign languages have made great strides in this field because the World Wide Web has played a major role in linking individuals on the one hand, and the broad influence in the field of teaching and learning many languages on the other. Therefore, digital information technologies, communication skills, and techniques for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers in the twenty-first century must be adopted. It should take into account the learners' needs, tendencies and desires in this field, and work to influence their behavior, use their muscular abilities, and the extent to which they can use these media and play the role to the fullest Face.

The importance of information technologies and educational technology in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers

Arabic language is an ancient language with a wide culture and civilization; as it is a living and contemporary language; it is considered one of the global languages with an international presence. Learning this language by non-native speakers is due to several reasons and motives, including political, diplomatic, economic, religious, cultural, educational, tourism and communication. Other than the self-motivation that drives the interested and the intellectual non-Arabs to learn the language to learn about the diverse Arab culture, thought and heritage.

Since Arabic is among the most widespread languages, it requires good handling in the use of technical means in the development of teaching this language to non-native speakers. Facing the challenges of the technological era that provided many opportunities in the educational fields, which contribute to modernizing the methods of teaching Arabic as a second language and raising the level of teaching based on technologies and educational technology. Modern electronic media are innovative solutions to many problems of teaching the Arabic language as a second language. This is to raise the efficiency of education and increase its effectiveness in a way that is compatible with contemporary civilizational developments. (Qandil, 2006)

The modern inventions that suit the requirements of the time, and these inventions led to the development of smart devices, and thus the emergence of an advanced generation of devices, programs and platforms. They were called multimedia programs. We can pay attention to the phonetic system of Arabic language, and focus on displaying letters during education and on using different letters according to their presence in the sentence.

Arabic language has many sounds that are not found in other languages, for example: The sound of the letter Ain, Qaf, Dhad and Dhaa, Ta'a and Hamza. Non-Arabic speakers will find it difficult to pronounce them correctly. We need to choose the most common and widespread words, and present the new words in examples to indicate the situations in which they are used in order to make it easier for the learner to memorize, acquire and absorb the meanings of the words and benefit from them.

Connecting new words and vocabulary with the daily life experiences of the learner, in order to speed up and facilitate the process of learning the language. When you follow of the rapid development movement you notice the beginning of the actual application of multimedia in order to quickly adapt to it; giving learners examples from various topics that enrich their dictionary with new meanings and their uses and improve their pronunciation and composition of sentences during learning. Relying on the principle of gradualism in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers and dividing the educational process into levels commensurate with the learner and his goal.

Taking into account the gradation in written education from easy to difficult, and from the oral to the written, this matter enhances the learner's self-confidence and urges him to continue learning. (Saaed, n.d.)

These are considered the basics of learning Arabic for non-native speakers, and what helps in teaching it to non-native speakers is the use of audio-visual means such as videos, audio clips, and pictures to bring the word and meaning closer to the learner's understanding. As well, we need build electronic courses, whose importance appears in achieving the goals of enriching the content of electronic courses, increasing the learner's motivation towards learning, acquiring research skills and navigation skills, and raising the level of achievement and performance. (Marei & Al-Haila, 2017)

It is useful to create many sorts of teaching and learning facilities: Designing a website using an electronic content management program, making electronic educational units for Arabic language skills; publishing them through content management programs on the Internet; employing some learning situations on the Internet in the linguistic educational situation; developing appropriate technology for teaching and learning Arabic for non-Arabic speakers; creating a multimedia library from various sources to teach Arabic to non-native speakers via wide web; choosing ready-made linguistic educational software according to educational, technical and scientific standards using the smart board in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers using one of the specialized programs; creating miscellaneous Internet pages in Arabic on the web; preparing learning and teaching resources that lie in designing non-traditional linguistic educational situations; using the educational video to present linguistic educational situations; developing the work and enriching the programs for preparing teachers of Arabic language for non-native speakers, and increasing the practical and technological aspect and linking it to the entrance of linguistic communication.

Training teachers to employ learning techniques and the teaching- learning of Arabic for non-native speaker technology in order to achieve the goals of linguistic communication.

These technologies are stimulating for all senses because the content of the educational videos, whether those created by teachers or those they upload from YouTube, contain a minimum level of integrity of cognitive and ethical content, where visual stimulation works, simulating reality, employing gestures, movement, breaking routines, and the ability to control work clips and stages of exploiting the medium outside the classroom. Teachers need skills to overcome the use of media, techniques and technology to develop listening skills, oral conversation, and writing letters and words to teach Arabic to non-native speakers. They also need to enable the adoption of technological media in the completion of activities and exercises and test being formative or partial self-evaluative.

Despite the possibility of dispensing with the teacher, the limited ability of computers and applications to predict all learners' needs and responses and interaction with them in a humane manner, such software and technologies remain a fertile field that undoubtedly requires the availability of devices, efficiency along with parallel and integrated efforts (Account, 1993).

“Between theory and practice” combines the principles of employing new technologies and transforming learning into a collaborative project that takes into account the diversity of consistency and different skills, and achieving common goals.

Arabic is the language of religion, culture, history and science. Throughout its long history, it has occupied pioneering positions and played great humanitarian roles.

Arabic language contains a lot of grammar, syntax, synonyms and antonyms. Herein lies the difficulty of the language and teaching it to non-native speakers. It is regarded as one of the richest languages in the world, but this renders the difficulty when learners desire learning it by exerting more efforts and dedicating more time for training and competence. Learning will not take place in a month or a year, but it will take more time. It would be great if non-native speakers could befriend with Arabic-speaking people to train them to practice speaking most of their time.

Technical solutions for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers

- Designing a simplified form for its alphabet and everything related to its layouts, which makes it easier for the learner to use it.
- Going deeper into learning materials and supportive lessons for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers through information technologies.
- Focusing on reading and listening to improve their practical performance.
- Paying attention to lessons that contain the grammar of Arabic language, while supporting them with real examples from the environment of the learner.
- Designing lessons and electronic video clips through which the linguistic information that characterizes Arabic is provided.
- Introducing vocabulary for non-Arabic speakers in a simple and easy way with correct pronunciation.
- Continuous evaluation, where the teacher recognizes the level of his students and provides them with feedback.

Conclusion

Teaching Arabic language to non-native speakers needs to adopt the latest trends and the ability to diversify strategies and make use of technological development. It also requires taking care of the learning environment, the abilities and tendencies of learners and working on developing the competencies of teachers. Information technology and education technology have played a prominent role in conveying the echo of languages to those who wish to learn them from individuals whose countries are far apart and whose languages are multifarious.

Since the demand for Arabic language is increasing and it is considered one of the most productive and prosperous languages, it has become necessary to introduce this ancient language and to communicate its sound and impact to those who seek it with a desire to learn it. It is necessary to work on the exploitation of educational

technology and information technologies to spread Arabic language around the world, and to work on the exploitation of interactive electronic texts for learners of this language for non-native speakers. This will benefit the teacher and the learner. The good handling of the Arabic text and its good inclusion in modern media are among the reasons leading to the success of the educational process for non-native speakers. Accordingly, the Arabic teacher must have wisdom and sophistication in order to be able to overcome the obstacles that hinder the learning of this language for non-native speakers. This requires continuous updating and activation so that Arabic language for non-native speakers can keep pace with the spirit of the times and keep pace with change, progress and development.

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