

#### **TEACHING ARABIC SPEAKERS** Challenges and Approaches

Regan O'Malley November 2019 In your experience, what kind of issues do Arabic-speaking learners have in an English class?



## **OVERVIEW**

- Literacy
- Grammar
- Classroom Management



Can you think of any examples of <u>literacy</u> issues that Arabic-speaking learners face?



#### LITERACY

- Different alphabet
- Right to left
- No Upper/Lower case letters in Arabic
- Punctuation commas often used instead of full stops
- 'Mirrored' letters can create confusion eg. 'b' & 'd', 'p' & 'q'
- Tendency to favour top-down reading strategies
- Vowels written as diacritics in Arabic

## ARABIC DIACRITICS

Table 1: Arabic vowel diacritics

Name :	Fatha	Damma	Kasra	Name :	Tanween Fatha	Tanween Damm	Tanween Kasr
Symbol :	/	8	/	Symbol :	1	28	1
bymoor.	12/	/u /	/i /		/an/	/un/	/in/
Explanation:	Written		Written	Explanati	ion: Written	Written	Written
	ove the	above the	below the		above the	above the	below the
Co	nsonant	Consonant	Consonant		Consonant	Consonant	Consonant
	/	۶			1	28	ر )
	ب	$\mathcal{L}$	Ļ	Example	يا .	ب	- li
Example :		÷	1.	Pronunci		bun	bin
Pronunciation	n: ba	bu	bi		and the second state of th	(1.1.1.)	UIII
		Name :	Shad	da	Suku	n	
		Symbol :	L.	,	C		
		Explanation:	Written al	oove	Written ab	ove	
			the Conso	nant	the Consor	nant	
			نی		0		
		Example :	ب	ر	Ļ	ر	
		Pronuncia	ation: b	ob	b		

## SUGGESTED APPROACHES - LITERACY

- Encourage daily writing (diaries, blogs, etc) little and often, with regular feedback.
- Reading assignments
- Appeal to interests of students to encourage motivation
- Depending on level, focus on alphabet recognition may be appropriate
- Spelling lists/tests
- Encourage development of bottom-up reading strategies



## **BOTTOM-UP READING STRATEGIES**

- **Analogy:** recognising patterns in the relationship between spelling and pronunciation.
- Assists learner in decoding individual letters in their reading.

## **BOTTOM-UP READING STRATEGIES**

• **Analogy:** eg.  $/ \wedge /$  is represented using the following patterns:

- u (up), o-e (done), o (won), ou (trouble).

• Have learners brainstorm words with this sound and categorise them by spelling:

u	0	о-е	ou
Sunday	month	come	young
husband	mother	one	cousin
uncle	brother	some	
but	son	love	
us	other		
lunch			
hungry			
fun			
much			

Can you think of any examples of <u>grammatical</u> issues that Arabic-speaking learners face?



#### GRAMMAR

- Verb 'to be' is not used in present tense in Arabic e.g. "He a student." "He playing guitar."
- Issues with modal verbs

e.g. "He must to go to school." OR "He will can go to school."

• Use of subjects + pronouns:

e.g. "My father he is a doctor"

- No indefinite article in Arabic e.g. "This is car."
- Incorrect word order e.g. adjective/noun "He is man tall."

## SUGGESTED APPROACHES - GRAMMAR

- Put grammar in context (especially modals) & include them in speaking tasks
- Include oral activities to keep interest
- During speaking activities, correct grammar errors more frequently
- Have learners produce the material for speaking tasks e.g. creating dialogues / vanishing dialogues



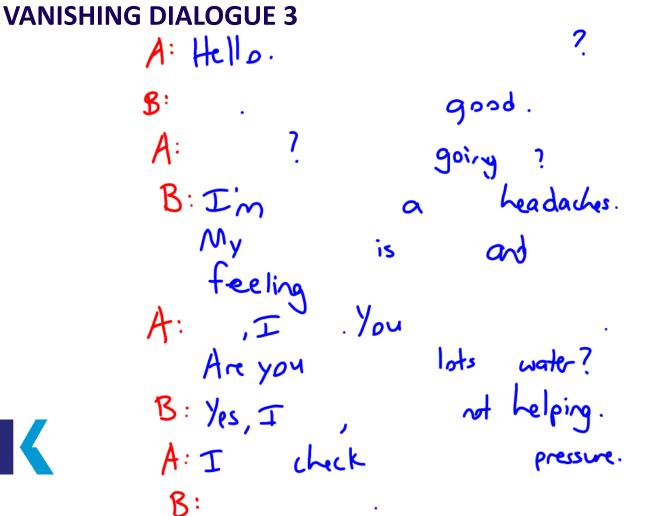
VANISHING DIALOGUE

A: Hello. How are you feeling? B: Hi. I'm not good. A: Why? What's going on? B: I'm having a lot of headaches. My stomach is sore and I'm feeling cold A: Oh, I see. You need fluids. Are you drinking lots of water? B: Yes, I an, but it's not helping. A: I will check your blood pressure. B: No problem.

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**VANISHING DIALOGUE 2** 

A: Hello. How feeling? B: H: not good. A: Why ? goiry on? B: I'm a lot of headaches. My stomach is and feeling cold A: Oh, I . You fluids. lots water? Are you not helping. B: Yes, I, but blood pressure. A: I check B: No



#### VANISHING DIALOGUE 4







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B: .

Can you think of any examples of <u>classroom management</u> issues that Arabic-speaking learners present?



# CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

- Punctuality
- Reluctance to write
- Expectations to be spoon-fed information by teacher
- Cultural issues related to gender in a mixed class

#### SUGGESTED APPROACHES – CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

- Set clear classroom rules with learner input
- Try to explain the rationale behind activities they may not like (eg writing)
- Encourage competition through games
- Validate culture by allowing them to speak about their countries
- LEARNER TRAINING!



#### LEARNER TRAINING

- Elicit reading strategies from learners before a task
- Set reflection tasks (written or spoken) after a task
- Have learners discuss study strategies that help them
- During feedback, ask learners:

"WHY?" or "HOW DO YOU KNOW?"

#### REFERENCES

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# ANY QUESTIONS?

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#### THANK YOU

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