



OUR LANGUAGE BETWEEN THE LANGUAGE OF THE QURAN AND THE LANGUAGE OF SCIENCE: THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE SACRED AND REALITY

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to study the complex dilemma facing the Arabic language in the modern era, namely the duality of the "sacred" and the "real." Since the revelation of the Holy Quran, the Arabic language has acquired a unique sanctity, making it the vessel of divine revelation and a tool for expressing faith, thus solidifying its place in the collective consciousness of the nation. However, the challenges of globalization, the information revolution, and the dominance of foreign languages as languages of science and modernity have placed this language in an existential confrontation with a new "reality." The research examines the manifestations of this sanctity, traces the history of Arabic as a language of science and civilization, analyzes the nature of the current conflict between the sacred and the real, and concludes by proposing practical visions for overcoming this conflict towards an integration that will restore the Arabic language to its rightful place as a vehicle for the message and a tool for scientific and intellectual creativity.

Keywords: Arabic language, language of the Quran, sanctity of language, language of science, linguistic identity, linguistic conflict.

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INTRODUCTION

The Arabic language is an intellectual, cultural, and civilizational vessel for the Islamic and Arab world. However, its status transcends its role as a mere tool for communication, becoming inextricably linked to the Islamic faith as the language of the Holy Quran. This close connection between language and religion has bestowed upon it a unique character and sanctity not shared by many other languages. Dr. Mohsen Hashem Darwish states: "Researchers in such important matters must not separate them from their historical context! After the revelation of the Holy Quran to the Arab Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Arabic, it became the language of religion, its rulings, and everything related to it."

Conversely, Arabic faces existential challenges in our present era, representing a new reality. This reality is embodied in the dominance of foreign languages, particularly English, as the language of science, technology, and scientific research. This has led to the marginalization of Arabic in vital areas such as university education, scientific research, and even in some aspects of daily life. This research aims to analyze the apparent duality between the "sacred" and the "real," to clarify the nature of their relationship, and to explore a path from this perceived conflict to a desired state of integration that restores the Arabic language to its leading role without isolating it from the spirit of the age and its demands.

Section One: The Language of the Qur'an... The Sacred and Identity

First: The Honor of the Language Through the Revelation

The unique status of the Arabic language cannot be understood apart from the revelation of the Holy Qur'an in it. God Almighty chose it from among all the languages of the earth to be the bearer of His final message. The researcher, AlSadiq Al-Rambouq, in his reading of Abd Al-Salam Yassin's discourse, describes this meaning by saying: "He intertwined the Arabic language and merged it into the Qur'an in such a profound way that it became an integral part of the essence of revelation and religion." This divine choice was not arbitrary; rather, it was intended to make this language the vessel for God's eternal miracle. It is not merely a covering for the text, but rather an integral part of the message's core, where word and meaning form an inseparable unity within the miraculous fabric of the Qur'an. Researchers have pointed out that the Quran acknowledges this characteristic through its apparent reference to previous religious traditions, thus placing it in constant dialogue with earlier texts in clear Arabic.

Secondly: Language as a Vessel of Identity and Emotion. From the moment of revelation, the Arabic language transformed from being the tongue of the Arabian Peninsula tribes into the language of the nation and its civilization. In his theory, "The Prophetic Methodology," Abdelsalam Yassine states that Arabic became "the foundation of all foundations" and "the mother of all aspirations and desires," the basis upon which the unity and strength of the nation rest. This emotional dimension has made Arabic a unifying identity that transcends ethnic and racial affiliations. Therefore, Dr. Mohsen Hashem Darwish believes that "whoever speaks Arabic is an Arab" from a civilizational and linguistic perspective, because Arabic, in this sense, has become "a crucible in which languages have been fused." It is not the exclusive property of Arabs, but belongs to all who have embraced Islam or been influenced by its culture. This explains the acceptance of Arabic by non-Arabs throughout history and their proficiency in it.

Section Two: The Language of Science... Between Yesterday and Today

First: The Historical Context: Arabic for Secular and Religious Sciences

The prevailing notion that Arabic is solely a "sacred" language, unsuitable for secular sciences, is historically inaccurate. Throughout centuries of Islamic civilization, Arabic demonstrated its remarkable capacity to absorb and develop the sciences of earlier civilizations, and indeed, it was the world's primary language of science for many centuries.

In his study of the House of Wisdom, Dr. Jamal Anaq affirms that the flourishing of science during the Abbasid era was intertwined with the flourishing of the Arabic language. Translators and scholars were able to "assimilate ancient Greek languages... and invent scientific terminology that resonated with the spirit of this language." Arabic was not an obstacle to science; rather, it was "the instrument by which things are achieved, and whoever does not master the instrument and tool will not attain the perfection of the craft." The House of Wisdom in Baghdad served as a practical model for how the Arabic language could be employed to cultivate academic and scientific elites across various disciplines, including medicine, astronomy, philosophy, and mathematics.

Second: Contemporary Reality: Challenges of Hegemony and Dependency

In stark contrast to its glorious past, the contemporary Arabic language faces numerous challenges. It is experiencing a kind of "linguistic conflict" with other languages, particularly English and French, which have

come to dominate higher education and scientific research. The writer Bilal Suleiman describes this reality, saying, "They have restricted the use of Arabic in science, confining it to textbooks and turning it into a scapegoat for failure in universities." This marginalization has been accompanied by a decline in the status of Arabic in some scientific circles and a forced separation between science (in foreign languages) and religion and identity (in Arabic), creating a sharp duality in the intellectual identity of the contemporary Muslim and Arab. This reality raises a genuine dilemma: Can a language simultaneously be a vehicle for conveying a message and a vehicle for scientific development?

Section Three: The Conflict Between the Sacred and the Real: The Dialectic of Authenticity and Modernity

First: The Nature of the Conflict and Its Manifestations

The relationship between the Arabic language, considered "sacred," and its contemporary reality can be described as a dialectical one based on tension. On the one hand, there is a current that views Arabic as the language of religion and identity, which must be protected from the "invasion" of other languages. This can sometimes lead to a defensive and isolationist stance. On the other hand, there is a pragmatic current that sees foreign languages as the language of science, because they are the "language of the age" and the "key to knowledge," thus marginalizing Arabic in higher education and scientific research. This tension has created a conflict within Arab educational and cultural institutions between advocates of "Arabization" and advocates of "shifting to foreign languages." This conflict can take on ideological and political dimensions, as is the case in the Arab-Israeli conflict, where language is used as a tool for hegemony, Judaization, and the erasure of Arab memory.

Second: The Problem of Terminology and Identity

One of the most prominent manifestations of this conflict is the problem related to scientific terminology. Should we adopt authentic Arabic terminology, borrow and integrate foreign terms, or simply use the foreign term as is? This dilemma is not new, but it has intensified with the tremendous acceleration in scientific production. Ancient Arab scholars successfully developed mechanisms for deriving and Arabizing terminology in a way that preserved the "spirit of the language" and its capacity for growth. Today, however, the absence of effective language academies and serious scientific institutions leaves the language oscillating between authenticity and stagnation on the one hand, and openness and assimilation on the other. Researcher Al-Sadiq Al-Rambouq believes that the language of the Quran remains "the most effective means of confronting the Western cultural onslaught, and the efficient tool for absorbing, indigenizing, and rescuing sciences from the alien influences imposed upon them."

Fourth Section: Towards Integration, Not Conflict: A Forward-Looking Vision

First: Rediscovering the Scientific Potential of Arabic

Overcoming this crisis requires reconsidering the relationship between the "sacred" and the "real," and avoiding treating them as opposing poles. The sanctity that Arabic acquires from being the language of the Quran does not contradict its role as a tool for science and modernity. In fact, this sanctity can be a powerful incentive for its development and defense. Dr. Mohsen Hashem Darwish says, "Arabic is, in reality and throughout history, a universal language! It does not belong to one race of people over another! Whoever speaks it and masters it is an Arab!" This universal concept of Arabic means that it is capable of absorbing all the achievements of human civilization, as it did in the past. What is needed is a serious scientific and cultural project that balances authenticity and modernity, and makes Arabic a language that produces knowledge, not merely transmits it.

Secondly: The Role of Institutions in Reclaiming the Initiative

This project cannot succeed without strong political and institutional will. Universities, scientific research institutions, and Arabic language academies must play a leading role in developing curricula for teaching science in Arabic, creating unified scientific dictionaries and lexicons, and encouraging scientific research and publication in Arabic. The experience of the Baghdad House of Wisdom offers us a historical model worthy of emulation, demonstrating the possibility of reviving this project within a framework that follows the example of the House of Wisdom and serves as an effective mechanism for the renaissance of the Arab nation. This means that the desired renaissance begins with attention to and investment in language, considering it the foundation and pinnacle of the edifice.

Conclusion

The issue of the Arabic language is not a matter of heritage or formality, but rather a matter of existence, identity, and civilization. The artificial dichotomy between "the language of the Quran" and "the language of science" serves neither the language nor the nation. The language that was the vessel of divine revelation is the same language that was the vessel of science, medicine, philosophy, and astronomy for centuries. The time has

come to move from lamenting the past to taking action. Revitalizing the Arabic language and preparing it to keep pace with the times is a religious, national, and patriotic responsibility that falls upon the elites and institutions. By restoring its status, the nation can reclaim its leading role in human civilization, affirming that "sanctity" does not mean stagnation, and that "modernity" does not mean assimilation.

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