

# An Integrated Approach to the Teaching of Diglossic Languages in a Foreign Setting: The Case of Arabic

Abdel-Hakeem Kassem and Fethi Mansouri

## Abstract

This paper investigates a crucial problem associated with the teaching and learning of Arabic as a second language, namely the diglossic nature of Arabic. Diglossia means that two varieties of one language (Modern Standard Arabic as opposed to Colloquial dialects) co-exist and cut across the four macro-skills on the basis of different sociolinguistic functions. Even though problems associated with diglossia have been identified and debated for the last three decades (Ferguson, 1963; Campbell, 1994), very little has been done to investigate its impact on the teaching and learning of Arabic as a foreign language. This research attempts to address this issue and provides potential curriculum remedies. It is hypothesised that integrating the two varieties in one teaching approach would enhance learning, despite all the apparent difficulties in a curriculum design which takes this approach. The findings of a controlled study, where such an approach was taken, show that the group of learners exposed to the integrated approach have performed equally as well and in many cases significantly better than learners taught by the traditional Standard approach. The statistical results in all the communicative patterns and structures taught to both groups of learners do not show a hindering effect resulting from exposing second language learners to two kinds of discourse/input which serve different functions.

## Introduction

Research into Second Language Acquisition (SLA) tends to describe and account for the language learning in terms of

'universal features' which are used as an explanatory tools for variation and development. Among such universal claims and principles one can mention Givon's Discourse Coherence scale, Bybee's Semantic

Relevance Principle (1991) and Pienemann's processing prerequisites (1994). In fact, Pienemann argues for a powerful and predictive Teachability Theory which predicts and accounts for language teaching and learning. This theory which was developed on the basis of a Second Language Acquisition theory — namely the Multi-Dimensional Model — combines principles of language learning and speech processing to account for inter-language development and variation. The Teachability Theory claims that learners can only learn what they can process. Implied in this statement is the claim that instruction cannot force learners to acquire structures which they are not ready for yet: for example, the teaching of the German Verb-Separation rule at the early stages of the curriculum will not be successful, regardless of how much practice and drilling learners are exposed to. This is because Verb-Separation requires certain linguistic (Inversion Rule; SVO order) and processing (+IFS; +COS; +SCS)<sup>1</sup> prerequisites which are not yet available to the learners at that early stage.

Claims of (universal features (of language learning may be supported by and based on cognitive grounds and, therefore, may not be easily refutable since all human beings (except in certain pathological cases) share the same basic cognitive attributes such as memory limitations, processing

capacities and perceptual abilities. However, there are other factors in speech communities across the world which relate to and affect language learning directly but which are not universal and, hence, may need to be dealt with by means of language-specific principles rather than language universals. One such a phenomenon is the fact that many speech communities use more than one variety of their mother tongue for different sociolinguistic functions. Variety 1 (V1) and Variety 2 (V2) are predominantly used in a complementary manner rather than in an overlapping manner. As far as Arabic is concerned, V1 (Standard Arabic) is used for liturgical purposes, political speeches, media, education, formal communication and other similar socio-linguistic situations. V2 (dialects), on the other hand, is used in everyday situations for personal and interpersonal communication. Native speakers learn V1 through formal instruction whereas V2 is acquired naturally. Consequently, not everyone can competently use V1, even though V1 and V2 share a great deal of linguistic features.

The present study attempts to investigate the feasibility of recreating the diglossic context for the learning of Arabic as a second language in a classroom environment. The experimental group in this study is taught a number of structures in the target language, using both the spoken variety, Jordanian Arabic, and

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). The objective of the study is to establish the learners' ability to process L2 input in two different but linguistically related forms. It is anticipated that the shared linguistic features between the dialect and MSA will enable students to overcome the otherwise apparent confusion of comprehending and producing two types of L2 simultaneously. The study draws on the basic premise that L2 acquisition is essentially similar to L1 acquisition (c.f., Ellis, 1994) and, therefore, learners of Arabic as a second language would be able to acquire the diglossic skills in the same order as native speakers, albeit at a slower pace and with a more limited scope.

The following section discusses diglossia and its implications on the Arabic language situation. It provides a review of the main debate on the issue with reference to its impact on the domains and functions of the various varieties of the Arabic language.

#### Diglossia

The situation referred to as 'diglossia' is not a contemporary phenomenon even though the term 'diglossia' was only recently introduced by Ferguson (1959). The co-existence of two varieties of the language was formally discussed by Arab and Muslim philologists and grammarians as early as the fourteenth century. Ibn Khaldoun

(1332-1406 AD), a prominent Arab historian, discusses this situation at length in his famous *Muqaddima* (Introduction):

It should be known that the usual form of address used among the urban and sedentary population is not the old Mudhar language (or Classical Arabic) nor the language of this generation. It is another independent language, remote from the language of the Mudhar and from the language of the present day Arabs. It is obvious that it is an independent language by itself. This fact is attested by the changes it shows, which grammarians consider solecisms (Ibn Khaldoun, 1384: 490).

Ibn Khaldoun proposes an explanation for these language changes and the subsequent existence of the varieties which are different from the Classical language. This explanation is based on language loss resulting from contact of Arabs with non-Arabs at the time of the Islamic spread into the Middle-East and North Africa. Ibn Khaldoun mentions Islamic conquests of North Africa and the Middle East which spoke different tongues, (Berber and other indigenous languages such as Lybique for North Africa and Assyrian languages for the ME) from that of the conqueror, whose origin were predominantly the

### Teaching of Diglossic Languages

Arab peninsula. Over time these changes developed into different varieties of Arabic, as structurally different as Italian is from Spanish and French. However, unlike Romance languages which eventually developed as independent languages from the source Latin, Arabic dialects are still treated as variants of the same language, despite the extensive lexical and phonological differences exhibited among the various regional varieties on the one hand, and between them and the Standard language on the other hand.

According to Sotiropoulos (1977: 10) the term 'diglossia' was first introduced by the German linguist Karl Krumbacher (1902)<sup>3</sup> in which he discussed the origin, nature, and development of diglossia with special reference to two situations: Arabic and Greek. A few decades later, Ferguson (1959) dealt with four linguistic situations which display diglossic behaviour: Arabic, Modern Greek, Swiss German and Haitian Creole, and introduced his widely quoted definition of diglossia as :

A relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed

variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation (Ferguson, 1959: 336).

The superposed 'High' variety which is embodied in MSA is associated with the language of the *Qur'an* and is, therefore, held in the highest esteem as a model of written Arabic. MSA is used for more formal functions such as sermons, lectures, books, and newspapers. The Colloquial varieties, on the other hand, represent the 'Low' variety which are essentially used for informal oral communication and thus are considered inferior to MSA. Each variety serves specific functions, and as Ferguson (1959: 236) points out:

The importance of using the right variety in the right situation can hardly be overestimated. An outsider who learns to speak fluent, accurate L ['Low'] and then uses it in a formal speech is an object of ridicule. A member of the speech community who uses H ['High'] in a purely conversational situation or in

an informal activity like shopping is equally an object of ridicule.

It has to be emphasised here that MSA is believed to be the prestigious Arabic variety throughout the Arab world. This is mainly because MSA is the language of the *Qur'an*, the holy book of Islam, and has served as the chief vehicle and instrument of this religion. MSA is the official language of all the Arab countries, the mainstay of Arab nationalism and the most unifying force in the politically divided Arab world, after Islam. One must also point out the fact that MSA is not spoken by any group of people in the Arab world. In fact, as stated earlier, it is well-known that use of MSA in daily conversation invites ridicule (See Ibrahim, 1984). On the other hand, Colloquial varieties, though they may be practically dominant, will not theoretically receive any formal recognition as local standards.

#### The teaching of diglossic skills

Ferguson (1963) discussed the implications of diglossia on the teaching and learning of diglossic languages. He identified the difficulties of re-creating authentic functional frameworks which could nurture the development of diglossic skills and called on curriculum designers and applied linguists to explore these issues by conducting theoretical and empirical research into

the question. At that time, Arabic was taught in American universities and military colleges using essentially audio-lingual as well as grammar-translating approaches which are designed to produce graduates able to carry out specific tasks in the language.

That same approach remained dominant and, in fact, unchallenged despite Ferguson's remarks. Almost two decades later, a renewed interest in the issue of 'diglossia' among a number of Arabists and applied linguists started to revive the debate and the possibility of incorporating the diglossic nature of the language into the curriculum designs. Among such scholars are Younes (1990), Bakalla (1980) and Neel (1980) and in an Australian context Campbell (1986, 1994).

In fact, the two main issues facing teachers of Arabic as a foreign language may be summarised in two points: one is the decision concerning the particular type of Arabic to be taught (that is, MSA or a dialect, and if a dialect which particular dialect); and the other concerns the methods and curriculum to be used to teach the type of Arabic chosen. (This is even more crucial in case it is decided to teach diglossic Arabic or even one Arabic dialect.) Along the same line, Campbell (1994) points to diglossia as being 'the confounding element in curriculum design' and argues that a curriculum which incorporates the

### *Teaching of Diglossic Languages*

dialect and the Standard in a functional framework is long overdue. Campbell calls for a curriculum design that reflects the notion of diglossia by systematically incorporating the development of diglossic skills.

It follows from the above discussion that there is a need to explore new approaches to the teaching of diglossic languages, which combine V1 and V2 in order to achieve a balanced competence in the four macro-skills. Hence, the present study is undertaken to investigate the feasibility and the effects of integrating the two varieties in one curriculum.

The traditional notion that discourse coherence enhances learning while discourse-switching hinders learning is irrelevant as far as the sociolinguistic situation created by diglossia is concerned. The essence of diglossic languages relies upon a serial acquisition (L1 acquisition) of the V1 and V2 and then a parallel use of these varieties for different functional purposes. In the context of teaching Arabic as a foreign language (L2), the aim is to re-create this diglossic acquisition context in a second language classroom and investigate whether exposing learners to the V1 and V2 simultaneously would slow the curriculum objectives and hence have a hindering effect or not.

#### **Integrated approach to the teaching of diglossic languages**

The majority of Arabic language programs in North America, Europe and Australia offer courses in MSA. Some programs are offered in a major spoken dialect such as Syrian, Egyptian, Lebanese, Saudi etc. However, none of these programs can claim to prepare students to develop a balanced competence in the four macro skills. Students who have learned MSA for three years at tertiary level and who have had no exposure to an Arabic spoken variety cannot be expected to function in situations that require use of everyday language in the Arab world, since MSA is not used for such functions (Parkinson 1985: 26). It is often claimed, in support of teaching MSA rather than a spoken dialect or teaching MSA before a dialect, that if a student has a foundation in MSA, then a transition into any of the Arabic dialects is relatively easy (Mansoor 1960: 95; al-Hamad 1983: 95). This may be true depending on how much MSA the learner has learned. On the other hand, students who have studied a spoken dialect and who have had no exposure to MSA do not have access to written Arabic materials, which are usually produced in MSA. Finally, programs in which both MSA and a spoken dialect are taught offer the two varieties independently without attempting to integrate the two in one Arabic course. MSA is generally used for all language

skills and the dialect is taught to serve some limited communicative needs of certain students. Such programs do not take advantage of the fact that MSA and the spoken dialects are varieties of the same language and, consequently, share a great deal of linguistic features that can be carried over from one variety to another (Younes 1990: 106).

Younes (1990), Lampe (1985), Haddad (1985) and Campbell (1986, 1994) suggest that any real solution to the present problems associated with the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language must address the sociolinguistic situation in the Arab world. Since teaching one variety of the language is not enough if the goal is to graduate students who are proficient in all aspects of the language, then an approach which offers both varieties is the only answer. The question that remains to be answered is how to implement such an approach.

Younes (1990: 112) suggests that 'any Arabic language program whose goal is to prepare students to function successfully in Arabic must include both MSA and a spoken dialect', each to be used in situations and functions for which it is used by native speakers. This can be achieved by three different routes as reported in Ferguson (1963: 78-80). Firstly, starting with MSA and introducing a dialect later; secondly, starting with a spoken dialect and introducing MSA later; and thirdly, starting with the two varieties

simultaneously. Younes rejects the first option on the ground that teaching MSA first for all language skills contradicts the fact that MSA is not used for ordinary everyday conversation. Furthermore, when MSA and a spoken dialect are taught separately, a certain amount of duplication and waste is unavoidable. He also adds that when the two varieties are introduced independently, it becomes more difficult for the learner to integrate them into a single language system.

As for the third option, starting with MSA and a spoken dialect simultaneously, MSA will be used for formal speaking and reading and writing while a spoken dialect is used for everyday conversation. Younes argues strongly against this option and describes it as 'the least plausible of the three'. The skeleton of his argument against this option is as follows: introducing students to two varieties of a foreign language from the beginning and telling them that each variety is to be used in certain situations will be overwhelming and confusing. If the curriculum designer is to remain faithful to the principle of authenticity and to have a course that truly reflects the sociolinguistic situation, then MSA materials will focus on areas in which MSA is used. So, while students are learning to communicate orally at the level of personal identification in the spoken dialect, they would, at

the same time, be learning the language of literature, newspapers, news broadcasts, and formal speaking (Younes 1990: 113).

#### **The approach taken in this study**

The approach proposed in this study is based on the integration of a spoken Arabic dialect and the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) so as to reflect the way Arabic is acquired and used by native speakers (Younes, 1990). According to this approach an Arabic program would start with a spoken Arabic dialect, build a dialectal foundation in listening and speaking, then gradually introduce MSA materials. The focus of the dialectal foundation would be on building the skills to communicate in situations in which the Colloquial is typically used, such as personal identification, family, weather, work, asking for directions, etc. It should be emphasised here that the dialect would not be abandoned with the introduction of MSA materials, but rather both varieties would be used side by side, the way they are used by Arabs. The argument presented by Younes (1990: 114) in support of the integrated approach is that this proposal treats MSA and the dialect as varieties of the same language, not as two separate languages as is the practice in some Arabic programs that offer a dialect in addition to MSA. Since the great majority of linguistic features are shared by MSA and the dialects, duplication will be minimised in an

integrated course, and the task of mastering the two varieties will require considerably less time and effort than learning two languages.

The approach taken in this study is essentially based on the thrust of the argument presented by Younes. However, students in this study have all had one year exposure to basic MSA, then in their second year were taught in both varieties in one class. The following table summarises the design of this investigation.

The main elements that need to be highlighted with regard to the difference between the integrated approach and the Standard approach are the following: (1) the integrated approach provides learners with authentic communicative input which re-creates the context in which Arabic L1 is acquired, while the Standard approach is restricted to situational input where learners are instructed to learn a variety of oral structures which have limited functional domains; (2) the integrated approach recognises the shared features between the two varieties and takes advantage of such features both in terms of medium of instruction in the classroom and the nature of input provided; and (3) the integrated approach allows learners to develop the four macro-skills in the manner L1 learners of Arabic do, while in the Standard approach both speaking and listening are attributed secondary educational status.

Ta  
Ap  
Ch  
Typ  
Inp  
Med  
Inst  
Ope  
Mac  
Shar  
betw  
and V  
Meth  
quan  
techn  
appro  
and  
learn  
study  
Statist  
X 2)  
statist  
and,  
pedag



**Table 1: Research design**

<b>Approach/ Characteristics</b>	<b>Standard (V1)</b>	<b>Integrated (V1+V2)</b>
<b>Type of Input</b>	Grammatical; Communicative	grammatical; Communicative
<b>Input</b>	Situational; Non-authentic	Situational; Authentic
<b>Medium of Instruction</b>	V1 and/or Learners' L1	V2, then gradually V1: V2 for introducing items then further explanation given using V1.
<b>Operating Macro-skills</b>	Reading; Writing (Speaking and Listening are secondary)	Speaking; Listening (as well as Reading + Writing)
<b>Shared features between V1 and V2</b>	Not utilised (does not take advantage of shared features)	Utilised (takes advantage of shared features)

### **Methodology**

Both qualitative and quantitative methods and techniques are applied when appropriate in order to compare and measure differences in the learners' performance between pre-study and post-study tasks. Statistical procedures (Chi-square X<sup>2</sup>) are applied to measure statistical significance of findings and, therefore, establish its pedagogic and academic validity.

### **Subjects**

Fourteen students enrolled at the Arabic program (level I) at Deakin University were randomly selected to provide data for this investigation. Students were selected on the basis of their age, their ethno-linguistic background (all from English-speaking backgrounds), their motivation for learning Arabic (academic purposes) as well as their previous experience with the language (no

**Table 2: Distribution of participants**

Approach	Integrated App.	Standard App.
Groups	Experimental Group (7 students)	Control Group (7 students)

previous exposure prior to commencing their language course at Deakin).

**Data collection**

Written data was collected (periodically) on a weekly basis. Students were divided into two groups of equal size, each being exposed to one of the two approaches. Certain linguistic structures and communicative patterns were taught and at the end of each session data was collected and transcribed. All sets of data were analysed from various theoretical perspectives: linguistic (structuralist); communicative and statistical. The main focus is to measure the differences between the performance of the two groups in 8 different situations and grammatical structures.

**Hypothesis**

The main hypothesis states that 'exposing learners to both V1 and V2 of the diglossic target language would enhance, not hinder, their learning of grammatical structures and communicative patterns'. The structures covered are of two main

types: (1) grammatical structures and (2) communicative patterns.

**Grammatical structures**

The grammatical structures investigated are those most prevalent in the target language and which learners could not avoid producing (through avoidance strategies) because they are essential to meaning. These include the following:

- **Question words:** the question words investigated are the most basic and most essential to making questions in Arabic. These include [*man*], [*mata*], [*madha*]/[*maa*], [*kam*] and [*ayya*] meaning 'who', 'when', 'what', 'how many' and 'which' respectively.
- **Negation words for verbs:** these include [*laa*] for present tense, [*lam*] for past tense and [*lan*] for future tense.
- **Negation for adjectival phrases:** this consists of the negation word [*laysa*] which behaves in a manner similar to verbs in terms of being inflected for person, number

and gender. Therefore, [*laysa*] is used with 'he', [*laysat*] with 'she', [*laysuu*] with 'they masculine', [*lasna*] with 'they feminine', [*lasnaa*] with 'we' etc.

- **Relative pronouns:** like the negation word [*laysa*], the relative pronoun in Arabic agrees with its head noun for number and gender. The complete list of Arabic relative pronouns is as follows:

Table 3: Relative pronouns

	Feminine	Singular
Singular	<i>allati</i>	<i>alladhi</i>
Dual	<i>allata:ni</i>	<i>alladha:ni</i>
Plural	<i>alla:ti/ allawa:ti</i>	<i>alladhi:na</i>

The dual form of the relative pronoun has two forms: one form listed in the above table for the nominative case, and a corresponding for the other two case (accusative and genitive) and these are /*alladhayn*/ and /*allatayn*/ for masculine and feminine respectively.

- **Demonstrative articles:** include [*hadha*], [*hadhihi*], [*dhalika*], [*tilka*], [*ha'ula'i*] and [*'ula'ika*] referring to 'this.M', 'this.F', 'that.M', 'that.F', 'these' and 'those'.

- **Adverbs of Degree:** these include [*kadhiran*], [*qaliian*], [*jiddan*] and [*jayidaan*] meaning 'a lot', 'a little/ a few', 'very' and 'well' respectively.

### Communicative patterns

In addition to these grammatical structures, the investigation also tested the effects of the integrated approach on the learning of a number of communicative patterns described below:

- **Polite requests:** making requests in Arabic is very sensitive to the choice of the appropriate formulaic expression in a given situation. The expressions [*min faḍlika*]/ [*law samahta*] and [*turidu an*] meaning 'please' and 'would you like' respectively can often be used interchangeably but in most cases they are governed by the situation in which they occur.
- **Religious formulaic expressions:** These are expressions which have strong religious connotation but gradually became associated and interchangeable with other more conventional meanings such as 'thank-you' (as with *baaraka llahu fiika*), 'exclamation' (as with *yaa allaah*) and 'hopefully' (as with *insha'a allaah*).

### *Teaching of Diglossic Languages*

The investigation was conducted in such a way that learners from both groups were introduced to the same structure or communicative pattern in the two different approaches (Standard as

opposed to integrated). Then at the end of the 30-minute session, both groups were given completion tasks. The main characteristics of both approaches are highlighted in the following table:

#### 1. *Communicative patterns*

**Table 4: Polite requests**

	Correct	Incorrect	Totals
Standard	60 (62.46)	10 (7.54)	70
Integrated	56 (53.54)	4 (6.46)	60
Totals	116	14	130

Degree of Freedom (df) = 1; Value of X<sup>2</sup> = 1.239  
Probability (P) = 0.2656; Significance = non significant (n.s.)

#### Results And Discussion

The following is a statistical report on the results obtained using the statistical procedure Chi-Square (X<sup>2</sup>) to determine the significance of the difference between the performance of the two groups in communicative and grammatical tasks.

The tables reported below are divided in three main sections: (1) the first section reports

on communicative patterns, namely the use of polite requests and certain 'religious-cultural' formulaic expressions; (2) the second reports the learners' performance in question nouns and negation particles; (3) and the third looks at the learners' performance in a number of grammatical structures namely demonstratives, adverbs of degree and relative pronouns.

**Table 5: Religious formulaic expressions**

	Correct	Incorrect	Totals
Standard	45 (41.25)	4 (3.75)	49
Integrated	30 (29.75)	5 (5.25)	35
Totals	75	9	84

Degree of Freedom (df) = 1; Value of X<sup>2</sup> = 0.288  
Probability (P) = 0.5915; Significance = n.s.

Before looking at the statistical analysis of the data, let us first consider some illustrative examples:

(1) *fatuurat l-hisaab law samaht*

bill the account if you please

'The bill, please.'

(2) *shukran wa baraka allahu fiika*

thank-you and bless God you

'Thank-you and may God bless you.'

Examples (1) and (2) for polite requests and religious expressions respectively, are produced by students exposed to the integrated approach and illustrate the fact that having L2 input in two forms does not hinder learning of communicative structures in the target language. Data produced by learners in the Standard-only approach, as shown in the above tables, is not significantly better than that produced by learners in the integrated approach.

The statistical results for the effect of adopting an integrated approach in the teaching of communicative patterns show that learners in the Standard-approach group did not perform significantly better than those learners exposed to the integrated approach. The value of  $X^2$  reported for both polite requests and religious formulaic expressions is (1.952) and (0.8) respectively with a probability level of (0.2656) and (0.5915) respectively well above the significance border

of (0.05), which means the difference between the groups statistically non-significant.

The first obvious conclusion from tables 4 and 5 is that learners who are exposed to both the Standard variety as well as the local variety are not hindered in any significant way in the learning of communicative patterns. This is, in fact, very logical since communicative patterns and formulaic expressions are more intrinsically entrenched in the various locally spoken dialects that in the Standard language.

Examples (3) and (4) below produced by students exposed to the integrated approach for question nouns and nominal negation particles respectively, clearly demonstrate that learners in this group were able to use question nouns and nominal negation particles appropriately. On the contrary, the data they produced, as illustrated in tables 6, and 8, is significantly better than that

Teaching of Diglossic Languages

2. Question nouns and negations particles

Table 6: Question nouns

	Correct	Incorrect	Totals
Standard	27 (33.25)	22 (15.75)	49
Integrated	30 (23.75)	5 (11.25)	35
Totals	57	27	84

Degree of Freedom (df) = 1; Value of X<sup>2</sup> = 7.425  
Probability (P) = 0.0064; Significance = significant

Table 7: Verbal negation particles\*

	Correct	Incorrect	Totals
Standard	91 (83.09)	24 (31.91)	115
Integrated	47 (54.91)	29 (21.09)	76
Totals	138	53	191

Degree of Freedom (df) = 1; Value of X<sup>2</sup> = 5.987  
Probability (P) = 0.0144; Significance = significant

Table 8: Nominal negation particles

	Correct	Incorrect	Totals
Standard	73 (80.23)	18 (10.77)	91
Integrated	76 (68.77)	2 (9.23)	78
Totals	149	20	169

Degree of Freedom (df) = 1; Value of X<sup>2</sup> = 10.338  
Probability (P) = 0.0013; Significance = significant

3. <i>Min faḍlika,</i>	<i>Ayna</i>	<i>Maḥṭati</i>	<i>l-qīṭaar</i>
Please	where	station	the train

'Where is the train station, please?'

4. 'ab-i:	<i>laysa</i>	@indahu haasib	<i>ai bi: im</i>
father my	not.3M.S	has computer	IBM

'My father does not have an IBM computer.'

5. <i>sami wa saaly</i>	<i>lan yuridaani</i>	<i>dh-dhahaaba</i>	<i>ila dimashq</i>
Sami and Sally	will not want	to go	to Damascus

'Sami and Sally do not want to go to Damascus.'

produced by learners in the Standard approach.

On the other hand, it is interesting to note here that learners in the Standard approach performed significantly better in the verbal negation particles than those in the integrated approach as shown in table 7 above. Sentence (5) above is an example of the type errors learners in the integrated approach produced. In this particular example '*lan*' (*will not*) was used incorrectly instead of '*laa*' (*do not*). One possible explanation to this is the fact that verbal negation in dialects is equally as complex, if not more complex, than verbal negation in the Standard language. The three negation words /*laa*/, /*lan*/ and /*lam*/ used in the Standard are replaced by the more complex [*maa huu/hii*], [*maa raah*] and [*maa Verb-aash*] respectively in the dialect.

The statistical results for questions words and negation particles are somehow conflicting. Table 6 reports statistics concerning the learners' performance in tasks requiring the use of question words

to form interrogative statements. Interestingly, the learners taught in the integrated approach performed significantly better ( $p = 0.0064$ ) than those taught in the Standard approach. This might be the result of the fact that question words in the Standard language are more variant than in the dialects, thus requiring more time and practice.

Table 8 regarding the use of nominal negation particles reports results along these line with learners from the experimental group (integrated approach) significantly ( $p = 0.0013$ ) outperforming learners from the Standard approach. This, again, highlights the fact that using the dialect to introduce certain grammatical structures such as question words and nominal negation particles facilitates learning rather than hinders it because of the lower degree of markedness and variation in the grammar of the local variety. This finding is in line with previous observations in SLA research that the order of learning of a particular language can be determined, and, in many cases predicted, on the

Teaching of Diglossic Languages

basis of the degree of linguistic complexity of the structures of the target language.

Surprisingly, Table 7 regarding the learners' performance in tasks related to verbal negation particles shows a significant

difference ( $p = 0.0144$ ) in favour of learners exposed to the Standard approach. This is the only instance in this study where learners taught in the Standard approach seem to outperform quite significantly learners taught in the integrated approach.

3. Other grammatical structures

Table 9: Relative Pronouns

	Correct	Incorrect	Totals
Standard	97 (96.25)	15 (15.75)	112
Integrated	68 (68.75)	12 (11.25)	80
Totals	165	27	192

Degree of Freedom (df) = 1; Value of  $X^2 = 0.011$   
Probability (P) = 0.9162; Significance = n.s.

Table 10: Demonstratives

	Correct	Incorrect	Totals
Standard	43 (44.18)	35 (33.82)	78
Integrated	38 (36.82)	27 (28.18)	65
Totals	81	62	143

Degree of Freedom (df) = 1; Value of  $X^2 = 0.53$   
Probability (P) = 0.8173; Significance = n.s.

Table 11: Adverbs of Degree

	Correct	Incorrect	Totals
Standard	71 (66.2)	22 (26.8)	93
Integrated	97 (101.8)	46 (41.2)	143
Totals	168	68	236

Degree of Freedom (df) = 1; Value of  $X^2 = 1.597$   
Probability (P) = 0.2063; Significance = n.s.

6. <i>al-waladu</i>	<i>lladhi</i>	<i>yajlisu</i>	<i>@ala</i>	<i>t-tawilati</i>	<i>huwa</i>	<i>akh-i</i>
the boy	who	sits	on	the table	he	brother my

(S,M)

"The boy who is sitting on the table is my brother"



7. <i>hadha</i>	<i>farid</i>	<i>wa hadhihi rima.</i>
This.S,M	Farid	and this.S,F Rima

"This is Farid and this is Rima."

8. <i>suhair tuhibu l-mawza kathiran lakinn-</i>	<i>ha tuhibu l- burtuqala qlilan</i>
Suhair like (N) the bananas a lot but she	like (N) the oranges a little

"Suhair like bananas a lot but she likes oranges a little."

Tables 9, 10 and 11 concerning the learners' performance in tasks involving relative pronouns, demonstrative articles and adverbs of degree respectively, all show a non-significant difference between learners from both groups. This is, of course, a desirable result for learners in the integrated approach since they are learning these structures in both varieties at the same time without being hindered. Learners in this group, as illustrated in examples 6, 7, and 8 above, were able to use the relative pronouns, demonstrative articles and adverbs of degree correctly and perform as well as learners taught in the Standard approach.

The statistical results reported above clearly support the main hypothesis which states that learners exposed to the integrated approach will not be hindered in the learning of the grammatical and communicative structures. In most cases learners taught in the integrated approach were still able to perform at least as well as those in the control group. This is an evidence that learners do, in fact,

utilise the shared linguistic features between V1 and V2 and are, therefore, able to relate linguistic items and structures from one variety to the other.

#### Conclusion

The aim of this investigation was to study the pedagogic effects of diglossia on foreign language learners of Arabic. It was anticipated that language learning would develop at a similar, if not a faster and more efficient pace, than in the Standard approach. It was demonstrated that the integrated approach adopted in this study is a way of reconciling the split in the linguistic skills between the two varieties, and therefore, lead to achieving a more balanced competence. These objectives were facilitated by the fact that V1 and V2 do, in fact, share a great deal of linguistic features which are essential to communication.

Overall, the findings reject the claim that integrating the two varieties may hinder learning. On the contrary, the only plausible and feasible way to deal with the

pedagogic problems associated with diglossic languages is to reconstruct a classroom context which mirrors the realities of the way Arabic is acquired as a native language. The positive results obtained with regards to communicative patterns are attributed to the fact that such formulaic expressions are indeed more authentic in the dialect (V2) and, therefore, are easily acquired and produced in their Colloquial form as opposed to using them in the non-authentic Standard form. Grammatical structures, on the other hand, seem to be facilitated by the fact that the Standard variety does exhibit more marking than the spoken variety which has lost, diachronically, a great deal of grammatical marking namely case marking, indefinite marking and word order flexibility. In addition, the number of negation words in the dialect is far more reduced (one only) than that in the Standard (three negation words used in three tenses).

All of these features contributed to the learners' overall positive response to discourse-switching in the classroom despite the limited time and scope of this study. Of course, there are a number of parameters that need to be adjusted to suit the needs of second language learners such as the pace and the degree of integration, but this is no more than simply adjusting parameters.

#### Notes

1. IFS refers to Initialisation, Finalisation Strategy; COS refers to Canonical Order Strategy, while SCS stands for Subordinate Clause Strategy. The [+] sign indicates that the learner's language is constrained by these strategies (see Pienemann 1994 for further elaboration).
2. This translation is provided by al-Buanain (1987:205).
3. Karl Krumbacher, (1902), 'Das Problem der Modernen Griechischen Schriftsprache'.
4. Figures in the left hand side of cells represent the observed value of tallied answers. Figures in brackets represent the expected number of observations in the normal circumstances. This figure is generated by the statistical procedure Chi-Square X2.

#### References:

- al-Buanain, H.A.F. (1987), 'Second Language Acquisition of Arabic: The Development of Negation and Question', Qatar, Dar al-thakafa.
- al-Hamad, F. (1983), 'Problems in Teaching Arabic to Foreigners', in *Proceedings of the Second Annual Linguistics Conference*, J. Owens and I. Abou-Salem (eds), 81-100. Irbid, Jordan, Yarmouk University.

- Andersen, R.W. (1991), 'Developmental Sequences: The Emergence of Aspect Marking in Second Language Acquisition', In T. Huebner and C. Ferguson (eds.), *Cross-Currents in Second Language Acquisition and Linguistics Theories*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins.
- Bakalla, M.H. (ed), *Proceedings of the First International Symposium on the Teaching of Arabic to Non-Arabic* Riyadh, University of Riyadh, KSA.
- Bybee, L.J. (1991), *Morphology: A Study of the Relation between Meaning and Form*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins.
- Campbell, S. (1986), 'The Modern Arabic Course — A Challenge', *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24 (2): 145-56.
- Campbell, S. (1994), 'The National Profile of Arabic: Where to Now?', *Journal of Arabic, Islamic & Middle-Eastern Studies*, 1 (2): 1-8.
- Ellis, R. (1994), *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Ferguson, C. (1959), 'Diglossia', *Word*, 15: 325-40.
- Ferguson, C. (1963), 'Problems in Teaching Languages with Diglossia'. In *Language Structure and Language Use*, Anwar Dil (ed.), Stanford University Press. Stanford, 71-86.
- Givón, T. (1983), 'Topic Continuity in Discourse: An Introduction', in T. Givón (ed.), *Topic Continuity in Discourse: A Quantitative cross-language Study*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Haddad, S. (1985), 'The Teaching of Oral Skills: A New Approach'. *al-Arabiyya* 18, (1 & 2): 15-21.
- Ibn Khaldoun, A.R. (1384), 'The Introduction', in al-Buanain (1987), *Second Language Acquisition of Arabic: The Development of Negation and Question*, Qatar, Dar al-thakafa.
- Ibrahim, M. (1984), 'On the Notion of 'Standard' and 'Prestigious' in Arabic Sociolinguistics', in I. Abou-Salem and J. Owens (eds.), *Proceedings of the Second Annual Linguistics Conference*, Irbid, Jordan, Yarmouk University.
- Krumbacher, K. (1902), *Das Problem der Modernen Griechischen Schrift-sprache*, Munchen.

### Teaching of Diglossic Languages

- Lampe, G. (1985), 'The teaching of Oral Skills in Arabic'. *al-Arabiyya*, 18, (1 & 2), 11-14.
- Mansoor, M. (1960), 'Arabic, what and when to teach', in R. Harrel (ed.), *Report of the 10th Annual Round Table Meeting on Linguistics And Language Studies*, Washington, Georgetown University Press, 83-96.
- Neel, A.F. (1980), 'Fundamentals of Arabic Grammar for Non-Arabic Speakers', in M. H. Bakalla (ed.), *Proceedings of the First International Symposium on the Teaching of Arabic to Non-Arabic*, Riyadh, University of Riyadh, KSA.
- Parkinson, D. (1985), 'Proficiency to Do What? Developing Oral Proficiency in the Student of Modern Standard Arabic', *al-Arabiyya* 18 (1 & 2): 11-14.
- Pienemann, M. (1994), *Towards a Theory of Processability in Second Language Acquisition*, The Australian National University, Canberra.
- Sotiropoulos, D. (1977), 'Diglossia and the National Language Question in Modern Greece', *Linguistics* 197: 5-31.
- Younes, M. (1990), 'An Integrated Approach to Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language', *al-Arabiyya* 23: 105-22.

### Appendix A

The following are samples of the tasks given to both groups to complete at the end of each session. It should be noted that the tasks were written in the Arabic language with no English translation provided:

#### 1. Grammatical structures

1.1. Question words: These include 'man' (who), 'mata' (when), 'madha/maa' (what), 'kam' (how many/how much) and 'ayya' (which).

Fill in the gaps using one of the following interrogative pronouns without changing its form (each pronoun ought to be used once).

— yudarrisu l-lughat- al-@arabiyyt-a fi hadhihi l-jami @at-i  
teach.3M.S the-language-Acc the-Arabic-Acc in this.F the-university-Gen

'— teaches the Arabic language in this university?'

1.2. Negation words for verbs: these include 'laa' for present tense, 'lam' for past tense and 'lan' for future tense.

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate negation particle: laa, lam, lan

anaa — adhab-u ilaa al-sinamaa kulla yawm.  
 I go-1S to the-cinema every day  
 'I —go to the cinema every day.'

1.3. Negation for adjectival phrases: These include: 'laysa' (he -not), 'laysat' (she -not), 'laysuu' (they - masc. not), 'lasna' (we- not) with .

Fill in the gaps with one of the above negative particles.

leila — fi al-jami@at-i hadha alsabaah.  
 Leila in the-university-Gen this morning.  
 'Leila is —at the university this morning.'

1.4. Relative pronouns: These include: 'alladhi' (mac. sing, who/which/that), 'allti' (fem. sing., who/which/that), 'lladhi:na' (they, masc. who), 'llawati' (they, fem. who)

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate relative pronoun: 'alladhi, allati, alldhi:na, allawati'.

Shakar-a al-ustadh-u at-ṭalibat-a — qaddam-at @ard-an  
 Thank-3MS the-teacher- the-student-Acc present- mutamayyiz-an.  
 Nom 3FS presentation-Acc  
 outstanding-Acc

'The teacher thanked the student ——— gave an outstanding presentation.'

Dhahaba attalibu ila al-maktabati wa-ishtara al-qissata ... nashraha Najib Mahfoudh.  
 muakharan.

1.5. Demonstrative articles: 'hadha' (this/masc), 'hadhihi' (this/fem), 'dhalika' (that/masc), 'tilka' (that/fem), 'ha'ula'i' (these) and 'ula'ika' (those).

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate demonstrative pronoun. 'hada', 'hadhihi', 'dhalika', 'tilka', 'ha'ula'i' and 'ula'ika'.

man hum at-ṭṭullab-u — yaqif-una hunaka.  
 Who are the- students-Nom stand-3M.PL there  
 'Who are the students — standing over there?'

Adverbs of Degree: these include 'kadhiran' (a lot), 'qaliLan', a little/a few 'jiddan' very and 'jayidan' well.

## Teaching of Diglossic Languages

<i>anaa laa 'uḥibb-u</i>	<i>l-qahwat-a</i>	<i>l-'arabiyya-ta —.</i>
I not like-1S	the-coffee-Acc	the-Arabia-Acc
'I do not like the Arabic coffee —.'		

### Appendix B

#### 2. Communicative Patterns

The following are samples of the tasks given to both groups to complete at the end of each session:.

2.1. Polite requests: The expressions '*min fadlka*' / '*law samahta*' (please), '*turidu an*' would you like.

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate polite expression without changing its form (each form can be used twice).

*Madha* '\_\_\_\_\_ *ta'kul-a*  
What eat.2MS-SUBJ  
'What do you \_\_\_\_\_ eat?'

2.2. Religious Formulaic Expressions: '*baaraka llahu fiika*' (thank you), '*yaa allaah*' (exclamation), '*insha'a allaah*' (hopefully).

Fill in the gaps using one of the following expressions without changing its form:

'\_\_\_\_\_ *'innahu ba@iid-un* *jidan*  
*it-MS far-Nom* *very*  
'\_\_\_\_\_ It is very far.'

### Appendix C

#### Key to phonetic symbols

@ = a voiced pharyngeal fricative

' = glottal stop

ṭ = voiceless alveolar stop.

dh = a velarised voiced interdental fricative

ħ = a voiceless pharyngeal fricative.

q = a voiceless uvular stop.

long vowels are indicated by double symbols.