

Spoken Arabic



Why do the Indian Subcontinent students have a barrier in fluently vocalising the Arabic Language?

Mahfuj Ahmed

Arabic in traditional Islamic institutions



In traditional Islamic institutions, widely known as Madrasah, a student spends many years learning Arabic from a grammar perspective.

They study several books on Sarf (morphology), Nahw (syntax), Balagha (rhetoric) and Arabic poetry.

The goal for them to study is to be able to understand the religious texts, i.e. the Holy Quran, Hadith and Islamic Fiqh etc. Hence, they master the classical Arabic language to accomplish this goal.

THEIR SUCCESS



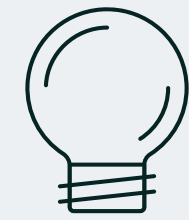
Ilmi (academic) works of their graduates

Many Arabic commentaries have been compiled by the Sub-Continent Ulama. These works are well circulated and appreciated by scholars all over the world.



Publications made throughout the academic year.

Such as monthly Arabic Magazines, annual Magazines etc.



Produced great scholars actively involved in the language

Their speech and writing in Arabic were admired by the native Arabic speakers. This list includes Shaykh Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Shaykh Nur Alam Khalil al-Amini (Darul Uloom Deoband, India), Shaykh Sultan Zawq (Chittagong, Bangladesh), Shaykh Shahidullah Fadhl al-Bari (Dhaka, Bangladesh) and many others.

When the graduates of these Madrasahs go to Arab countries for further studies they do very well and that is because they are already well grounded in the Arabic language. Therefore, some of them, after completing their studies, work in different sections of the religious and nonreligious environments.

The Reality

Students are still unable to speak fluently

Despite all these achievements, it is also the reality that many students of these Madrasas are not fluent in speaking the Arabic language. If one considers the main objective of teaching Arabic in these madrasas then they would not find it as a shortage. The reason is that the main focus was to give students the ability to read and understand ancient Arabic (religious) texts and this is what is achieved. However, considering the concept of “Global Village” it would be great if the students were also able to speak in Arabic fluently.

The Reasons

- Arabic is taught as a classical language to understand the Qur'an, Sunnah, and Academic texts; Therefore, they do not focus on creating the skill of speaking confidently.
- Many institutions used to teach Arabic using a non-Arabic medium. Some even teach Arabic via a third language.
- Although the Indian Subcontinent students master the theoretical skill of the Arabic Language, they lack practice and application of these rules. As a result, they have a limited vocabulary and are unaware of modern Arabic. It is also caused by the environment. If these students had an Arabic environment, then they would have mastered the speaking skill as well.
- Some students excuse themselves saying that learning the Arabic language speaking skill, in many cases, is not helpful. Their argument is that the Arab countries have a lot of different dialects. This argument, however, is not a strong one.

A New Change



As times have changed and communications between Arabs and Non-Arabs have increased, the skill of speaking is required more than ever. Hence, the Madrasahs pay more attention to developing their students' speaking skills as well. Many institutions have taken various measures and plans to improve that. They brought some changes in their syllabus and teaching methods. Therefore, the graduates of these Madrasahs are more capable of expressing themselves in spoken Arabic.

The importance of this skill

Shaykh Dr Muhammad Hamidullah said that Arabic is the mother tongue for every muslim across the globe. He quoted this verse from the Holy Qur'an:

وأزواجه أمهاتهم

And his wives are their mothers.
(Surah al-Ahzab: 6)

Shaykh Muhammad Badr Alam Mirati would inspire his students to learn and speak in Arabic saying:

التكلم بالعربية عبادة

Speaking in Arabic is an act of
worship

Muhi Uddin Al-Hilli, beautiful and rightly, said:

بقدر لغات المرء يكثر نفعه وتلك له عند الملمات أعوان

فبادر إلى حفظ اللغات مسارعا فكل لسان في الحقيقة إنسان

"The benefits derivable by an individual are proportional to the number of languages he speaks; these (languages) will be of immense assistance to him in times of difficulty. You should, therefore, gear up to learn as many languages as possible; since every language acquired by man makes another distinct personality"

Some Suggestion



Each institution should have lessons dedicated to speaking Arabic and some lessons should be conducted in Arabic



In higher education, in Madrasah settings, all the official documents and announcements should be made in Arabic.

CONCLUSION

Email: mahfujahmed783@gmail.com