A Report about the Fourth Arabic Conference for Translation

Language and Translation in the Era of Technology of Information and Communication*

The Arab Organization for Translation held its fourth conference entitled “Language and Translation in the Era of Technology of information and Communication” in Muscat-Oman, which lasted from 1/10/2012 to 3/10/2012 as the Organization used to hold a conference specifically about language and translation every couple of years. But this conference was different from the preceding conference in both its motto and contributing studies, as it tried to relate the technology of information and communication to translation and language. That was because the aim was to establish an infra-structure which will enable the future translator to benefit from what is available of modern technology and follow its development, particularly, as it began to impact directly and indirectly publication and paper book, and this was due to the fact that the World has witnessed during the last two decades a multitude of electronic instruments which can carry whole books. Moreover, the digital world and its instruments began to constitute an enormous challenge to the nation and its intellectuals, specifically in education and its aspects. There is no doubt that this reality will challenge the future generations which will necessarily be living within what will be available of modern technology.

* Translated from Arabic by Dr. Haydar Haj-Ismail.
In the light of these facts and their significance the viewer of this conference focused on finding the relation between the language and translation and the technology of communication and their interactions. So the sessions of the conference consisted of the following axes:

**The First Axis:** The Technology of Information and Communication: A General Approach.

**The Second Axis:** Language and the Technology of Information and Communication.

**The Third Axis:** Translation and the Technology of Information and Communication.

**The Fourth Axis:** Economics and the Industry of Translation.

Because of the specialization involved in those well-defined axes and their mutual relations at certain aspects, the studies in every axis did have its special flavor and future implications which will inevitably contribute to the development of translation and finding a synthesis which will enable the translator and the reader equally to benefit from that.

The studies of the first axis were as follows:

- **The First Axis: The Technology of Information and Communication: A General Approach**

  **The Fist Study:** The technology of information and communication in its relations with language and translation. Presented by Dr. Mohammad Debs, Commented on by Dr. Joseph Chraim.

  **The Second Study:** Electronic publishing and the future of the paper book. Presented by Dr. Haitham Alnahi, Commented on by Dr. Adnan Aidan.

  **The Third Study:** Lexicons and encyclopedias in the era of the technology of information. Presented by Dr. Fayiz Suyyagh, Commented on by Dr. Georges Abdul Massih.

- **The Second Axis: Language and the Technology of Information and Communication**

  **The Fourth Study:** The discourse of the youth and the interconnection of languages: the youth and the language of the era as a model. Presented by Dr. Mohamad Nader Srage, Commented on by Dr. Maurice Abou Nader.
The Fifth Study: The technology of information and communication in communication in contemporary Arabic language and its role in developing education. Presented by Dr. Hayssam Kotob, Commented on by Dr. Zeinab Jaber.

The Sixth Study: Toward a fundamental infra-structure of the Arabic linguistic content in the era of the technology of information. Presented by Dr. Adnan Aidan, Commented on by Dr. Haitham Alnahi.

- The Third Axis: Translation and the Technology of Information and Communication

The Seventh Study: The Arabic lexicon and its scientific methodology and foundation. Presented by Dr. Abdelghani Abou El Aazme, Commented on by Dr. Bassam El Barake.

The Eighth Study: Modern technology at the service of translation. Presented by Dr. Nelson Verastigui, Commented on by Dr. Mohammad Debs.

The Ninth Study: Mechanical translation in the Arabic experience: possibilities and limitations. Presented by Dr. Mahmoud Ismaiel Saleh, Commented on by Dr. Michel Zakaria.

- The Fourth Axis: Economics and the Industry of Translation

The Tenth Study: The changes of linguistic studies in the society of information. Presented by Dr. Mohamad AlMrayati, Commented on by Dr. Hassan EL Charif.

The Eleventh Study: The digital library and its challenges in the Arabic world. Presented by Dr. Saleh Abu Osba, Commented on by Dr. Afaf Bataineh.

The Twelfth Study: The economics of globalization and translation. Presented by Dr. Said Faiq, Commented on by Dr. Nadeen Nasrallah.
The Concluding Statement:

Under the sponsorship if his Excellency Dr. Abdullah Bin Nasser Al Harasy, the Arab Organization for Translation held its fourth conference entitled: Language in the Era of the Technology of Information and Communication, in cooperation with the Union of Arab Translators, Polyglot Institute, Oman Cultural Club, The Group of English language and Translation at the Sultan Qaboos University, and with a support from the Council of Scientific Research.

The conference started with a speech delivered by Sheikh Mohammed Al-Harthy, the president of the Polyglot Institute in which he welcomed and praised the presence of his Excellency Dr. Abdullah Bin Nasser Al Harasy. Besides, he valued the necessity of supporting translation and the language and their aims consisting in enriching the Arabic content. He pointed, in his speech, to the significance of cooperative efforts to benefit from language in the way of creating young elite to be employed in enriching the Arabic library, and creating work opportunities for those who are capable and specialized amongst them.

That speech was followed by another one delivered by Dr. Bassam El Barake, the Secretary of the Arab Translators Union, in which he defined the significance of the conference and the ambition of the union to keep industriously working until we catch up with the other nations via translating their sciences. Then he gave a summary about the activities of the Union and his pleasure in sharing in holding and the organization of conferences like this.

The last opening speech was delivered by the general director of the Arab Organization for Translation Dr. Haitham Alnahi in which he defined three stages of the Conference. The first stage emerged from his conscientious relation with Oman, its people and sons.

Dr. Alnahi showed the great care taken by the Omanians toward science, learning and culture, which he derived from his academic relations with many of the Omani professors whom he knew during his staying in UK.

The second stage involved his talk about the Arab Organization for Translation and its role in enriching Arabic culture and civilization through what was translated, what is being translated and what will be translated in the future comprising the best works in the World Culture, hoping that a permanent work will go on where in all sides concerned with translation and its goals will cooperate.
The Deeds of the Conference:

After the opening and introductory speeches and welcoming the respectful guests, the conference began its first session with the studies of the first axis entitled: “Technology of Information and Communication” in which the contributors talked about the technology of information and communication and its relation to language and translation. They showed the significance of technology, computerizing the language and the interest in its spreading and interaction.

The second study was about: “Electronic Spreading and the Future of the Paper Book”. In which, the researcher discussed the magnitude of benefit that could be derived from the electronic spreading, enriching the Arabic content and using beneficially the achievements of the World in this domain.

The study entitled: “Lexicons, Encyclopedias in the Era of the Technology of Information” showed the importance of lexicons in establishing an infra-structure for translation and improving the Arabic language, and getting involved in its intelligible aspects and using the experiences of the other non-Arabic world, which erected its age and progress starting from translation and its impacts.

The Second Axis entitled: “Language and the Technology of Information and Communication” contained a discussion of the rhetoric of the young and relatedness of the languages: The youth and the language of the era as a model. The researcher aimed at modernizing the language in proportion to the technical and technological development which is loved immensely by today’s youth. Whereas the study entitled: “The Technology of Information and Communication in Contemporary Arabic Language and Its Role in Developing Learning” dealt with the basics of programing and how to deal with it in a way that will make it significant and homogenous with what is there of technical progress which we are still behind.

This kind of talk was reinforced by the Third Study in the same Axis which was entitled: “Toward a Basic Infra-Structure of the Arabic Linguistic content in the Era of the Technicality of Information”. In which the researchers discussed the responsibility of those who attended the conference in structuring a content for putting the language together, classifying it, facilitating its understanding and teaching it according to its computerized form and benefiting from the achievements of modern technicalities which did strengthen the foreign scientific languages which used the same methodology.
In the second day of the conference the Third Axis began, entitled: “Translation and the technology of Information and Communication”. It dealt with “the Arabic lexicons, its methodology and scientific bases” and how to deal with this side according to the linguistic formulations in order to enrich translation, develop the translator and the language used in translation. The study entitled “Modern Technology in the Service of Translation” discussed what could be the benefits from facilitating the business of translation and making it smooth and productive in proportion to the reality of the nation and its ambitions. The study entitled: “Mechanical Translation in the Arabic Experience: the possibilities and limitations” dealt with the work of the Arabic elite and its contribution in this field, calling ultimately, for the consideration of translation and its development because it is a genuine contributor to what we aim at as to the merge of knowledge, information and translation.

The Fourth Axis entitled: “Economics and the Industry of Translation” comprised studies which dealt with three significant aspects, namely, translation, communication and its social economics. The first study entitled: “The Changes of the industry of language within the society of information” highlighted the importance of language, its industry and the ways of benefiting from it socially, which endows it a developing an economical value and creating a society equipped with learning, culture and novel thinking.

The second study in the same Axis entitled: “Library Digital Translation and its Challenges in the Arabic Homeland” did realize the important part relating to the first study, as it dealt with the way to utilize what the first study produces office-wise and in a way comparable with the reality of technology in the Arabic homeland. The last study entitled: “The Economic of Globalization and Translation” was a complementary to the earlier studies. It involved a view that emphasized the need of interaction between the social reality, technical progress and the need of the market which could be considered scientific, cultural and economic.

**Recommendations:**

The Conference, constitution-wise, was like a festival aiming at linking the reality of modernity represented by communication and technology, and the present reality of the nation which is still behind the other nations in this domain. Again, it linked modern technicalities with translation being an art, profession and a civilized support that can enrich the
culture and encourage a generation familiar with what is going around in terms of developments, progress and technicalities. Accordingly, and hinging on those facts, the Conference recommended the following:

**First:** Supporting The Arab Organization for Translation for the purpose of establishing a bank of terms with many languages and in different specializations in coordination with the other concerned Arabic institutions such as King Abdul-Aziz City for Science and Technology, The Office of Coordinating Arabization in Rabat, The Institute of Studies and Researches for Arabization, Councils of Arabic language and different Arabic associations, and extending this effort in proportion to what The Arab Organization for Translation did provide, namely, a project that contains more than 95,000 terms as an initial product.

**Second:** Supporting the Association of Arab Translators and strengthening its material and spiritual capabilities so that it can play a big role in the way of propagating translation and enabling the academic and educational institutions to use it, in a way that will enable it to achieve its goals consisting in strengthening the position of the Arabic translator in contemporary culture, developing his function and improving his fulfillments.

**Third:** Extending the formation of records that take care of the Arabic texts and are available, and adopt the projects which was presented by the King Abdul-Aziz City for Science and Technology, and which was financed by the company ATA and realized by it to be a basis for large Arabic Record to be shared by different interested parties like the Arab Organization for Translation.

**Fourth:** Working toward classifying the sources of speech, establishing contexts whereby their use will be according to a genuine Arabic content in which the computerization of language, introducing its statements and pursuing the path of the history of the word, will be the basis of the project.

**Fifth:** Concentrating on the computerization of the language, the Arabic mechanically electronic surveying, supporting the effort made by the parties working in the domain in order to be a basis for developing the programs of developing the programs of the mechanization of translation and to get involved in using them, for the purpose of producing a condensed translation
for scientific books that are basic, thoughtful and humanitarian, which, today, might not be available to the Arabic reader.

**Sixth:** Calling for the institution of Arabic companies concerned with electronic spreading and activating the electronic book, particularly, the translated one so that it will be available to the coming generations.

**Seventh:** Organizing actual training sessions for those who wish amongst the young professional translators, specifically those who are members in the Association of Arab Translators so that they can contribute, in the future, in improving the mechanical translation. Again, the conferees recommended the necessity of training the students of translation at the Arabic universities on how to use the technicalities of the computer and to make it a basic course including the mechanical translation after defining how to use its tools. This mission was assigned to the Arab Organization for Translation. The Association of Arab Translators, The King Abdul-Aziz City for Science and Technology and the Arabic companies to work for establishing workshops in the next conferences aiming at explaining the use of the computer in translation and editing the translated texts in a mechanical way. All this is because those institutions do have a great experience, tangible effort and valuable results during their scientific journeys.

**Eighth:** Working toward using electronic spreading and activating it within the societies and the cultural and educational institutions, and make available to the interested and the ambitious so that they can catch up with the modern technicalities and technology.

**Ninth:** The conferees recommended that the Arab governments work toward transcending their differences relating to the scientific terms and recommended cooperation among the institutions of the states in order to produce a work compatible with the need to affect that. Furthermore, they emphasized the necessity of communicating with the national institutions and urge them to effect the recommendations.

**Tenth:** Calling the Arabic youth to employ the modern technicalities, and benefiting from them in developing translation in the Arabic World.

**Eleventh:** Working toward finding a formula for integrating the common efforts in different Arabic institutions which are interested in translation and
language, providing electronic lexicons, increasing communications with the departments of foreign languages and the departments of translation and cooperate with them in constructing plans for future work in this respect.

**Twelfth:** Calling the governments and the private sector to increase their interests in language, its studies and researches and with the industry of language because of its increasing social, cultural and political roles.

**Thirteenth:** Calling for prohibiting the entrance of the computers and the communication apparatuses which do not contain Arabic letters according to the criteria of our states and our research and academic institutions.

**Fourteenth:** Working toward reconsidering the project of the historical lexicon and finding ways for reworking in it seriously with results that are defined temporarily.

**Fifteenth:** Executing the laws and procedures which aim at enjoining piracy and being committed to the treaties and agreements relating to the rights of literary and intellectual property, internationally and locally together with insistence on issuing laws relating to the intellectual property in all the Arabic countries, if they are not there.

**Sixteenth:** Calling the private sector to establish an enduring company for the Arabic lexicon which possesses the possibility of research, development and technicality.