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## **LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

One's language strongly participates in forming one's communication patterns. People usually have distinct communication patterns because their native languages are different. This article attempts to clarify the role of languages in the construction of diverse communication methods.

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#### **Arabic Language and Information**

Almost each word in Arabic contains an interesting set of inherited information. For example, the Arabic word "Sadeek", i.e. friend, is linguistically derived from "Sadaka", i.e. "he said the truth and/or he was truthful". Therefore, according to Arabic language, your friend is that who tells you the truth. In this sense, the Arabic word "Sadeek" possesses an interesting inherited information, namely that a friend is that who says the truth. Another example is the Arabic word "Marifa", which means knowledge. But the word "Marifa" is linguistically derived from "Orf", which means tradition. Since "Marifa", i.e. knowledge, is linguistically derivable from "Orf", i.e. tradition, it follows that, according to Arabic language, knowledge resides in tradition. Here, the word "Marifa" implies the inherited information that knowledge exists in tradition, given that the word "knowledge" in Arabic is linguistically derivable from the word "tradition" in Arabic language.

The examples, which reveal that Arabic language is an inherited set of information, are almost endless due to the strong derivative process in Arabic. For instance, in Arabic language, "Ja-mi-aa", i.e. university, "Ja-mi-a", i.e. mosque, and "Moj-ta-ma-a", i.e. society, are linguistically derived from the verb "Ja-ma-aa", i.e. "he gathered". Hence, from the perspective of Arabic language, "Ja-mi-aa", i.e. university, is that which gathers students in order to study, "Ja-mi-a", i.e. mosque, is that which gathers people in order for them to pray, and "Moj-ta-ma-a", i.e. society, is that which gathers people to live together. All of this shows that these Arabic words have interesting inherited information, and that Arabic language provides definitions and analyses of many concepts. Another informative example is the Arabic word "Ta-wa-sol", i.e. communication. In Arabic, "Ta-wa-sol" is derived from "Wa-sa-la", i.e. "he connected". Therefore, from the viewpoint of Arabic language, communication is that mechanism which connects people with each other. This indicates that the Arabic word "Ta-wa-sol" contains the inherited information that communication is the process which connects people.

Another example of the fact that Arabic language is an inherited set of information is the following: in Arabic, the word "In-saan", i.e. human being, is derived from "Na-sa", i.e. "he forgot". Thus, according to Arabic language, a human being is that who forgets. Yet those who forget are those who think. Therefore, from the perspective of Arabic language, a human being is that who thinks. Here, the Arabic word "In-saan" possesses the inherited information that human beings are those who think and forget. All of this proves that Arabic language is a set of inherited information, such that almost each word in Arabic contains some interesting information due to the strong derivative process in Arabic language.



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**The Arab-Islamic Communication Patterns**

The fact that Arabic language is an inherited set of information is closely related to the basic Arab-Islamic communication patterns. Many scholars, such as Edward T. Hall and Joerg Schmitz, discussed the main properties of the Arab-Islamic culture and communication methods. For instance, the Arab-Islamic communication pattern is high-context, implicit, and deductive. The Arab-Islamic communication style is high-context in the sense that most Arabs and Muslims tend to assume that others know the background information. And hence, they don't tend to elaborate on the background information when they are communicating. The Arab-Islamic communication pattern is also high-context in the sense that most of the Arabs and Muslims rely on metaphors to express themselves, and only the context fixes the exact meanings of what they are expressing.

In addition, the Arab-Islamic communication style is implicit rather than explicit in the following important sense: most Arabs and Muslims tend to imply what they intend to convey instead of expressing themselves clearly and explicitly. In the Arab-Islamic culture, the hidden and implied messages are the basic messages which one aims to communicate. The Arab-Islamic communication is also deductive rather than inductive in the sense that most Arabs and Muslims express general statements when they communicate instead of providing details with regard to the topic under discussion. For instance, they might say: "The economy in Dubai is good". But they don't usually convey the details about what kind of economic markets they are talking about, and they don't usually mention examples in order to support their claim.

Now, Arabic language determines the Arab-Islamic communication patterns. Since almost each Arabic word contains very interesting inherited information, it follows that if someone is using Arabic language to communicate with others, then one does not need to be explicit and elaborate on the information one wants to transmit. In other words, given that Arabic language is a huge set of inherited information, it follows that when we use Arabic to communicate, we are already transmitting a lot of information, implied in Arabic language itself, even without mentioning detailed information. And hence, there is no need to be explicit and elaborative. This is why the Arab-Islamic communication patterns are high-context, implicit and deductive, such that most Arabs and Muslims don't transmit maximum amount of explicit information when they communicate. All of this shows that Arabic language forms the Arab-Islamic communication patterns, and that when one's language possesses a huge amount of inherited information then one's communication patterns are high-context, implicit and deductive.

**English Language and Communication**

Some English words have inherited information, but these words are much fewer than Arabic words. This amounts to the fact that the inherited information in English language is less than the inherited information in Arabic. For instance, the two English words "community" and "communicate" are linguistically derivable from each other. This indicates that, according to English language, one's community is shaped by one's communication patterns, and vice versa. Here, English has interesting inherited information, namely that communities are formed by communication, and vice versa. Yet, in English language, the word "friend" does not have interesting inherited information in comparison to Arabic. As we have seen, in Arabic the word "Sadeek", i.e. friend, contains the inherited information that your friend is that who tells you the truth. In this example, the Arabic word "Sadeek" implies a specific moral code, in light of which, friends are and should be those who say the truth. But the English word "friend" lacks any significant inherited information in comparison to the Arabic word "Sadeek". Similarly, the English word "knowledge" has no inherited information, while the Arabic word "Marifa", i.e. knowledge, does. As we have seen, the word "Marifa" implies essential inherited information that knowledge resides in tradition. And this probably participated in leading the Arab-Islamic culture to be traditional. Yet the English word "knowledge" lacks any essential inherited information enabling it to shape the English-speaking cultures.



Since only few words in English have interesting inherited information in comparison to some other languages such as Arabic, it follows that if one is communicating through English language, then one should elaborate on the information one wants to convey and be explicit in order to transmit meaningful and informative messages. In other words, since English language has less inherited information than some other languages, one should provide detailed information when one uses English to communicate. If one is using a language which contains a huge amount of inherited information, then one doesn't need to provide detailed information and be explicit, given that one's language already possesses a lot of interesting inherited information. But English language does not have a huge amount of inherited information. This is why if someone uses English to communicate, then one is forced to be explicit and elaborate on the information one wants to express. And thus, one's communication patterns will become low-context, explicit and inductive, exactly as they are in the English-speaking cultures. This shows that the fact that English language lacks a maximum amount of inherited information led the communication patterns in English-speaking cultures to be low-context, explicit and inductive, such that people in English-speaking cultures tend to present detailed examples and elaborate on the relevant information when they communicate. All of this proves that one's language determines one's communication methods.

In conclusion, language plays an essential role in forming our communication patterns and hence in shaping our cultures. People using different languages will probably use distinct communication styles, depending on whether one's language contains a maximum amount of inherited information or not. Languages are not only tools for communication, but they are also mechanisms for forming our minds and behaviors.

**References**

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**A Brief Bio of Author**

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