

## LANGUAGE PLANNING IN SAUDI ARABIA (1927–2019): ARABIC AND OTHER LANGUAGES

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**Abstract.** The aim of this study is to survey and explore the history and development of language policy and planning (LPP) in Saudi Arabia. It did not only probe into Arabic, which is the national language but also attempted to discover the relationship between Arabic and foreign languages functioning in the country, including English as manifested in policy documents. The method of data analysis was qualitative. It followed the historical-structural and the discourse-analytical approaches to language policy and planning research. The source of the data used in the analysis was a monograph of the collection of language policy and planning statements compiled by King Abdullah International Centre for Arabic Language (KAICAL). The major findings of the analysis of the texts in this document showed that the modern Saudi State has paid careful attention to language planning issues since its inception. Across the history of the Kingdom until today, language issues have been of central concern and various policy statements have attempted to cover status, corpus, acquisition, and prestige planning. The rationale has always been coping with economic, social, political, and educational changes. Cultural, religious, and national identity of the Kingdom is always present in most of language policy and planning and plays a key guiding role. The power relation between Arabic and foreign languages in Saudi Arabia national and international concerns was clearly addressed in the policy document. The intertextuality traced among the policy statements provided strong evidence of cohesion in the language planning situation in Saudi Arabia.

**Keywords:** language policy, language planning, status planning, corpus planning, acquisition planning, intertextuality, Arabic language, Saudi Arabia

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## 1. Introduction

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918–1920, Abdulaziz Ibn Saud became the Sultan of Hejaz in 1926, then Najd became under his control in 1927 and he ruled Hejaz, Najd and their dependencies. In 1927, the treaty of Jeddah was signed between the United Kingdom and Ibn Saud (Wynbrandt, 2010) and the sovereignty over what was then known as the Kingdom of Hejaz and Najd was recognized by the UK. The new kingdom later gained recognition from the then USSR, USA, and many other countries. It was at this critical stage in the history of the Kingdom that Saudi Arabia started framing its language policy and language planning (henceforth, LPP) at both national and international levels. The first language Act (14) of the new state was issued by the Shura Council (the Consultative Assembly of Saudi Arabia) on the 21st of September, 1927 stating that it is mandatory to ensure that Arabic is fully taken care of because it is the official language of Hejaz and Najd State particularly in internal trading transactions. Moreover, the Arabic standard style must be observed at the lexical and grammatical levels (Corpus of Arabic Language Acts in Saudi Arabia, 2015).

In September 1932, Abdulaziz Ibn Saud united his lands as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is a historic landmark in the history of the country. This tremendous move towards building new Saudi Arabia had a huge impact on the Kingdom's development in different aspects. Language planning measures were always present to keep abreast of all changes since 1932 until today. Most of language planning efforts have been directed toward preserving and consolidating the status of Arabic. Mahboob (2018) believes that “[Arabic] is considered to be a holy tongue and is the language of the intellectuals and the power holders and dominant groups in the region [Gulf Cooperation Council] (henceforth, GCC). As such, it is projected as a uniting power and the symbol of Arabness. The choice of Arabic as the language of the state is strongly tied to elements of nationalism (Bitar, 2011; Suleiman, 2003).”

The history of language policy and planning in Saudi Arabia has not been systematically studied in a way that explores and classifies the types of language planning activities under the established categories known in the literature, namely status, corpus, and acquisition planning. This study is an attempt to fill this gap and basically to track the changes in the language policy and planning across the history of the Kingdom given the fact that Saudi Arabia is a dynamic country and plays significant political, economic, and religious roles at regional and international levels.

## 2. Literature review

One of the much cited definitions of language planning in the literature is Cooper's (1989), which states that “language planning refers to deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes.” Similarly, May and Hornberger (2008)

define language planning as “deliberate efforts to affect the structure, function, and acquisition of languages.” Starting with these two definitions is justified considering the focus of the present study. These definitions clearly categorize all language planning efforts and activities under acquisition, corpus, and status planning. The first use of the status-planning/corpus-planning typology was by Heinz Kloss (1969), while acquisition-planning as a third type of language planning was introduced 20 years later (Cooper 1989). Status planning is mainly concerned with planning the functions of a specific language. According to Wright (2012), it refers to “...the process whereby state elites identify a language variety as the national language to be used in all the formal functions of state business.” Corpus planning as defined by Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) deals with “...those aspects of language planning which are primarily linguistic and hence internal to language. Some of these aspects related to language are: (a) orthographic innovation, including design, harmonization, change of script, and spelling reform; (b) pronunciation; (c) changes in language structure; (d) vocabulary expansion; (e) simplification of registers; (f) style; and (g) the preparation of language material.” This type of language planning plays a significant role in state and nation-building. Wright (2012) argues, “Corpus planning became a conscious activity and part of the growing desire to achieve and maintain linguistic cohesion within the state.” These efforts are usually controlled and promoted by language academy institutions. The last major type relevant to this study is acquisition planning which plays the role of improving language proficiency as well as creating new speakers, usually through teaching (Sallabank 2012).

The language map of Saudi Arabia comprises not only Arabic and its regional varieties, but also Mehri, a south Arabian language and many other languages spoken by expatriates from the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, etc. to serve language needs within their social circles.

Very few studies have discussed language policy and planning in Saudi Arabia and the majority of them deal with issues of English language in education policy (Faruk, 2013; Payne and Almansour, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2017; Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi, 2017; Elyas and Badawood, 2016). Arabic as the national and official language has not received enough research attention even though a considerable trajectory of policy texts have existed and have always accompanied and responded to many changes that have taken place throughout the modern history of Saudi Arabia. Payne and Almansour (2014) argue that “Language planning in Saudi Arabia has been developed around maintaining Arabic culture and language.” They also claim that “The introduction of any other language could be seen as an introduction to another religion and consequently a threat to Islam and the status of Arabic in the country.” This claim is not confirmed in any of the policy statements traced from 1927 to 2019, an argument that will be discussed further in this article. This study will also attempt to respond to Payne and Almansour’s argument that “Any attempt to plan to introduce other languages, or indeed to modernize Arabic, could be seen as a threat to Arabic and thus access to the Qur’an.” At least, this is not the state’s position and many language policy acts unequivocally regulate the relationship between Arabic and other languages in different domains of use. Marzouq’s study

(2017) raised the concern about Mehri language shift in Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman, and suggested a plan to revitalize and rescue this endangered language from 'disuse'. Alseqair (2017) studied the attitude of Mehri students in the primary and intermediate schools towards Mehri and Arabic languages and their speakers and the language they prefer as a medium of instruction. The major findings indicate that the Mehri school students have positive attitudes towards both languages, but wish to be taught in Mehri which is their heritage language. The study recommends that the ministry of education should address the linguistic needs of these minority language speakers. Saleh (2017) detailed the efforts of Saudi Arabia to spread Arabic and to improve its teaching methods. His study surveyed many institutes and centers that serve Arabic inside and outside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the workshops, conferences and publications that aim at enhancing the teaching methods of Arabic were also highlighted in this study.

A very interesting concern was raised by Mahboob, Elyas, and Al-Issa (2018) in a workshop titled *Shaping the Future of the GCC Countries through Language Policy and Planning: Concepts, Challenges and Aspirations* where they rang the alarm bell regarding the role that various heritage and migrant languages play, which serve "identity purposes of the local and migrant populations" in GCC (including Saudi Arabia) – an area of research which is 'under-explored' – while Arabization policies have recently been adopted and "English continues to play an important role in the educational and corporate sectors ...". The authors argue that "these policies do not consider the role and contribution of heritage and migrant languages that form part of the linguistic ecology of the region."

The scarcity of research on the comprehensive language policy and planning is a gap this study is attempting to bridge. This gap-filling mission in the literature on language policy and planning in Saudi Arabia can be used for any further research since it highlights the top-down language planning trajectory as expressed in a reliable and official corpus of policy texts from 1927 until 2019.

### **3. Methodology**

It is not an easy task to decide one specific method while conducting a language policy and planning research given the myriad of available data collection tools described by Hornberger (2015) as "... a dizzying array of choices confronting the would-be LPP researcher." Based on the basic source used to investigate the Saudi language policy and planning documents, this study employs Tollefson's (2015) historical-structural approach and the discourse-analytical methods to examine both "the historical and sociopolitical processes that lead to the development of language policies ... and to examine the LPP process 'on the ground,' ... with a focus on how policy texts and discourses relate to language practices in schools and communities" (Hult and Johnson, 2015). Tollefson (2015) states that the historical-structural approach covers macro- and micro-levels of data and analysis. The major concern of this study is the macro-level data which "... include a range of phenomena such

as ideologies implicit in policies and plans or rationales for them; links between language plans and economic development ...”, as well as “nation state planning, explicit policy statements, and large institutions.” The element of inequality is not taken into consideration in the Saudi context because the language policy under discussion is set to serve a homogeneous community with almost the same language background. Non-Arabic speakers’ linguistic rights are recognized in the policy texts as will be shown in the discussion below. This approach is basically utilized to examine the relation between ideology and language policy. In other words, the ideological underpinnings contribute to the interpretation of some policy statements. Tollefson’s descriptive framework of historical-structural research is used to analyze status, corpus, and acquisition planning with special focus on monolingual ideologies of language in official policy statements, multilingualism, linguistic stratification in the job market, language and national identity, standardization in education and media, international cooperation, Arabic language spread, and medium-of-instruction policy.

The discourse-analytical method employs intertextuality “to analyze how texts derive meaning from other texts” (Johnson, 2015). John elaborates, “... inter-textual LPP analysis can illuminate where the ideas and language in a document might come from, how they are connected to other texts and discourses, and what this might mean for those responsible for interpreting, appropriating, or implementing the policy.” The corpus of policy texts that are used as the major source of analysis consists of 149 statements that describe the Saudi language policy and planning and much of intertextuality has been noticed and analyzed.

#### **4. Research questions**

One might wonder why Arabic, which is centuries old in a country that is considered as the homeland of Islam, requires language policy and planning, though Islam and Arabic are strongly connected and Arabic is the major language with the exception of Mehri which is spoken by only 20,000 of the Saudi people. To respond to this argument, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

- a. What is the language planning situation in Saudi Arabia (status, corpus, and acquisition)?
- b. What could be the reasons behind this big number of language planning statements in a country where Arabic is the dominant language?
- c. How has language planning in Saudi Arabia changed over time?
- d. How has the Saudi language policy regulated the relationship between Arabic and foreign languages, especially English?
- e. How do language policies relate to one another?

## 5. Corpus

In 2015, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for the Arabic Language (henceforth referred to as KAICAL) published a monograph of Arabic language resolutions that contains 149 statements described in the cover as orders, resolutions, rules, regulations and memos. The monograph consists of twenty seven royal orders, four deputy king orders, forty five cabinet resolutions, two Shura Council resolutions, and the rest are decisions made by different ministries and government bodies and institutions that usually relate to the policy statements issued by the higher authorities. According to the monograph preface, KAICAL's secretariat worked hard to trace all old and recent resolutions related to Arabic language in all government institutions. It is also written in the preface that KAICAL's general secretariat makes this publication available to linguists, administrators, and concerned researchers and that the center wishes this work to be a springboard for more refined research work that can contribute to establishing policies and strategies for promoting comprehensive linguistic identity in the Arab world. This study takes advantage of this final recommendation of KAICAL to answer the present research questions.

## 6. Results and discussion

This section attempts to answer the research questions. Readers are expected to obtain a clear picture of Arabic language planning types and activities in Saudi Arabia. The reasons behind the considerable number of language policy statements is interpreted from ideological, economic, and historical perspectives. The results also discuss the development of relationship between Arabic and foreign languages, particularly English, over time. Furthermore, the discourse analysis of a selection of texts deepens our understanding of how ideology is represented and how intertextuality contributes to the promotion of language policies implementation.

### 6.1. Arabic status planning

The corpus of Arabic language policy statements in the monograph presents the orders, resolutions and acts in a chronological order with no annotations or classification for their types. The majority of the texts (over one hundred of the one hundred and forty nine) are meant to promote and maintain the status of Arabic language. As mentioned in the introduction, the first language policy statement was issued by the Shura Council in September 1927 that emphasized the commitment to full care of Arabic because it is the official language of Hejaz and Najd state, particularly in internal trading transactions. Moreover, the statement emphasizes that a standard Arabic style must be observed at the lexical and grammatical levels. This text indicates that the polity was fully aware of the role of one standard national language in state building, given the fact that different varieties of Arabic existed in Arabia.

The second act in the monograph was the royal decree number 32, article 464 of the Commercial Court Statute in the year 1931 which stated that "It is a must that



import documents are written in Arabic during commercial trials.” It is worth noting that the Saudi relations with the United States were established this year (Wynbrandt, 2010). Many similar orders were issued later in the business and trading context to maintain the status of Arabic while international business and trading are practiced. These relevant policy statements are indicators of dynamic commercial relationships between the new Saudi state and other countries.

The most prominent texts include the royal decree number 32, article 482 in the year 1931 that emphasizes “obliging litigants to use Arabic during commercial trials deliberations or else a sworn interpreter/translator must be appointed to facilitate the mission.” This text indicates that international business in Saudi Arabia started in the early years of the modern Saudi Arabia State.

In 1938, commercial quantities of oil were discovered (Wynbrandt, 2010); and one year later the oil agreement between King Ibn Saud and the United States was signed. The agreement was conditioned to be written in both Arabic and English. In similar contexts of business, trade, importing and exporting, many Arabic policy statements were issued. For instance, the deputy King’s order number 38 in 1943 mandated the foreign exporting companies to write their bills of lading in Arabic beside the foreign language. Along the same line, the Director General of the Saudi Arabia Organization for Standardization and Metrology issued an order in 1973 stating that Arabic must be among the languages used on the labels of food products. In a similar context, the deputy prime minister issued a memo concerning the use of English-only signage by some foreign companies. This notice was brought to him by the Commission for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice (Sometimes called religious police). The deputy prime minister’s memo stated that national considerations oblige foreign companies to use the language of the hosting country in their sign boards. In a more unequivocal policy in this regard, the Secretary of Riyadh Municipality issued a resolution stating that, “Restaurant signs must be clearly written in Arabic above the English translation. If any facility does not comply, it must be closed by order.”

In 1952, the Deputy King issued order number 4212 that states his approval to the proposal brought forward by the ministry of finance to impose financial penalty on the foreign companies that do not use Arabic language in their transactions and records. The penalties are 1. not less than SAR 5,000 fine must be paid for the first breach; 2. not less than SAR 5,000 plus one year company suspension of importing and exporting. Lesser penalties were imposed in case the violation was made by individual personnel. Following the approval of this proposal, different government bodies and institutions emphasized its implementation, like the cabinet against the Middle East Airlines in 1960, the department of Zakat and income tax against any incident of correspondence or accounts submitted in a non-Arabic language. This was also observed by the Ministry of Commerce and the Public Administration for Consumer Protection.

In media sector, a royal decree was issued in 1955 to emphasize that the official language of the Saudi radio and other media channels is Arabic. This is a hint to avoid the use of local varieties of Arabic on media.

In the education sector, the Ministry of Higher Education in 1978 wrote to Riyadh University (Currently King Saud University) in reply to a query regarding the language that should be used in writing a contract with an American company. The reply of the ministry was, "It is obligatory that the contract is written in Arabic being the official language, with the possibility of making the document bilingual (Arabic and English); and in case any conflict occurs in the interpretation of the two texts, the baseline is the Arabic version."

In 1981, the deputy prime minister sent a reply to a request made by the vice president of Jubail and Yanbu' Royal Commission to use a foreign language in correspondence with some foreign companies. The request was rejected and a reference was made to a previous order that emphasized the use of Arabic in such incidents. In the same vein, the head of the Supreme Committee for Saudi Education Policy refused a request by Najd private schools in 1985 to use English as the medium of teaching Science and Mathematics subjects. The letter of refusal emphasized the obligation to using Arabic. Further discussion of this type of planning is in the section under 'acquisition planning'.

In 2003, a shift of Arabic status planning took place. The General Organization for the Saudi Arabian Airlines issued a manual that regulated the domains of Arabic and English use. This is an incident of language spread within the ideology of language ecology framework which argues that "... languages do not compete, but readjust themselves to fit into an environment" (Muhlhausler, 2000). According to Garcia (2010), both globalization and technological advances create this position in the postmodern period. The same shift applied to educational institutions such as government and private schools and universities and the inaction on the part of higher government authorities regarding the medium of instruction choice in these institutions may be interpreted as implicit consent and has legal reference in the general policy statement made in 1993. The prime minister issued resolution number 60 that states, "Arabic is the medium of instruction in Saudi universities, and when necessary, another language can be used after a resolution from concerned university council." This decision was immediately followed by a royal decree approving the same within what is known as the higher education and universities council bylaws.

## 6.2. Arabic corpus planning

Spolsky (2012) defines corpus planning as "... a conscious and part of the growing desire to achieve and maintain linguistic cohesion within the state." The journey of Arabic language planning in Saudi Arabia characterized as top-down in almost all types has covered corpus planning as well. Its early manifestation according to KAICAL's monograph was in 1941 when the deputy king approved a proposal by the Egyptian Medical Association to standardize medical terminology. The approval carries the reference number 1611/5/1/9. In 1945, the Saudi prime minister issued a resolution that ensures pairing the words "Arab" and "Saudi" in the citizenship statute. This policy measure goes with the definition of the function of corpus planning by Spolsky (2012) "... to modify the national language to serve its new functions, by standardizing it and its writing system ..." This emphasis on the word "Arab" plays



the role of linguistic cohesion in use by the nation and emphasizes the identity of belonging to the Arab world. The royal decree 7/3/16/1004, article 4, paragraph 5 was declared in 1955 to emphasize that part of the mission of the Saudi Broadcasting Statute is the simplification of standard Arabic and making it comprehensible and usable by public. The deputy chief magistrate issued a circular number 3/2449 to the effect of urging state officials to avoid spelling and grammatical mistakes in the letters and instruments issued by courts and to hold accountable the government bodies which are commonly prone to such linguistic mistakes.

Another example of corpus planning activities is the cabinet approval of a request by the minister of finance and national economy to correct a linguistic mistake discovered in the 25 halalas coin (one Saudi riyal is 100 Halalas). In Arabic grammar, if the modified noun is feminine, the first element of the compound numbers should be masculine; but it was mistakenly feminine in the coins in use. A resolution number 1223 in 1974 to this effect was issued to fix the linguistic problem.

In 1980, the chief Riyadh police noticed that the public security departments use the definite article ‘al’ meaning ‘the’ before the military rank ‘General’ and thus it becomes ‘al fareeq al awwal’, meaning ‘The General’ in the signature. Therefore, he directed all police personnel to refer to the military rank without the definite article in order to avoid any semantic ambiguity in official documents.

The cabinet issued an order not to replace the current orthography of numbering used in the Arab world with the numbering used in the ‘west’ while printing the Holy Quraan verses. According to the cabinet text, this is an act of westernization and imitation of western traditions. This order was made in 1983 and given the reference number 20860.

An interesting example of Arabic corpus planning in Saudi Arabia is associated with regulating the use of the title ‘Sheikh’ normally used as a marker of respecting the addressee’s position. The deputy Emir of Riyadh circulated a memo that directed government bodies to use this title in official documents exclusively to refer to students of Shariaah sciences who work in justice. In addition, the memo emphasized observing the grammatical rules of Arabic and ensuring the first name in any official document should be followed by ‘ibn’ meaning ‘son of’ then the father’s name in case the full name is required. This directive limited the meaning of the Arabic lexical item ‘Sheikh’ and gave instructions on how personal names should be written in full in official documents. The reason behind this linguistic intervention by the polity is to protect the meaning of a culturally important lexical item from semantic diversion.

The last example to illustrate corpus planning in Saudi Arabia is an urgent order by the Emir of Makkah (the holy city) in 2019 to all government bodies with regard to the translation of the word ‘Allah’ into English. The directive states that the word ‘God’ as a translation for ‘Allah’ must not be used. The word ‘Allah’ must remain as it is and should be transliterated into English alphabet. The document also mentions that the directive is based on a recommendation by the Mufti of Saudi Arabia, the highest religious authority in the country.

### 6.3. Arabic acquisition planning

Ricento (2009) defines acquisition planning as “efforts to influence the allocation of users or the distribution of languages/literacies by means of creating or improving opportunity or incentive to learn them, or both.” Donakey (2007) states that “... acquisition planning is concerned with language distribution, which can involve providing opportunities to use a particular language to increase the number of users.” This type of language policy and planning is concerned with teaching and learning opportunities of a certain language. In Saudi Arabia, Arabic acquisition planning is taken for granted at the national level. It is taught as a subject in all stages of education. In 2012, the commission for education and training of the Saudi army issued recommendations related to Arabic language education with minimum of 14 contact hours to raise the military students’ language skills of composition and communication. These recommendations were approved by the Chief of Staff of the Saudi Army.

The non-Arabic speaking expatriates, as well as the international scholarship students are given special care in Saudi language policy and planning. In 1995, the director of the supreme committee for education policy approved the opening of language institutes to teach Arabic to non-native speakers with the condition that the syllabus is prepared by the ministry of education. The same policy statement was then confirmed at the end of the same year by the deputy prime minister (resolution number 183). Moreover, many Arabic-to-non-native speakers’ institutes and programs were opened in King Saudi University and Umm Al Qura University in 1975, Imam university in 1981, Islamic university in Madinah in 2001, King Fahd University for Petroleum and Minerals, Nora University in 2010, and King Abdulaziz University in 2010 (Saleh, 2017).

### 6.4. Arabic language planning beyond Saudi national boundaries

The government of Saudi Arabia considerably supports the teaching and learning of Arabic in different Muslim countries around the world. The early documented support according to KAICAL monograph was in 1954 when the Saudi cabinet issued a letter to the minister of education to the effect of promoting Arabic language in Pakistan pursuant to a recommendation made by Arab league. In 1982, the deputy chairman of the Supreme Committee for Education Policy issued an approval to send 35 Saudi teachers of Arabic to teach in Malta in response to a request from the Maltese government. In 1983, the deputy chairman of the Supreme Committee for Education Policy approved Imam University proposal to support the Arabic language institute in Turkey. The university pledged to pay the monthly salaries of ten teachers, arranged exchange program between the institute in Riyadh and the one in Turkey, providing books, a language laboratory, and support to the Saudi cultural activities in Turkey. In 2006, the prime minister authorized the ministry of higher education to negotiate a memorandum of cooperation with the Comorian ministry of education to the effect of promoting Arabic language in Comoros. Imam university runs and supports affiliated Arabic language institutes in Indonesia, Japan, Djibouti,

etc. These institutes have contributed tremendously to Arabic teaching and learning materials, assessment, methods, textbooks and references (Saleh, 2017).

### 6.5. Why language planning in Saudi Arabia

Any language planning in any context generally aims at influencing the status, the corpus, the acquisition, or the prestige of language or languages. These four language planning activities are usually influenced by economic, political, ideological, technological, social, historical, national or international factors. In Saudi Arabia, Arabic status planning activities presented in the previous section might have been triggered by the polity concern about language as a result of the country's opening up to the outside world and developing international relations with the worldwide key players. Since the declaration of the new Saudi State and the discovery of oil, international economic and commercial relations have flourished. Languages as methods of communication between humans are influenced when cross-cultural and inter-cultural communication takes place. Since language and identity are intertwined, international communication requires regulations to address the possible challenges to languages. The following different reasons for language planning activities are reported in KAICAL's monograph: *"because it is the official language of the state, to safeguard the interests of Saudi traders and merchants, to protect the dignity of the national language, because of the frequent occurrence of using English for correspondence, Saudi Arabia is the source and cradle of Arabic, for national considerations, because this is a manifestation of westernization, because taking pride in our language is a religious and a national obligation, the requirement of English proficiency to occupy some vacancies negatively affected the community and the recruitment policy of local labor and Saudization in particular."*

Similarly, the corpus planning activities are justified in the policy statements presented in KAICAL document as follows: *"to make Arabic more simplified and easily understood by the common people, to avoid semantically unnecessary usage, to avoid western usage, to avoid semantic expansion beyond established meaning, to ensure observing the grammatical rules of Arabic usage."*

The reasons behind acquisition planning activities and language in education policy is basically the Arabic language spread, specially among Muslims in different countries. Promoting Arabic outside the Saudi borders has also played the role of strengthening international relations with countries like Pakistan, India, Indonesia, Turkey, Malta and many other countries. At the national level, this type of language planning serves the purpose of preserving the status of Arabic in education, promoting the Arabic language skills of communication and composition among state employees in both civil and military sectors.

Prestige planning occurred in three different statements in the policy monograph. All of them call for promoting the feeling of the importance of Arabic and its usage among Arabic speakers in different ways, including observing the annual international day of Arabic language.

### 6.6. Change in language planning over time: analytic discourse perspective

It has been observed that language policy and language planning in Saudi Arabia is not completely static. The Kingdom is an international key player in the world economy and politics and this position requires flexibility of adaptation to changes in many facets of life, including language policy and language planning. The connection between political and religious authority in the Kingdom has some influence on language planning over time. To illustrate this influence, Wynbrandt (2010) explains “In 1930 the nascent Directorate of Education proposed a curriculum that included instruction in technical drawing, foreign languages, and geography. The ulama [religion scholars in Islam] objected, decreeing that ... knowledge of foreign languages facilitated exposure to the thinking of infidels. ... Ibn Saud approved the curriculum over their objections.” This strong objection by ulama of that time to teaching foreign languages could be the reason behind some strong expressions found in the language policy statements. These expressions emphasize the role of the agency of local actors. For example, the words *wujoob*, *yajeb*, *ilzam*, and *taltazem* all express the speech act of obligation followed by a policy statement obliging the use of Arabic language is repeated 64 times in the monograph. The phrase ‘*imposing a financial penalty*’ over those who violate language policy resolutions occurs four times in the document. The choice of words, phrases, and clauses like “*observing surveillance, violation, unfortunately, dangerous phenomenon, unjustifiable act, cannot be accepted, not tolerated, negative impact on people’s life, preventing the use of another language unless necessarily needed, Arabic above English in shop signs, closing a business if it does not follow language policy orders, no license to a business if it carries a foreign name, the Arabic text is more authoritative in bilingual documents, Arabic must not be overshadowed in signage, the use of English for internal communication within Saudi Airlines ignores public policy, vigorous application and surveillance*” indicate the tone of strictness of language planning measures throughout the history of Saudi Arabia.

### 6.7. Regulating the relationship between Arabic and foreign languages

From the perspectives of postmodern and the ecology of languages, the effect of factors of imposition in language planning decreases and languages readjust themselves rather than compete due to globalization and technological advances (Garcia, 2010). This adaptation is noticed in the change of Saudi language policy texts’ tone across time in response to local and international changes. The sense of intolerance of foreign languages in Saudi life throughout the 20th century has considerably changed in theory and in practice. What was considered as the language of ‘infidels and westerners’ in the early 20th century can now coexist with Arabic language in different contexts. This tolerance of linguistic coexistence developed and was manifested in different language planning statements. The examples that illustrate this change include phrases and clauses like, “*Arabic and English details are put side by side, confining the use of English to situations when there are technical problems to use Arabic, Aviation language can be in both Arabic and English, Hotels can*

*announce rent to guests in Arabic and English or French (1975), No objection to use English beside Arabic in contracts with American companies (1987), International technical terminologies can be used in English between brackets (1981), A foreign language can be used as the medium of instruction in universities when necessary (1993), theses and dissertations can be written in a language other than Arabic if necessary, Arabic and English texts in bilingual international agreements are equally authentic (2012)."*

### 6.8. Intertextuality

Intertextuality refers to "Making connections between language policy texts and discourses and language practices" (Johnson, 2015). These connections help in determining meaning and in confirming linguistic and institutional cohesion. Fairclough (1992) classifies intertextuality into manifest and constitutive. The former involves verbatim quotations and citations from texts while the latter refers to merging older texts in new texts which may assimilate, contradict, or ironically echo them (Momani et. al, 2010). The majority of the policy statements under investigation in this study fall under manifest intertextuality. Yet some examples of constitutive intertextuality exist. The reason could be that in Saudi Arabia, whatever is decided by higher authorities must be strictly implemented in accordance with the language of the original regulations. For instance, the ministry of interior issued a regulation number 22878/2 in 1979 that "obliges companies inside the Kingdom to use Arabic in all matters." One year later the deputy prime minister issued a similar directive that obliges all government bodies, public institutions, government-owned companies to use Arabic in their correspondence, writing contracts and various types of documents that are made between these internal bodies and foreign companies and institutions. These two policy texts issued by the cabinet and interior minister were quoted verbatim by lower authorities, like the minister of finance and national economy, assistant director of the Saudi Airlines, deputy chief of Monitoring Office, minister of higher education, Saline Water Conversion Corporation, Irrigation and Drainage Commission, Ministry of Water and Electricity, etc. Yet, they start their new texts with words like "adherence to, confirming, emphasizing, the need to, adopting and enforcing, circulating the need to, etc." followed by the quotation or citation from the source texts of supreme authorities. An example of constitutive 'vertical' intertextuality is the letter from deputy king to the minister of finance in response to a proposal by the latter to impose penalty on foreign companies that do not use Arabic in their dealings. The deputy king's letter assimilates the suggestion from the ministry of finance with some additional remarks regarding penalty on individuals who do not use Arabic. A relevant resolution number 273 from the prime minister's office dated 12/6/1960 confirms the Shoura Council resolution number 48 that obliges the Middle East Airlines Company to pay a fine for using English instead of Arabic in its correspondence. The word *penalty* figured again in a brief statement made by the department of Zakat and income in 1973 stating that any correspondence or accounts submitted in a language other than Arabic will be penalized; and in another statement issued by the deputy prime minister's office in



1978, which repeats obliging the foreign companies and institutions to use Arabic in their correspondence, otherwise they will be fined. The majority of the cases of intertextuality found in the KAICAL's document show consistency in their semantic and pragmatic effects. Yet, few examples illustrate a case of inconsistency which can be interpreted as evidence of coping with changes. A case in point is the different texts that regulate the status of the two languages regarding their authoritativeness in a bilingual contract or agreement. Such bilingual documents which were written in the 20th century consider the Arabic version to be more authoritative than the foreign language text if any conflict over meaning occurs. The policy documents dated in 2012 state that the two languages carry identical authority. The old illustrations echo the monolingualism paradigm of language spread, whereas the recent ones represent the ecology of language approach spurred by globalization.

## 7. Conclusion

The present study has attempted to outline the profile of language policy and planning in Saudi Arabia since the establishment of the modern Saudi state until today. Based on the discussion above, it can be argued that language policy and planning in Saudi Arabia is robust and comprehensive. The modern Saudi State has been paying careful attention to language planning issues since its inception. Across the history of the Kingdom until today language issues have been of central concern and various policy statements have attempted to cover status, corpus, acquisition, and prestige planning. The rationale has always been coping with economic, social, political, and educational changes. Cultural, religious, and national identity of the Kingdom is always present in most of language policy and planning and plays a key guiding role. The power relations between Arabic and foreign languages, which function actively in Saudi Arabian national and international concerns have been clearly addressed in the policy document. Language in education policy requires more filtering and clarity in order to adjust issues of internationalization of education and national cultural identity (Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi, 2017). This issue is not elaborated in this study because of its limitation to providing a historical profile of Saudi language policy and planning. The intertextuality traced among the policy statements provides strong evidence of cohesion in the language planning situation in Saudi Arabia in spite of the fact that it was not an easy task to collect the scattered texts by KAICAL in a single monograph. The study recommends establishing a language policy and planning body in the Kingdom with the mission of more comprehensive and more systematic documentation, evaluation of the current policy, recognition of the current efforts by KAICAL and similar institutions, and foreseeing the future opportunities and challenges that can influence the regional and international roles of Saudi Arabia, as well as contribute to scholarship in the dynamic field of language policy and planning.



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