

The relationship between society and language acquisition: influence and interaction, a comparative study between linguistics, sociology, and philosophy

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Abstract: Language is one of the most significant aspects of human behavior, serving as a tool to express thoughts and emotions while also revealing societal identity and culture. This importance has attracted the attention of linguists, psychologists, sociologists, and other scholars to study language and its impact on humans. Language plays a pivotal role in maintaining societal cohesion and unity by acting as a binding medium across generations. However, disruptions to this tool pose challenges to linguistic communication within society, as it serves as the foundation for interaction and engagement. Based on this understanding, sociologists and cultural scholars have emphasized the importance of the first language, focusing on its transmission to future generations and its development through raising awareness and educating members of society. The primary aim of this paper is to provide an accurate description of the relationship between society, environment, and language. Raised in a culturally deprived environment, a person often experiences linguistic disadvantage, as the linguistic development of any society, across all its dimensions and aspects, significantly impacts its members. Given that the study uses Arabic as a model to present its ideas, it seeks to establish the connection between language and identity in general and Arabic specifically. Society regards Arabic as an essential component and dynamic factor. Identity has emerged as a critical issue on the international stage, particularly after the transformations that have reshaped the structure of the global system.

Keywords: Culture, Identity, Language, Sociolinguistics.

1. Introduction

When the dawn of human knowledge broke, scholars made language their first focus, as it is the most critical tool for expressing their thoughts and beliefs, transmitting their scientific achievements, and preserving their cultural heritage across generations. Language is also one of the most prominent manifestations of human behavior, serving as a criterion for revealing societal identity and a significant influence on both individual and societal formation.

For these reasons, scholars from various fields of knowledge—linguistics, psychology, sociology, and others—dedicated themselves to studying language, pondering its logic, nature, origins, and its profound impact on humans and society, using their insightful understanding and academic tools.

Language is also the most crucial element in maintaining societal harmony and unity, acting as a binding medium among community members across generations. When this tool becomes impaired, linguistic communication challenges arise, undermining the cornerstone of interaction and engagement within society. Simultaneously, society itself plays a pivotal role in learning the first language, contributing significantly to its development and evolution.

Based on this premise, linguists, sociologists, and cultural scholars have focused on the first language, emphasizing its teaching and nurturing among generations by fostering awareness and educating members of society.

Thus, the primary goal of this paper is to precisely describe the relationship between society, environment, and language. Raised in a culturally deprived environment, a person often experiences

linguistic disadvantage, as the linguistic development of any society, across all its dimensions, significantly influences its members.

Since this research adopts Arabic as a model for its ideas, it is imperative to determine the relationship between language and identity in general, and Arabic in particular, as a dynamic and essential component of Arab and Emirati society. Identity has become one of the most critical issues on the global stage, especially following the transformations that reshaped the structure of the international system.

2. Research Problem

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between society and language acquisition?
2. How does cultural level influence language quality or deficiency in individuals?
3. What is the relationship between national identity and the Arabic language?

3. Methodology

The researcher adopted a descriptive approach for this study. The researcher complemented this methodology by employing the "selective" approach, which emphasizes the essential tools for acquiring the first language, particularly the individual's environment of upbringing. Additionally, we utilized an analytical approach to align with contemporary logic, highlighting the importance of cultural level and national identity pride in fostering language development. These two aspects—society and language—interact to enhance the first language, supporting culture and national identity.

4. Objectives

This study aims to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Stress the importance of the first language and society's role in its development.
2. Demonstrate the effectiveness of cultural levels in enhancing language within individuals and society.
3. Emphasize the significance of national identity and cultural belonging in raising awareness of the mother tongue.
4. Showcase the efforts of the United Arab Emirates in preserving the Arabic language and culture.

5. Research Structure

The introduction, two main chapters, and conclusion comprise this research.

- **Chapter One:** Language, Society, and National Identity: Conceptual Definitions
- Section One: The First Language and Its Meaning
- Section Two: Society and Its Meaning
- Section Three: National Identity and Its Meaning
- **Chapter Two:** The Relationship Between Society and Language Acquisition and Development
- Section One: The Role of the Society in Learning the First Language
- Section Two: Influence and Interaction between the Cultural Level and the Mother Tongue
- Section Three: National Identity and Arabic Language: Integration and Complementarity

6. Conclusion

6.1. Chapter One

6.1.1. Language, Society, and National Identity: Conceptual Definitions

6.1.1.1. Section One

6.1.1.1.1. The First Language and its Meaning

6.1.1.1.1.1. Language

The term "language" derives from the Arabic root *lagha*, meaning to deviate or stray, as in "so-and-so strayed from the correct path." People named language as such because they spoke in ways that differed from others' speech patterns. The word *laghw* signifies utterance or speech. For example, "this is their language, which they use to speak," or "the birds' *laghw*" refers to their sounds and singing (Ibn Manzur, 1414 AH, 15/252).

Ibn Jinni defines language as "a set of sounds through which each group expresses their intentions." He explains its etymology as deriving from *laghwa*, similar to the pattern of words like *kura* (ball) and *qilla* (small vessel), both of which end with the letter "waw." Expressions like *karut* (to play with a ball) and *qalut* (to use a vessel) serve as evidence for this. He also observes that *laghwa*, the root of *laghw*, is closely associated with meaningless talk or chatter (Ibn Jinni, undated, 1/34).

Based on these foundations, any means of exchanging emotions and ideas—whether through gestures, sounds, or words—can be considered language.

Terminologically, language is defined as "any word assigned a specific meaning" (Taj al-Din al-Subki, 1999, 1/349).

Ibn Khaldun elaborates, asserting that the speaker typically uses language as an expression to convey their intention. This expression is a verbal act resulting from the will to communicate, which eventually becomes a fixed skill in the acting organ, namely the tongue, and varies according to each nation's conventions" (Ibn Khaldun, undated, 23).

6.1.2. Modern Linguistic Definitions

Contemporary Western linguists define language as a human communication tool based on two main axes:

- **Linguistic System:** A set of innate and learned grammatical, morphological, and lexical rules stored in the human mind.
- **Application:** The use of these rules to produce comprehensible and meaningful spoken messages (De Saussure, 1987, 17).

Thus, language is a purely human medium for conveying thoughts, emotions, and desires through a system of intentional symbols (Edward Sapir, 1961, 8).

6.1.3. Philosophical Perspectives on Language

Among philosophers, the concept of language reflects diverse and sometimes conflicting views, shaped by their philosophical doctrines.

Language, in their view, is the most vital tool for conveying ideas. Democritus (460–370 BCE) considered language a social agreement, arising from human consensus. Plato (427–347 BCE), on the other hand, regarded language as a natural phenomenon akin to other actions within the realm of nature. Aristotle described language as the vocal manifestation of internal emotions, thoughts, and psychological states (Ibn Jinni et al., 1979, 76).

Some philosophers proposed that divine inspiration inspires languages. Several philosophers from Greece, Rome, India, and the Arab world, including the Muslim philosopher Al-Farabi, shared this view in their treatises (detailed in the second chapter). A balanced view combines these perspectives, suggesting that language originated as innate inspiration in humans and evolved through social conventions, environments, and societal progress. This theory aligns with that of early and later scholars (Al-Suyuti et al., 1998, 1/10), as well as religious texts like the Qur'an: "*And He taught Adam the names—all of them*" [Al-Baqarah: 31]. Ibn Hazm al-Andalusi and Abu Ali al-Farisi interpreted it similarly, as does the Book of Genesis (Al-Khatib, 2001, 53).

Despite differing opinions on the origin of language, philosophers agree that it distinguishes humans from animals as a product of intellect. Thus, logicians describe humans as *rational animals*, with speech being one of its manifestations (Simon W. Blackburn, www.britannica.com). This idea resonates with the Arab poet Al-Akhtal:

"Speech resides in the heart, but the tongue is merely its guide."
(Ibn Hisham, undated, 36).

6.1.4. *Language According to Psychologists and Sociologists*

Psychologists study language as a psychological phenomenon, considering it one of the significant forms of human behavior that reveals an individual's identity, behavior, emotions, and perception. A person's psychological makeup directly reflects their linguistic formation, positively or negatively. The words and terms they use, along with the ways they structure them, indicate either the intellectual refinement of the individual or the linguistic impairments and disorders they might face, including methods for addressing and overcoming these issues.

Psychologists have dedicated a specialized field to the relationship between language and the individual, known as **"psycholinguistics."** This field is one of the most crucial branches of applied linguistics, focusing on the study, understanding, production, and acquisition of human language (Chomsky, N., 1959, p. 35).

Thus, psycholinguistics serves as an intermediary science, acting as a bridge between disciplines that address human linguistic activity, including linguistics, psychology, sociology, and education.

On the other hand, sociologists define language as a general system that individuals adopt to express their thoughts and understand each other. Language is not a creation of any specific individual or group but rather arises from the nature of social interaction and collective life. It emerges to meet the needs of expressing ideas and exchanging thoughts.

Individual is born into a community with an established linguistic system, which they acquire through learning and imitation, much like other social systems. They shape their speech according to the community's linguistic framework, using it for communication and expression (Ali Wafi, 2004, p. 6).

Thus, language is a social phenomenon, and the changes it undergoes are also inherently social. Linguists have paid considerable attention to the social adaptability of linguistic phenomena. Many sociologists emphasize the inherently social nature of language and the mutual influence between language and society (Hadi Al-Nahr et al., 1988, p. 22).

6.1.5. *The Concept of a First Language*

The first language, also known as the native language in some regions, signifies the language of an individual's ethnic group, not the first language they learned. It is the original language from which other languages may branch out (Dr. Ahmed Mukhtar et al., 2008, 3/202).

The first language can be defined as the one a person acquires initially and becomes familiar with in their environment, using it to communicate with others.

An individual ingrains their first language from birth, which evolves through daily exposure and numerous experiences in that language. It is considered indispensable and irreplaceable, as it becomes an inevitable part of one's identity. The first or native language is assigned, not chosen.

6.2. *Section Two*

6.2.1. *Society and Its Meaning*

6.2.1.1. *Society Definition*

The term *society* is derived from the verb *gather* (*jamaa*), which is the opposite of *separate* (*faraqa*). Linguistically, it follows the form (*mufta'al*), denoting the act of uniting similar entities. It is a past participle derived from *to gather* (*ijtamaa*) and denotes either a location where people gather or a group of individuals bound by shared customs, traditions, laws, and interests. Examples include: *Modern society*, *Human society*, *Elite society*. Expressions like "society's notables" refer to its prominent and influential members. Additionally, the verb (*ijtamaa*) signifies union, agreement, and coming together in harmony (Dr. Ahmed Mukhtar et al., 2008, 3/396).

6.2.2. *Terminological Definition*

Society is a large group of individuals living in a stable arrangement, connected by shared social bonds and mutual interests, and governed by systems that regulate behavior under an overseeing authority. Any group of people, whether permanently or temporarily bound by a shared relationship, influences their lives and interactions.

The concept of society refers to a group of people connected by mutual interests and social ties, governed by systems that regulate their behavior under common factors such as location, language, beliefs, and goals. These shared elements unify individuals, fostering interconnectedness within a single social framework. Social needs and vital connections unify human life and create strong bonds among individuals (Dr. Mohamed Al-Gohary et al., 2013, p. 187).

Human society arises naturally out of necessity, as humans are inherently social beings who depend on others to meet their needs, desires, and security. Achieving these goals alone is impossible.

Similarly, civil society results from social contracts, meaning it originates from agreements voluntarily made by individuals to cooperate with others in addressing life's demands and challenges. As life became more complex, the need for collaboration led to the establishment of a society protected by collective strength, achieved through the creation of institutions, laws, and standards necessary for justice and social peace. Thus, civil society emerged through the social contract, whereby people unified their collective will to regulate social relations.

Based on that, language is one of the most prominent tools for activating and developing society by facilitating communication among its members, building their community, and defining shared goals. The relationship between language and society is characterized by mutual influence, reflecting a dynamic and absolute interconnection.

The interactions among society's members are based on collective production, fostering a sense of belonging to a shared culture and economic system. While societies inherently possess diversity and differences, their continued existence relies on active, dynamic forces within.

Advances in production, culture, and knowledge, along with the organization of labor and resources, shape the structure and nature of any society. Consequently, language becomes one of society's defining characteristics, serving as the vessel of culture, a tool for construction, and a medium for understanding and communication.

6.3. Section Three

6.3.1. National Identity and Its Meaning

Identity: Derived from the root word (*hawwa*), which implies falling, depth, or a low and deep place. Al-Asma'i mentioned that *hawwiyya* refers to a deep well. (Al-Harawi et al., 2001, 6/261).

Therefore, we can understand identity as partial truth; we refer to the essence, when considered in its particularity, as identity. The term can also imply external existence or individuality. Identity, they say, is derived from "هو هو" (He is He) and stands in opposition to "otherness" (*ghayriyya*). (Al-Qadi Nakri, 2000, 3/330).

In the human context, identity indicates existence and essence. People often use the concept to describe their individuality and their relationship with groups, such as their national, ethnic, or religious identity. Social psychology associates the term identity with the pronoun he (*huwa*). Personal identity defines a person (e.g., their birth, appearance, traits, nationality, etc.), while collective identity (such as national, ethnic, or religious) refers to the shared fundamental characteristics that distinguish one group from another. Members of such groups share essential features that shape their collective existence. (James, Paul, 2015, pp. 174, 195).

Nation: The concept of (*watan*) refers to the place where one resides, the homeland of a person, or their dwelling. In plural form, (*awtan*) refers to the resting places of animals, such as sheep and cattle, where they return and reside. (Ibn Manzur, n.d., 13/451).

National Identity: A compound term combining *identity* and *nation*, it refers to the sense of belonging to a homeland or geographical area. Scientifically, it can be defined as: "*A collection of ideas centered around the multifaceted concept of a nation, encompassing the ways individuals and groups connect themselves to those ideas.*" National identity consists of fixed components, including the environment, shared history, and religion. Saleh Ashour published "The Nation, Citizen, and Authority" in Wujhat Nazar in 2005.

Alternatively, it is defined as: "*One of the fundamental indications of determining the identity of a people living within a specific geographic territory that incorporates all subcultures.*" (Mohammed Al-Arabi, 2003, p. 91).

Foremost among the tools shaping these cultures, alongside history and religion, is *language*.

6.4. Chapter Two

6.4.1. *The Relationship Between Society and Language Acquisition and Development*

6.4.1.1. Section One

6.4.1.1.1. *The Role of the Society in Learning the First Language*

Language is a social phenomenon, and scientists have emphasized its significant role in society and its relationship with other social phenomena. Humanistic scholars view language as a key to understanding many truths about humans, their history, developmental stages, and various ethnicities, as revealed through excavations, inscriptions, and artwork.

One example of the influence of society on language acquisition is when people from different ethnic and racial backgrounds speak the same language, which then becomes the native language of all speakers. This occurs due to the social interaction among these groups in a shared environment, regardless of shared ethnic background. An historical example can be found in America, where people of various races, including Blacks, Native Americans, and Europeans, all speak English due to social mixing within a single society. A similar phenomenon occurred in Islamic civilization, where various ethnic groups learned Arabic, and it became the native language of future generations. In this case, the acquisition of language was influenced by social and environmental factors, rather than just ethnicity, although ethnic background did play a role, albeit to a lesser extent than societal influence.

This passage underscores that social and environmental interactions, rather than inherent racial or ethnic ties, shape language. In the history of Islamic civilization, many different ethnic groups living in Arab environments learned Arabic and made it their native language for subsequent generations. This highlights the role of social and environmental influences in language acquisition. Therefore, social interaction and the environmental context in which individuals live do not limit language acquisition to a specific ethnic or racial group.

The Prophet (PBUH) stated in the prophetic saying, "Arabic is only the tongue," that Arabic is not associated with origin or descent, but rather serves as a "tongue" or a medium of expression. The hadith elucidates that Arabic serves as a tool for communication and expression, not as an identity associated with one's father or mother, but rather as a unique identity defined by its speakers. (Narrated by Ibn Asakir, Alaa' al-Din, from Abu Salma ibn Abdul Rahman, as a transmitted narration (Al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, 1981, Hadith number: 33933, p. 47).)

6.4.2. *The Relationship Between Society and the Acquisition of the First Language*

A child is born with the inherent ability to learn a language but needs a social environment and other conducive factors for language acquisition. First language acquisition happens through interaction between the child's cognitive abilities and the social environment. This process takes place over the first five years of life. The primary language the child learns is the colloquial or vernacular language spoken in the community, while formal language (like Modern Standard Arabic) is acquired when the child enters preschool or formal schooling. Standard Arabic surpasses colloquial language in vocabulary enrichment, term precision, and grammatical structure (Mahmoud. Sayed et al., 1982).

6.4.3. *Is Language Innate or Acquired?*

The nature of language was a subject of interest for early philosophers, especially the ancient Greeks, who sought to understand its origin and nature. There were various schools of thought about whether language is innate (a natural gift) or acquired through social interaction.

1. The First View: Language is a social construct, acquired through social interaction and agreed-upon conventions. The Greek philosopher Democritus (370–460 BC) believed that language is a product of human consensus and social agreement.

Some Muslim philosophers, including Al-Farabi, held this view, stating in his book *Al-Huruf*: "Thus, they initially agree upon the letters of that nation and their words, which originate from these letters." One of them uses a sound or word to denote something when addressing another, and the listener retains it. The listener then uses the same word when addressing the original speaker, and the

first listener has followed suit; thus, they have agreed and established a convention around that word. They continue to use it with others until it spreads among a group. Whenever a new idea emerges in one's mind that requires understanding by others, they create a sound to symbolize it, which the other individual then hears and remembers. They both make that sound a sign for that thing, and new sounds continue to be created by others in the community until a person emerges who manages their affairs and creates new sounds for things that have not yet been assigned sounds. This person becomes the creator of the language of that nation. From that point on, they continue to develop the vocabulary necessary for all aspects of their lives (Al-Farabi, n.d., pp. 28-29). In his forged work, he concludes by endorsing the concept of convention, social agreement, and naturalization in language, asserting: "All languages are conventional." He bolsters this claim by citing the story of Hayy ibn Yaqzan, a man who lived in isolation on a remote island, achieved the highest levels of faith and knowledge, and yet spoke no human language. A wise man met him and began teaching him language through gestures and word repetition. Had language been an innate gift or divine inspiration, Hayy, the enlightened believer, would have known it (Al-Farabi, n.d., 1/p. 13). Similarly, 19th-century philosopher Adam Smith, as well as the French philosopher Dolan and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, claimed that humans invented language once their development was complete and they had evolved into fully developed beings. The claim was made by Dolan, M., and N. Chadwick in 1972, on page 9.

2. The Second View: Plato (427–347 BCE) articulates this view, asserting that language is inherent in nature. He refers to language using the term "speech" and argues that language's origin is a type of action that belongs to the realm of nature. Existence derives actions, and everything in existence possesses a fixed nature and essence. Plato thus reduces the concept of language to a natural phenomenon, with no involvement from humans. Similarly, the Greek philosopher Heraclitus claimed that language is a divine revelation (Plato, 1990, pp. 90-92).

Many followers of various religions hold a similar view, considering language a form of divine inspiration. Some Islamic scholars use the term *taqwīf* (divinely ordained) to describe language. Ibn Faris asserts that Allah's words, '**And He taught Adam the names, all of them...**' (Surat al-Baqara, 31), prove the divine ordination of the Arabic language. Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) explained that this means the names He taught Adam were the names that people use to refer to animals, lands, plains, mountains, donkeys, and similar things from other nations and creatures" (Ibn Faris, n.d., p. 5).

In my opinion, this view represents only half of the truth. There is no doubt that language has its own nature, but at the same time, society plays an active role in shaping linguistic systems and in determining the kind of language used by speakers.

3. The Third View: The synthesis of the previous two views. Some scholars, both in earlier and later periods, have sought to reconcile the theory of nature and divine inspiration with the theory of social convention and agreement. Among these scholars is Imam Al-Suyuti, who explored the contradiction between these two views and found no definitive evidence supporting the position of divine inspiration, nature, and revelation. He also rejected the view of those who claim language is purely a matter of social convention, as this would lead to an infinite regress, requiring the existence of a prior convention for every language. This led Ibn Jinni to hesitate in endorsing either of the two theories, despite initially leaning toward the theory of social convention and agreement. He recorded his hesitation in various parts of his book *Al-Khasa'is*, where he says, "This is a matter requiring careful consideration. However, most scholars of the matter believe that the origin of language is social convention and agreement, not revelation or divine ordination. Yet, Abu Ali (may Allah have mercy on him) once told me that it is from Allah, and he cited Allah's words: '**And He taught Adam the names, all of them**' (Surat al-baqara, 31). This does not address the point of dispute, as it could be interpreted as: 'Allah enabled Adam to be the one to establish the names.'" (Ibn Jinni, n.d., p. 76).

As for Al-Suyuti, he believed that the way to resolve this closed debate was to combine both views. He suggested that there must be a certain portion of language that is inherently divine, natural, and ordained, but that humans later developed it through social convention and agreement. This approach, he argued, seems the most plausible, as it works with both sets of evidence, rather than neglecting one or the other (Al-Suyuti, n.d., 1/p. 10).

Today, there is no longer any disagreement among scholars about whether language is innate or acquired. Contrary to what some scholars have claimed, language is not spontaneous, but rather socially acquired, with a significant biological factor. Scholars distinguish between what is intellectual and what is instinctive. Indeed, a child is born with an innate linguistic predisposition that helps them acquire language. Language is a human, social phenomenon, not an animalistic material act, but a mental activity. (Al-Qasimi, Dr. Ali, 7/11/2007, *The Child and Language Acquisition: Theory and Practice*, paper presented at the Sixth Conference titled "Child Language and Contemporary Reality," held by the Arabic Language Academy in Damascus).

When the child enters a linguistic environment, they hear a collection of incomplete or fragmented sentences, among other things. This is how the child learns language, acquires limited data, and develops a very rich cognitive system. Despite all this, the child succeeds, within a very short period, in constructing or internalizing the rules of that language and developing a very complex knowledge that cannot be summarized through induction or abstraction of the experience they have gained. We conclude that a specific biological faculty must precisely determine this internally represented knowledge. This conclusion is supported by Noam Chomsky and Responsibility (1979, p. 63).

When we discuss the relationship between language and society, its impact on society, or the various functions language performs in society, we discover that society consists of individuals and groups living in the same geographic area, connected by social, cultural, and religious relationships, as previously discussed. Members of society reflect the elements that form a unified whole in their awareness. Language is the sounds through which a people express their purposes, as defined by Ibn Jinni—it is what members of a particular community speak. While these definitions broadly cover the concepts, they are highly beneficial, especially when we realize that there are many types of communities that we need to study and that speech in society can manifest in many different ways. Some communities are multilingual, with many of their members speaking more than one language.

Regarding the links between language and society, social structure influences the form of linguistic structure and behavior. The phenomenon of "age gradation," where younger children speak differently than older children, provides evidence of this. Studies have shown that linguistic variations used by speakers reflect factors such as regional, social, or ethnic origins and can also reflect gender. Furthermore, linguistic structure and behavior affect social structure. Language and society influence each other, meaning that linguistic and social behaviors are in constant interaction. Material life circumstances are a significant factor in this relationship, as social phenomena, as explained by Émile Durkheim, share three main characteristics:

1. Members of a society follow these general systems to organize their collective lives and coordinate their relationships with each other and others.
2. Sociologists call them the "collective mind." They are created by socialization and emerge naturally from communal life and the necessities of civilization.
3. Any individual who deviates from such a system faces resistance from society, which may impose a material or moral punishment, annul their actions, or obstruct their objectives, making their efforts futile.

These three characteristics are fully present in language. (Dr. Ali Wafi, 1971, p. 3-4)

Sociolinguistics emerged as a branch of general sociology in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the gap between sociology and linguistics began to narrow. Linguists started paying attention to the social adaptation of linguistic phenomena, while some sociologists became more aware of the social nature of language. Thus, sociolinguistics emerged to emphasize this mutual connection. (Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Uthmān, n.d., p. 44)

The discussion leads us to the conclusion that language plays a crucial role in a group's existence, with society and its tools playing a significant role in the acquisition and development of the first language. Language and its uses also influence society, either negatively or positively, as I will discuss in the next section.

6.5. Section Two

6.5.1. *Influence and Interaction between the Cultural Level and the Mother Tongue*

The essence of a human being lies in their language, thought, and social life. From an anthropological perspective, language plays a crucial role in transmitting culture, which is defined as the collective traditions of people and the culture of their societies, along with their language use. The young acquire their first language due to the cultural enrichment they gain through language.

Culture significantly contributes to the development and enrichment of a society's language by introducing new vocabulary. Language constantly adopts words from the culture of the society it serves. The Arabic language, with its countless words, serves as a clear example of this.

Language is the official representative of culture, as it articulates the cultural uniqueness of a society and civilization to others. Through language, we also become acquainted with other cultures around the world. This illustrates the deep integration between culture and language and their mutual influence on one another. No culture is without language, and no language is without culture. Language preserves cultural heritage from generation to generation and ascribes social values to human knowledge and ideas by using language within the community. There is an undeniable relationship between social phenomena and linguistic phenomena, as customs, traditions, social systems, and people's culture shape language.

6.5.2. *The Role of Culture in Language Acquisition*

It involves the intertwining and interdependence of language and culture, as each influences the other. Culture not only facilitates the acquisition of language, but it also acts as a symbol of culture.

Today, learning the first language encompasses not just vocabulary and grammar, but also the cultural and economic factors that shape linguistic performance. We must integrate the social and cultural context into the process of learning the first language and any subsequent languages.

The concepts of communicative competence, as proposed by communicative approaches to language learning, go beyond language rules alone and incorporate the culture of the learner's surrounding environment, including their civilization and ideas. Culture, in its broader sense, encompasses knowledge, beliefs, art, ethics, law, skills, and customs that an individual acquires within their society. The integration of culture, communication, and language occurs as societal behaviors, ways of life, and environments shape thought processes, which in turn influence the learning and use of language in human communication.

Thus, culture imposes vocabulary filled with the characteristics of the culture in which the language learner lives. Cultural knowledge is essential in language learning and acquiring linguistic skills, and societal culture can change depending on the language used. Various sociological studies, including the theoretical approach of British sociologist Basil Bernstein, confirmed this, emphasizing the significant role of social environment in determining the level and shape of language development in individuals. An individual's primary group and the linguistic practices present in their social environment influence their language acquisition. Therefore, the educational and familial environments influence the social life of each class, which in turn influences the linguistic level. (As'ad Watfa, n.d., p. 169)

6.5.3. *The Influence of Language on Culture*

Language shapes our culture, mirroring our inner thoughts and feelings. As language expands, culture develops accordingly. Three aspects link language and culture: expression, embodiment, and symbolism. First, language expresses cultural reality, as people use language to convey events and ideas that reflect their attitudes and emotions. Second, language embodies cultural reality, as it is the tool that enables individuals to ascribe meaning to the experiences they go through. Third, language transforms cultural reality into symbols; thus, speakers perceive their language as a symbol of their social identity. (Kramsh, 1993, p. 3)

The functions of language in society revolve around utility and regulation: through language, individuals control their own behavior as well as the behavior of others. Language remains a fundamental component of societal culture, and the cultural level is a key factor in the development of language among community members.

The first language is an integral part of an individual's culture, but this does not negate the importance of understanding culture when learning a second language. A learner of English, for example, needs to immerse themselves in the culture of English-speaking communities to master and develop the second language. Without understanding the culture associated with that language, one cannot fully comprehend many terms and expressions. Language maintains its connection to the study of human thought, imposing a particular way of thinking on individuals through its role in preserving cultural heritage and social traditions, which it transmits from generation to generation. It equips individuals with the tools of thought, serving as the primary means of learning and helping them adapt and regulate their behavior within society. Both language and culture affect each other and merge to the point where speech behavior and social practice coincide. Language is the key element that distinguishes human societies. It is fundamental to the construction and survival of society, and there is no language outside the realm of society; it is a social product shaped by historical accumulations.

Based on this, we can conclude that our first language, (Arabic), requires the development of a specialized framework. This framework should, on the one hand, focus on the various relationships fostered by specific cognitive and scientific contexts, given that language is a communication tool. On the other hand, it should pay attention to the content of scientific and cognitive fields, as language represents thought. Thirdly, it should instill in future generations a sense of citizenship, identity, and collective responsibility for language learning and preservation, taking into account all its cultural contexts. This will help our language take its rightful place in society and in people's daily, scientific, and practical lives. The first consideration ensures that the language has the competence to perform its role in fostering communication and meeting communicative needs. The second focuses on developing the language to keep up with human intellectual progress in all fields. The third views it as a source of pride, a testament to our roots and identity, and something that everyone should value and take seriously. This is why we must address the joint role of language and national identity and the reciprocal influence in enhancing each other's position, as discussed in the next section.

6.6. Section Three

6.6.1. National Identity and Arabic Language: Integration and Complementarity

Language is the cornerstone of identity, making the mother tongue an inseparable part of an individual's personality. Despite the influence of other languages learned later, the first language remains the heritage of both the individual and the nation. It is a rightful possession, a carrier of ancestors' civilization and legacy. For instance, Arabic, the language of the Qur'an, deeply roots us as Arabs and Muslims in our religion and civilization. However, the rise of other civilizations and their intellectual and economic impacts often compel us to learn additional languages.

Language defines a nation, sustains its existence, and conveys its culture. It reflects the nation's civilization, mirrors its renaissance, preserves its heritage, and serves as its collective memory and historical archive. A nation's survival hinges on the survival of its language. Nations whose languages have perished have themselves faded into oblivion, as no nation can endure if its people abandon their native tongue.

Identity stems from the meanings individuals construct through language. The unique character of a society arises from the interaction of linguistic discourses shaped by historical changes, reflecting both harmony and discord within its social framework.

6.6.2. Language Serves as a Tool for Preserving Identity

Turning to history offers valuable lessons, as many civilizations have risen from the ashes and revived their identities through the preservation of their languages. This has allowed them to maintain their national identity and safeguard the heritage and accomplishments of their ancestors.

6.6.3. Examples from Hebrew, Japanese, and Korean

The Hebrew language was once considered a dead language, but its speakers succeeded in reviving it from extinction and uniting it after years of dispersion. In the mid-19th century, a group of young European Jews initiated a movement to revive Hebrew. Among the most prominent figures was Eliezer

Ben-Yehuda, who advocated for making Hebrew a spoken language in daily life under the slogan, "*No nation lives without its language.*"

In 1881, Ben-Yehuda emigrated to Palestine with his wife and family, where he imposed the use of Hebrew as the primary language of communication within his household. At that time, Hebrew was a dormant language, much like Latin, used only in religious rituals. Ben-Yehuda's efforts led to the establishment of schools that taught all subjects—history, geography, mathematics, and more—exclusively in Hebrew.

As a result of Ben-Yehuda's advocacy, Hebrew has become a highly dynamic language that plays a central role in identity formation. All modern sciences, including chemistry, physics, pharmacy, medicine, engineering, and humanities, now teach in Hebrew. Additionally, it serves as the medium for academic conferences and scholarly discussions.

This successful endeavor exemplified the cohesion of identity through the revival of a language from oblivion. American-imposed changes, including constitutional reforms and significant restructuring of state institutions, followed the Japanese's defeat in World War II. However, they steadfastly refused to abandon their national language. They continued to use it in their institutes and universities, integrating it into the realms of advanced scientific and industrial development.

Similarly, the Koreans, who had endured Japanese occupation during which their language was suppressed and replaced with Japanese in education, reclaimed their linguistic identity after liberation following Japan's defeat in World War II. They adopted standard Korean as the foundation for human development and made it the language of education across all levels and disciplines.

All signs and store names in Korea were solely in Korean. In cases where foreign names were necessary—such as for embassies or major hotels—these were inscribed in smaller foreign letters beneath the prominent Korean script.

(Reference: Khuli, Dr. Muammar, 1995, "*The Arabic Language: Identity and Belonging*," *Al-Rawabet Center for Research and Studies*).

<https://rawabetcenter.com/archives/1995>

6.6.4. Arabic Language and National Identity

Undoubtedly, language embodies thought, identity, and the essence of the past, present, and future. Today, the Arabic language faces numerous challenges, including the prevalence of colloquial dialects in media, academia, and among broadcasters and lecturers, as well as its marginalization in scientific and natural studies. This, however, does not mean opposing openness or learning other languages. Rather, the focus on foreign languages should not come at the expense of Arabic.

Prioritizing the following actions will help us preserve Arabic as our first language, a cornerstone of our identity, roots, heritage, and noble religion.

1. Integrating Arabic Across Sectors: Utilize the Arabic language in all aspects of academic, educational, media, and administrative life.
2. Early Childhood Education: Teach children in preschools their first language—Arabic—so they grow up rooted in its vocabulary and cultural essence.
3. Innovating Teaching Methods: Develop and simplify Arabic language teaching methods, encouraging students to actively practice the language.
4. Mandatory Use in Education: Require teachers and professors across all educational levels to use Arabic for at least half of each lesson.
5. Promoting Arabic in Business: Encourage businesses, restaurants, and offices to use Arabic in naming their establishments and adopt it effectively in advertisements and promotions.
6. Media and Institutional Efforts: Urge media outlets, organizations, and training centers to produce programs, workshops, and episodes emphasizing the importance of Arabic and fostering its growth and development within society.

6.6.5. The efforts of the United Arab Emirates in Preserving the Arabic Language and National Identity

This statement reflects the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, as expressed on July 13.

"Our history, identity, and cultural heritage will remain an essential part of our plans for the future."

In his first comprehensive speech outlining the UAE's internal and external policy since assuming leadership on May 14, Sheikh Mohammed pledged to uphold history and reinforce national identity and cultural heritage as cornerstones for shaping the future.

This leadership commitment serves as a directive for state institutions and shapes the contours of UAE policies and plans. On this basis, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and Chairman of the UAE Education and Human Resources Council, called for enhancing national identity, cultural values, and the Arabic language in educational institutions. He affirmed that preserving and promoting Emirati identity, culture, and the Arabic language are top priorities for the UAE leadership. Key Initiatives to Preserve and Promote Arabic Language. The UAE has initiated various initiatives and projects aimed at safeguarding and elevating the Arabic language. (<https://al-ain.com/article/national-identity-uae-directives-shape>)

1. Center of Excellence in the Arabic Language: Established at Mohammed Bin Zayed University for Humanities in Abu Dhabi, this center focuses on Arabic language research and its development in modern contexts. It reflects the university's commitment to advancing Arabic globally and aligning research efforts to serve it optimally (<https://www.mbzuh.ac.ae>).

2. Arabic Language Charter: Announced in April 2012 by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President of the UAE, Prime Minister, and Ruler of Dubai, the Arabic Language Charter marked a transformative effort in protecting and promoting Arabic. The charter serves as a reference for policies and laws supporting Arabic language use and has led to the establishment of the **Arabic Language Advisory Council** to implement its principles and recommendations.

3. The Sheikh Zayed Book Award The Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Center, under the Department of Culture and Tourism, hosts an independent annual award that honors cultural creators, thinkers, publishers, and young talents for their significant contributions to cultural, literary, and social development. Hosted by the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Center under the Department of Culture and Tourism, this award includes categories like children's and youth literature to nurture cultural identity and combat ideas outside societal norms.

4. The Arabic Reading Challenge: Launched by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, this initiative is the largest reading competition in the Arab world, engaging over one million students annually to read 50 million books each academic year. It aims to foster a culture of reading among Arab youth, making literacy a fundamental pillar of intellectual growth.

Through these efforts, the UAE continues to champion the Arabic language as an essential part of its national identity, ensuring it thrives across cultural, educational, and societal domains.

7. Conclusion

7.1. Key Findings

1. Language serves as the intellectual vessel of a society, storing its cultural values and playing a pivotal role in shaping individual personalities.

2. Scholars and philosophers have debated the origins of language, with prominent theories including divine inspiration, natural evolution, and social convention. The researcher leans toward a synthesis of these theories.

3. The primary influences on first language acquisition are environmental and societal interactions.

4. Sociolinguistics explores the interplay between language and social life, revealing how societal factors influence linguistic phenomena and vice versa.

5. Sociolinguistics emerged as a distinct field within general sociology in the late 1960s and early 1970s, bridging the gap between sociology and linguistics.

6. Cultural level and social environment significantly impact language acquisition, usage, and development, while language simultaneously influences cultural standards.

7. First language development depends heavily on the social environment and cognitive abilities of the learner.

8. The relationship between language and culture is symbiotic; individuals and societies use language to express cultural identity.

9. Preserving and advancing the Arabic language is both a national and religious duty, as it is the cornerstone of the national identity of Arab countries.

10. Language has evolved beyond a mere communication tool, becoming a cultural bridge among individuals, groups, and generations.

7.2. Key Recommendations

1. Organize workshops, training sessions, and guidance initiatives across societal institutions to teach, develop, and promote first language proficiency, especially in media and educational institutions.

2. Improve methods for teaching the Arabic language, simplifying grammar and linguistic rules for students, and promoting cultural awareness about learning patterns.

3. Encourage teachers and professors to consistently use Standard Arabic in their lessons and lectures.

4. Host seminars and conferences that integrate culture and language to highlight the richness and cultural significance of the Arabic language.

5. Develop comprehensive Arabic teaching programs rooted in Arab cultural identity. These programs should consider:

- Program Level: Beginner, intermediate, or advanced.
- Language Type: Standard Arabic.
- Program Type: General or specialized programs tailored to different needs.
- Cultural Content: Tailored to the community and location where Arabic is being learned.
- Train learners in practical language communication through real-life scenarios, addressing their linguistic needs and demonstrating that language acquisition transcends rote memorization.

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