Arabic Language for Expatriate Parents in Dubai:
An Innovated Unit of Learning from an Andragogical Approach

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Abstract

Since the Arabic Language (AL) is a compulsory subject in private schools in Dubai for non-Arabic-speaking expatriate pupils, AL training is being offered to expatriate parents by volunteering school-teachers to foster learning Arabic and promote parental engagement in their children's Arabic learning. However, without a properly devised unit of learning based on parents' needs, specific course design models and adult learning approaches, parents' motivating factors could be hindered which, might discourage them from further pursuing this learning journey. Therefore, this paper aims to design an innovative Unit of Learning (UoL) based on identifying expatriate parents' language needs through a needs analysis tool, in one of the British private schools in Dubai. The needs' analysis reveals that expatriate parents expect to learn Arabic language and culture through experiential and functional learning that link to their roles in life. Thus, this paper presents a designed UoL entitled, 'Arabic Language for Expat Parents,' which aims to involve parents in their children's learning of Arabic as an Additional Language (AAL) in Dubai private schools. The designed UoL is underpinned by three theories: progressivism, andragogy, and authentic learning. Ultimately, this paper aims to encourage schools to increase their engagement with expatriate parents and act as catalysts for Arabic language and culture learning in Dubai and the UAE context at large.

Keywords andragogy, Arabic as a second language, authentic learning, course design, innovation in education, Language Learning for Specific Purposes, parental engagement, progressivism

1. Introduction

Since Dubai hosts a majority of expatriates who have come from all over the world for the hope of a better life, the English language has emerged as the Lingua Franca (Obaid 2009; Randall & Samimi 2010). This posed a critical debate regarding the status of the Arabic Language (AL) and culture. Therefore, the UAE Ministry of Education (MoE) has announced that non-Arab students, irrespective of where they come from, must study AL in schools from grades 1 to 9 (KHDA 2019). However, parents had conflicting attitudes towards this decision (Clarke 2016). Some parents were hoping to apply for an exemption from studying AL as it would be seldom used back home and is by no means easy (Ahmed 2012). However, many parents welcomed the idea and expressed *their* interest in learning AL to assist their children in learning about the culture and language of this region (Bell 2016; Hanif 2016). The latter parents summoned other expatriate parents to view this as an opportunity rather than a setback since an additional language is an extra skill and will induce cultural knowledge, respect, and understanding (Egbert 2015).

Henceforth, UAE media articles reported an upsurge in schools taking initiatives to provide AL training for parents (Bell 2016; Tesorero 2017; Gems Founders Schools 2018). These reports denoted that volunteer AL schoolteachers are teaching Arabic as a taster language experience and offered during the school calendar's provision during 'Parental Engagement Week.' Thus, a properly designed course is needed for this specific context and niche segment of keen learners.

According to Al Sumaiti's (2012) UAE policy brief, the quality of parental involvement is of more importance for the child's progress than parental education, occupation, or income. "What parents do is more important than who parents are" (2012, p. 3). Moreover, the OECD report highlights that a critical strategy of innovation in education is to involve parents in their children's learning at school (Lancrin et al. 2017). This is in line with the UAE National Agenda 2021 that articulates "Arabic will re-emerge as a dynamic and vibrant language, expressed everywhere in speech and writing as a living symbol of the nation's progressive Arab-Islamic values" (UAE Vision 2021 2019). Therefore, a bottom-up approach within a problem-solving model is considered a

successful combination of innovation (White 2003), as it strongly aligns with the primary purpose of this paper.

1.1 Problem Statement

AL is being offered in the UAE to expatriate parents by volunteering school-teachers without a properly devised course or unit of learning based on parents' language needs, specific course design models, and adult teaching and learning approaches. This can hinder the motivating factors of parents and might discourage them from further pursuing this learning journey. Thus, this paper aims to design an innovatively tailored Unit of Learning (UoL) based on identifying parents' needs and expectations in one of the British private schools in Dubai, while being guided by course design theories and research-based methods and approaches.

1.2 Purpose

The primary purpose of this study is to identify expatriate parents' needs and expectations from learning AL in their children's schools, hence introduce and design an innovated, appropriate, and engaging UoL for the specific context of Dubai and caters to this niche segment of intrinsically motivated adult learners. Ultimately, the designed UoL entitled *'Arabic Language for Expat Parents'* aims to involve parents in their children's learning of AAL in Dubai private schools and seeks to inspire private schools to increase their engagement with parents as catalysts for fostering learning Arabic language and culture.

1.3 Research Questions

Expatriate parents as key stakeholders are affected by the implementation of AAL in schools. To further support the teaching and learning of Arabic in Dubai and the expatriate parents who are motivated to learn AL, it is proposed that a course be designed for parents in order to further involve them in their children's AL learning in school (Razem 2020).

Therefore, there are two key research questions that emerge from this backdrop:

- What are the parents' language needs and expectations regarding the desired AL

Unit of Learning (UoL) that will engage them in meaningful learning of basic Arabic?

- Based on parents' needs, what are the critical elements that guide the development of the innovated UoL in matter of included or excluded content to fit for purpose, suggested timeframe, the scope and sequence of this content, the delivery mode (instruction methods), needed resources, and outcomes measurement or assessment?

To answer these questions and achieve this paper's purposes, the designed UoL will be founded on an initial needs analysis conducted on volunteering parents in a British primary school in Dubai. Besides, there is clearly a need for a model that considers all the potentially significant variables in course design to achieve an appropriate and engaging UoL that meets parents' needs and expectations. It is argued that all course design components will fall into place, depending on the adopted model.

1.4 *Significance and Relevance*

This paper is considered relevant according to the contextual factors of the UAE: English is a Lingua Franca and Arabic is a mandated subject in private schools. The design of this UoL is based on the premise of 'parents as learners'; hence there is a need for age and 'social' role-appropriate content and meaningful experiences. The significance arises from the scarcity of literature on designing courses to involve parents in AL learning, especially in the UAE context. The study is also considered timely as it aligns with the UAE National Agenda 2021.

2. Literature Review

The unit structure depends on making decisions that are justified within the adopted theoretical and conceptual framework. Hence, this section will include the main concepts related to the envisaged UoL as it explicates the theoretical frames that ground this unit's design and presents the literature that pertains to research questions.

2.1 *Conceptual Frameworks*

Three conceptual frameworks relate to the research questions at hand: innovation in teaching and learning, andragogy versus pedagogy, and Language Learning for Specific Purposes (LLSP).

a. Innovation in teaching and learning

Innovation in education is defined as "an object, idea or practice which is perceived to be new by the participants in the change process and the process by which that object, idea or practice becomes adopted" (Print 2003). The OECD (Lancrin et al. 2017) report also provides twelve innovations in education and considers "parental involvement in school activities" as the eleventh innovation. Likewise, White (2003) argues that "the decision to design and implement a new language syllabus is an aspect of innovation" (p.136). According to Print (2003), innovation has four significant features: it is multidimensional in nature (idea, object, or practice), process-oriented, perceived as new by its adopters, and its intention is improvement. Besides, Hoyle (1976) postulates a process of innovation on a continuum that starts from "its embryonic beginnings to its adoption by users" (p.241), as **Figure 1** shows below.

---Innovation---
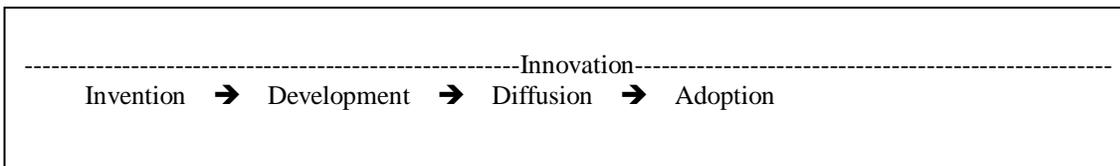   Invention ➔ Development ➔ Diffusion ➔ Adoption

Figure 1: Process of Innovation (Hoyle 1976)

Given these conceptualizations, this paper attempts to produce an object (UoL) based on an idea (involving parents in learning AL) that can be implemented (in pilot schools using a process approach) and adopted by MoE/KHDA/ other schools, which fits the criteria for innovation in education.

b. Andragogy versus pedagogy

According to Knowles (1973), pedagogy is defined as the science and art of teaching *children.* On the other hand, andragogy is defined as "activities intentionally designed for

the purpose of bringing about learning among those whose age, social roles, or self-perception, define them as adults" (Merriam & Brockett 2007, p. 8). Thus, andragogy as a teaching method is proposed to be built around the needs and interests of adult's contexts: family life, work, community, recreation (Lindeman cited in Merriam & Brockett 2007). This study bases the design of the UoL on the needs analysis of parents as it adopts the assumptions that underly andragogy. These assumptions include (Knowles 1980):

- In pedagogy, learners are dependant in their learning endeavours, while in andragogy, learners are self-directing.

- Adults have a rich resource for learning, their 'experiences.'

- Adults are more problem-centred than subject-centred in learning.

- The developmental tasks of adults' social roles drive the readiness of an adult to learn.

c. Language Learning for Specific Purposes (LLSP)

Language Learning for Specific Purposes (LLSP) courses are driven by context and involved learners (Widdowson 1983). These courses emerge from specific target language uses founded on an identified set of specialized needs. Hence, the methodology, content, objectives, materials, teaching methods, and assessment practices are tailored to a specific context or a particular subset of tasks and skills (Trace, Hudson, & Brown 2015), for example, Arabic for business and English for tourism. Hence, this unit falls under the bigger umbrella of LLSP as there are certain expectations of the learners that are exemplified by their specialized needs as parents living in Dubai. However, Brown (1995) highlights that designing LLSP courses involves the same processes applied to any other language course. The most crucial components should be systematic, justifiable, and based on identifying the needs of learners. Thus, the core steps of curriculum development, according to Brown's (1995) model, include: needs analysis, goals and objectives, materials selection and development, teaching, and finally, assessments and program evaluation. The subsequent sections will follow Brown's model of curriculum development.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Two interrelated theories guide the design of this UoL and ground this research paper: progressivism theory and authentic learning theory.

2.2.1 Progressivism Educational Theory: The Process Model

Progressivism is based on two essential perceptions related to the nature and purpose of education: firstly, students are decision-makers, and secondly, education aims to assist learners in problem-solving (White 2003). White contends that progressivism is concerned with "doing things *for* or doing things *with* the learner" (2003, p. 25). Thus, progressivism as a value system emphasizes the processes of building the course or adapting it to the needs of learners or the requirements of the community within it, which aligns with the conceptual frameworks of this paper: innovation, andragogy, and LLSP.

Accordingly, this UoL adopts Progressivism as it endeavours to answer the research questions. In fact, progressivism matches the purpose of meeting parents' communication needs as they are active participants, end-users, and decision-makers in the design process of this UoL as well as being more problem-centred than subject-centred (White 2003). Thus, the framework that guides the design of this UoL starts with the learner and ends with their target communicative competence. The adoption of Progressivism involves subsequent course design decisions that will be expounded in the following sections.

2.2.2 Authentic Learning Theory

Authentic Learning is defined as learning that "focuses on real-world, complex problems and their solutions" (Lombardi 2007, p2). Hence, this type of learning goes beyond the content-based curriculum to the multidisciplinary and transferable skills. Herrington, Reeves, and Oliver (2010) assert that immersing learners in appealing and complex tasks, using scenarios "built up through the creation and development of realistic and engaging ideas," creates an authentic context (Herrington et al. 2010, p.90).

An authentic context provides purpose, motivation, and engagement for learning. Herrington et al. (2010) emphasize that the task is the single most significant element in the design of the learning course. The activities learners engage in to complete the task

"can enable and facilitate complex learning, and motivate and engage students in its execution" (Herrington et al. 2010, p. 41). There are nine elements of authentic learning tasks: have real-world relevance, are ill-defined, are complex tasks, expert performances, collaboration, reflection, applied across subjects, seamlessly integrated with assessment, create polished products in their own right.

It is highlighted that for authentic learning to occur, learners must be engaged in a realistic task that provides opportunities for complex collaborative activities (Herrington et al. 2010). Hence, using the authentic real-life context of living in Dubai (an Arab Emirate), learners in this unit are surrounded by Arabic script and encounter Arabic speakers almost daily. Therefore, this UoL applies the AuL theory and task-based design.

2.3 Review of Literature

A literature review on adult language learning based on andragogical methods was performed using the online databases ERIC, Google Scholar, and ProQuest. The search keywords were 'adult learners,' 'andragogy,' 'language learning,' 'needs analysis,' and 'course design.' Although empirical studies in this field are scant, there were three comparable studies carried out in an American context and one local study. Research have shown that the context is crucial to the nature of the designed courses and the parent-school collaboration.

In Beecher and Van Pay's (2020) quasi-experimental study in the USA, effectiveness of community-based parent education program to engage families in increasing English language interactions with their children was investigated. The study concluded that "Community-delivered interventions have the potential to engage caregivers to provide enriching language environments that lead to children's healthy language development" (p. 453). Likewise, Waterman (2009) averred in her quasi-experimental research of Mexican mothers enrolled in school-based English as a Second Language (ESL) classes that the intervention group (wherein teachers integrated parent-involvement knowledge and behaviours into their instruction) supported meaningful parent–school collaboration, reflecting new knowledge and behaviours which provided evidence for increasing meaningful collaboration between Mexican immigrant families and U.S. schools. In the same vain, Wood, Rogers, and Yancey (2006) concluded that American schools play a

transformational role through involving parents in learning ESL.

Locally, the researcher's qualitative local study on Arabic as an Additional Language policy in the UAE proposed that the MoE offers an AL course for parents (Razem 2020). The purpose is to enhance parental engagement in their children's learning of Arabic to achieve the National Agenda 2021 priorities of enhancing the status of Arabic in the UAE and empowering its use (National Agenda 2021 2019). This parallels a local initiative by Abu Dhabi Education Council's (ADEC) that offered opportunities for ICT training to parents as part of the parental involvement and the e-citizen program whereby parents received training in several schools on how to use various ICT applications to involve parents (ADEK 2012). Hence, it is perceived that offering AL training to expatriate parents who show an interest in the language and culture of the UAE is likely to yield better student attainment and achievement in AAL, let alone the prospect of culture learning and potential social integration of expatriate families (Sakho 2012).

3. Methodology

3.1 Course Design Approach

White contends that there are two main approaches to language course design, the first is "an interventionist approach which gives priority to the pre-classification of linguistic or other content or skill objectives" versus the "non-interventionist experiential natural growth approach" (2003, p. 45). Therefore, the bases for language courses can be: content (form/situation/topic/functional), skills (language skills are productive and receptive learning skills), or methods (process or procedural).

This UoL mainly adopts the communicative approach that entails four linguistic skills (receptive and productive) and integrates several elements from all bases, as mentioned above. The rationale behind adopting this integrated approach emerges from the fact that it assumes an eclectic, holistic approach that caters to all areas of linguistic and experiential learning and teaching, which fits this paper's purposes (Brown 1995). This also aligns with the theoretical underpinning of progressivism and authentic learning. In other words, the UoL springs from the needs of parents and applies multiple approaches

(which combine content, skills, and methods) as it aims to achieve rich learning experiences with reasonable flexibility from the instructor's side.

3.2 Data Collection: Needs Analysis

Language Needs Analysis (LNA) entails determining the course's aims and objectives by identifying the learners' communicative needs (Richards & Rodgers 2014). Hence, it is the starting point in course design and development. This paper's LNA form is adapted from Al Bassri's (2016), as shown in Image 1.

Image 1: Language Needs Analysis Form (LNA) (Adapted from Al Bassri 2016)

White (2003) contends that one of the adult learner characteristics is their desire to learn quickly, something they can use immediately. Hence, some of the categories provided in the form result from an initial informal discussion with a couple of expatriate parents (pilot sample) as they perceived the language purposes of the type of persons concerned.

- *Context and site:* A British private primary school in Dubai.

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- *Participants' profile*: The participants comprised of twelve volunteering parents who filled the LNA. The snowball sampling technique was used wherein existing participants referred other expatriate parents who are keen on learning AL (Naderifar, Goli, & Ghaljaie 2017). All of the participants were mothers whose kids attended a British primary school in Dubai, bilingual or multilingual, and who were interested in learning AL. None of the participants had previous knowledge of AL.

- *Importance*: Needs analysis is considered a crucial stage in course design when the functional content supersedes the structural one. Courses that "have meaning as their priority will tend to be based on the needs of the learners" (White 2003, p. 91).

- *Procedures*: The LNA was conducted in a pre-course stage; however, it is regarded as an ongoing process that will help guide the learners and the instructors by providing feedback (White 2003).

3.3 Limitations and Ethical Considerations

The LNA scope is limited to one site only, one private school, and is context-bound to Dubai only. As the sample size of volunteer parents is relatively small (12), it is argued that conducting an LNA on larger numbers of participants from expatriate parents could reveal a broader range of language needs. Likewise, to run full-fledged research requires more time and resources. Another limitation emerges from the fact that all the participants consisted of mothers only. In the study, fathers' participation was not possible as they did not volunteer or were unavailable.

This study considered the ethical consideration related to the school principal's approval to conduct a needs-analysis to design a UoL for parents, and the informed consent provision included in the LNA in which the volunteering participants signed (Image 1) (Habibis 2013). The form indicated that this UoL is to be piloted in the school in the next academic year 2020-2021 and that parents' participation is unbinding.

4. Findings

The needs analysis revealed parents' profile and needs, which answer the first research question as demonstrated below in Table 1.

No	First Language	Nationality	Other languages	Style of learning	Arab nationalities/ contact	Very often need AL in these situations	Other	Confidence using technology
1	English	Canadian	French	Alone + with a friend + in group	Emirati	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Calligraphy	Very confident in using all items mentioned in the form
2	English	Australian	Italian		Jordanian and Lebanese	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		
3	Italian	Italian	French - English		Syrian	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		
4	Italian	Italian	English		Emirati and Omani	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6		
5	English	American	Spanish		Levant	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		
6	English	New Zealander			Egyptian	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		
7	Dutch	Dutch	English German		Cannot determine!	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		
8	English	British	Urdu		Unsure	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		
9	Russian	Russian	English		All	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		
10	Indian	Indian	Gujarati		Mostly Syrian, Palestinian, and Jordanian	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	GCC dialect	
11	English	British			All Arabs	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Loves to learn more about Arabic music	
12	Hungarian	Hungarian	English		Unsure	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		

Table 1: Parents' Profile and Needs

Parents preferred to learn AL twice a week for two hours, which provides the suggested timeframe for this UoL as it answers part of the second research question. They all

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mentioned their priority in learning necessary language skills that can help them in the following activities/functions (Appendix A):

- Reading an Arabic book/story with their child at a beginner level: alphabet books.

- Writing and reading basic Arabic such as family members' names, numbers, and basic sentences.

- Singing Arabic songs with their child and understanding them, such as the alphabet, the days, and numbers.

- Converse with Arab parents in school at a basic level, such as exchanging greetings and pleasantries, conversation fillers, and fundamental questions/common phrases.

- Learning about Arab culture through language learning.

As shown in Table 1, very few parents were interested in learning Arabic calligraphy skills, GCC dialect, and Arabic music. The LNA results emerge as the answer to the second research question related to what content should be included. Hence, the UoL outline is derived from the LNA and will consist of learning experiences (functional approach) that integrate the linguistic aims (four skills) with the experiential ones. See Table 2.

The learners' profile comprises:	The unit profile comprises:
- Level of learners: Novice 0 - Age group: Adults - Number of learners: 12 - Social segment: Parents - Learners language knowledge: Mostly fluent or native English speakers- all are bilingual or plurilingual - Learners' confidence in using	- Target language: Arabic Language - The medium of instruction: English Language - Total contact hours: 20 hours F2F - iBook: estimated 10-15 hours of home learning - Frequency of contact session: twice per week for two hours

technology such as iPads/applications: they all are very confident using technology	- Duration: five weeks - Frequency: UoL can be offered twice every school trimester to a new cohort of parents

Table 2: Learner and Unit Profiles

Print (2003) asserts that effective content selection depends on specific criteria: significance, validity, relevance, utility, learnability, and interest. Hence, the content selected for this UoL will reflect these criteria as it pertains to adult learning.

5. UoL Outline

5.1 Rationale

This unit is designed for expatriate parents who wish to learn basic AL to help their children learn Arabic in school. They reflect their interest in learning about the language and culture of the country they reside in. It introduces the necessary communication skills needed to communicate in various relevant situations (in school, home, and others). This unit seeks to enable the learners to recognize their strengths and needs in language learning and provide them with sufficient confidence to use basic Arabic effectively. It also aims to enhance the learners' skills in independent learning outside of the classroom. Henceforth, this rationale guides the planning of the various components of this UoL and reflects the beliefs, values, and goals that underline the unit.

5.2 Determining the Scope and Sequence

This section answers the second question on determining the scope and sequence of content. While scope refers to the depth and breadth of content, the sequence is the order of the content (Print 2003). Since this UoL is considered a short course of 5 weeks with a total of 20 hours of face-to-face instruction, the in-depth content is deemed to be challenging. However, the breadth explicitly covers the outcomes that meet the communicative needs of learners. On the other hand, the sequence is based on principles

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of simple to complex and pre-requisite learning (Nunan 2004). Since learners have no previous knowledge of Arabic, the basic linguistic skills form the foundation to build. This means that learning the alphabet is a pre-requisite to learning how to write, read, and pronounce Arabic letters and sounds accurately.

5.3 Learning Outcomes

Towards the end of this UoL, learners will be able to:

- speak and sing with their children in Arabic at a beginner level (speaking).

- decipher the Arabic by reading Arabic words surrounding them in Dubai, such as signs, and read Arabic stories -at a beginner level- to their children (reading).

- write their names and their family members' names in Arabic using Arabic script and write basic roleplays (Writing).

- start a dialogue with Arabic speakers by exchanging pleasantries, introducing themselves and immediate family, and use common catchphrases (speaking and listening).

- reflect a better understanding of and develop an appreciation of the importance of the AL, society, and culture and how this experience has affected them as well as the people around them (culture).

5.4 Instruction Methods

The unit applies synchronous and asynchronous modes of teaching wherein face-to-face instruction is complemented by online learning, mobile learning, and an iBook as independent home learning. It has been proven that the blended learning instruction method engenders rich and eclectic learning environments that best matches the experiential learning objectives of this UoL (Lalima & Dangwal 2017). Aligning with the second research question that raises the issue of the delivery mode and instruction methods, the following approaches are to be implemented as they provide scaffolding to the authentic tasks/ experiences:

5.4.1 Blended learning: an innovative approach

According to Lalima and Dangwal, "blended learning is the concept that includes framing teaching learning process that incorporates both face to face teaching and teaching supported by ICT. Blended learning incorporates direct instruction, indirect instruction, collaborative teaching, individualized computer-assisted learning" (2017, p. 131). Moreover, Lombardi (2007) emphasized the need for the new 'participatory learners' to have learning activities that match their experiences of hands-on involvement with Web 2.0 applications. In this unit, learners will use Web 2.0 applications/tools throughout the course activities as cognitive tools that will facilitate and enhance learning and collaboration. Therefore, the unit comprises blended e-learning methodology, which includes 20 face-to-face contact hours in a classroom, provides a free iBook, and integrates technology using Edmodo as a social networking platform.

Previous research has shown that Edmodo proved to be easily accessible and provided a virtual space for collaboration, a tool for reflection, learning to learn and sharing of learning, allowed the teacher to control the users, and was used as a communication tool to enhance self-directed and blended learning environments (Al Shehri 2016; Smala, Semingson & MacDonald 2014; Holland & Muilenburg 2011). Therefore, Edmodo is the technology tool used in combining classroom interaction with e-learning, and integrating Edmodo in this unit is perceived to provide all the aforementioned benefits, which enhances the learning experiences and outcomes.

In addition, classroom learning is not only combined with self-directed e-learning using an interactive iBook as well as suggested reading/watching links but also includes mobile learning since learners need to download Edmodo on their mobiles to receive prompt announcements, notifications, replies and actively participate in discussions, postings, commenting, reflecting and blogging on an asynchronous basis.

5.4.2 Embedded learning skills

Throughout the unit, the learners will actively participate in and outside the classroom to enhance the key learning skills: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and innovation by applying, constructing their knowledge, and reflecting on their interpretation. By showing and sharing their journey of learning Arabic

and applying their gained knowledge in real-life situations, the learners would demonstrate that learning Arabic is attainable and beneficial.

5.5 Initial Preparations

At the outset, the school will need to provide a fully equipped classroom for the unit to be conducted twice a week. The instructor should have a high English proficiency and be well-trained on andragogy (adult teaching and learning methods). The professional andragogy teacher training should be certified. It can be conducted in certain entities such as the KHDA, or the UoL can be taught by university instructors (experts in teaching languages to adults).

Furthermore, the instructor needs to be technologically literate if not savvy. They will need to apply blended learning and get to an awareness stage that will allow a full exploration of Edmodo and mobile learning's potential. The instructor will need to set up a class group, create a group name, and give learners the group code they can use to join. Since Edmodo has several similarities to Facebook, the instructor can familiarize her/himself on how to use the several aspects it affords before commencing the unit. After getting acquainted with using Edmodo, the instructor posts a welcoming note to learners and creates subfolders with five themes, and embeds all the videos/ links related to the themes of the unit on Edmodo's Library.

5.6 Resources

The element of the needed resources which is alluded to in the second research question involves the following:

- An iPad for video recording of learners in-class activities.

- Edmodo app to be downloaded on the learners' mobiles.

- Home learning iBook: *Let's Explore Arabic Alphabet.* A CLASSroad Publication. Learners to download it for free from the iTunes Store on their iPads.

- Self-reflection journal document shared on Edmodo.

- Quizlet: is an online cognitive tool that helps learners learn vocabulary in an easy and fun game-based way. The instructor prepares the flashcards for the first session and asks learners to collaborate and prepare the vocabulary flashcards for the remaining sessions (scaffolding).

- Learners are encouraged to have a Native Speaker Buddy: a native Arabic speaker friend (parent) or neighbour or their kids' Arabic teachers to practice, or the instructor could suggest creating coffee mornings and inviting Arabic speaking parents to practice with learners in the school parents' cafe.

5.7 The Culminating Authentic Task

Learners to collaborate and present their whole learning journey by creating a Prezi/PPP/iMovie and showcasing it in their children's school. Learners will use their authentic Arabic products (portfolio of their speaking and writing evidence) and provide English translations to encourage other expatriate parents to learn AL and culture. This is envisioned to positively shift parents' conative and affective attitudes towards learning Arabic, assist children with their Arabic learning in school, and ultimately exemplify global citizenship by embracing bilingualism if not multilingualism (EJME 2016).

5.8 Authentic Learning Elements in Sub-Tasks

By applying task-based learning and AuL theory, Table 3 reveals the elements of AuL as staged experiences in the duration of five weeks.

Week	Tasks	Arabic Culture Focus	Collaboration Opportunities	Learners Products (Articulation)	Reflection Opportunities
1	Why learn Arabic? What do you know about AL? What is MSA?	The importance of AL locally, regionally, internationally. Modern Standard Arabic and dialects.		Speaking: Introducing themselves Writing: in transliteration, learners write their introductions	In F2F sessions: Before> learners to ask questions in the recap slot During> instructor asks reflection questions After> learners reflect on their learning by writing on
2	Why learn Arabic script? How is it useful in your daily life?	Arabic fonts and Calligraphy	Create an Arabic Alphabet Book	Writing their name and their family members' names in Arabic script Business Cards as	

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			examples	the Self-reflection Journal
		Quizlet flashcards on Edmodo	Create an Arabic Alphabet Book	Asynchronous on Edmodo: instructor posts reflection questions on Edmodo's wall +extension activities
3	What do you know about the history of the UAE? Why are the emirates named this way? Experts visit	Pleasantries, Greetings, and Replies	Quizlet flashcards on Edmodo	Writing samples (2 worksheets) +joining the letters (connectors and semi-connectors) Role-play in pairs videos Role-play script is written in Arabic	
4	Reading Arabic stories	Reading Arabic stories - based on Arabi 21 leveled reading books (Arabic21 2012)	Reading Stories to children Quizlet flashcards on Edmodo	Students' photos of Arabic script signage from around the city-Dubai- and their comments of recognizing the non-Arabic letters and different fonts	
5	Coaching and scaffolding for the Authentic Task		Learners collaborate using Edmodo and create a Prezi/PPP/iMovie which includes their products	Videos of learners reading stories to their child/ren Whole class showcasing of their learning journeys using technology	

Table 3. The Authentic Learning Elements in Sub-Tasks

5.9 Integrated Assessments and Unit Evaluation

Traditionally, there are two main methods to measure learners' accomplishments of the course objectives: formative and summative. Since this UoL is grounded on andragogical principles, authentic learning, and task-based activities, the assessment will be "based upon observations of student engagement and analysis of artifacts produced in the process of completing the tasks" (Herrington et al. 2010). This means that there will be no summative assessment that resembles an exam or test.

In addition, the unit is designed based on the needs and interests of parents, which in turn engenders the notion that learners "perceive learning as relevant and meaningful, and

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typically learn process skills that are beneficial in life" (Sowell 2005, p. 59). Therefore, the answer to the second research question on assessing the outcomes entails a holistic approach of four levels of evaluations: context, input, process, and product (Stufflebeam 2003). Table 4 shows the strategies that can be tailored and adapted by the unit instructors (see Appendix B for further details).

For students to demonstrate their knowledge and ability throughout this unit, there are two types of assessments:	
• **Formative** • Ongoing observation: anecdotal records, checklists, analytic rating scales • Record-keeping: learners' portfolios (as soft or hard copies) > a compilation of Ss productive evidence which reflects their progress • Self-reflection log: learners to fill weekly • Success criteria (SC) is provided on the side of every task card using Bloom's Taxonomy (remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, reflecting, creating). The teacher to tick the criterion that applies, and Self-assessment is attempted by learners using: WWW (what went well) & EBI (even better if) • Evaluation form of the teaching and the unit to be filled by learners	**Authentic Tasks** • Towards the end of this unit, learners showcase their learning and collaboration through the culminating authentic rich task, which encompasses: • Recordings of roleplay scenarios • Writing evidence of joining letters • Writing the names of family members on a poster -using fonts/calligraphy • Reading a storybook with your child video • Singing Arabic with your child video • Evidence of attempted tasks such as learners' photos and analysis of the signage in Dubai and the recognition of non-Arabic letters/sounds: P/V/G/X/CH

Table 4: Assessment and Evaluation Strategies

6. Conclusion and Implications

Within the micro level, the innovated UoL aims to create meaningful subjective engagement opportunities for non-Arabic speaking expatriate parents by learning the basics of the Arabic language. Thus, parents will exemplify role models to their children

in being open to learning new languages besides further encouraging their motivation, attainment, and achievement in AAL. Having a UoL tailored to expatriate parents' language needs will significantly enhance their learning experiences as it relates to their social roles and learning expectations.

On a meso level, the UoL could be an embryonic initiative for policymakers and decision-makers to be further developed/adapted hence offered to parents in all private schools in the UAE. Consequently, this can potentially create a ripple effect on a regional level within the GCC or the Arab world contingent on the successful implementation of the UoL.

In the chapter entitled 'Andragogy: the art and science of helping adults learn,' Merriam and Bierema (2014) highlight that the purpose of andragogy is changing individuals and changing society. In effect, the prime purpose of this UoL is the prospect of generating positive subjective social transformations towards valuing AL by learning and using it. It is also argued that offering AL training to expatriate parents who show an interest in the language and culture of the UAE is likely to yield better student attainment and achievement in AAL, let alone the prospect of culture learning and potential social integration (Sakho 2012), thus, induce wider social change in Dubai and the broader UAE context. Moreover, this paper not only contributes to the field of Arabic as a second language, parental engagement, and andragogical teaching and learning, but also highlights the need for further future research that could investigate the impact of this UoL on parents, children, and AL status/teaching and learning.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Implementing the Unit of Learning (Sample)

UoL Map: to be filled by the instructor (first week is filled as an example)
Arabic Language for Expat Parents in Dubai

Rationale

Expatriate parents are interested in learning Arabic for many reasons such as to help their children in learning Arabic as an additional language in school, learning the language and culture of the country they reside in 'UAE', and gaining cultural understanding as means to social integration. To support parents in their learning journeys, this UoL is designed to cater for their needs based on a language needs analysis. Learners will be scaffolded to use good re/sources as self-access to further their knowledge as they are engaged in various weekly authentic tasks.

Unit Profile		Learners' Profile	
Duration of the program	5 weeks	Learners	Adults/ Parents
Frequency	Twice a week – every session is 2 hours in duration	Ability	Novice 0 in Arabic language
Learners' number	12: all females	Assumed Prior knowledge	Learners are bilingual or plurilingual and are very confident users of technology
Cross-curricular links	This unit links with ICT, sociology, psychology, media, geography, cross and intercultural studies, history, and art	Motivation and attitude	Learners have an intrinsic conation as they live in Dubai and their children learn Arabic as an additional language in school.

Communicative Purposes of Learners: introducing yourself in Arabic, exchanging greetings, asking basic questions, reflecting on their new knowledge, comparing their previous knowledge to what they learn, experience the language with their children (reading, writing, viewing, listening, speaking and singing together).

Learning Outcomes: Towards the end of the unit, students will be able to do the following using the TL (Arabic language):

Reading and responding	*Listening and responding*
- Recognize the letters and the vocalization markers (such as short vowels) when reading simple words in AL - Recognize common words or often used phrases presented within a supporting context such as: insha'Allah,	Understand and use familiar everyday expressions such as hello and goodbye and simple phrases aimed at the satisfaction of a concrete type's needs. - Obtain specific information from different videos/songs to use them in their final authentic task - Recognize and respond to language items relating to giving and receiving information - Demonstrate their understanding through presenting/speaking about their created products and experiences
Viewing and Speaking	*Writing*
- Present themselves in AL - Apply the correct greeting and its reply depending on the context	- Recognize and apply the joining of connectors and semi-connectors when writing words and phrases using the Arabic script.

- Speak in roleplays applying the new lexical items according to every context - Ask and answer basic questions about personal details such as name, where people live, telephone number.	- Create an alphabet book with word examples with their child. - Write a basic dialogue in AL

Cultural Understandings	*The system of the target language*
- Students to appreciate the sociocultural importance of learning AL from a personal, pragmatic or metacognitive and global citizenship mindset, and identify how this knowledge would help them in their real-life encounters living in Dubai (manners of interacting, expected behaviours, courtesies, rituals, customs, practices..etc.)	• Lexical➔ using vocabulary related to AL in contexts of introductions, greetings, asking about basic information appropriately: • Syntax ➔ using the correct word order, nominal sentences, idhafa structures, male and female. • Discourse➔ reflecting appropriate intercultural language use in the productive modes

Language learning strategies	*Language Teaching Strategies*
• Using Hans Wehr Dictionary for new words; • Cognitive—making associations between new and already known information; • Mnemonic—making associations between new and already known information through use of formula, phrase, verse or the like; • Metacognitive—controlling own cognition through the co-ordination of the planning, organization and evaluation of the learning process and journaling self-reflections • Affective—regulation of emotions, motivation, attuning their interests and attitude toward learning; • Social—the interaction with other learners to improve language learning and cultural understanding.	- Explicitly link concepts to Ss backgrounds and experiences; - Adapt task content to all levels of proficiency (*differentiation (LA/HA)*: by modifying the input, the task, the expected output, the expected duration, or providing more scaffolding and assistance) -in case heritage speakers are part of the learning group ; - Strategy training: Provide ample opportunities for Ss to use learning strategies (problem-solving, organizing, summarizing, predicting, categorizing, evaluating, self-monitoring; - Use scaffolding techniques consistently (providing the right amount of support to move students from one level of understanding to a higher level throughout the lessons); - Use a variety of question types including those that promote higher-order thinking skills throughout the lessons (literal, analytical, and interpretative questions) - Use a variety of techniques to make content concepts clear (modeling, gestures, visuals, hands-on activities);

Week 1: Getting to know each other

Introducing yourself

Texts	*Language Items*	*Lexical Items*	*Tasks*
Video clips • Introduction to AL • What is Modern Standard Arabic?	How are you? What is your name? Where are you from? What do you do?	I am Good/fine/not Good My name is…انا أسمي I am from… أنا من الأردن Countries names كندا- بريطانيا – الهند - روسيا Greetings and replies السلام عليكم / و عليكم السلام – مرحبا / مرحبتين – صباح الخير/ صباح النور Teacher and studentطالب/ة مدرس/ة	- LP/G: Why learn Arabic? What do you know about AL Why is it important? What do you think MSA means? - LP/P: watch the videos> answer comprehension qs> Class FB> - LP/I: immersion experience introducing themselves > listening without writing > writing in transliteration what they remember **SAO (LA/HA):** Recorded interviews with different Arab nationalities introducing themselves using their own dialects: Iraqi/ Palestinian/ Moroccan/ Egyptian/ Lebanese/ Emirati/ Yemeni

Cultural Points

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- UOS	**Unit of study**	- Ss	- **Students**
- TL	**Target language (in this context it is Arabic)**	- FB	**Feedback**
- LP	**Language Practice**	- I	**Individually**
- LU	**Language Use**	- P	**Pair work**
- LA	**Low achievers**	- G	**Group work**
- HA	**High achievers**	- SAO	**Self-access opportunity**

Abbreviations Key:

Appendix B

Integrated Assessments & Self-Assessment Sample

When	Type of Assessment	What
Week 2	Collaboration	Creating an Arabic Alphabet Book (can be adapted from ReadWriteThink)
Week 3	Skill- based	Writing a roleplay and enacting it (Dialogue)
Week 4	Skill-based	Learners reading an Arabic story to their child Video.
Week 5	Multimedia Project	Prezi/iMovie/PPP rubric (adapted)
Week 5	Self-assessment Form Unit & Instructor Evaluation	Learners to fill the evaluation forms towards the end of the unit

Student self-assessment Form

Criteria	Yes	No	Not yet	Comments
❖ I can recognize all the letters of the alphabet				
❖ I know the difference between short and long vowels				
❖ I can make up words from letters like أم /أب				
❖ I know the basic rules of writing: - Writing from right to left. - Semi-connectors rule. - Punctuation rules.				
❖ I recognize all the new sounds added to the original Arabic alphabet like P-G-V-X				
❖ I can use all the greetings and their replies in real life situations				
❖ I can write my and my family members' names in Arabic				
❖ I know the difference between masculine and feminine words in Arabic				
❖ I know the numbers and can ask: what is your number?				
❖ I recognize the shapes and sounds of all 14 symbols in writing				
❖ I am able to introduce myself				
❖ I can understand and use some familiar expressions such as: Happy birthday, please				
❖ I can make a basic conversation using basic questions				
❖ I am able to read an Arabic book with my child/ren				
❖ I feel more confident reading signs written in Arabic around me				
❖ This course has encouraged me to continue my journey in learning Arabic				
❖ I would recommend this course to friends, family and/or other parents				

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