

Language in the Non-Language Classroom

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Purpose of Presentation

This session will explore the use and misuse of certain “hot words” of the Arabic language that are commonly found in the U.S. media. The meaning of their linguistic roots, daily usage and the perspective taken by the U.S. media will be discussed.

Topics to be Discussed

- Introducing the Arabic Language
- Defining “hot words”
- Arabic loanwords into English

Arabic as a Language

Arabic ranks sixth in the world's league table of languages, with an estimated 186 million native speakers.

As the language of the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, it is also widely used throughout the world.

It belongs to the Semitic group of languages which also includes Hebrew and Amharic, the main language of Ethiopia.

اهلا وسهلا!

A Semitic Language

An Arabic word is composed of two parts:

- 1) The root: usually formed of three consonants. These consonants remain in the same order.
- 2) The pattern: additional consonants and vowels can be added to the root to produce another word according to a certain pattern.
- 3) Different patterns created with the same root letters might make abstract concepts from concrete words.
- 4) One Arabic word could equal 3-4 English words.

Example: K-T-B \ ك-ت-ب

كتاب	Kitaab	Book
كاتب	Kaatib	Writer
مكتب	Maktab	Office
مكتبة	Maktaba	Library
كتابة	Kitaaba	Writing
أكتب	Aktub	I write

Hot Words

Question?

What are some “Hot words” of the Arabic language that are commonly found in the US media?



Some Hot Words

Islam

Muslim

Allah

Sharia

Jihad

Qur'an



Activity...

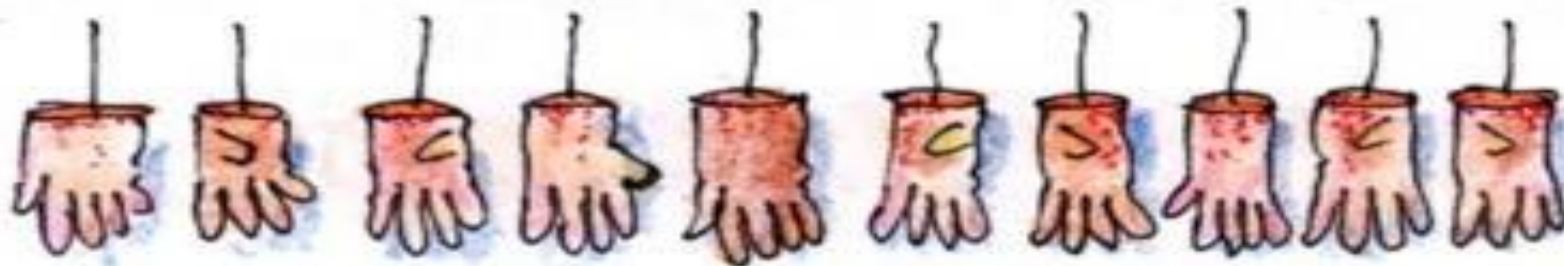
Political Cartoons





ANYTHING IN THERE ABOUT
GRATITUDE?





**SHARIA LAW
EXPLAINED**

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Cindy A. J.

search ID: ifon166

TWO HOURS
LATE... YOU KNOW
WHAT THAT MEANS,
YOUNG LADY?!

C'MON, DAD...
I WANT GOOD OLD
HOUSE ARREST, NOT
THE SHARIA!

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Islam

- Monotheistic religion practiced by millions around the world.
- Meaning: Submission, resignation, reconciliation (to the will of God).
- Can you guess the roots?
- Hint: Three consonants.

Islam

- Roots: S – L – M
- Other words that may have these roots:
 - Muslim - An adherent of Islam (One who submits)
 - Salaam – Peace, Safety, Security
 - Saalim – Safe, Secure, Intact
 - Tasliim – surrender, delivery of goods

Allah

- Roots: A – L - H
- Meaning: God (the One and Only as in monotheism)
- God in other languages –
 - Dios – (Spanish)
 - Dieu – (French)
 - Deus – (Latin)
 - Zot – (Albanian)
 - Tanrı (Turkish)
 - Khoda (Persian)

Allah

- Roots: A – L – H
- Other words with these roots
- Ilah – a god, deity (lacking definite article)
- AAlih – a pagan god (lacking definite article)
- AAliha – a pagan goddess (lacking definite article)
- AAlihii – divine, heavenly
- Muta'allih – divine, heavenly
- Al-Ilaahiyaat – theological

Sharia

- Roots: Sh – R – A'
- Basically known as is the code of conduct or religious law of Islam.

Other common meanings:

- law, canon, code, pretext, legislation, constitution.
- In archaic Arabic, the term Sharia means “path to the water hole.”

Sharia

- Many people, including Muslims, misunderstand Sharia.
- Often associated with the amputation of limbs, death by stoning, lashes and other medieval punishments.
- Sharia is applied by Islamic judges and laws are interpreted according to the Qur'an, saying and practices of the Prophet Muhammad, consensus of religious scholars, and deductive analogy.
- Sharia deals with many topics addressed by state law.
- Some nations have a blend of Sharia law and state law. They apply Sharia law towards marriage, divorce, inheritance and family issues.

Some Topics of Sharia

Ritual worship
Transactions and contracts
Morals and manners
Beliefs
Punishments
Purification
Prayer
Funeral Prayer
Poor Tax
Fasting
Pilgrimage
Trade
Inheritance
Marriage
Divorce
Justice

Sharia

- Roots: Sh – R – A'
- Other words with these roots
- Tashriia' – legal regulations, legislative power
- al-Ishtiraa' – Deuteronomy, fifth Book of Moses
- Mashruua' – legal, legitimate, permissible
- Mutasharri' – legislator, lawgiver, jurist

Jihad

- J – H – D
- Multiple meanings are found.
- Both violent and non-violent meanings exist.
- Term can mean either a “Lesser Jihad” or “Greater Jihad.”
- Media primarily translates it as a holy war or battle (Lesser Jihad).
- Other meanings:
 - Striving to live a moral and virtuous life (Greater Jihad).
- Other uses in Arabic:
 - Gandhi's struggle for Indian independence is called a “jihad” and so is the terminology applied to the fight for Women's Liberation Movement.

Jihad

- Roots: J – H – D
- Other words with these roots
- Juhd – strain, endeavor, effort.
- Ijtihad – exertion, arriving at independent judgment in a legal question.
- Majhuud – endeavor, effort, exertion.
- Mujaahid – fighter, warrior.
- Mujhid – strenuous, trying, grueling.
- Mujtahid – diligent, industrious, striving to achieve a goal.

Qur'an

-Roots: Q – R – ء

-Meaning: Recitation

-Revealed from Allah to Muhammad over a period of approximately twenty-three years.

-It was memorized, recited and written down by Muhammad's companions.

Other words with same root:

Qiraa'a – reading

Qaari' – reader, reciter

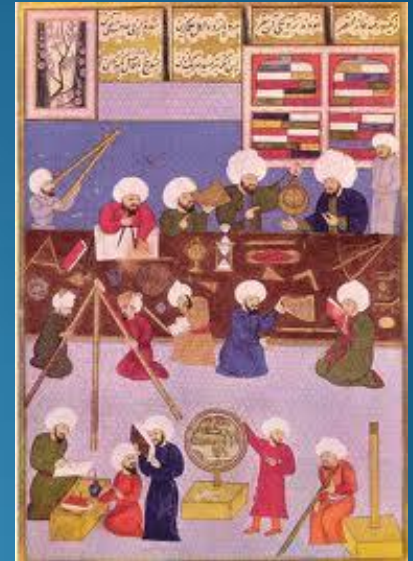
Maqruu' - legible, readable

Istiqraa' – investigation, examination



Some Arabic Loanwords

- admiral - *amīr al-bihār*
- alcohol - *al-kohl*
- algebra - *al-jabr*
- assassin - *ḥashāshīn*,
- coffee, café - *qahwa*
- cotton - *qutun*
- ghoul - *ghūl*
- guitar - *qītāra*
- magazine - *makhāzin*
- safari - *safar*
- zero - *sifr*



Something to Consider

- Certain Arabic words are transformed into “hot words” by the U.S. media.
- These words possess a variety of meanings, but are overshadowed by stereotypes created by the media and film industry.
- Is this popular portrayal in the media accurate? Is it fair?
- Since the media propagates the popular portrayal of these words, how can we redefine them?

Thank You

