Exploring the Al-Khalil Platform: Strategies, Evaluation, Challenges, and Solutions in Teaching Arabic to Non-Native Speakers Through Distance Education

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Abstract
Ibana Company decided to provide a platform for teaching the Arabic language due to the growing interest from non-Arabic speakers in Oman and abroad. The researcher had previously conducted studies on this platform, delivered presentations to describe it, and then deemed it crucial to publish a paper describing the platform, its initiatives, and its significance in the Omani educational field. The paper will introduce the platform, its objectives, teachers, curriculum, and teaching strategies to scholars and professionals in the field of Arabic. The aim is to identify and familiarise them with the platform to facilitate the development of studies that enhance its educational experience.

Keywords: Al-Khalil Platform, Teaching Arabic to Non-native Speakers, Strategies for Teaching

Introduction
The current technological and cognitive revolution necessitates individuals in different sectors, particularly in education, to utilise modern methods to enhance the educational experience and adapt teaching strategies to align with individuals’ technology-driven lifestyles, characterised by various digital tools such as smartphones, online banking, computers, and smart city technologies under the umbrella of the Internet of Things. Digital technology has introduced innovative and adaptable forms of communication in distant education, virtual classrooms, and open institutions. It has also improved the utilisation of programmed education by using computers, CD-ROMs, and the Internet. The e-learning style arose (Al-Zahwani, 2022, p. 5).
Some individuals are optimistic that future education will shift towards e-learning, utilising computer networks and cognitive advancements. This method involves educational platforms that facilitate interaction between teachers and learners, either synchronously or asynchronously. This paper aims to examine the Al-Khalil platform's experience in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers in Oman. It will explore the platform's objectives, strategies, curricula, evaluation tools, challenges faced, and solutions implemented to address these challenges.

The Study Problem

The paper analysed the Al-Khalil platform's teaching of Arabic to non-native speakers in Oman to examine its components, strategies in distance education, challenges encountered, and suggested solutions. The article will provide an in-depth analysis of the inaugural Omani platform dedicated to instructing Arabic to non-native individuals. It will outline the platform's elements, strategies, challenges, and solutions, paving the way for future research to explore its practices through various methodologies.

Objectives of the Study

1- Presenting the Al-Khalil platform and its components.
2- Presenting the tactics, methodologies, and assessment tools used on the platform.
3- Presenting the obstacles encountered by the Al-Khalil platform and the answers it offered.

Study Questions

1- What is the significance of the Al-Khalil platform? What are the constituents?
2- What tactics, methodologies, and assessment tools does the Al-Khalil platform utilise to teach Arabic to non-native speakers?
3- What obstacles did the Al-Khalil platform's interface face? What remedies are being suggested?

Study Approach

The study will use a descriptive and analytical approach to investigate the elements, tools, strategies, challenges, and resolutions of the Al-Khalil platform. Information not given. The study will consist of an introduction, a prelude, three sections, and a conclusion. The introduction will outline the research aspects and their importance. The study will first concentrate on investigating the experience of Omani institutions in distant education. The study will outline the Al-Khalil platform and its components in the first section. The study will examine the strategies, approaches, and evaluation instruments used in the Al-Khalil platform in the second section. The latter part of the study will address the challenges faced by the Al-Khalil platform in teaching the Arabic language to non-native speakers remotely, as well as the primary suggested solutions. The study will provide primary recommendations derived on the Al-Khalil platform's expertise in teaching Arabic to those who are not native speakers. Most educational institutions adopted remote education due to the epidemic, allowing them to continue the educational experience without in-person courses. Oman is likewise included in this worldwide trend. In response to the epidemic, institutions in the Sultanate of Oman implemented online education to teach Arabic to non-native speakers. This effort sought to provide ongoing education and then create customised programming for certain populations. Teaching Arabic to non-native speakers
The Ministry of Education in Oman's expertise in training Arabic language instructors for non-native speakers in Brunei

Arabic language instructors in Brunei asked for a comprehensive programme that included both theoretical and practical components. The subjects covered were classroom management, grammatical and morphological courses, educational technology applications for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, and the use of language games. The curriculum covers grammatical and morphological lessons, the impact of extracurricular activities on linguistic proficiency, international language proficiency standards, spelling and punctuation guidelines, cross-linguistic comparisons in Arabic language instruction, Arabic calligraphy, and grammar. Spelling the punctuation mark (2) and promoting creativity in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. The training course for Arabic instructors of non-native speakers in Brunei was chosen by assessing the teachers' training needs and developing a training schedule accordingly. The evaluation used in this initiative was as outlined: To successfully complete the curriculum, you must maintain a 70% attendance rate and a comparable 10% level of commitment. Continuous assessment entails consistent monitoring throughout the whole cycle, constituting 40% of the process. An applied project requires the student to do a video application session demonstrating a skill chosen by the supervisor, which accounts for 20% of the assessment. No details given. The final test evaluates all acquired skills and accounts for 30% of the overall result.

1. The Sultan Qaboos Institute Trains Arabic language academics at Uzbek institutions.

This experience resulted from a series of discussions between the Department of Educational Programmes of the Sultan Qaboos Institute for Teaching Arabic to Non-Native Speakers and the University of Tashkent, namely the Arabic Language Department. The training workshop adopted the following subjects based on the subsequent sessions. Skills for teaching and acquiring a second language using non-verbal methods. Topics include mediation, teaching conversational skills, extracurricular activities' impact on teaching, selecting questions from texts, popular Arabic teaching curricula for non-native speakers, and language partners. The courses were structured around two methods: theoretical and applied aspects, and included interaction and discussion.

The rating criterion included both the student and the instructor. The student was assessed via two methods: measuring active participation during the workshop and assigning him to produce a lesson where he applies his studies without utilising an intermediate language. The instructor evaluates the trainer using a questionnaire that assesses the teacher's performance, the subject delivered, and the tactics used.

2. The Sidra platform's experience in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers for the Omani-British Friendship Society pupils.

The Sidra platform was developed by the "Salcon" Company in response to a request from the Omani-British Friendship Society to teach Arabic to non-native speakers in Britain. The platform created asynchronous educational content for this purpose. The student independently completes exercises from the Department of Educational Programmes at the Sultan Qaboos Institute for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers before advancing to the next lesson. They have implemented the European Reference Framework for Languages with a proficiency level of 6. Each session addresses the four skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing, as well as culture. The learner comprehends the lesson and proceeds to the exercises. Upon completing them with the requisite competency, he advances to the next lesson. If he
is unsuccessful, he must redo the lesson, with the option of going back to the instructor. Sidra platform There exists The box allows the student to ask questions directly to the instructor, who will then engage in a discourse and provide the required answers.

Figure 1: Explore the Al-Khalil platform designed for teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

We will provide a detailed discussion of the Al-Khalil platform's experience in this paper. Another incentive for the student to study Arabic is to accommodate their unique circumstances, in addition to the impact of the epidemic (Qaddum, 2020, p. 18). Below is a list of these requirements. A need arising from the learner's incapacity to participate in traditional university education in physical classrooms. A need arising from the limited capacity of traditional university education to cater to all individuals seeking to acquire knowledge, irrespective of their age and reasons. A demand has arisen due to ambitious university students who want to pursue many majors simultaneously.

**Section one: Introduction to the Al-Khalil platform and its components**

**Introduction to the platform**

The administrators of the Al-Khalil platform for teaching Arabic language utilised the expertise of the scholar and poet Al-Khalil bin Ahmad Al-Farahidi Al-Oman (d. 100 AH - 170 AH / 718 AD - 786 AD). He is known for creating the first Arabic dictionary (the Al-Ayn dictionary) and establishing prosody, a field focused on the metres of Arabic poetry. He also introduced a symbol for tanween and stress in Arabic letters, and transformed diacritic
symbols like fatha, damma, and kasra from dots to This platform might be named to reflect its pioneering status as one of the first specialised in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers remotely, inspired by the early efforts of Al-Khalil bin Ahmed Al-Farahidi. The Al-Khalil electronic educational platform focuses on instructing the Arabic language to both native and non-native speakers, offering training courses. Proficient in both general and specialised language sciences and abilities, available remotely at https://alkhalilarabic.com.

The Platform Objectives
The Khalil platform aims to help individuals worldwide learn and use the Arabic language effectively in various aspects of life such as daily communication, academic pursuits, and business. This is facilitated through an advanced educational platform that offers interactive learning experiences with experienced professors.

Target learners
The Khalil platform aims to offer its programmes to a diverse range of learners, such as Arabic-speaking school students, university faculty and students, teachers, government officials, lawyers, media professionals, and individuals interested in studying the Arabic language. Non-Arabic speaking learners include students studying Sharia sciences, the Arabic language, Middle Eastern studies, imams, orators, diplomats, and businesspeople. Figure 2 shows an example of the course.

Supplementary Educational Services Offered by the Platform
Al-Khalil platform offers many services outside teaching the Arabic language. An assessment exam required for all candidates applying for general Arabic language courses. No information provided. An extensive standardised assessment of Arabic language proficiency. No changes needed. Various proficiency levels of Arabic language classes are offered for both native and non-native speakers. Specialised training courses are available for Arab and non-Arab
students focusing on developing specialised talents such as Arabic poetry, linguistic and literary studies, and training Arabic language instructors. Courses on linguistic skills for youth. The platform was created through a successful collaboration between Emerging Technologies Company (ETCO) and Anwar Al-Hidayat Library in the Sultanate of Oman. ETCO specialises in software development, linguistic technologies, and electronic educational platforms. The library contributes educational content to the platform, and there is also cooperation with the Sultan Qaboos Institute to teach Arabic to non-native speakers. Sultan Qaboos University and additional institutions.

Academic levels on the platform https://alkhalilarabic.com
- The Al-Khalil platform for teaching Arabic consists of six levels.
- Novice level.
- Level: lower intermediate.
- Level three: Average.
- Upper Intermediate: Level Four.
- Advanced Level: Five.
- Proficient at Level Six.

Curriculum and its Resources
The curriculum certified for teaching on the Al-Khalil platform is the Kalman curriculum, which includes interactive electronic material designed with high requirements. The content and
presentation include enrichment texts, audio segments, and informative films. The curriculum is supported by a collection of aids. Live virtual meetings facilitate self-directed learning within the programme. Attend planned virtual sessions with the instructor to review instructional content, practise the language, and address any questions. Interactive tasks are available during free time to reinforce gained language abilities, assess knowledge and comprehension levels, and track progress. Academic consultations may be arranged with the instructor during office hours for comments and questions pertaining to the course. The website offers a forum with scientific articles and study subjects to facilitate language practice via debates between teachers and students, enhancing reading and writing abilities.

**Platform teachers**
The platform has six teachers, five of whom are Omani, three of whom have master’s degrees. Two of them are specialists in the field of Arabic for non-native speakers and one in Arabic literature with preparation in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers through specific courses from the Australian Deakin University and the ACTFL programmes. In terms of gender, four of them are male, one is a female teacher, and the sixth is a teacher. He is Egyptian by nationality.

![Figure 4: instructors’ profiles](image)
Various Arabic language courses available for those who are not native speakers. Visit https://alkhalilarabic.com for more information.

1. **The Standard session**
   This course lasts for 9 months, with each course lasting 6 weeks. The overall length of the course is 180 hours, with each level consisting of 30 hours. The course is conducted entirely online via live classrooms and self-learning. The tests are electronic, and this course will guide students from a basic understanding of Arabic to an advanced level through direct meetings with the teacher, self-study, interactive platform activities, and linguistic consultations. Academy with experts and direct interactions with Arabic speakers (language partner). The platform enables the learner to choose the study periods that are convenient for them.

2. **Arabic language for diplomats**
   This course aims to help students become proficient in speaking Arabic for diplomatic matters and to familiarise them with the language and terminology often used by diplomats in contemporary media discussions. This course lasts for six weeks and consists of 3.0 hours of instruction. The instruction is delivered online via live classes. Aside from self-paced activities, the course includes electronic tests with the goal of enhancing the linguistic and terminological skills of advanced Arabic speakers in the practice of diplomatic Arabic used in Arab media discourse. This course is designed to teach non-Arabic speaking students, such as diplomats, media professionals, and intellectuals, how to speak Arabic on diplomatic topics and understand diplomatic media communication methods. It involves virtual lessons with expert professors and practical activities. Accompany and use a variety of instructional tools.

3. **An Arabic teacher training course for non-native speakers**
   This course lasts for six weeks, with a total of 30 hours of distance learning. The course includes direct classes, self-tasks, and electronic tests. Upon completion, students will be equipped with the necessary skills to teach Arabic to non-native speakers, including teaching, pedagogical, and cultural skills. The course provides current methodologies and contemporary technologies to teach reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities in a second language. The course involves participating in face-to-face sessions with the instructor, self-directed study, engaging in interactive activities on the platform, and receiving academic assistance from professionals throughout the course.

4. **Accreditation for academic programmes on platforms:**
   Al Khalil Platform programmes are approved by the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation in Oman and adhere to the criteria of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

5. **Platform elements**
   There are three primary pages on the platform: the student page, the instructor page, and the management site. The student page includes the academic timetable, course materials, preceding course information (if applicable), curriculum, lesson list, educational content, discussions, and a summary. Objective. The instructor page includes the home page, sections, assignments (creation and grading), talks (office hours), topics or courses, and the academic timetable. The administration page manages courses, academic periods,
assignments, and the interface between the student portal and the database. It also provides listings of all users and their rights, as well as financial issues. The platform's flexibility in study times, incorporation of European frames of reference and American Council standards, aims to cater to diverse student segments unable to study in person due to temporal and spatial constraints, providing a comprehensive range of courses.

- **Topic two covers the strategies, methodologies, and assessment tools used in the Al-Khalil platform.**
  - **Strategies used for teaching skills on the Al-Khalil platform.**
    1. **Strategies for teaching listening skills**

      Given the growing prominence of the Arabic language globally and the expanding number of learners, it is crucial to develop effective teaching strategies. This is essential to enhance the language's status and competitiveness among other languages, and to cater to the diverse skills, preferences, and learning methods of students. Diversifying teaching strategies increases the likelihood of meeting students' needs and preferences.

      The receptive individual significantly influences the effectiveness of e-learning due to many factors. Several studies (Al-Batal, 2017, p. 137) have shown the efficacy of the Internet in teaching skills overall, especially in teaching listening, due to its convenient access to diverse audio educational resources. Presented as audio recordings and video clips, with the option to integrate them with texts, pictures, graphic layouts, and other methods (Qadoum, 2020, p. 35.).

      Researchers mention several categories of the listening talent and methods for teaching it. Some tactics include auditory discrimination, categorization, logical reasoning, assessing the truthfulness of the message, and analysing the content. Ahmed Madkour's categorization is detailed in Madkour's work from 2006, on page 81. And some of them were categorised. Strategies in listening include understanding the speaker's purpose, recalling details in order, considering past experiences, inferring meaning, analysing, critiquing, differentiating primary and secondary points, and distinguishing between reality and fiction. Some individuals included other talents like critical listening, while others mentioned qualities such as memory and taste. Rebecca Oxford (1996) categorised listening methods as mnemonic strategies.

      - Cognitive techniques.
      - Compensatory tactics.
      - Indirect methods include
      - Impactful tactics.
      - Strategies for social interactions.

      Silver Harvey (Silver et al, 2009, 29) emphasises that selecting the right strategy for teaching a text, including providing listening exercises, plays a crucial role in enhancing listening comprehension efficiency, which is equally important as choosing the text itself.

      The primary tactics used in teaching listening skills on the Al-Khalil platform.

      1. An approach for developing fundamental ideas associated with the literature to be taught.
      2. Recording information.
      3. Emphasise the primary concepts without delving into specifics.
      4. Prior to listening, it is essential to read the comprehension questions.
      5. A approach for developing anticipations that facilitates comprehension of the text's concepts Slowly
6. Introducing students to the specific subject of discussion and the field of knowledge it pertains to.
7. Pose first inquiries on the listening material.
8. Posing reflective inquiries that encourage the receiver to ponder and reflect.
9. View a video with no audio but subtitles.
10. View a series of images prior to listening.
11. No information provided.
12. Observing profound pictures may serve as an entry point to attentive listening.
14. Compiling and documenting vocabulary likely to be heard during listening activities.
15. Enumerate important terms associated with the subject.
16. The approach of pinpointing the main elements of comprehension: such as characters, time, location, and event (Oxford, 1996, p. 67).
17. Group categorization approach involves categorising what the learner hears into groups based on semantic, grammatical, or other connections.
18. Semantic drawing and mapping procedures include creating a map where the learner fills in information based on their understanding. (Al-Qadi, 2018, p. 15).
19. Textual criticism approach.

B- Strategies for teaching reading skills.

The reading skill is unique in that it can be developed both in and out of the classroom. A non-native Arabic language learner can read various materials, especially if they reside in an Arab country. To enhance this skill, the learner requires exercises that aid in improving their reading ability and proficiency. Therefore, it serves as a valuable resource for Arabic language learners and a significant tool for engaging with written texts, functioning as a crucial kind of linguistic art with cognitive, psychological, and social implications (Qaddoum, 2020, p. 64).

Larson confirmed that students are adopting new reading practices that involve e-books, Internet resources, and communication interactions. Consequently, they require skills, strategies, and profound comprehension to effectively utilise the evolving information and communication technology. He also noted the importance of reading. Electronic communication fosters an engaging learning environment. (Qenawy, 2008, p. 1636). Studies in language education emphasise the importance of utilising teaching strategies and modern technology to enhance reading skills efficiently. Research has shown positive outcomes in using computers to teach and improve reading abilities among students (City, 2014, p. 6; Al-Ramamaneh, 2018, p. 7). The Al-Khalil platform aligns with this approach by incorporating electronic strategies to enhance learners' reading skills.

The primary strategies used for teaching reading abilities on the Al-Khalil platform are:

1- Memory retention techniques:
2- Cognitive linking technique: Organizing information into categories based on content.
3- Association and linkage.
4- Utilizing language.
5- Infographic strategy: Sensory visualization.
6- Mind maps.
7- Keywords.
8- Dimensional review approach  
9- Visual inspection.  
10- Manifestation of significance.  
11- Flashcard.  
12- Cognitive strategies:  
13- Utilize a rapid knowledge approach.  
14- Plan and condense.  
15- Analytical and logical approach.

C- Conversational skill strategies

E-learning offers benefits for developing conversational skills since it is not limited by time or location. Learners may immediately contact with instructors and engage with other students simultaneously. E-learning promotes self-education and self-reliance by making it easier to access knowledge. Different modes of access, such live and recorded lessons, address the issue of restricted learning hours (Qaddum, 2020, p. 104). The key tactics used in the Al-Khalil platform for teaching conversational skills were:

1- Pronunciation learning strategy.  
2- Free speech strategy.  
3- One-on-one strategy.  
4- Postman strategy.  
5- Image and story strategy.  
6- Debate strategy.  
7- Project strategy.  
8- Parliament text strategy.

private lessons

You can practice and develop the conversation skill for extra hours with the best Arab teachers, and at times that suit you

Figure 5: Private lessons
D-Writing skill strategies

Writing is a crucial language production skill that requires a combination of linguistic competencies such as phonetic, lexical, semantic, and syntactic elements, as well as cultural competency to be successful. Considering the social and cultural environment of the receiver, culminating in literary proficiency and the lexical phrases and rhetorical techniques it encompasses. Proficiency in language comprehension and expression is essential for mastering writing skills. (Advent, 2020). Textual approach method focused on achieving precision in writing.

1. Procedural approach method focused on enhancing writing fluency.
2. Writing approach for pleasure.
3. Pencil approach for critical thinking.
4. Text manipulation technique involving cutting and reassembling.
5. Mediation approach for condensing narratives.
7. Interview writing technique.
8. Approach for creating mind maps.
10. Four correction techniques.
11. Approach for conducting office hours or one-on-one discussions to address errors.
12. Symbol-based correction technique.
13. No information provided. Approach for rectifying specific mistakes. (Tufenkji, 2020, 146)

- The Khalil platform uses three assessment techniques.

The exams are separated into three portions based on programme duration. The assessment process includes a pre-test to gauge students' initial level, ongoing short examinations throughout the programme, and a final test upon completion. The Al-Khalil platform offers students various exercises and activities to engage with scientific material, including multiple choice questions, fill-in-the-blank tasks, matching true and false statements, writing exercises, reading assignments, video clips, and recording audio clips. The platform may assess the learner's involvement and interaction with the training pages, attendance of virtual sessions, participation in conversations, and dedication to the language partner programme. Analysing conversations using audio-to-text technology allows for assessing fluency, cohesiveness, lexical resource, subject relevancy, grammatical correctness, and pronunciation. Classroom methods may vary based on learners' preferences and challenges. These tactics are not fixed and may not be consistent across all levels or academic subjects.

2.1. The third part discusses the obstacles encountered by the Al-Khalil platform while teaching Arabic to non-native speakers remotely, along with the main recommended remedies.

The challenges faced by the Al-Khalil platform in the experience of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers come in several forms.
1- These include challenges encountered by the teacher:

6. The lack of the lecturer's body language, which plays a crucial role in capturing the student's attention and making the topic more relatable.
7. It is challenging to monitor pupils' focus throughout the lecture, particularly since some of them sometimes disable the camera.
8. Difficulty arises when all students engage in activities during class, particularly when there is a disparity in ability levels.
9. The instructor is losing the ability to see the practical effects and miss out on training opportunities.
10. Students' schedules vary, particularly when they come from various countries.
11. And the. The learner is familiar with curricula that use the intermediate language, but the platform curriculum does not use it.
12. Loss of genuine peer contact and learning opportunities outside of school hours.
13. Secondly, proposed solutions:
   a. The instructor should put more effort into varying their tone of voice and ensuring that all pupils participate in the conversation. By individually addressing each person and assigning chores and questions without expecting them to volunteer.
14. It is advised to limit the number of pupils to seven per class to maintain the educational quality if the class is the primary medium of instruction. If the programmes rely heavily on self-learning from pre-existing materials and the class is only supplementary, it is not essential to have everyone in it. class, and then the number of pupils might exceed 15 students.
15. Preparing diverse activities to make up for the shortage of resources and ensuring all pupils have the chance to take part in them.
16. D. Providing professors who can accommodate the time zone difference.
17. Considering novice pupils and identifying instructional materials suitable for their familiar curriculum.

2- The obstacles associated to the student include:

1. Network and technical issues, such as sound interruptions or difficulties with the broadcasting application, may occur.
2. The student may easily avoid assignments unless they are part of the assessment and need continual follow-up, since the student works long hours, and the sessions are scheduled after work.
3. In my view, the answers are:
4. Before enrolling in the educational programme, provide the student with general instructions on the importance of a stable internet connection and guidance on accessing the educational platform, attending classes, participating in the learning process, and completing assignments.
5. Linking student performance and class involvement to loyalty points for purchasing academic or non-academic items or receiving discounts on tuition costs.

3. Challenges unique to the platform's operating capabilities include:

1. High marketing expenses for educational programmes using digital marketing.
2. Obtaining certification for educational programmes from formal accreditation authorities in the nation, such as the Ministry of Higher Education, is necessary due to the absence of norms for certifying educational platforms.

3. Solutions:
   A. Seeking to establish agreements with institutions to provide programmes rather than only targeting people.
   B. Acquiring international accreditations or partnering with training institutions capable of securing formal local accreditation.

Summary and Suggestions
Teaching Arabic to non-native speakers in Oman was done remotely in response to the global pandemic. This approach evolved into a valuable addition to Arabic language programmes for non-native speakers, particularly through the diverse Al-Khalil platform. The programmes include regular and customised training for diplomats in addition to programmes for both native and non-native speakers. The Al-Khalil platform is well regarded in the Sultanate of Oman for its specialised staff, synchronous and asynchronous educational features, skill-based techniques, and commitment to diversity. Within ongoing assessment instruments.

1- Key proposals include establishing a structure to implement this style of education in Oman with specific regulations to ensure compliance with standard criteria.

2- The platform needs to create an asynchronous learning experience that enables students to complete the programme at their convenience, while scheduling specific times for teacher meetings. This is important as many students work long hours and prefer their lesson attendance to align with their mental and physical capacities.
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