

**Dr. Hamad Al Dosari**  
Chairman, English Department

It is my pleasure to contribute to "Mountain Top". First of all, I would like to congratulate the Language Research Center for its successful activities, such as organizing the Academic Seminars and regularly issuing "Mountain Top" editions.

We are approaching to the middle of the second semester. With the examinations round the corner, students will be engrossed in their studies. The amalgam of theoretical learning and practical experience has its own plusses and minuses, an important plus being that knowledge is real, wholesome and useful. A major drawback, however, is that students face difficulties in effectively managing their time. Students who possess a natural flair for the process of learning are able to better cope with stress and pressure.

Others may face some difficulty. In general, I would like to give the following advice to students:

- Have a positive attitude: The first thing that is required for preparing for examinations is having a positive attitude. You have to feel that you can do it. Remember that there are students like you who not only pass but manage to obtain good marks.
- Study when you are rested: If you or your mind is tired, your assimilation will be low. Make a timetable for studying. Allocate maximum times for when your mind is fresh.
- Avoid interferences.
- Take breaks: All work and no play make Jack a dull boy. Although interferences should be avoided, planned breaks are required for better assimilation. Breaks should be short and followed by rigorous study efforts.



- Prepare notes: If you only read the study material, you will only be good at repetition. You have to actually write answers in examinations. You have to, thus, prepare by utilizing your written skills. Prepare notes or write answers to questions.

- Practice and revision: Repeatedly studying something over and over helps you in learning, as in the phrase "practice makes perfect". In fact, by now you should have completed the whole syllabus as laid out in your course plan and started the process of revision. Revision helps with remembering as well as in better understanding the concepts.

Lastly, I would like to quote Henry Ford, who said: "Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young." You should not limit yourselves to the examinations. Have a basic desire for learning. Prepare for the examinations now; but keep your mind open and receptive to knowledge. Then, only, you will come out as a better individual and succeed in life.

Send your write-ups to: [salahuddinkku@yahoo.com](mailto:salahuddinkku@yahoo.com)

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## KKU E-learning Center and Testing



**Rizwan Ghani**

Lecturer,  
English Language Centre

The importance of computer based testing (tests and examinations) has increased exponentially in contemporary education systems. A large number of countries, global student assessment organizations and international examination bodies, including most of the educational institutions of Europe and America, have adopted Computer Based Testing (CBT). The majority of their exams are taken on computers centrally, or through Authorized Testing Centers (ATC<sup>1</sup>).

King Khalid University (KKU) has to adopt CBT

and establish ATCs in its E-learning Center to meet the testing (center) needs of the university and the Asir region (public and private sector), and for taking national and international level exams to achieve desired goals (Diagram 1).

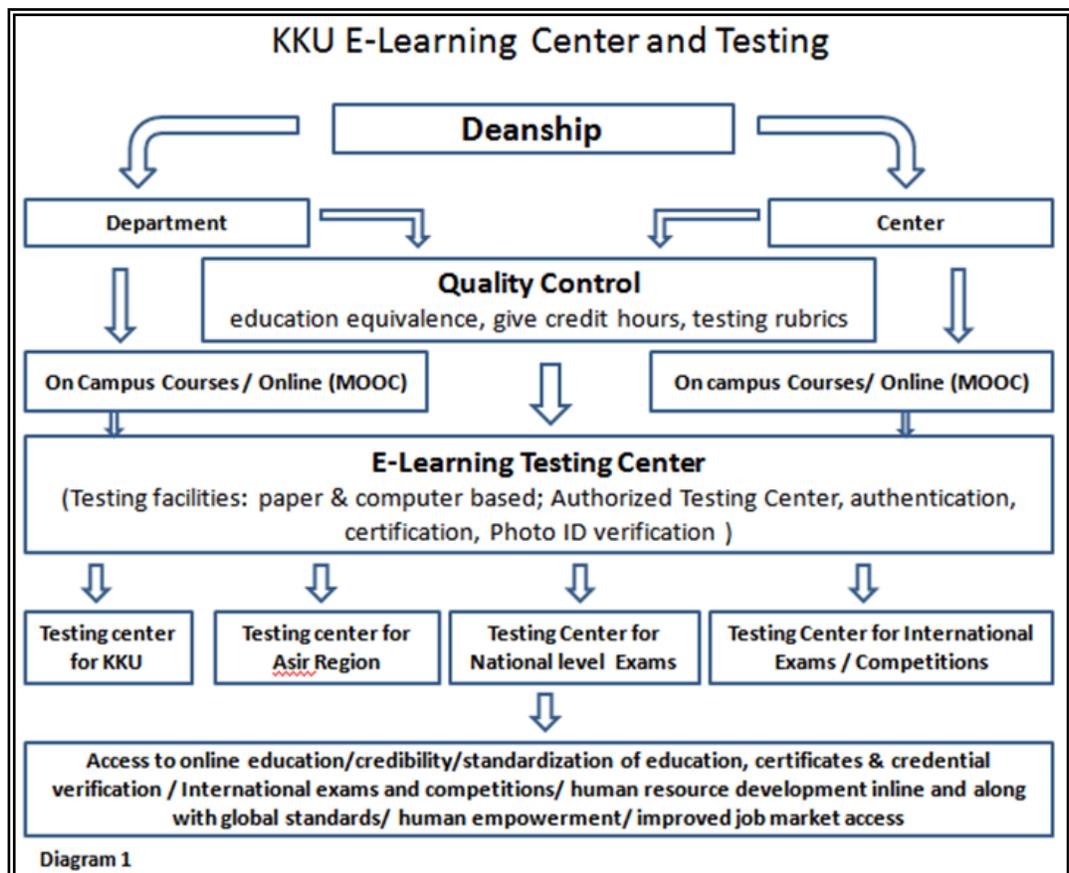
ATC will allow policy makers and students to take advantage of online education (MOOC) to supplement on-campus education so students can complete their course of study sooner. By providing equivalent credit hours, the Quality Control Deanship can play a key role in allowing KKU students to benefit from international level education at minimal cost, using local

resources (CBT & ATC) optimally. It will go a long way in standardizing education, improving test transparency and helping meet national and global accreditation standards.

The ATC will allow students access to exams without traveling abroad or to other (major) cities. It will save time, reduce the cost of education and enable students to receive an international education locally, through (for example) college preparatory exams like ACT Compass<sup>2</sup>, AP<sup>3</sup> and the Global Assessment Certificate (GAC<sup>4</sup>) Program. It will help students complete their education earlier and enter the job market sooner.

Furthermore, the combination

“ATC will allow policy makers and students to take advantage of online education (MOOC) to supplement on-campus education so students can complete their course of study sooner.”



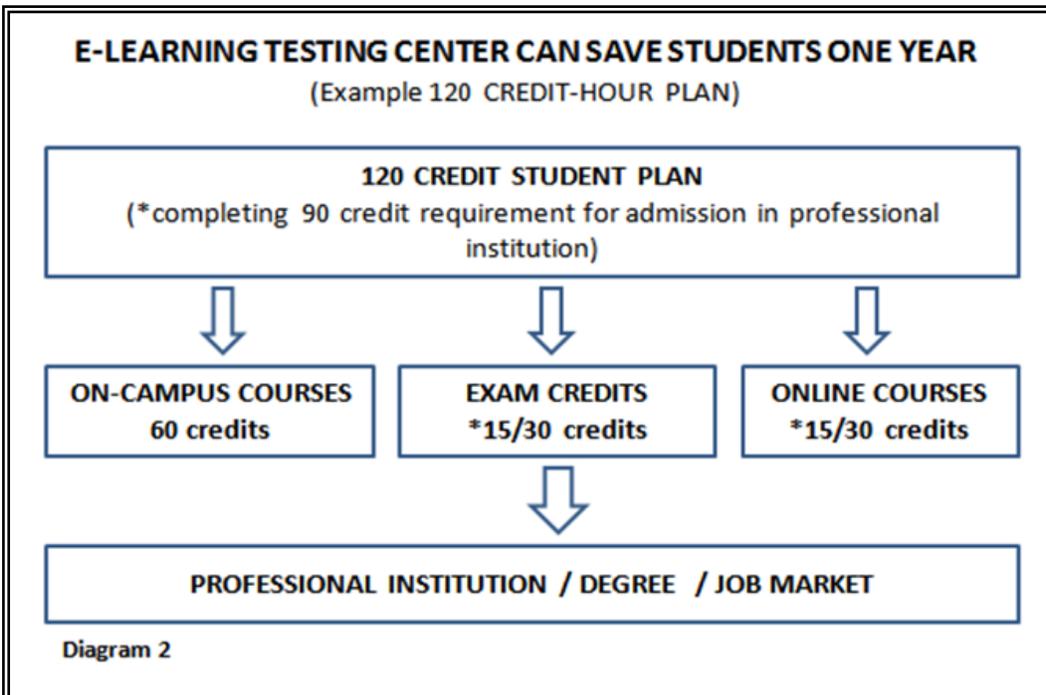
of CBT and ACT will help local students take admission tests used for undergraduate (SAT) and graduate enrolment (GRE) across the world. It will allow them to take professional examinations such as USMLE<sup>5</sup> (American Medical Licensing Exam) and those of the Engineering Council, as well as obtain Information Technology, pharmacy, accounting, banking or business certifications.

The structuring of on-

campus and online education, and the availability of CBT in ATC, can save students one year of study. For example, currently, 90 credits (equal to 3 years of study) are needed to join a professional institution in Western countries such as America. In order to graduate with a degree, 120 credits (equal to 4 years of education) are required (Diagram 2).

Finally, the structuring and development of the E-learning Center to facilitate testing (CBT and ATC) will allow the university to serve the local community, which is

one of its primary objectives.<sup>6</sup> The combination of the KKU E-learning (testing) Center, online (MOOC) and on-campus education will allow people from all walks of life (correctional facility inmates, handicapped persons, those living in remote areas, the poor and underprivileged) access to quality education, and save the time and resources of the university and the government. It will help create 15,000 jobs and educate 150,000 students annually who otherwise would be excluded from the system.



“The structuring and development of the E-learning Center to facilitate testing (CBT and ATC) will allow the university to serve the local community, which is one of its primary objectives.”

**Sources:**

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## Writing an Effective Statement of Purpose



**Matthew Paul Glotfelter**  
Language Instructor  
English Department

“A good SOP will also mention your plans for the future after an MA or PhD degree. Universities like to hear you have a clear life plan after graduation. Don't be afraid to shoot for the stars in this part - be optimistic about the future. After all, it is **your** life!”

Since I have been at the King Khalid University, I have had numerous requests from students to review and revise their Statements of Purpose (SOPs) for graduate school applications. When I worked in Indonesia, a big part of my job was advising students on how to write a good SOP. In addition, when I worked at New York University, I saw the review process from the other side and watched faculty member reactions to various SOPs. I would like to share some of this knowledge with those of you who may be writing an SOP in the future.

First and foremost, an SOP will most likely ‘not’ be read. I know that does not sound encouraging, but most SOPs are simply ignored. Many graduate school admission decisions will be based on things other than the SOP (grades, GRE scores, work experience, etc.). That being said, if your application is “borderline” acceptance, or there is great competition between candidates, then it is more likely that someone on an admissions committee will read it to see “what you are all about”. So unfortunately, you DO have to write an effective SOP even if the

chances of it being read are small.

What makes for a good SOP? Perhaps we should start with what is not a good SOP. If your SOP simply mimics your CV and is the text version of that, it is not considered to be a good one. A good SOP will give the “between the lines” information about you – it will tell the interesting, relevant personal things about you that make you an interesting candidate for the

the point will make a better impression than long and flowery. Try to keep it to one page, if possible.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, do your homework! Who are the professors you intend to work with (especially at the PhD level)? You should have read research by members of the department to which you are applying. Be specific, name names, articles, and/or conferences. Make them believe that you are a serious candidate. “I am particularly looking forward to working with Professor X. I have read about his/her research on xx topic and I find it relevant to my study”. This kind of language will show the admissions



program. You should feel free to talk about why you have an interest in the subject matter, and when and where you first became interested in that.

A good SOP will also mention your plans for the future after an MA or PhD degree. Universities like to hear you have a clear life plan after graduation. Don't be afraid to shoot for the stars in this part - be optimistic about the future. After all, it is **your** life!

An SOP should be brief. Remember that you are one among many. Short and to

committee you are not just randomly applying to a large number of universities, but you have actually seriously thought about that particular university and program.

Most SOPs can be tailor made (especially regarding what was mentioned above). The first part of your SOP will be the same for all the places you apply to. However, the last part will have to be changed for each application.

I hope this brief outline will be of help to those of you

## The City of Abha: Past and the Present

**Dr. Muhammad Arshad**

Assistant Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering, College of Engineering

The science of remote sensing is advancing rapidly as sophisticated sensor systems obtain data with increasingly detailed spatial, temporal, and radiometric resolution. Digital image processing algorithms used to extract information from the remote sensor data continue to improve. This has resulted in an increased ability to extract quantitative, biophysical data and land use/land cover information from remote sensor data. It is possible to collect information about an object or geographic area from a distant vantage point using remote sensing instruments

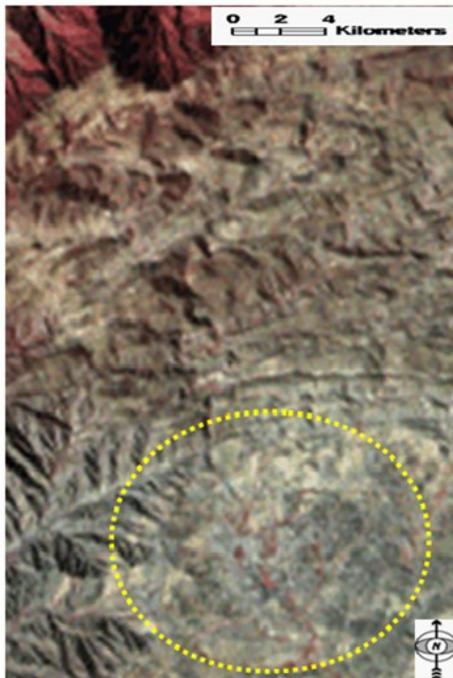
(Figure 1). With the help of airborne or spaceborne sensors the amount of electromagnetic energy exiting an object or geographic area can be measured and valuable information can then be extracted from the data using mathematical and statistical algorithms.

### Temporal Resolution:

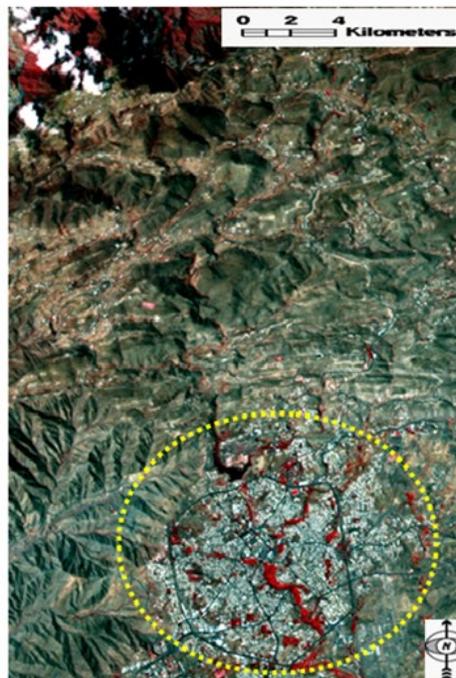
One of the valuable things about remote sensing science is that it can be utilized to obtain a record of Earth landscapes at a unique moment in time (known as the temporal resolution). Multiple records of the

same landscape obtained through time can then be used to identify changes in land use and land cover (LULC). One of the examples of temporal resolution is presented in Figure 1 above. During the last 40 years the city of Abha in the Asir region has shown the trend of rapid urbanization in Saudi Arabia, which has one of the fastest rates of urbanization in the world. Government's land grant policy and liberal interest-free loans have resulted in the massive expansion of cities and towns all over the country. Budget revenue and spending for the Fiscal Year 1435/1436H (FY 2014) were set at a record \$228 billion (SR 855 billion).

### Past and Present of Abha City – Asir Region, Saudi Arabia



Landsat2, 25 December 1972  
Color infrared: 6, 5, 4  
Quantization: 6 bit (64 levels)



Landsat 8, 25 November 2013  
Color infrared: 5, 4, 3  
Quantization: 16 bit (55000 levels)

(Source: [http://landsat.usgs.gov/about\\_landsat1.php](http://landsat.usgs.gov/about_landsat1.php))

(Source: <http://landsat.usgs.gov/landsat8.php>)

**Professor Profile****Dr. Farhatullah Khan**

*Professor Emeritus, English Department,  
Faculty of Languages and Translation*



Interviewed by:

**Salahuddin Abdul Rab**  
**Abdullah Al Mamun Bhuiyan**  
Lecturers,  
Faculty of Languages and Translation

Dr. Farhatullah Khan Dr. Farhatullah Khan has been teaching in the Faculty of Languages and Translation at King Khalid University for the last five years. He has extensive experience of working at different universities both at home and abroad. He obtained his PhD in English for Special Purposes with reference to Medical Discourse from the University of Delhi. Here he shares his academic background and views on education with Mountain Top.

**Q: What is your educational and academic background?**

**A:** I joined my school back

in 1954. The traditional educational system on the Indian subcontinent was infused with moral values, inculcated by both parents and the educational institution.

When I joined the college as a graduate student I studied the literature of three languages: Persian, Urdu and English. It was a very rare combination then, not permissible any more. I didn't know any Persian when I started, yet I was awarded a gold medal for Persian and a gold medal for Classical Languages after achieving a pass rate of 99%.

At the Masters level, I was a student of English literature. I was taught by eminent, scholarly teachers. We enjoyed literature not only for the sake of getting a degree, but for the sake of literature itself. I still have in my possession all the lecture notes from 1961-1963 and still refer back to them from time to time.

I joined my alma mater, i.e. Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, as a lecturer immediately after finishing my Master's degree. When my interest in linguistics grew, I enrolled at an internationally renowned institute of English in India, CIEFL (the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages) which is now known as EFLU (the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, India). In 1971-72 I went to the University of Hyderabad, as a regular student, on study leave from my university. That gave me a chance to learn so many things that were going to complement the appreciation of literature. Studying literature more

“Trained teachers, conversant with pedagogical strategies, who can adapt their methodologies and techniques according to the requirements of the situation can deliver the goods efficiently.”



**Dr. Farhatullah Khan**



**Dr. Farhatullah Khan, Salahuddin Abdul Rab and Abdullah Al Mamun Bhuiyan**

closely I got interested in stylistics and discourse analysis. I wrote a dissertation on the stylistic analysis of Emily Dickinson's poems. So, in my dissertation linguistics and literature – two fields that are often considered rivals – came together. After finishing the course at CIEFL, I wanted to pursue my interest further in linguistics. I, therefore, joined a Master's program in Linguistics. A Master's degree in Literature, a postgraduate diploma in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, and the Master's degree in Linguistics – that gave me a chance to proceed with my interest in Linguistics, and I completed my MPhil at the University of Delhi. I later obtained my PhD from the Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

After serving my university for about 42 years I came to Saudi Arabia, where a new kind of exposure has

enriched my teaching experience immeasurably.

**Q: How does research in Saudi Arabia compare to that in India?**

**A:** Leading universities like King Saud University and King Abdul Aziz University are doing wonderful research, not only in linguistics but also in other subjects, and their standard is remarkable.

**Q: What do you expect from King Khalid University, being a relatively young university, in terms of teaching, compared to King Abdul Aziz University and King Saud University?**

**A:** Students who come to King Khalid University generally bring very little English with them and they find it hard to cope with the prescribed English courses. So, firstly, to overcome this barrier we should devote one semester of level one to some kind of specially designed bridge and remedial English courses in order to

bring students up to the mark. If we did that, it would instill confidence among students. Part of this endeavor should be to impart to students a reasonable fund of working vocabularies and frequently used grammatical structures, consolidated by exercises which they have to complete on their own.

Further, trained teachers, conversant with pedagogical strategies, who can adapt their methodologies and techniques according to the requirements of the situation can deliver the goods efficiently. An eclectic approach to teaching is always the best, but structure and function must be brought together.

**Q: Do you think that good writers will come out of the current system?**

**A:** When it comes to writing, it is a great challenge. We cannot expect students to become good writers over-

“Moreover, one semester must be devoted to remedial teaching; that is the only way to improve the quality of students' output. Teachers become confident when their students are responsive.”

**Continued on the back page**

# Bees on Action!



Reported By

**Md. Shahrear Talukder**

Lecturer, English Language Centre

For the consecutive second time in this 2013-2014 academic year auditorium five (5) was resonated with the clapping of a huge audience. It was 4 March 2014 when fifteen spellers from the Department of English gathered in the big hall to prove themselves as the best.

Honorable Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Translation, Dr. Abdullah Al Melhi, graced the occasion as the chief guest. Among others Vice Dean of Quality and Development Dr. Abdulkhaleq Al-Qahtani, Director of English Club Dr. Saeed Alsurf, faculty members and students from different colleges were present to witness young spellers' zeal for spelling.

Tareq Ali Humaidi of level 1 from English Department won the spelling bee battle on Tuesday. His winning word was 'Spectacular'.

Abdur Rahman from level 1, finished the second and Jaber, from level 1, finished the third.

Professor Dr. Golam Faruk, organizer of this magnificent Spelling Bee Competition, said, "These kind of spelling contests act as a kind of fine-tuning ground for the students who want to improve themselves in academic arena." He expressed his gratitude to the writing course teachers Mr. Siraj, coordinator writing-1, Mr. Joseph, Dr. Osman, Mr. Matthew Paul, and Mr. Hassan Costello for their constant support in preparing the young spellers.

Dr. Soren, Mr. Siraj, Mr. Matthew Paul, and Mr. Hassan Costello from the Faculty of Languages and Translation were the judges of this spelling competition. Mr. Hassan Costello and Dr. Soren articulated words in American and British pronunciation respectively.

Except some initial acoustic problem, which however was fixed immediately, the battle went on quite smoothly. All the contestants along with the three winners were rewarded for their active participation in this Spelling Bee Competition.



*"All the contestants along with the three winners were rewarded for their active participation in this Spelling Bee Competition."*



*Spelling Bee competitors on the stage*

*Photo credit: Md. Shahrear Talukder*



## Tears for Tears

**By Md. Shahrear Talukder**

Lecturer, Faculty of Languages and Translation

My palatable tears rolled down through the narrow streets, dark alleys  
and then faded slowly into the thin air.  
I wanted it back to the place from where it started  
but that moment of crescent joy never returned.  
Tick-tock time evades the yellow morning, coffee evening and auburn night  
without saying 'Good bye' to me and the alleys.  
I don't miss the time but I miss the tears.

## A Three-quatrain Ode

**By Eyhab A. Bader Eddin**

Lecturer in Translation, Faculty of Languages and Translation

O sir! It's my duty and right  
To thank such an erudite  
Person who shone at my night  
And saved me from bye-gone plight  
  
Thou hast gently wiped my tear  
Simultaneously dispelled my fear  
Thy advice bringeth me to the shore  
Amidst perilous mire and woeful moor  
  
Excuse my style and grammar  
Whose quill pen does stammer,  
Trembling between the lines  
To spell out shrieks and cries

## This Land

**By Javed Ahmad**

Lecturer in English, Faculty of Languages and Translation

This Land  
rich and rare  
dear and sincere  
fresh and fair  
this land  
not dull or cold  
but warm and bold  
true and old  
this land  
beauty guard  
virtue reward  
this land  
no foe  
no favor  
this land  
novel, lactating and wet  
invigorating and great  
this land  
engaging and appealing  
charming and pleasing  
This Land



Translated by:  
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Poet: Nizar Qabbani

## An Elegy

### TO THE DAMASCENE PRINCE, TAWFIQ QABBANI

Snapped are words as your father's eyelids are  
Clipped are expressions as your father's wings are  
How could a singer sing  
While tears have filled the ink bottle?  
What would I compose, son,  
While your death has wiped out all languages?

Why are newspapers murdering me?  
Why are they hanging me everyday with a long rope of memories?  
I am trying not to believe you are dead: All reports are a lie,  
All doctors' words are a lie  
And so are all the wreaths on your sepulchre  
And so are tears and death throes  
I am trying not to believe that... The fictional prince Tawfiq has died,  
The forehead roaming among planets has died,  
The one who used to pluck from sun trees has died  
Nor am I able to believe that the one who used to preserve sea water in his eyes has died  
For your death, son, is a joke ....And death might be the cruelest jokes

## مرثاة

### إلى الأمير الدمشقي توفيق قباني

مكسرة كجفون أبيبك هي الكلمات..  
ومقصوفة ، كجناح أبيبك، هي المفردات  
فكيف يغني المغني؟  
وقد ملأ الدمع كل الدواه..  
وماذا سأكتب يا بني؟  
وموتك ألغى جميع اللغات..  
لماذا الجرائد تغتالني؟  
وتشققني كل يوم بحبل طويل من الذكريات  
أحاول أن لا أصدق موتك، كل التقارير كذب،  
وكل كلام الأطباء كذب.  
وكل الأكاليل فوق ضريحك كذب..  
وكل المدامع والحشراجات..  
أحاول أن لا أصدق أن الأمير الخرافي توفيق مات..  
وأن الجبين المسافر بين الكواكب مات..  
وأن الذي كان يقطف من شجر الشمس مات..  
وأن الذي كان يخزن ماء البحار بعينه مات..  
فموتك يا ولدي نكتة .. وقد يصبح الموت أفسى النكات

## GENES FOR SUCCESS

Professor Dimitri P. Mikhailidi's lecture at the first Saudi Scientific Publishing Conference on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at the Gregar Campus of King Khalid University was an opportunity for Muslim scholars to reflect on why Muslims are trailing behind the other scientific communities. In his keynote speech, he reminded the Muslim intelligentsia of their glorious past. "You have the genes for success. You have successfully experimented in the past. You can do it again. Do it soon, as I am old now, and I want to see you at the top again before I die."

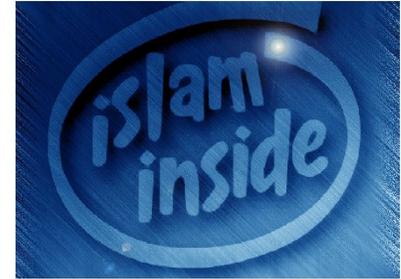
His lecture led me to think about the genes he was referring to. Were they the Holy Quran? Or were they the Muslim scientists who were inspired by the revelations? The Holy Quran deals with the signs of science whereas Muslim scientists made their impact felt in the world by their noble scientific experiments. Nonetheless, the Holy Quran became the foundation for various discoveries by the Muslim scientists which, as many people believe, led to the European renaissance.

The accuracy of the Holy Quran on many scientific issues has astonished many modern scientists. In fact, they are amazed to see the scientific facts described in the Holy Quran in 7<sup>th</sup> century stand up to the sophisticated tests in the modern laboratory. This, in fact, led many of them to conclude that Muhammad (peace be upon him) received these facts from God in the form of revelation. Dr. Gerald C. Goeringer, Dr. William W. Hay, Prof. T. V. N. Persaud, Prof. E. Marshall Johnson, Prof. Alfred Kroner, Prof. Keith Moore, Prof. Joe Simpson, Prof. Yoshihide Kozai, and Prof. Tejatat Tejasen are among them. Allah says in the Holy Quran, 'We will show them Our signs in the universe, and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this (Quran) is the truth.' (41:53).

Muslim scholars began their golden age looking for the direction of the *Qibla* (Kaabah in Makkah) from different locations. Al-Beurni's *Tahdeed Al-makin* discussed the use of spherical trigonometry to determine the exact direction of the *Qibla*. Al-Khawarizmi's book *Al-jeber Moqabla* was popularly known as algorithm in Europe. Ibn Sena's *Al-Qanoon fi Tib* made its remarkable impact on medical science. Yehya Al-Maghrabi came up with *Roots of the Number* and Ibn Shatir gave *Law of Proportions* to the world. Nasiruddin Tusi's discovery is known as the Tusi Couple. Razi differentiated between smallpox and measles. Ibn Batoota's travelog gave the world an individual's experience of the world for the first time. Yaqootul Hamoodi's book *Mejemul Beldan* gave a true picture of the big cities of the world. This, in fact, is the reason that the language of modern science still has many references to its Arabic roots. Scientific terms like *algebra*, *alkali* and *algorithm* are derived

from the Arabic language. There could be no mathematics or physics without *algebra*, no computer without *algorithm*, and no chemistry without *alkali*. Surprisingly, only a few people in the West, including scientists, are aware of this medieval Islamic scientific legacy.

The Europeans began their golden age by translating important books from Arabic into their own languages. Muslims, too, benefited a great deal from translation. Unfortunately, there is no sincere effort today to translate the important scientific books into Arabic, nor is there a sincere effort to make Arabic the language of science. No country has ever been able to develop or gain independence by copying the language of another community. The present nuclear countries like China,



**Dr Mohammed Shahid Kamal**

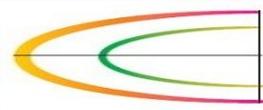
Assistant Professor  
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Dr Mohammed Shahid Kamal and Prof. Dimitri P. Mikhailidis

Russia, France, Japan, Germany and North Korea have all preserved their own languages well, and are working hard to preserve them as the languages of science.

Can we not make a sincere and honest effort to make Arabic the language of science? Is it not ironic that Muslims states are considered to be the most backward nations in spite of the fact that the first word of the revelation of the Quran is *Iqra* ('read')? Has the time not come for Muslims to learn from their glorious past and pay attention to the different signs of Allah scattered all over the universe?



## Continued from page 7

night. We should keep in mind that writing is the most difficult skill to master, even for native speakers. Let us aim, first of all, to get students to write correct sentences with correct grammar. Let them pass through all the necessary stages and if each stage is mastered, the process will produce competent and efficient writers. However, this will take time.

**Q: Is the revised writing syllabus able to achieve this?**

A: The Writing course syllabus is perfectly adequate. The course objectives and course descriptions are sound, but the delivery and receiving system have to be monitored.

Moreover, one semester must be devoted to remedial teaching; that is the only way to improve the quality of students' output. Teachers become confident when their students are responsive. Students are not very responsive here because many of them haven't acquired the required level of proficiency in English. Among those who do speak with confidence, the ability to write in English varies considerably.

**Q: What is your message to our students?**

A: Students should think of English as a language for success, a language of opportunity, a tool for international progress. Our native languages are not weak by comparison; in fact, they are very rich. However, let us embrace English as a means of facilitating international communication. Learning English will improve students' perspectives and advance their careers. And last, but by no means the least, English is also a tool for defending our faith against misdirected people who criticize it on false grounds and thus it becomes the basis for mutual understanding.

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