



Mountain Top

Monthly Newsletter of
Faculty of Languages and Translation
King Khalid University



Dr Abdullah Al-Melhi
Dean, Faculty of Languages and Translation

I take the columns of the *Mountain Top* as an open opportunity to encourage the students of all the faculties of King Khalid University in general and those of the Faculty of Languages and Translation in particular to participate in various English language learning activities provided by the Language Enhancement Programme (LEP). The LEP

is gradually becoming the centre of interest for the students because of the availability of both online as well as traditional face-to-face learning opportunities. With the collaboration of the eLearning Dean-ship, the LEP has launched many non-

Message from the Editor-in-Chief

credit online English courses in Basic Grammar, Advanced Grammar, Listening & Speaking, IELTS, and TOEFL.

I also encourage all the faculty members of the Faculty of Languages and Translation to put their share in the advancement of the LEP by offering their professional pedagogical services, particularly by devoting some of their weekly Office Hours to the LEP.



Salahud Din Abdul Rab
Editor, *Mountain Top*

The second issue of the *Mountain Top* is in your hands. The long-cherished dream is asserting its physical presence as a permanent reality. Now, the appearance of the *Mountain Top* is a regular phenomenon. In spite of all the technical obstacles and administrative hindrances, this monthly newsletter has ensured its publication on monthly basis.

There was a slight delay in the appearance of the second issue. The insiders, however, know the primary factor—all the faculty members were busy in administering the first progress test, both in the English Department and the English Language Centre.

The response of the faculty members contributing to the *Mountain Top* is encouraging and worth appreciating.

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A Vision for KKU

Rizwan Ghani

Lecturer, English Language Centre

“KKU should establish a writing seat in the Kingdom to promote the writing skill, which has been identified as the core skill for 21st Century to help students and professionals use modern technology to communicate effectively in professional and social environments.”

King Khalid University (KKU) is strategically positioned to serve the community of Southern Saudi Arabia. The grand plan of KKU university city reflects the commitment and dedication of the government towards developing human resources in line with higher education objectives to serve the community, the people, and the country at large. In this regard, the following areas would help the policy-makers realize the vision for KKU.

There is a need for the adoption of a writing framework which may help improve the writing skills of students in all deanships, and enable them to meet professional and social requirements. Based on the writing result of 15-year-old American students in 70 countries in 2003, the US education authorities of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)¹, formed a committee which presented first draft of the Writing Framework 2020² for the country in 2007. It was finalized in 2011 in consultation with 48 national and state organizations, including TESOL (pG2).

The Faculty of Languages and Translation can help all the deanships of KKU and the of General Directorate of Education, Asir Region to adopt the writing framework to help standardize the writing skill at grades 4,

8 and 12 in line with the recommendations of the consensus of the professional experts at the levels of school, college, and university and the concerned ministries. This framework envisages to standardize the writing skill within the Kingdom and help the country compete with 70 plus developed nations in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)³ held every three-year by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)⁴.

KKU should establish a writing seat in the Kingdom to promote the writing skill, which has been identified as the core skill for 21st Century to help students and professionals use modern technology to communicate effectively in professional and social environments. It will bring the due credit to the university on national and international levels.

The Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) may also be incorporated in the policy making for writing framework. In this regard, the e-learning Deanship can play a pivotal role in assisting the Faculty of Languages and Translation backed by the Deanship of Quality Control in offering accelerated courses related to the writing skills. For example, a student with IELTS can be exempted from taking courses equivalent to 6 credit hours.

The Faculty of Languages

and Translation will coordinate with the Deanship of eLearning in identifying courses related to the writing framework and providing access to online reading material like Coursera⁵ (five million plus courses); Edx⁶ (Harvard University), Alison⁷ & MiT open courseware testing services in line with Prometrics in the KKU eLearning labs. The Deanship of eLearning, in collaboration with the Deanship of Quality Assurance, will issue verified certificates (with photographs) which will be accepted by the university.

The introduction of subjects of critical thinking, computer literacy, including keyboard proficiency (Arabic and English), and assessment of reading skill on computer⁸ will help improve professional and social skills of the students at school, college and university levels. This can be achieved by close liaison among KKU, the Ministry of General Education, and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Finally, KKU has to play a vital role in materializing the use of the opportunities like MOOC and the eLearning facilities. It also has to review and update its vision periodically. This will help the university produce students who can meet the demands of professional environment and social needs. It will, furthermore, pave the way for producing quality graduates who can serve the Kingdom, and make it more prominent at the international level.

References:

1. <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>

2. <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/frameworks.asp>

3. <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/>

4. <http://www.oecd.org/>

5. <https://www.coursera.org/>

6. <https://www.edx.org/>

7. <http://alison.com/>

eLearning Workshop**Online Testing: Problems & Remedies****Mountain Top Report**

Under the patronage of Dr. Abdullah Al-Melhi, Dean of the Faculty of Languages & Translation, the eLearning Unit at the Faculty, organized a teacher-training workshop titled "Online Testing: Problems & Remedies".

Dr. Abdul Khaliq Al-Qahtany, Vice Dean for Quality & Development, Dr. Hamad Aldosari, Chairman of the English Department, Mr. Abdullah Al-Rezgi, the Director of the English Language Center, and Dr. Khalid Mohanna, Manager of the eLearning Team graced the occasion.

"The purpose of the workshop is to spread awareness among the teachers about the Online Testing System", Mr. Mohsin Raza Khan, Supervisor of the eLearning Unit at the Faculty, said in his opening remarks.

Mr. Rizwan Ghani and Mr. Salahuddin Abdul Rab initiated the formal proceedings of the workshop with a detailed presentation titled "Online Testing: Problems & Remedies".

Mr. Rizwan Ghani, the first



Salahuddin Abdul Rab and Rizwan Ghani

presenter, practically explained and displayed the steps for uploading the test to Blackboard, copying the test to the local computer, and deploying it to other sections. He also explained the recommended settings in the Test Options like the number of attempts, set-timer, and the auto-submit option for the upcoming examinations of the ELC.

Mr. Salahuddin Abdul Rab continued the presentation by focusing on the process of downloading the results from the Grade Center and administering the Excel sheets developed for preparation of the result in the ELC. He then shifted his focus to the expected complications faculty members might face while conducting the online tests. The participants were also given

an opportunity to raise questions and get answers and solutions from both presenters. The attendees also discussed the problems faced during the previous online examinations.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Hamad Aldosari, Chairman of the English Department, applauded the presentation and stressed the need for the observance of the basic characteristics of a good test viz. validity, reliability, authenticity and comprehensiveness during the forthcoming ELC examinations.

Dr. Mohammad Asif Ishaq, Mr. Javed Ahmed, Mr. Abdullah Al-Zubain, and Mr. Abdul Aziz provided holistic support to make this workshop a success.

Mr. Rizwan Ghani and Mr. Salahuddin Abdul Rab initiated the formal proceedings of the workshop with a detailed presentation titled 'Online Testing: Problems & Remedies'."



Dealing with Students' Negative Feelings in the EFL Classroom



Dr. Ismail Alrefaai
Director, Language
Research Centre

"Finally, students should be given an opportunity to express how they feel and it is very important to listen to the comments and feedback given by the students about the teaching-learning process."

Language learners bring many variables into the classroom. They include learning experience, study habits, attitudes towards language learning, emotions, and feelings. It is worth mentioning that students may bring negative feelings with them as well. In the course of time such feelings transform into psychological barriers and impede learning.

According to Steven Krashen, every learner has a built-in, imaginary effective filter. This filter takes two positions, up and down. When the filter is up (closed), it becomes difficult for the learner to internalize information. When the filter is down (open), it becomes easy for the learner to engage in the learning process and retain information. Motivation, self-esteem, confidence, attitude, and feelings of the learner play a significant role in changing the position of the filter. Positive feelings will make the filter low and learning becomes easy, natural and enjoyable. On the contrary, negative feelings close the filter and make learning very difficult. This article attempts how language teachers can remove students' negative feelings in the EFL classroom. To remove these negative feelings, the following strategies can be suggested:

First, it is necessary for the language teacher to understand how students feel. In addition, the teacher should keep in mind that

students' security must be maintained.

Second, from the beginning of the course/semester, the teacher should give the impression to his/her students that language learning is attainable and enjoyable. Also, students should have a clear idea about the course, its objectives, the materials to be covered, dates of exams, format of exams...etc. Furthermore, the teacher should observe the students' behavior in the classroom. The teacher has to help students overcome negative feelings by using various techniques such as pair work, group work, discussion, audio-visual aids, and cooperative learning.

Third, if students are relaxed and confident, learning the target language becomes natural and easy. To make students relaxed, confident, and comfortable in the classroom the teacher has to lower the level of anxiety. Anxiety exists when students feel afraid of making mistakes and therefore remain passive in the classroom. The teacher can help students lower anxiety by using a number of techniques. For example, helping students to become confident, forming positive attitudes towards language learning. To help students become self-confident, the teacher can request the students to list their strengths and weaknesses. Also, students can set goals to overcome their weaknesses. In addition, the teacher should help students succeed in achieving

certain tasks. Success motivates students to work harder and increases confidence. Nothing succeeds like success.

Fourth, the language teacher has to think of student error as a natural part of the learning process. Student's error points to the fact that there is lack of clarity on his part. The teacher can use these errors as a guide when deciding on further drills and activities. When correcting errors in the classroom, the teacher can use strategies such as self-correction and peer correction.

Finally, students should be given an opportunity to express how they feel. It is very important to listen to the comments and feedback given by the students about the teaching-learning process. The teacher can benefit from students' feedback if he/she accepts students comments in a non-defensive manner.

To conclude, the humanistic approach in language teaching stresses the importance of respecting students' feelings and removing psychological barriers. The teacher should have excellent rapport with his/her students and make language learning as enjoyable as possible to deal with negative feelings that might exist in the EFL classroom. It is possible to achieve this goal by using various teaching techniques and strategies which enhance interaction, increase students' motivation, and encourage cooperation in the EFL classroom.

Students' Problems at KKU

Seminar conducted by Dr. Ismail Alrefaai

The language research centre (LRC) is resolved to bring to you its activities on a regular basis through this article. One of the most vocal activities undertaken by the LRC is its fortnightly endeavour to present seminars & workshops under the patronage of the Dean of the Faculty Dr. Abdullah Al-Melhi and the Director LRC, Dr. Ismail Alrefaai.

The LRC is burning the midnight oil to bring into focus the first-hand thoughts, research studies, and opinions on contemporary challenges, issues & techniques in the field of academics.

The second activity of this year was an interactive workshop conducted by Dr. Ismail Alrefaai on 'The Students' Problems at KKU'. The speaker focused on some key areas of concerns among students and asked the participants for suggestions to address the issues. Various suggestions & recommendations were recorded to address the highlighted issues. A brief account of these suggestions follows:

"Eliciting is a good idea", Dr. Atif Jalabneh said, "to ensure students' participation and interest in the

learning process."

"A technical backup is pivotal to enjoy an uninterrupted use of technology in teaching," Syed Asif said as he supported the view of the presenter.

"Dates of midterm exams should be fixed through consultation with the students in order to avoid any overlapping of dates," commented Dr. Abdul Wahid and Dr. A. Latif Shazli.

"Teacher-student relations are workable solutions to overcoming many problems", said Dr. Michael.

Dr. Farhat Ullah Khan said that faculty members should consult with students to see what is wanted from a teacher's office hours to precipitate a maximum benefit from the office hours.

Syed Asif, further expressed his opinion in the following words. "The students should be well received on their first entry to KKU to minimize their confusion and unawareness to many things like their timetables, classrooms, names to text books, knowing their teachers etc. Therefore, the reception staff should work in a multi-dimensional way".

"The E-learning role is most of the times misunderstood and misused. It is not a replacement to the face-to-face interaction, but a help and assistance to facilitate the regular course of interactive teaching," said Dr. Ahmed Ismail Assiri, the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Translation. He further added, "Seminars on latest emerging trends, techniques and research work should also be arranged to open a new chapter of achievements in the field of academics at KKU."

The Language Research Centre has planned to arrange workshops on many important topics in the future. But our endeavours can never make a way until we continue to have active participation from our faculty members, especially from the people in chair positions. You can book a place for your presentation, and can hold the forum in the near future.

Hard copies of the current as well as the previous presentations are just an e-mail away. We are ready to respond even to individual requests.



Reported by
Syed Asif Abbas
Seminar Coordinator,
Language Research Centre



Language Research Centre's
Activity Blog



Five non-Credit Online English Courses Arranged by LEP



Reported by
Matthew Glotfeller
Language Instructor
English Department



Abdul Rauf Khan
Head of the LEP & Lecturer,
English Department

The LEP is proud to introduce five new non-credit, supplementary online English classes in the following subject areas: TOEFL, IELTS, Basic Grammar, Advanced Grammar, and Listening & Speaking. These courses provide additional study for students who are interested in deepening their knowledge in the above subjects. These courses are free of charge for registered KKU students and can be accessed via Blackboard from anywhere in the University or from home. Students must enroll online one time to access these courses. The process is fast and easy. Interested students should log in to Blackboard and find those courses on the first page.

Basic Grammar:

By Dominick J. Inglese



The World of Tomorrow

The LEP is very proud to offer these courses in eLearning to help KKU students better improve their studies and knowledge of English.

This course focuses on the basic elements of English grammar to provide a foundation for all other skill areas. If a student feels he is missing some basic knowledge of English grammar rules, this would be an excellent practice course.

Advanced Grammar:

By Dr. Andrew Agostino

This course deals with upper level grammar and is for more advanced students. This course would

be most helpful to those students who want to improve their writing skills and grammatical knowledge.

Listening and Speaking:

By Yolanda Parker

This provides some basic practice in Listening and Speaking for students who are not quite confident in these skills. A student can listen to a text in a lesson over and over until he feels he has mastered the material. Sometimes students feel frustrated due to the time limit of Listening and Speaking class, but this online format allows the students to repeat the listening texts as many times as needed.

TOEFL:

By Paul Sanchez

This is a good course for students wishing to brush up on their English before taking the TOEFL test. The class focuses on each module of the test. Although the class does NOT give practice tests, it does give assignments that will be helpful with the test later.

IELTS:

By Philip Warren

This course will help students prepare for the IELTS exam. There is a special focus in this class on Reading and Writing skills. Assignments are provided for student practice as well.

The LEP is proud to offer these courses in eLearning to help KKU students improve their studies and knowledge of English. Get on Blackboard, enroll, and have a look soon. You

Mr. Philip Warren
IELTS Teacher



522 KKU students enrolled in this program

Philip Warren is from New Zealand. He earned his undergraduate Degree at Otago University in New Zealand. Later he completed post graduate degrees in South Africa and Australia. In South Africa, at the University of Cape Town, he did a post graduate Honours Degree in History and completed Secondary Teacher Training. Later he earned an MA in ESL at the University of South Africa in Pretoria. The topic of his dissertation was the "Learning Styles of Successful ESL Learners." In Australia he completed a post graduate Degree in English Literature.

Philip has mainly worked overseas teaching English. His first job was teaching English in Zimbabwe. Recently, he finished a contract doing Primary Teacher Training in Malaysia. He has worked in Paraguay, Chile, and Atlanta, USA teaching English and Spanish. From 2004 to 2010, Philip worked in the Gulf, mainly in University Foundation Departments as an English lecturer. He spent 4 years in Oman, mostly at Sultan Qaboos University in Muscat, and some time later in Abu Dhabi. He is currently teaching at the Language Enhancement Program, College of Languages and Translation, King Khalid University and is proud to be a part of it.

Mr. Dominick Inglese
Basic Grammar Teacher



482 KKU students enrolled in this program

Dominick Inglese has earned an AA in business (Culinary Arts), a BA in English (Literature) and holds a MAE. (Curriculum/Instruction). Being a saxophone and flute player, he focuses on how to incorporate music into lesson plans, especially for English language learners (ELLs).

He is co-founder of GAT (Golden Avatar Trust), a pioneering free alternative education initiative with the goal of teaching practical lifetime skills to the poorest of India's village children. He is proud to teach here at Language Enhancement Program, College of Languages and Translation, King Khalid University.

Dr. Andrew Agostino
Advanced Grammar Teacher



427 Students of KKU are Enrolled in this program

Dr. Andrew Agostino holds a PhD in Educational Technology from Concordia Univer-

sity, Montreal, Canada, an M.A. in Media Production and Evaluation and a B.A. in English Literature. He has taught senior high school, college and graduate level courses at the university and has published a variety of articles in academic journals and magazines dealing with the impact of media and technology on existing systems. His dissertation explored the residual effects of human machine interaction. Virtual learning environments, constructivism, virtual social networks, technology as artifact, cognitive apprenticeship models and the acquisition of the English Language make up some of his research interests.

Throughout his career, Andrew has been involved in many video productions, industrial, corporate and creative. He has written and directed work for the stage and has been employed as a consultant, subject matter expert and instructional designer for different companies. Dr. Agostino is now honored to be teaching at Language Enhancement Program, College of Languages and Translation, King Khalid University, Abha.

Yolanda Parker
Listening and Speaking



834 KKU students enrolled

Yolanda Parker was born in North Carolina, located on the eastern coast of the

United States. She has been a teacher for over 18 years and is currently a Lecturer online at King Khalid University in Languages and Translations. She has always loved stories since she was a young girl. She has a BA in English with a concentration in Literature. She also has an MA in teaching and learning with technology. She has been studying online education for fifteen years, and is excited to be a part of the advancement of online education. She is proud to teach here at LEP, Faculty of Languages and Translation.

Paul Sanchez
TOEFL Teacher



1451 students of KKU enrolled

Paul Sanchez was born in Monterrey, and was raised in San Diego, California. He is a graduate of California State University, Fresno where he received his Bachelor's degree in Psychology and English. He also has earned an M.A in TESOL. Sanchez is also a Doctoral Candidate. He will receive his Ph.D. in TESOL in 2014. He spent over 6 years working in Guadalajara and South Korea as a teacher trainer at national universities and has traveled across Europe, Mexico and Asia.

His hobbies are learning and exploring new cultures and photography. In his free time, he enjoys listening to music, reading and spending time with family.

Dr. Agostino is now honored to be teaching at Language Enhancement Program, College of Languages and Translation, King Khalid University, Abha.

Professor Profile**Dr. Abdulkhaleq A. Al-Qahtani***Assistant Professor Faculty of Languages and Translation*

Written by:
Matthew Dresner
Language Instructor,
Faculty of Languages
and Translation

I was studying. I was a part of several Muslim Student Associations at both the University of Missouri and Oklahoma State. We planned many functions such as arranging.

If you are passing through the halls of the Department of Languages and Translation, be sure to visit room A/3/142. There you will meet one of department's new professors, Dr. Abdulkaleq A. Al-Qahtani. I recently had the opportunity to ask Al-Qahtani about his experiences at KKU and abroad. Al-Qahtani is an excellent resource for any student on topics ranging from Linguistics to living in America as a Saudi.

Matthew Dresner (MD): This is your first year here, what are your impressions of KKU?

Dr. Al-Qahtani (AAA): Since my arrival at KKU, everything has been great. I have really enjoyed meeting all of the new colleagues, both the new and the ones that were here before our arrival. The resources available to the faculty members, as well as the ability of the leadership to embrace challenges and receive ideas with open mindedness are all things that impress me about the college.

MD: You are originally from Abha?

AAA: Yes, I was born in Abha and lived here until I was 18 years old. I then moved to Riyadh to begin my bachelors. After finishing my bachelors I worked as an instructor in commu-



Dr. Abdulkhaleq A. Al-Qahtani

nications for the military and as an instructor for a saline water conversion corporation before moving to the United States to pursue graduate work. When I completed my graduate studies, I worked for seven years in Dammam as an instructor in the college of technology and an adjunct professor in King Fahad

MD: How was your time in the states?

AAA: The years I spent living in the United States were some of the best times of my life. On an academic level, I was able to make great strides in my learning because of the quality of the graduate education available in the States. My English education was furthered by the fact that I was learning in an environment that was culturally very different from mine and was in fact the culture of native English speakers. On a personal basis, the lifestyle was very enriching too. I immersed myself in the culture, and by the end of my time in the States, I felt like a native. I surrounded myself with good colleagues, friends, family, and really enjoyed getting to know all



University of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, before coming to KKU.

of the people I met in the US. Another part of my time in the States that I enjoyed was bridging the gap between the Muslim/Arab community and the local communities where I was studying. I was a part of several Muslim Student Associations at both the University of Missouri and Oklahoma State. We planned many functions such as arranging for people to come to mosques to watch prayers, having dinners with traditional Arabic food, and things of this nature. We were able to show people in the United States unfamiliar with Muslim/Arab culture, what it is like.

MD: What were some other important things about being abroad for you?

AAA: I like to think of myself as a mainstream Saudi. I was able to show

the people of the United States what an average Saudi is like. The fact that I was studying TESL and linguistics abroad introduced me to a large international community. We were all from different backgrounds and we were all working to convey ourselves in English. We were from different cultural backgrounds from around the world, so everyone did this differently. It was very interesting to compare and contrast the way people worked to express themselves in a non-native tongue. I learned a great deal from the people I met in the States and I would like

to believe the people I met there learned a great deal from me.

MD: Would you recommend studying abroad to any students that may be interested in such a path?

AAA: Studying abroad would be my number one recommendation, especially if you are going to study English or another foreign language. Immersing yourself in a country that speaks that language is the best way to learn about the language and the people. I would recommend the Midwest United States as the best choice, followed by the Western United States, and then the East Coast. America is well known globally for having the best graduate schools in the world. You would need a life-

*B.A. English (King Saud University Riyadh)
M.A. TESL (University of Central Missouri)
PhD TESL and Linguistics (Oklahoma State University)*

time to explore the graduate possibilities there. I would strongly recommend studying abroad to any interested student.

MD: Are you happy to be back in Abha?

AAA: I am definitely happy to be back in my home town. I have all of my family here. It is also wonderful seeing old friends and colleagues. Everyone has been really wonderful to me since I have been back.

MD: How do you like to spend your free time?

AAA: I like reading. In my free

time I usually read newly published articles in my field. I also like to walk. I would say that I walk about 10 km a day on average. It really helps me clear my head and relieve any stress I have built up during the day.

MD: What are your goals for the academic year?

AAA: I wish to see our college accredited by the NCAAA. I am doing a great deal of extensive reading on quality and development, accrediting bodies, and attending workshops in order to see how our college will best be able to meet this goal. My aim is to see this program, the English Language Program, become the number one English Program

in the entire country.

MD: Aside from being able to communicate in other languages, what, in your opinion, are some advantages of being bilingual?

AAA: It is a known fact that a bilingual person has more capacity and flexibility to maneuver and accomplish goals than people that are monolingual. There has been research showing this to be true. If you are truly bilingual you will also be able to research and add to the knowledge base in both languages. Being able to specialize knowledge in both languages is a great advantage and the most desired outcome of being bilingual.

We were from different cultural backgrounds from around the world so everyone did this differently. It was very interesting to compare and contrast the way people worked to express themselves in a non-native tongue.

Buzzing Bees of King Khalid University



By Md. Shahrear Talukder

King Khalid University's biggest rendezvous of spelling enthusiasts, Spelling Bee Competition, was held on November 27, 2013 in auditorium 5, building B of the KKU campus at Gregar. Dr. Abdullah Al-Melhi, the Honorable Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Translation, graced the occasion with his presence

Professor Dr. Golam Faruk, the organizer of this fabulous spelling bee competition said, "This sort of competition will encourage students to be more careful about, and interested in spelling and pronunciation simultaneously."

as a chief guest. Dr. Ahmed Ismail Asseri, the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Translation, Dr. Abdul Khaleq Al-Qahtani, the Vice Dean for Development and Quality Unit and faculty members from different colleges and a staggering number of one hundred and fifty students were also in attendance.

Eighteen of the best spellers from the Faculty of Languages and Translation of KKU participated in the competition. Khaled Al-Shehri won the competition after a long spelling battle. The second-place finisher was Talal Saad. Mohsen Mamdouh finished third.

Professor Dr. Golam Faruk, the organizer of this fabulous spelling bee competition said, "This sort of com-

petition will encourage students to be more careful about, and interested in spelling and pronunciation simultaneously."

Dr. Soren Ciutac, Dr. Khurshid Anwar, Mr. Mohammad Siraj Al-Islam, Mr. Joseph F. Uddo, Mr. Matthew Paul, and Mr. Hassan Costello from the Faculty of Languages and Translation judged the competition.

Last years success prompted and encouraged the organizers to hold the spectacular Spelling Bee Competition the first semester of this academic year.

The contestants' enthusiasm instilled a vibe of excitement in the audience. It was worth watching in every sense.



Spellers with the Dean of Faculty of Languages and Translation, Organizers and Judges

Photo credit: Md. Shahrear Talukder

Handling the Teaching of Grammar



By Mohammad Adil



“Interestingly, a user of a foreign language starts using it correctly long time after he or she is exposed to the culture the language belongs to - without knowing the rules or how the syntax works.”

The teaching of grammar is often mistakenly believed to be something boring and even monotonous. It can, however, be interesting and entertaining to many. A common complaint among some teachers is that students find grammar lessons rather difficult or do not enjoy them at all. Also working out or mastering rules often leads to frustration or confusion among many learners who find their teacher's explanation going over their heads. It all comes down to what makes the difference and whether grammar is really boring or it is the teacher's responsibility to make it interesting. In analyzing this, we will look at what we understand by grammar, the reasons for teaching it, students' opinion about it, and how to handle the teaching in the most effective way.

Is grammar a skill? The answer is simply 'No'. This term comes under language system, which the user of a language is not necessarily aware of while using it. In Richards, J.C. and Schmidt, R. *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*, grammar is defined as follows:

“a description of the structure of a language and the way in which linguistic units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language. It usually takes into account the meanings and functions these sentences have in the overall system of the language.”

Interestingly, a user of a foreign language starts using it correctly long time after he or she is exposed to the culture the language belongs to - without knowing the rules or how the syntax works. Some users even eventually turn out to be more efficient than the native speakers despite not being able to explain the structures. On the other hand, some users of a

foreign language are extremely good at explaining the structures, but not necessarily good speakers or users of the language. Whatever the fact, we should agree that every language has a system which includes grammar. Let us now look at why grammar should be taught and learnt.

Traditionally speaking, learners should know the structures of the language they are learning. From a pragmatic point of view, proper knowledge of structures enables them to self-correct themselves when they use the target language. Moreover, grammatical knowledge enhances their confidence as well, which results in the ability to produce correct sentences when they write. Although language acquisition theories generally emphasize direct learning from the context, they sometimes fail when the learners are false beginners. In this case, knowing grammatical rules facilitates and accelerates the learning process provided that they are contextualized. What might students think of learning grammar?

The bar chart below shows the result of a three-minute survey on several groups of students studying English at King Khalid University. A form comprising three statements was given to each student who was supposed to tick only one statement. The result is striking. According to the graph below, it is obvious that most of the learners (50%) agree that it is the teacher who can make grammar lessons appealing to them in a language classroom. On the other hand, only 12.5 percent students consider grammar boring. Interestingly, more than three times as many students find grammar interesting as those who find it boring.

When it comes to the teaching of grammar, a great deal of research has been conducted so far to make it engaging and interesting. The idea of teaching grammar does not solely involve the explanation of rules followed by consecutive exercises. There is something more to do about the teaching, which may include warm-up sessions, interactive games and activities and so on. The same grammar lesson can be handled differently by two different teachers. A traditional teacher, for an elementary class, may explain adverbs of frequency at the beginning, then make the learners attempt some exercises from the text book. Another teacher can arrange a five-minute activity in which the learners can talk in pairs about what they do in their free time. For an intermediate level class, the second conditional can be handled through a fun activity where learners may talk about predicaments (e.g. *What would you do if you saw a man shoplifting?*) or hypothetical situations. Such activities do not usually require a lot of time, but at least break the ice. In this regard, Harmer says,

“Perhaps we may decide to start our lesson with a short icebreaker for no other reason than to get the students in a good mood for the lesson that is to follow.” (Harmer 2007: 159)

Therefore, to make a grammar lesson meaningful, realistic and effective, all a teacher can do is make his or her lessons engaging with interactive activities, simplify instructions and explanations (i.e. simpler than the grammar point) with proper demonstrations, use various methods and techniques. In this case, the best thing to do is to

adapt some of the exercises (which students may find monotonous) to some interesting and engaging activities where there is room for enjoyment as well as proper practice of the target language.

Finally, there is practically no point in finding grammar lessons boring or monotonous. Learners will find them worthwhile if there is room for enjoyment which changes the learning concept from 'having to do' to 'loving doing'. There are excellent books available on grammar activities, which language teachers can use to make their grammar lessons more interesting and engaging. At the same time, a teacher can mull over an exercise to come up with something interesting even without the help of an activity book. The bottom line is that a teacher should add interactive

activities to his or her grammar lessons to make them interesting, and talking of activities, simply there are thousands to choose from.

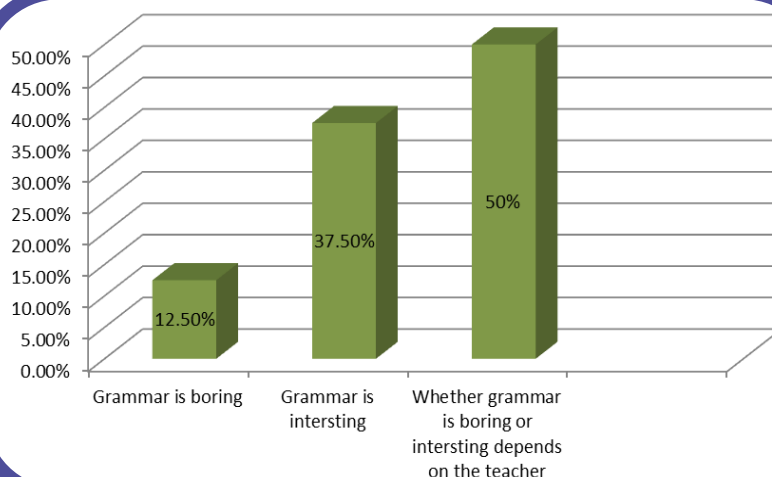
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Continued from Page 11

start driving. During classroom instruction, students can be encouraged to utilize at least half of their driving time in listening to learning materials. Teachers can also practice lessons on listening while commuting, saving preparation time at home.

Learning via electronic means is the order of the day. The educational technologists, instruction designers, and e-learning experts have worked out standards and applications which enable learners to use a wide range of materials on an individually configured learning platform. For Saudi students, the learning materials can be processed into a kit of ready-made tools, which can be operated with the software users are familiar with, including the same browsers and search engines via mobile phones. If the other students sitting in the back seats like to learn in groups, they can use

mobile phones for the online courses as well. Since the learning environment is designed to adapt to the learning and working style of the individual, some students may prefer to work through the course on screen using documents, while others will use short course sub-units on their cell phone as a video sequence or audio file.

There are many benefits. A listening practice on a daily basis makes the same tasks much easier for the students in the classrooms or language labs. Constant and regular listening practice helps develop interest among students who show indifference because they have trouble understanding the rapidly spoken exercises in the classrooms or language labs. Once motivational interest overpowers students, they will seek other listening materials in order to make their ears more familiar with English sounds

and words. They can even start listening to BBC, CNN, or running commentaries on live football matches. This will surely lead to a serious approach towards language learning.

A good beginning can be made in college campuses through motivational sessions in the classroom and language labs as to how the students can utilize their time while commuting. Technological expertise can be provided to allow students easy access to learning materials. Even educational content can be converted into digital form to be used in the car.

Next, in order to compete internationally, local students have to focus their learning strategy on two methods: they not only have to adopt latest technology for learning in an anywhere-anytime environment, but also need to speed up their learning pace through seamless motivation on a daily basis. Teachers have a bigger role to play while motivating students to turn their cars into learning repositories.

A Contrastive Study of the Sentence Pattern in English and Bangla: A Study of Simple Sentences

By
Md. Faruquzzaman
Akan

Introduction: It is evident in the history that the origin of the English and Bangla languages is Indo-European language family. But with the passage of time, these two languages had undergone a lot of changes. Bangla was greatly influenced by English, specially in some areas of grammar during the British rule in this Indian subcontinent. However, the earlier Bangla grammar was based on Sanskrit grammar. The English grammar was also influenced by Greek and Latin. In English, the term "grammar" comes from Greek meaning "study of words," whereas the Bangla equivalent of the term is "ব্যাকরণ" (bækəron) which receives the meaning "analysis". The subject of this study is a comparative analysis of the structure of the simple sentence (Declarative and Interrogative) in the two languages of the standard variety. It is worth mentioning that the sentence pattern in both the languages is well-fixed.

Method of the Study: The grammar of English and Bangla shares some noticeable features in common. But if we compare and contrast between English and Bangla sentences, we can find both similarities and differences. The definition of the sentence in both languages is almost the same. In English, the sentence is defined as a group of words arranged in such an order so that it makes a complete sense. In Bangla, the sentence is a collection of words (or inflected words) that expresses a complete sense about a topic. On the contrary, the sentences in the two languages vary largely in terms of their structures that is in the sequence or order of words.

For instance, a typical English sentence can be represented as : Subject + Verb + Indirect Object + Direct Object. e.g.

I gave him a book. (also I gave a book to him.)

But in Bangla, it is shown as : Subject + Indirect Object + Direct Object + Verb. e.g.

আমি তাকে একটি বই দিলাম। (a:mi ta:ke ekti boi dila:m)

A sentence can be viewed in English as: Subject + Verb + Complement. e.g.

I have a book.

And in Bangla, this is shown as: Subject + Complement + Verb. e.g.

আমার একটি বই আছে। (a:ma:r ekti boi a:se)

To construct a grammatically correct and complete sentence in English there must be an explicit verb. But in Bangla, there are some sentences where the verbs (usually linking verbs) are often understood. e.g. He is poor. Vs তিনি দরিদ্র। (tini ḡridro:). Here the silent verb is "হন" (hon). But in both the languages, the subject in the second person in imperative sentences is generally unexpressed. e.g. Come. Vs আসো। (a:so:). In English, the adverb follows the verb whereas in Bangla, the adverb precedes the verb. eg. Rana runs fast. Vs রানা দ্রুত দৌড়ায়। (ra:na: ḡruto: ḡḡorae). In English, the order of person is usually as second, third and first (You, He and I); but in Bangla, it is as first, second and third (আমি, তুমি ও সে) (a:mi, tumi and je). In English, the interrogative and negative sentences are formed when there is no auxiliary verb, with the help of "do" operators. But in Bangla, there is no need of such operators. e.g.

English Declarative (Aff): Hasan drinks coffee.

Bangla Declarative (Aff): হাসান কফি পান করে। (ha:sa:n kɔfi pa:n kɔre)

English Declarative (Neg): Hasan does not drink coffee.

Bangla Declarative (Neg): হাসান কফি পান করে না। (ha:sa:n kɔfi pa:n kɔre na:)

English Interrogative (Aff): Does Hasan drink coffee?

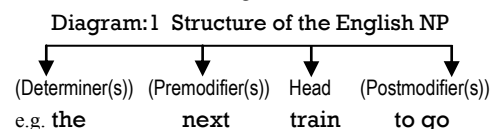
Bangla Interrogative (Aff): হাসান কি কফি পান করে? (ha:sa:n ki kɔfi pa:n kɔre)

English Interrogative (Neg): Doesn't Hasan drink coffee?

Bangla Interrogative (Neg): হাসান কি কফি পান করে না? (ha:sa:n ki kɔfi pa:n kɔre na:)

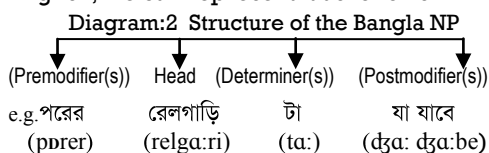
In the above negative sentences, the negative word "not"/"না"(na:) is placed after the auxiliary verb in English, but at the end of a sentence in Bangla.

In both the languages, the sentence is broadly divided into subject and predicate or NP and VP. The subject and predicate can be a single word or a group of words. It is shown in the diagrams 1 & 2 below:



Though in Bangla, there is no such NP like

English, we can represent it as follows:



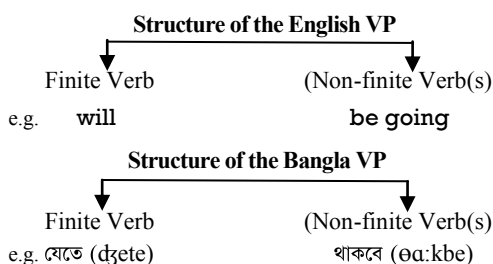
Unlike the Bangla NP, the English NP has to accompany some determiner(s) with a singular common noun as mandatory. e.g.

English: a/the book; Bangla : — বই (boi)

But like the English NP, the Bangla NP does not take the plural form in the Head with plural determiner(s)/premodifier(s). e.g.

three books Vs তিনটা বই (tinta: boi)

The structure of the predicate (VP) in both the languages is not similar. However, in both the languages, the predicate must contain at least one finite verb. The structures of the English and the Bangla VP's are shown in the following diagrams:



Here, the above two sentences are shown as Subject & Predicate Forms:

Subject			Predicate	
Subject/Headword		Attributes/Adjuncts	Verbs	Adjuncts of Predicate
English	farmers	Our	lead	a very poor life.
Bangla	কৃষকরা (kriʃkɔra:)	আমাদের (a:ma:ðer)	যাপন করে। (ðʒa:pən kore)	অতি দরিদ্র জীবন (əuti ɔrɪdrɔ: dʒɪbɒn)

Expected Outcome of the Study: This study aims at helping the researchers, teachers, as well as the learners of English as a second (ESL) or a foreign language (EFL) to understand the bilingual relationship of the two languages at the sentence levels. It will be of great value to the teachers and course designers for classroom techniques in the process of language teaching/learning. If one knows the similarities and differences of the sentence system of these two languages, one will be able to translate from one language into another effectively. This study will offer a contrasting picture of the sentence in the two languages.

Conclusion: The sentence is the largest unit of grammar. As we use it as the instrument of expression in our day to day life, it is very essential to have the comparative knowledge of the sentence in two languages. It is hoped that the Bangla speakers of English will be immensely benefited from this research. This comparative study will reveal some remarkable features of the two languages. However, a further researcher can provide us with more useful material in this field.

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So, the simple sentence of English and Bangla is defined as having only one subject and one finite verb. But sometimes in Bangla, the finite verb may be unexpressed and the number of verbs in Bangla VP may be from zero to four; but in English, it is from one to five. e.g.

Bangla : তিনি সবল। (tini jibbal) (No. of Verbs is zero)

English : He is strong. (No. of Verbs is one)

Again, there are more than one verb in the two languages where only one verb is finite verb. e.g.

Bangla : পুলিশ কর্তৃক ডাকাত ধৃত হয়ে যেতে থাকবে।
(No. of Verbs is four)

(pulis kɔtrɪk dɑ:kɑt ɔrɪto: hɔe zete θa:kbe)

English : The bandit will be being caught by the police. (No. of Verbs is five)

Analysis of Simple Sentences:

English Vs Bangla

English: Our farmers lead a very poor life.

Bangla: আমাদের কৃষকরা অতি দরিদ্র জীবন যাপন করে।

(a:ma:ɔrɛr kriʃkɔra: əuti ɔrɪdrɔ: ɔʃɪbɔn ɔʃa:pən kɔre)

This study aims at helping the researchers, teachers, as well as the learners of English as a second (ESL) or a foreign language (EFL) to understand the bilingual relationship of the two languages at the sentence levels.

Poet: Abu Attaiyeb Ahmad bin Al-Husain Al- Mutannabi**Translated by: Eyhab A. BaderEddin**

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*Live gloriously, or die nobly amidst lances thrusting
 and banners waving*

*For the points of spears better dissipate ire, and slake
 the thirst of a malice-filled breast*

*So seek glory in blazes, and spurn humiliation even if
 it be in eternal paradise*

*If conceited I seemed, it is the conceit of an unrivalled
 man who has never found any surpassing him*

*I am the twin of bounty, the master of rhyme, the bane
 of my foes and the rage of the envious*

بَيْنَ طَعْنِ الْقَنَا وَخَفَقِ الْبُنُودِ	عِشْ عَزِيزاً أَوْ مُتْ وَأَنْتَ كَرِيمٌ
ظِ وَأَشْفَى لَغَلِّ صَدْرِ الْحُقُودِ	فَرُؤُوسُ الرِّمَاحِ أَذْهَبُ لِلْغَيْ
الدَّلِّ وَلَوْ كَانَ فِي جِنَانِ الْخُلُودِ	فَاطْلُبِ الْعِزَّ فِي لَطَى وَدَعِ
لَمْ يَجِدْ فَوْقَ نَفْسِهِ مِنْ مَزِيدِ	إِنْ أَكُنْ مُعْجَباً فَعُجْبُ عَجِيبِ
وَسِمَامُ الْعِدَى وَغَيْظُ الْحَسُودِ	أَنَا تَرَبُّ النَّدَى وَرَبُّ الْقَوَافِي

The First IATIS Regional Workshop in Translation organized by Semarang State University

Dr. Ahmad Al-Faifi, the Chairman of the Department of Translation, Faculty of Languages and Translation, participated in the First IATIS Regional Workshop organized by Semarang State University (SSU) earlier this year.



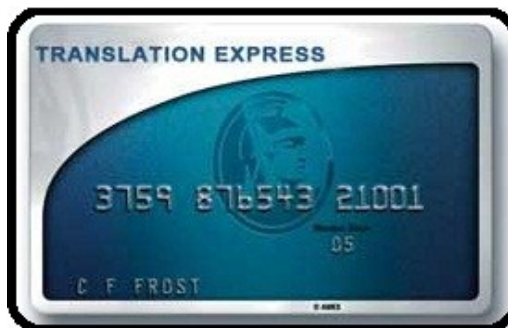
**Vice Rector for Deanship Affairs
Prof. Dr. Fathurahman, M.Pd**

The aim of the meeting was to seek for the possible collaboration of mutual benefits between SSU and King Khalid University (KKU). This visit was a response to a formal invitation from SSU as a part of their university-to-university agreement program aimed at cooperation on different areas such as research, staff exchange, and student exchange.

SSU sends the PhD students to

have 2-3 months visit to overseas universities for attending various lectures and being supervised by various overseas professors. They also receive overseas students to learn Indonesian language and culture for one year, under the Indonesian government's financing.

Dr. Al-Faifi grasped this opportunity as a point of establishing a friendly relationship with the students of SSU in general and those of Arabic Language in particular. He also met the Vice-Rector for Student Affairs,



By Salahudin Abdul Rab

Vice-Rector for Partnership Affairs, and the Organizer of the Conference Committee and gave each one of them a bag of Islamic books as a gift from Cooperative Center For Call & Communities, Saudi Arabia.



The students of Department of Arabic Language



**Vice Rector for Student Affairs
Prof. Dr. H. ZMasrukhi, M.Pd.**



Organizer of the Conference Committee

The Qur'an: A Challenge to Reason

An excerpt from the book
"Struggling to Surrender: Some Impressions of an American Convert to Islam"



Jeffery Lang

"For myself, the most decisive moment in my search for God was when the Muslim student leader explained to me, after some deliberation, what it meant to him to be a Muslim."

Dudley Woodbury of the Zwemmer Institute is a gifted and experienced communicator of the Christian perspective in interfaith dialogues. Recently, while lecturing to fellow Christian missionaries, he mentioned that one of the first images one gets of Muslims is that they love to debate. They will debate whether the Qur'an or the Bible is God's word, or if Jesus is God or man, or whether or not the coming of Muhammad is foretold in the Bible, and on many other topics. But, Woodbury pointed out, if you ask them to discuss their experience of faith, they are often taken aback. He relates how one popular Muslim lecturer had challenged him to a public debate. Woodbury responded that while debating did not appeal to him, he would be very interested in a public sharing and exchanging of faith experiences. The challenger had no interest in such an encounter, and so no progress was made.

To Americans, the experience of faith is the crux, the validation, and the purpose of religion. For myself, the most decisive moment in my search for God was when the Muslim student leader explained to me, after some deliberation, what it

meant to him to be a Muslim. This book is my attempt to do the same.

Such a perspective should not be taken to mean that belief in God should be irrational, but rather that the emphasis is on feelings and spirituality. "What does your belief do to and for you?" is a legitimate question. However, it is also not the only question, for faith must be more than an exercise in rational thinking or a spiritual encounter. To concentrate on only one of these elements is to disregard a vital part of our humanity.

The Muslim inclination and preference for polemics in interfaith discourse is better understood in light of two considerations. First, a Muslim has no experience in dividing his or her life into "sacred" and "secular" aspects. All of life is a sacred experience, as can be seen in the fact that even the

continuous and pervasive, how could it be otherwise? So when a Muslim is asked to relate his or her experience of belief, he or she is being asked to do something unfamiliar, to dissect and think about faith in a way that is outside of the Islamic perspective. Second, Muslims believe that religion must make sense, that there must be a wisdom and a rationale behind every one of its elements. While admitting the limitations of human thought, they nonetheless see reason as playing a vital role. The source of this insistence is undoubtedly the Qur'an, which leads us to discuss one of the most common first impressions readers have of the Muslim scripture.

A central Qur'anic concept is the extreme importance of reason and contemplative thought in the attainment of faith. Almost every modern Western orientalist has noted this. For example, Rodinson writes: "The Koran continually expounds the rational proofs of Allah's omnipotence: the wonders of creation, such as the gestation of animals, the movements of the heavenly bodies, atmospheric phenomena, the variety of animal and vegetable life so marvelously well adapted to man's needs. All those things "are signs (*ayat*) for those of insight." (3:190)"

And a little further on he adds: "Repeated about fifty times in the Koran is the verb *aqala* which means "connect ideas



most mundane acts are consecrated by the almost ceaseless invocation of the divine names. If this seems too formalistic to non-Muslims, Muslims see it as appropriate and natural, for if God's influence in our lives is

together, reason, understand an intellectual argument.” Thirteen times we come upon the refrain, after a piece of reasoning: *a fa-la taqilun*—“have ye then no sense?” (2:41-44, etc.) The infidels, those who remain insensible to Muhammad’s preaching, are stigmatized as “a people of no intelligence,” persons incapable of the intellectual effort needed to cast off routine thinking (5:53-58, 102-103; 10:42-43; 22:45-46; 59:14). In this respect they are like cattle (2:166-171; 25:44-46).⁸

H. Lammens wrote that the Qur’an “is not far from considering unbelief as an infirmity of the human mind.”⁹

The Qur’anic term *kafir*, which interpreters most often render as “disbeliever,” comes from the root *kafara*, which means “to cover or conceal.” In Qur’anic usage, it has the general sense of one who conceals or rejects, consciously or unconsciously, a divine gift, a divine favor, or truth. When talking of such people, the Qur’an asks, almost incredulously, “Do they not travel through the land, so that their hearts may thus learn wisdom?” (22:44); “Do they not examine the earth?” (26:7); “Do they not travel through the earth and see what was the end of those before them?” (30:9); “Do they not look at the sky above them?” (50:6); “Do they not look at the camels, how they are made?” (88:17); and “Have you not seen the seeds which you sow?” (56:63). The implication behind all these questions is that evidence of the truth of this message is to be found in the study of history, cultures, the earth, the cosmos, and nature, among others. The Qur’an insists that it contains signs for those who “are wise” (2:269), “are knowledgeable” (29:42-43), “are endowed with insight” (39:9), and who

“reflect” (45:13).

The very first revelation to Muhammad, consisting of the first five verses of the ninety-sixth surah, stresses the acquisition and transmission of

given ability, every human being partakes, in one way or another, in mankind’s continuous accumulation of knowledge, man is spoken of as being “taught by God” things which the individual does not—



knowledge in the human quest for advancement: “Read, in the name of your Lord, who created—created man from a tiny thing that clings. Read, for your Lord is the Most Bountiful, who taught [man] the use of the pen, taught man what he did not know. (96:1-5)”

Thus the first command revealed to mankind through the Prophet was, quite literally, “Read!” And the ability to do so is proclaimed as one of the great divine gifts. Asad comments: “The pen” is used here as a symbol for the art of writing or, more specifically, for all knowledge recorded by means of writing: and this explains the symbolic summons “Read!” at the beginning of verses 1 and 3. Man’s unique ability to transmit, by means of written records, his thoughts, experiences and insights from individual to individual, from generation to generation, and from one cultural environment to another endows all human knowledge with a cumulative character; and since, thanks to this God-

and, indeed, cannot—know by himself. (This double stress on man’s utter dependence on God, who creates man as a biological entity and implants in him the will and ability to acquire knowledge, receives its final accent, as it were in the next three verses) [which read: No, truly, man is rebellious, seeing himself as independent. Surely unto your Lord is the return. (96:6-8)]¹⁰

These last three verses characterize the attitude of modern man, who, because of the achievements of science, has come to believe that he is independent of the need for God. From the Qur’anic perspective, he “transgresses all bounds” in his abuse of the divine gift of intelligence. The Qur’an’s dual challenge to test one’s own positions against those of the Qur’an according to the standards of reason, coherence, and accepted truths is well-suited to this attitude and, moreover, its acceptance has been the first step for many who eventually converted to Islam.

“The Qur’anic term *kafir*, which interpreters most often render as ‘disbeliever,’ comes from the root *kafara*, which means ‘to cover or conceal’.”



Quality and Development Unit's Updates



The first meeting of Quality and Development Unit at the Faculty of Languages and Translation the academic year 1434-1435 was held under the chairmanship of Dr. Abdul Kha-

liq on 24th of September, 2013. The following points were discussed at the meeting:

At the meeting last year, a self-study report and scales document was analyzed and reviewed. Different opinions were shared and some actions were suggested by the committee members, which were based on the analysis made, and accordingly the report was sent to the Deanship of Quality and Development.

The Deanship of Quality and Development should be approached regarding whether the actions suggested by our committee members have been approved or not.

An English version of the Quality and Development guidelines should be circulated to all the committee members.

With a view to appointing coordinators of each department, the Dean of Quality and Development should be approached.

There is a need to sit with the Dean of Quality and Development in order to know the requirements to meet the first 3 standards.

Our missions need to be sent to all the members. Rubrics on the basis of which staff members are evaluated should be made known to all.

The second such meeting was held on 25/1/1435. The



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Points discussed in this meeting were as follow:

The name of an external reviewer has been proposed.

The self-study report is to be formulated and submitted as soon as possible.

The idea of introducing a proficiency test was raised by some members of the committee. A question was raised regarding whether it could be added to our English program.

Problems with student enrollment are to be fixed to ensure quality and consistency.

Each committee has to finalize 'stars' evaluation.

Reports on the sub-committees meetings are to be received soon.

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