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Has English Globalization Affected Arabic Language?--- A Survey Based Study in Saudi

Abstract

Arabic is the official language of over 20 countries and there are about 300 million speakers of Arabic across the world. People around the world revere Arabic since it is the language of the Holy Koran. Latest technological developments proved futile dampening the glory of the language. The present study throws light on the history and significance of the Arabic Language. It discusses the need for learning the Arabic language to meet the future requirement of Arabic learners. The study explores the elements responsible for the current position of the Arabic language following a quantitative survey via google form. The participants are students from different colleges and universities, teachers, teaching supervisors, postgraduates, retirees, landlords, administrators, and others from different parts of Saudi Arabia.

Introduction

Arabic is a Southern-Central Semitic language. It is spoken in most parts of the Arabian Peninsula, parts of the Middle East and North Africa. Since most of the Arabic speakers are concentrated in the Middle East. Arabic is a macro-language that has 30 modern varieties or dialects. Literary Arabic, which is also called Standard Arabic or Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), is used today in formal speech and in writing in the Arab world while Classical Arabic was used in Islamic literature of the 7th to 9th centuries. It is the language of the Quran. Arabic is the fourth most spoken language in the world. About 315 million people in 58 countries speak Arabic as their first language, according to Ethnologue. It is truly one of the great modern languages of the world.

Muslims, all over the world consider it sacred. It is written in the golden pages of history that Arabs have contributed immensely to the advancement of science, medicine, and philosophy. Arabs have also made significant contributions in literature, mathematics, navigation, astrology, and architecture.

Modern standard Arabic is the dominant language in education, cultural and media exchange. Colloquial Arabic differs in every Arabic country and has a variety of accents, yet Arabic speakers turn to use modern standard Arabic whenever they have problems in understanding each other. Although this proves the familiarity of colloquial Arabic in Arabic countries, it also asserts that modern standard Arabic remains the choice of the elites and educated classes. The relationship between modern standard Arabic, colloquial and slang is one of the main issues today in the Arabic east and the non-Arab west.

1.1 Arabic Language Today

In today's world, Arabic is of utmost importance due to the economic significance of the oil-producing Arabic countries in the global scenario. Learning the Arabic language

opens doors to employment in the oil and travel industry. Knowing the Arabic language can help us find a career in a variety of fields such as journalism, business, and industry, education, finance and banking, translation and interpretation, consulting, foreign service and intelligence etc.

With the growing importance of the Middle East in International affairs, there is a shortage of people who are well versed in the Arabic language and culture in the West. Apart from this, numerous business opportunities are available in the Arabic world as a result of the expansion of markets. Studying the Arabic language will give you a cutting edge in your endeavor towards becoming an international businessman oriented towards the ever-growing Arabic market. The Arabic language has played an important part in shaping the Islamic future in the world of globalization and conflict of civilization.

1.2 Significance of Arabic Language Studies

- ❖ It is necessary to study the Arabic language for the following reasons
- ❖ There is a high demand and low supply of Arabic-speakers in the Western world.
- ❖ With the growing importance of the Middle East in international affairs, there is thus an extreme shortage of workers in the West who are versed in Arabic language and culture.
- ❖ Those who study Arabic can find careers in a variety of fields: journalism, business and industry, education, finance and banking, translation and interpretation, consulting, foreign service and intelligence, and many others.
- ❖ Arabic-speaking nations are a fast growing market for trade.
- ❖ Initiatives to integrate the Arab world into the global economy are opening up numerous potential new business opportunities.

- ❖ The Arab region with its rapidly growing population provides a huge export market for goods and services.
- ❖ With a GDP of over 600 billion dollars annually, the region also has much to offer the world market.
- ❖ The Arab countries are in the process of reforming and diversifying their economies.
- ❖ Business regulation is improved in order to make the economies more competitive and to attract entrepreneurs.
- ❖ In the Arabian Gulf, for example, huge investments are made in areas like construction, finance, telecom, and tourism. In order to do business effectively, one must understand the language and culture of the people with whom one hopes to negotiate and conduct trade.
- ❖ The business culture in the Arab World is very much about building personal relationships of mutual trust.
- ❖ Knowledge of Arabic can be instrumental in fostering deeper business relations.
- ❖ The history of the Arab world and the religion of Islam are preserved in the Arabic language.
- ❖ The Arabic language is part of the identity of Arab speaking countries.

1.3 Hindrances affecting Arabic

Arabic is one of the most important living languages. Fadhel Al-Omani Al-Riyadh mentions that there are grave challenges that have undoubtedly stalled its spread as a glorious language that once contributed to science, art, and knowledge as follows:

- ❖ Globalization has contributed to the spread of Western culture, thought, ideas, behavior, and customs.
- ❖ Standard Arabic is no longer used in homes and limitedly used in schools, workplaces and in the street. It is mainly used in cultural and literary conferences and events.
- ❖ Today, Arabic dialects are the official means of communication, in addition, of course, to foreign languages.
- ❖ The standard of Arabic on the Internet is poor. That is why the majority of young Arab men and women use English and other languages to surf the web and search for what they want in languages other than Arabic.
- ❖ Illiteracy has reached unprecedented levels in the Arab world where 40 percent of the population of most Arab countries are illiterate.
- ❖ Lack of proper communication between people due to the growing use of social networking.
- ❖ The educational methods employed in schools and universities do not meet the needs of today's world with all its modern technologies.
- ❖ Translated materials of foreign languages.

2. Statement of the Research Problem

The main purpose of the present study is to explore the impact of impediments on Arabic Language learning in the modern age. It discusses the following major issues

1. Is Arabic still in demand in the current generation?
2. Does globalization affect the glory of Arabic language?

3. Literature Review

Dr. Jamal Sanad (2018) states there are meaningful efforts being made in the Arab world aimed at preserving, promoting, and reinforcing the Arabic language among younger generations. UAE's Council of Ministers, in 2008, has decided to authorize Arabic as the official language at all ministries and federal institutions and entities exerting efforts to teach Arabic to non-Arabic speakers, and to hold conferences pertaining to the promotion of the Arabic language, mainly the International Conference for the Arabic Language which is hosted annually in the UAE. There are also several activities and initiatives, the most recent of which is the Madrasa platform, launched on October 16, 2018, by His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

Prominent Arab scholars wrote books discussing the mistakes and faults which flow come from the locals' tongues. Foreign threats have spread until it reached all levels of Arabic language; conversation is mixed nowadays with foreign vocabulary, Arabic writing has melted with English since people write English words with Arabic letters. Therefore, we read and learn (deformed) lingual levels between two languages (Arabizi), something like cooked meat, but not cooked enough to be eaten. There are in some electronic social communication pages such as "Facebook" and "Twitter" programs in Arabizi that widen the gap between the formal language and the native speakers.

Siti Ikbal (2006); her findings refuted the existence of such an environment in schools. Her contention was that the lack of practice of the Arabic Language as a medium of communication was the core issue. Zawawi et al. (2005) stated that the optimum environment for promoting the use of foreign languages was unavailable in Malaysia. The spectrum of dominance is claimed mostly by the Malay language, the English language, and other ethnic languages, for these are the most popular media of communication in Malaysian society.

4. Methodology

The methodology adopted in the present study is a quantitative based survey via Google form. The questionnaire is administered among students from different colleges and universities, teachers, teaching supervisors, postgraduates, retirees, landlords, administrators, and others from different parts of Saudi Arabia.

4.1. Objectives of the questionnaire

The questionnaire comprises 44 questions. The survey covers all the aspects including their preferences of learning Arabic language, language used in terms of daily activities, social networking, translation and employment opportunities. The main purpose of eliciting information is to

- ❖ Identify whether or not Arabic is the first language of the person and to know if the language is a constant and daily occurrence in her life
- ❖ Endorse the belief that past generation is more skilled in learning and using it
- ❖ Find out the religious fervor of the young generation
- ❖ Check their daily usage of Standard Arabic Language
- ❖ Determine their proficiency in Arabic language individually and publicly
- ❖ Establish their awareness of identifying the Arabic Language speaking problems in and outside their circle.
- ❖ Throw a light on the significance and demand of learning Arabic language for various purposes like jobs, business and so on
- ❖ Identify the usage of Arabic language globally
- ❖ Detect the impact of early education and the role of teachers in learning Arabic
- ❖ Prove that reading improves Arabic vocabulary.

- ❖ Know if their basic Arabic knowledge is stronger
- ❖ Recognize the impact of foreign media and languages on the Arabic language
- ❖ Distinguish between regular Arabic language and Arabic translated form.
- ❖ Find their communication through technological tools and social networks rather than face to face that affected the Arabic language proficiency.
- ❖ Discover their hold over languages
- ❖ Establish their fluency, exposure, vocabulary, and usage of foreign language, English
- ❖ Confirm the fact that globalization of the English language has affected the Arabic language sparsely.

5. Data Analysis

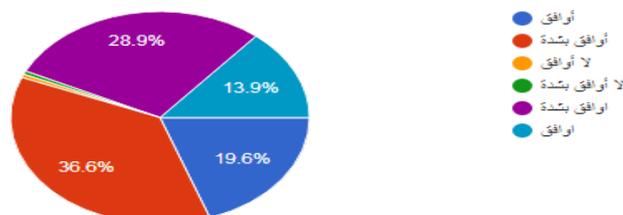
The present study adopted Google survey for the data collection. The analysis of the data is presented both descriptively and graphically below:

Majority of the respondents out of 201, around 37.3% fall between 20—30 years category, while 34.3% are between 30-40 years old, 22.9% between 40-50 years old and only 16% are above 50 years category. Nearly, 16% of them didn't reply to this query.

- ❖ Hence, majority of the respondents belong to young generation.

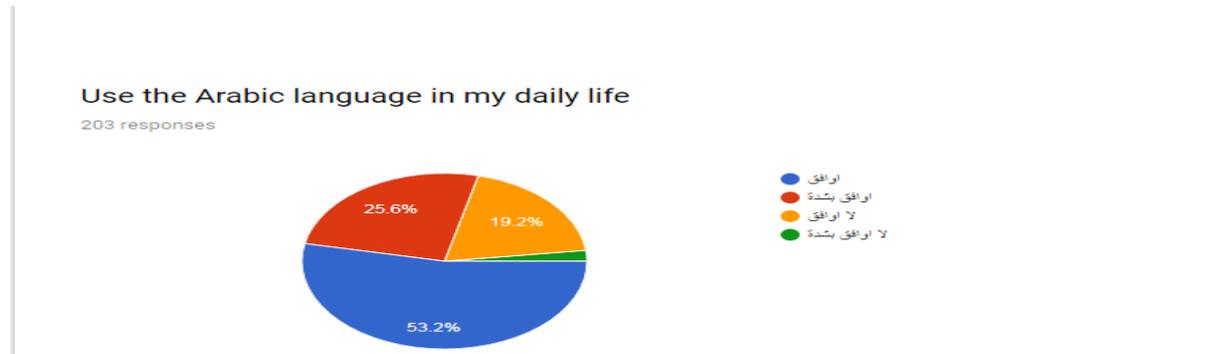
I use the Arabic language in reading the Quran

194 responses



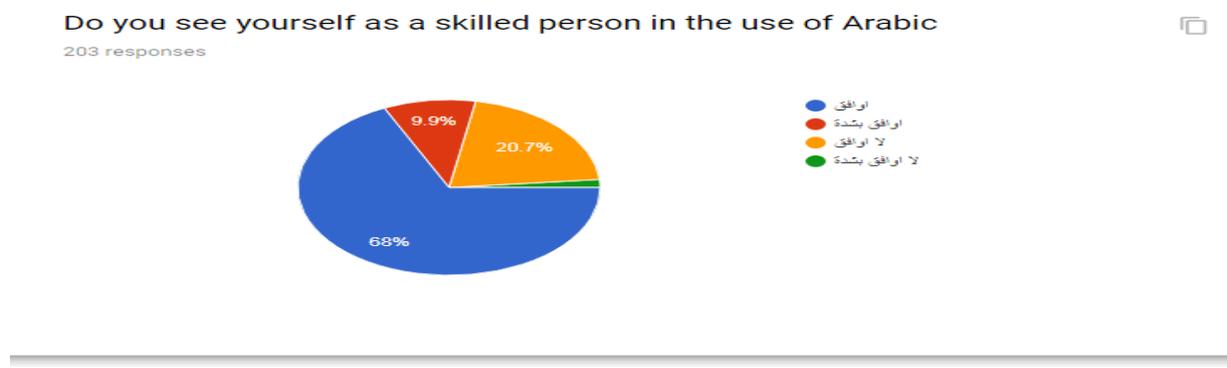
Out of 203 only 194 replied to this query, 36.6% strongly agreed, while 28.9% strongly disagree, 19.6% agree completely, 13.9% are neutral and remaining not responded.

- ❖ A lot of them follow religious pillars.



Total 203% responded to this query out of which 53.2% agree, while 25.6% strongly agree, 19.2% disagree and remaining strongly disagreed.

- ❖ Therefore, majority of them use Arabic language in their daily life. Arabic is their native language so it is expected.

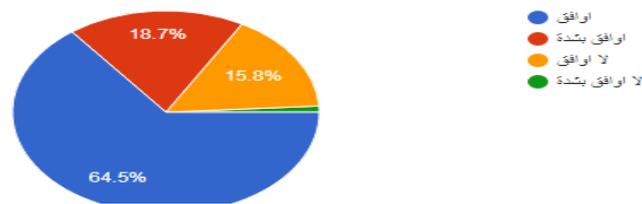


Overall 68% of the respondents accepted that they are proficient in Arabic language. While 20.7% of them disagree, 9.9% strongly disagree and remaining strongly disagreed.

- ❖ Therefore, most of them express their confidence in being skilled in Arabic.

Arabic is used in business and business

203 responses



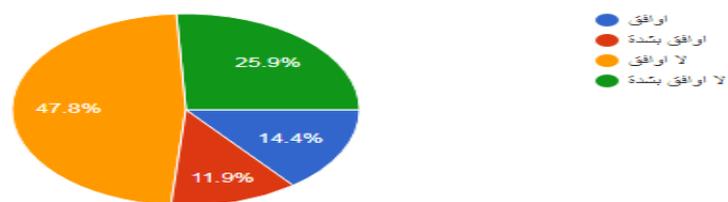
Majority of them about 64.5% agree that Arabic language is necessary in business field.

Nearly, 18.7% strongly agree, 15.8% disagree and remaining strongly disagrees.

- ❖ The young generation feel Arabic is needed in carrying out business dealings.

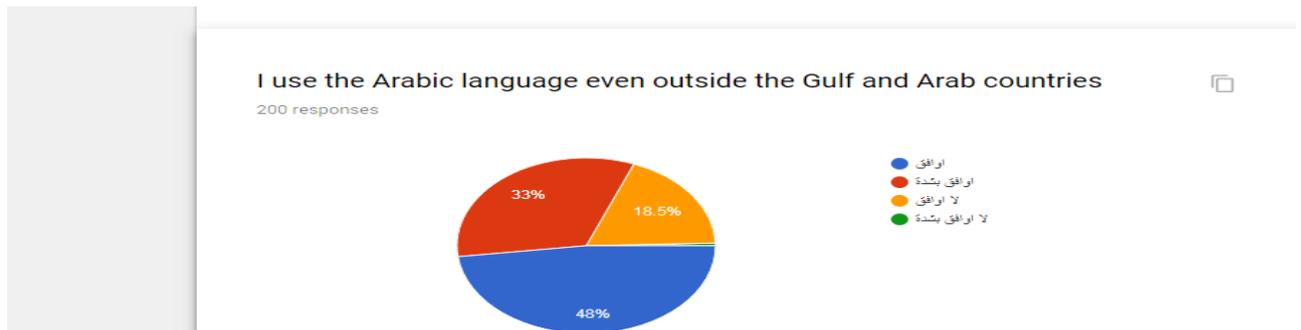
Arabic language studies in Gulf countries only

201



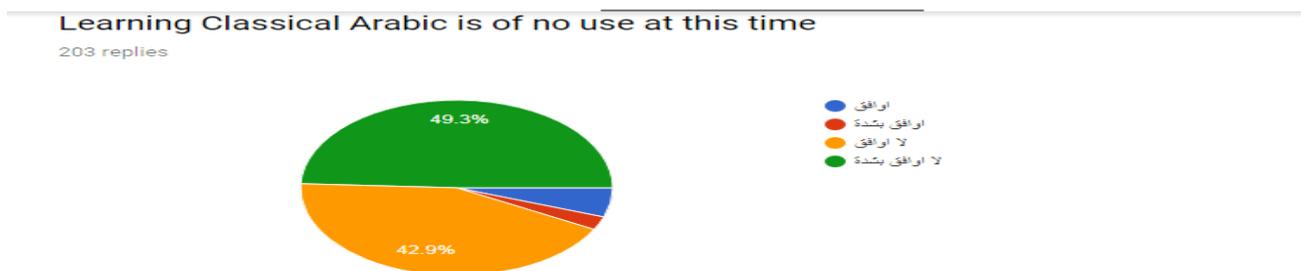
Out of 203 only 201 responded to this question. 47.8% strongly disagree, while 25.9% strongly agree and 14.4% agree.

- ❖ It proves that they believe Arabic is studied in and out of Gulf countries.



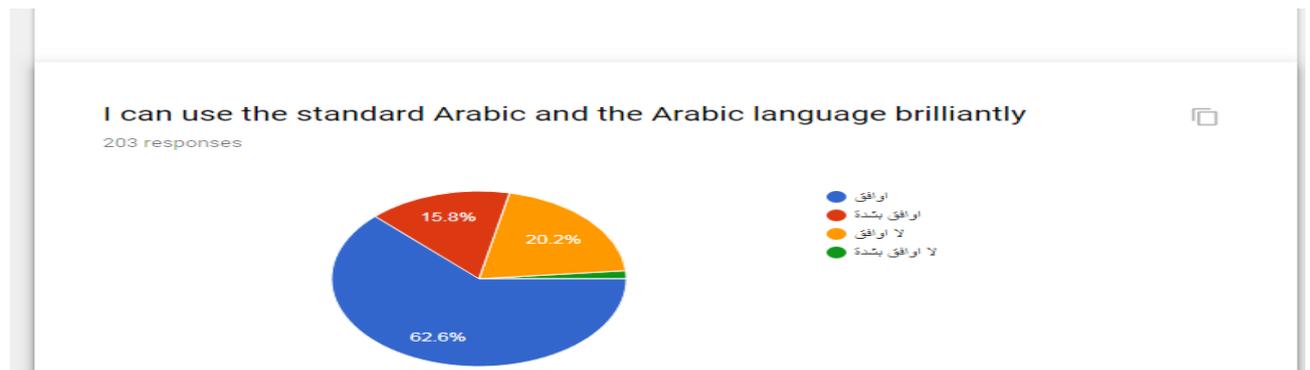
Total 200 out of 203 responded that they are confident of using Arabic even outside the Gulf countries. 40% agree, while 33% strongly agree, 18.5% disagree and remaining strongly disagree to this statement.

❖ Thus, it reveals that Arabic is used broadly even outside Arab countries.



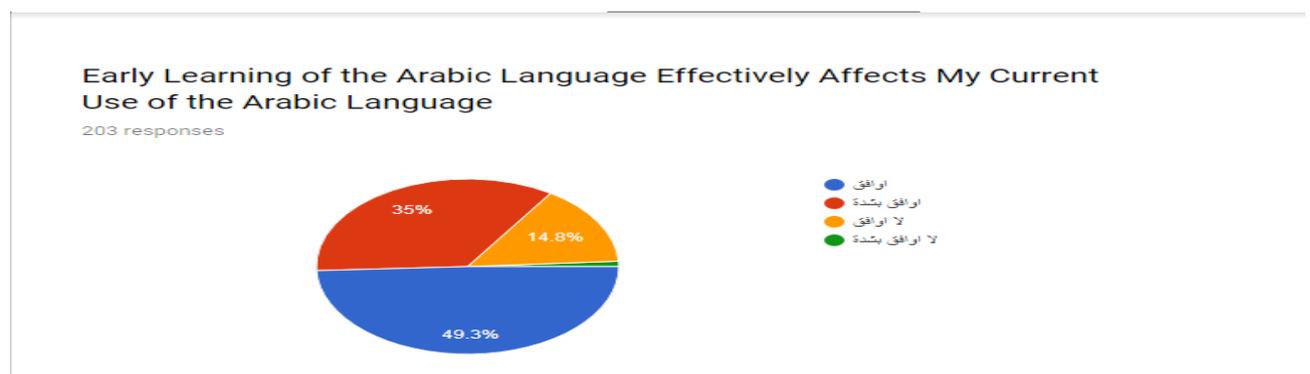
All participants replied to this query 49.3% strongly disagree, whereas 42.9% disagree and a few of them agree.

Consequently, the present generation indisputably confirmed that learning Arabic is crucial.



62.6% of them agreed to that they can use standard Arabic language perfectly, whereas 20.2% disagree, 15.6% strongly disagree and remaining strongly disagrees to the query.

❖ Majority of them are proficient in standard Arabic language.

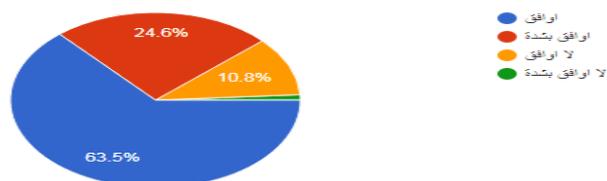


Around 49.3% agree, while 35% strongly agree, 14.8% disagree and remaining strongly disagree

❖ They received stronger basic foundation of Arabic language in their schooling.

There is a difference between Arabic translation and standard Arabic language

203 responses

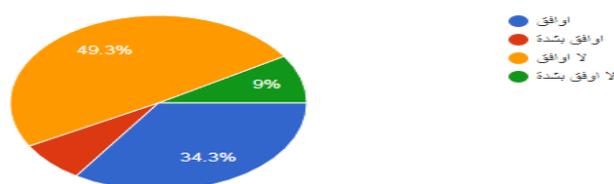


63.5% agree to this query, whereas 24.6% strongly agree, 10.8% disagree and the rest strongly disagree.

- ❖ Hence, the participants endorse there is a difference between translated and standard Arabic usage.

I can speak English fluently and understand

201 responses

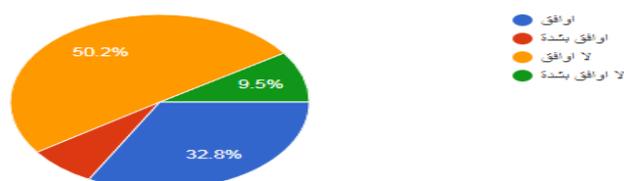


Out of 203 only 201 of them responded to this query. 49.3% disagree, 32.8% agree, 9.5% strongly disagree and the rest strongly agree.

- ❖ Maximum participants lack English language skills.

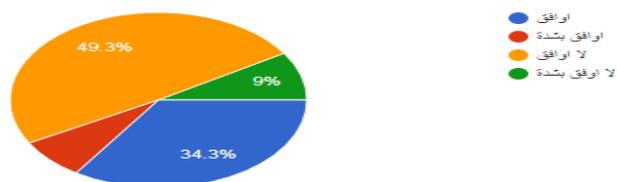
Watch and read a lot in English

201 responses



I can speak English fluently and understand

201 responses



Out of 203 only 201 of them responded to this query. 49.3% disagree, 32.8% agree, 9.5% strongly disagree and the rest strongly agree.

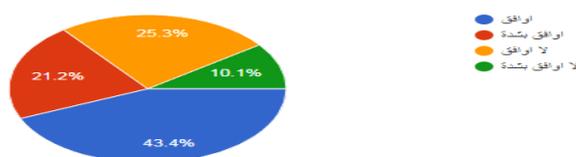
- ❖ Maximum participants lack English language skills.

50.2% of them disagree, 32.8% agree, 9.5% strongly disagree and the rest strongly disagree.

- ❖ Therefore, majority of the participants never practice to improve English language skills. They prefer

The current field of work requires the use of English proficiently

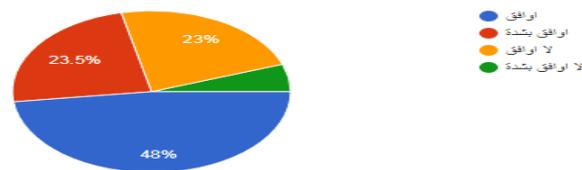
198 responses



43.4% agree, while 25.3% disagree, 21.2% strongly agree, 10.1% strongly disagree to this question.

- ❖ Most of them accept that there is a great demand for the second language English.

English has affected
200 Arabic language
responses



48% strongly agree, while 23.5% strongly disagree, 23% disagree and the rest strongly agree to this query.

- ❖ Thus, the respondents agree that English language usage has affected Arabic language not much.

6. Findings/ Conclusion

The findings of the present study from the Google survey indicate that Arabic language is regarded highly by the Gulf residents and also abroad since it is the script of the holy book, The Quran. The translation of the many forms of foreign media and entertainment has influenced the current use of the Arabic language. Another factor is that social networking is a major factor for influencing the Arabic language as most of them depend on social networks that led to the decrease of face to face interactions which consequence in lack of language usage. The study observe that most of the respondents to be able to speak and understand English. They have been exposed to many forms of the English language since their childhood. They prefer using English terms in their daily life activities. The work field gives importance to speakers of the English language, and many admit that English has many advantages than Arabic and that English globalization has indeed influenced the current use of the Arabic language.

Still, the glory of Arabic language is intact since the Saudi youth revere their mother tongue and observing their responses it is evident that Arabic language is highly demanded in business field and job market. The present study concludes by a strong belief that those factors are minor comparatively affecting the splendor of the holy language Arabic.

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