

The impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies in the Arabic region : An applied study on foreign companies in Iraq

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Abstract : The study aimed to determine the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world. The study used a descriptive-analytical approach. A questionnaire was used as a tool for collecting primary data, which was distributed to (386) individuals from the study sample, which comprised a purposive sample of employees in a number of foreign companies operating in Iraq. The study results revealed a significant impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world. Furthermore, there were no significant differences between the average responses regarding the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world based on the experience variable. The researcher made several recommendations, most notably the need to invest in enhancing Arabic language proficiency within foreign companies operating in the Arab world, which contributes to improving overall performance and promoting effective communication at all levels.

Keywords: Arabic language proficiency; human resource management; foreign companies operating in the Arab world

أثر إتقان اللغة العربية على إدارة الموارد البشرية في الشركات الأجنبية العاملة في المنطقة العربية: دراسة تطبيقية على الشركات الأجنبية في العراق

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المستخلص : هدفت الدراسة إلى تحديد أثر إتقان اللغة العربية على إدارة الموارد البشرية في الشركات الأجنبية العاملة في العالم العربي. واعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي. وتم استخدام الاستبانة أداة لجمع البيانات الأولية، حيث وُزعت على (386) فرداً من عينة الدراسة، التي تمثلت في عينة قصدية من العاملين في عدد من الشركات الأجنبية العاملة في العراق. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة وجود أثر ذي دلالة إحصائية لإتقان اللغة العربية على إدارة الموارد البشرية في الشركات الأجنبية العاملة في العالم العربي. كما بينت النتائج عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين متوسطات استجابات أفراد العينة حول أثر إتقان اللغة العربية على إدارة الموارد البشرية في الشركات الأجنبية العاملة في العالم العربي تعزى إلى متغير الخبرة. وقد قدم الباحث مجموعة من التوصيات، كان أبرزها ضرورة الاستثمار في تعزيز مستوى إتقان اللغة العربية داخل الشركات الأجنبية العاملة في العالم العربي، لما لذلك من دور في تحسين الأداء العام وتعزيز التواصل الفعال على مختلف المستويات الإدارية والتنظيمية.

الكلمات المفتاحية : إتقان اللغة العربية؛ إدارة الموارد البشرية؛ الشركات الأجنبية العاملة في العالم العربي.

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1.0 Introduction

In light of the spread of globalization, most foreign companies seek to enter the Arab market as new labor markets. This requires human resources management to be well aware of the existence of multiple and diverse languages, each of which differs from one another, and that there is no single universal language. They must also recognize the importance of mastering Arabic, as it is the language spoken in the Arab world. This requires them to take language proficiency courses, which they can do with ease, given the widespread availability of Arabic language teaching programs for foreign employees worldwide, and in Arab countries in particular. Human resources management recognizes that the need to develop language proficiency tests that measure the proficiency of Arabic learners has become essential for individuals who will work within foreign companies in the Arab world (Bhatti et al, 2023,). This enables these companies to expand more widely. Therefore, the management of these companies must pay great attention to the Arabic language proficiency of their human resources. As a result, these companies have begun working to establish rules, principles, and instructions that ensure this, with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of human resources management, which typically addresses working conditions, meets the needs and aspirations of employees, and works to guide their behavior and activity, or develop their skills that ensure increased productivity and efficiency, which, in turn, increases productivity. It enables companies to improve their performance and enhance their competitiveness among their competitors (Kawany, 2024). Therefore, these companies have begun to search for mechanisms to ensure they have the best human resources and the most linguistically proficient individuals, by creating a positive environment that supports learning effectiveness and encourages their commitment to language learning (Khalaf, (2024). Thus, the growing interest in developing the Arabic language competencies of human resources within companies today is dictated by the rapid developments and changes in all fields, resulting in the evolution and complexity of modern societies. This has obliged and compelled these societies to work hard to find and adopt ways to adapt and harmonize with these changes, to enhance their performance and, subsequently, to maximize their ability to meet the challenges of competition (Abunaila, 2022). If we examine foreign companies operating in the Arab world, we find that they are most in need of human resource training and enhancing the Arabic language proficiency of their human resources, to be closer to the company's incubator environment and, consequently, to be more sustainable and enduring within that Arab environment. Accordingly, the researchers will present this study to clarify the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world. This study aims to demonstrate the importance of intercultural competencies in the internationalization of human resource management, which leads to interaction between different cultures, a major concern for business managers. The study also aims to help individuals and managers address the cultural differences resulting from the internationalization of business. To achieve this goal, the German Bosch Group was presented as a good example of an integrated strategy for managing intercultural competencies. In Germany, it can be considered a pioneer in the field of intercultural training for its international executives. The descriptive-analytical approach was used, and the study results showed that human resource management creates interaction between different cultures, a major concern for business managers. This approach aims to reduce the likelihood of conflicts arising from linguistic misunderstandings. This requires managers to seek solutions to these conflicts by ensuring that the organization possesses intercultural competencies and developing a strategy consisting of a set of exchange and communication mechanisms to develop intercultural competencies. - A study (Abunaila,et al, 2022). entitled: "The Cultural Effects of Globalization and Its Impact on the Human Resource Development System/Cultural Values as a Model. The

study aimed to clarify the concept of cultural globalization, its impact on human resources, and the requirements for human resource development in light of globalization. The study relied on a qualitative approach and reached a set of recommendations and findings. The study confirmed that human resources under globalization are characterized by greater diversity and complexity compared to local human resources. This requires managers to implement a training program to develop and qualify human resources with the skills required for the twenty-first century, including language proficiencies. This will increase their ability to work within a team and enhance their ability to organize, plan, coordinate, and integrate, and create positive participation in thought, suggestions, and innovations, which contributes to the development of teamwork methods (Aloqaily and Rawash 2022).

This study aimed to examine the relationship between Arabic language proficiency (ALP), expatriate adjustment to work conditions (EA), and job performance (JP) in Saudi Arabia. Additionally, the moderating role of personal and environmental factors was examined. This study employed a mixed-methods research design. The study sample included employees of higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia. A survey was conducted for quantitative data, while interviews were used for qualitative data. CFA and SEM were used to analyze the quantitative data, while thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. The results of this study indicated that Arabic language proficiency significantly affects expatriate job performance and adjustment to work conditions. Several personal and environmental factors were found to contribute to this effect, including language barriers, the work environment, training, and support. The study emphasizes the importance of training and support, which can help expatriate employees adapt and improve their job performance. - A study (Khaled et al, 2023) entitled "Languages Proficiency And Multinational Settings: Implications And Prospects" aimed to clarify the implications of the interrelationship between linguistic and economic variables in multinational corporations, considering economic production as a dynamic that requires linguistic competencies for employment and institutional activity. The study relied on a quantitative approach, with data collected via questionnaires. The results showed that proficiency in more than one language is more beneficial, particularly from a social and economic perspective, leading to significant returns for both the workforce and the multinational corporation. The study results indicated that individuals with multilingual skills occupy better job positions in multinational corporations; and for the corporation, employing multilingual individuals makes profits highly cost-effective. Commentary on Previous Studies (Abubaker et al, 2024).

The current study agrees with the aforementioned previous studies in one of its variables. However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, the variables presented are not included in any of these studies combined, whether in Arabic or foreign studies. This demonstrates the originality and novelty of the study. Consequently, it is important in the Arabic language as a modern reference for researchers and those interested in this field.

The learner's control over the phonological system of the language, in terms of recognition and production, and his or her knowledge of the language's structures and basic rules, both theoretically and functionally. It also means mastering an adequate amount of language vocabulary for understanding and use (Mohammad et al, 2022; AlShammari et al, 2023). A set of practices used by an organization to manage human resources by facilitating the development of the company's competencies, creating complex social relationships, and generating organizational knowledge to maintain excellence and achieve a competitive advantage (Daradkah et al, 2023).

Knowledge of linguistic competence is very important because it affects an individual's ability to use the language. Although native speakers of a language do not have complete knowledge of

linguistic competence, for employees of foreign companies operating in Arab countries, or for adult learners of a language other than their mother tongue, knowledge of linguistic competence in the language they speak is essential (Abdullrada and Waheeb, 2023). .

Studying it is extremely important. Without linguistic competence, it is impossible for someone to perform linguistic acts actively, receptively, or productively. This means that awareness of linguistic competence among students is extremely important, as it will determine their ability to act in the language. Therefore, mastery of the components of the Arabic language is considered part of Arabic language competence (Ahmad et al, 2022). A study by Belloumi and Touati, (2022) defines it as the ability to create meanings by exploring the potential inherent in language—that is, the language of continuous analysis in response to change and negotiation of the value of transmission and communication, rather than conformity—in order to arrive at organized cognitive structures with a set of procedures to adapt this knowledge to solve new communication problems that have no ready-made solutions. It is the ability to function in a real communicative environment, that is, in a dynamic exchange, where linguistic competence must be adapted to the overall informational input, both linguistic and non-linguistic, from one or more interlocutors. The Canadian Language Standards Centre defines it as the ability to interact, express, interpret meaning, and create discourse in a variety of contexts and social situations. It is the latent language system that they acquire from childhood, i.e., the latent or implicit introspection of the individual that enables them to generate and understand a number of sentences, including sentences they have never heard before (Shakir et al, 2024). It also includes the ability to differentiate between structures, including a sentence understood in a given language, and other acceptable structures (Al-Janabi et al, 2024). It is the ability to communicate using a recognized system of symbols, sounds, and words in written, spoken, or drawn form, and to transmit them to others efficiently. It is the teacher's possession of a set of knowledge, skills, abilities, concepts, and attitudes that can be derived from their various roles. It is a practical performance that can be observed, analyzed, interpreted, and measured. It is the general, complex ability in which the branches and skills of the Arabic language are integrated, and which the learner employs in thinking, expression, and communication—orally or in writing—with others (Qader et al, , 2022; Pereira et al, 2022). Methods for Acquiring Linguistic Proficiency: Although Iraq has recently witnessed an increasing proliferation of foreign companies, as has most countries in the Arab world, due to global openness in various fields. This has led to a significant increase in foreign companies operating in Iraq and the Arab world, after fieldwork by the researchers on the reality of foreign companies' operations in Iraq, it became clear that the main problem facing human resources management in these companies was the lack of linguistic proficiency in Arabic. This necessitated the selection of a number of competent, skilled, and highly proficient employees in Arabic. This was to better match the aspirations of their host environment and meet customer requirements by understanding their needs. To determine the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world. To identify significant differences between the average responses regarding the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world, depending on the variable of experience.

2.0 Research methodology

This section includes an explanation of the study population and sample, its boundaries, methodology, and hypothetical outline, as follows

2.1 Study Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world.

Hypothesis 2: There are no significant differences between the average responses regarding the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world, depending on the variable of experience.

2.2 Population and Sample

The study population included all employees in foreign companies operating worldwide.

Subject of the Study: This study will be applied to foreign companies operating in Iraq. The sample was intentional, including a group of 386 employees with experience and knowledge of the research topic.

The sample size was calculated from the research community, represented by employees of foreign companies operating in Iraq, according to the sample size law for large societies

$$n = \frac{z^2 p(1 - p)}{d^2}$$

n = 384

This is the minimum required sample size.

400 questionnaires were distributed, 392 of which were returned. 6 invalid questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete answers and some incorrect answers. Therefore, the approved sample size reached 386 individuals.

The researchers relied on the following sample law:

$$n = \frac{p \cdot q}{\frac{p \cdot q}{N} + \frac{E^2}{Z^2}}$$

n: research sample size; N: Research population size = 1000; E: Permissible error margin, equal to 0.05

p: Percentage ranging from zero to one. p = 0.5 was adopted, p + q = 1; from which q = 0.5.

Z: Standard score, equal to 1.96 / at a confidence level of 95%

$n = (0.5 * 0.5) / ((0.5 * 0.5) / 1000 + 0.05 / 1.96$

This is the minimum required sample size. The researcher distributed 400 questionnaires, and 386 valid questionnaires were returned for analysis.

2.3 Study Limits

Spatial Limits: A number of foreign companies operating in the Arab world. This study will be applied to foreign companies operating in Iraq.

Human Boundaries: A sample of 386 workers from the foreign companies operating in Iraq, the subject of the study.

Temporal Boundaries: The year 2025 AD.

Subject Boundaries: A study of the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world.

2.4 Methodology and Tools

The descriptive analytical approach was adopted as the general research methodology. The researcher proceeded from deduction as a general rule of reasoning, as this approach is consistent with the objectives and hypotheses of the study. This approach is defined as the method by which

the researcher describes various scientific phenomena and problems that fall within the scope of scientific research. The data is then analyzed to extract appropriate explanations and conclusions. The questionnaire will be used as a tool to complete the fieldwork by distributing it to a purposive sample of 386 employees from the foreign companies operating in Iraq, the subject of the study. The responses obtained will then be analyzed using the SPSS 25 statistical analysis program.

2.5 Study Variables and Model

Independent Variable: Arabic Language Proficiency

Dependent Variable: Human Resources Management



Figure 1. Study Diagram

3.0 Results and discussion

This section includes a description of the study methodology, the study population, the sample, the method by which the sample was selected, and the tools used in such a study. Data is collected through the distribution of questionnaires, and is then collected and statistically analyzed using appropriate methods.

3.1 Study Population and Sample

It consists of a number of foreign companies operating in the Arab world. The study sample included a purposive sample of 386 individuals who are fully aware of and knowledgeable about the research topic. Table 1 make an explanation of the research sample data

Table 1. Gender classification

Ratio	Rep.	Gender
54.7	211	male
45.3	175	Female
100.0	386	Total

We note that the sample's qualifications are distributed as follows:

(54.7%) males.

(45.3%) females.



Figure 2. Gender

Table 2. Years of experience

year	repetition	
30.8	119	Less than 5
44.8	173	6 to 10 years
17.4	67	11 to 15 years
7.0	27	Above 16
100.0	386	Total

The sample is distributed according to their experience as follows:
(30.8%) less than 5 years.v (44.8%) between 6 and 10 years. (17.4%) between 11 and 15 years.
(7%) 16 years or older.

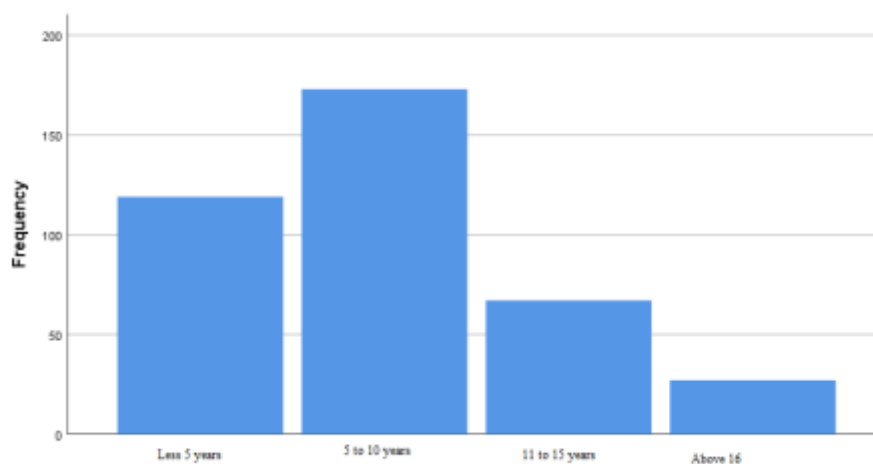


Figure 3. Years of practical experience

3.2 Reliability Constructive Validity

Scale reliability has been calculated as showing in table 3

Table 3. Cronbach's alpha values

Phrases	values	Subjects
6	0.955	Arabic Language Proficiency
6	0.969	Human Resources Management
12	0.981	Total Questionnaire Score

The reliability value for all axes is $> (0.70)$, and therefore these are statistically acceptable values. This is because the values are significant at values greater than (0.70) . That is, if we distribute them across a sample with similar characteristics, we arrive at similar results as shown table 4.

Table 4. Correlation Coefficients

sig	Person	Aspects
0.00	0.993	Arabic Language Proficiency
0.00	0.992	Human Resources Management

We note that the Pearson correlation coefficients are significant, indicating that the questionnaire is valid.

3.3 Internal consistency validity

All coefficients are significant with values $> (0.60)$, which demonstrates the positive significant correlation between all items. Therefore, the questionnaire is characterized by internal consistency as shown in table 5

Table 5. Correlation coefficient of items with axes

Cof .se	Aspects
0.950	You can quickly and accurately comprehend the content of official emails in Arabic.
0.863	You are able to draft management reports in Arabic in a clear and understandable manner.
0.895	You are able to summarize key points from job interviews and meetings with ease.
0.880	You can conduct job interviews fluently in Arabic.
0.940	You can explain work policies to employees in clear and understandable language.
0.923	You feel confident communicating verbally with administrative staff.
0.954	You are able to communicate and interact with your team to build trust.
0.949	You can formulate clear messages that accurately define performance standards.
0.938	You use positive language that encourages and enhances employee self-confidence.
0.897	You can simplify work information and present it in a manner appropriate to employee understanding.
0.923	You can influence employees and convince them of the need for change and development.
0.949	You can manage work crises using neutral language without showing any bias.

3.4 Descriptive Statistics

The study relied on the five-point Likert scale to assess the level of descriptive statistics, and the results showed the table 6.

Table 6. Statistics of the questionnaire items

Sig	Std. error	Std. dev	Mean	Items
0.00	.07592	1.49159	3.6010	You can quickly and accurately comprehend the content of official emails in Arabic.
0.00	.06258	1.22958	3.7617	You are able to draft management reports in Arabic in a clear and understandable manner.
0.00	.07444	1.46250	3.6528	You are able to summarize key points from job interviews and meetings with ease.
0.00	.07406	1.45501	3.3135	You can conduct job interviews fluently in Arabic.
0.00	.06533	1.28360	3.5207	You can explain work policies to employees in clear and understandable language.
0.00	.05685	1.11692	3.4767	You feel confident communicating verbally with administrative staff.
0.00	.07000	1.37533	3.5259	You are able to communicate and interact with your team to build trust.
0.00	.05996	1.17798	3.5259	You can formulate clear messages that accurately define performance standards.
0.00	.07505	1.47441	3.6399	You use positive language that encourages and enhances employee self-confidence.
0.00	.05891	1.15745	3.7202	You can simplify work information and present it in a manner appropriate to employee understanding.
0.00	.05650	1.10997	3.7047	You can influence employees and convince them of the need for change and development.
0.00	.06154	1.20914	3.5648	You can manage work crises using neutral language without showing any bias.

3.5 Testing Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant effect of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world as shown table 7.

Table 7. Testing the First Hypothesis

Regression	R	df	Squar R	Fr.	Function
	496.624	1	496.624	6144.339	.000
Remaining	31.037	384	.081		
Total	527.661	385			

- The correlation value = 0.970, which is a very strong relationship.
- The corrected determinant value = 0.941, which indicates that Arabic language proficiency

explains 94.1% of the variance in human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world.

• (Sig) 0.00 = <0.05, which indicates a significant effect of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world. This is evident in the following:

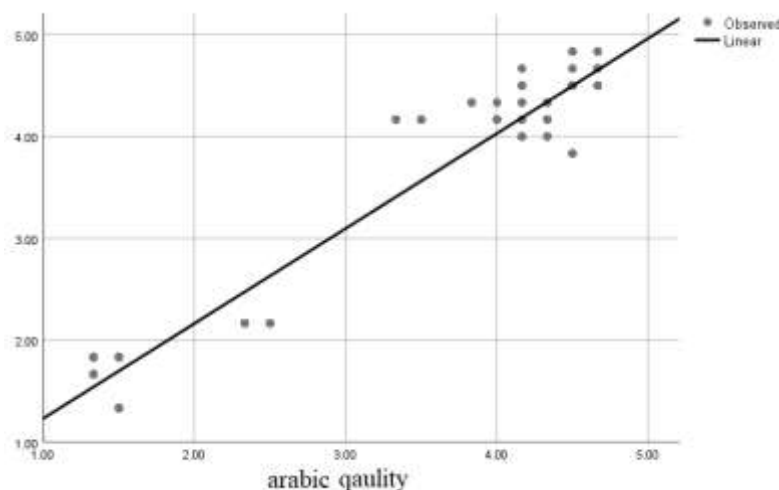


Figure 4. The relationship between the variables of the first hypothesis

Hypothesis 2: There are no significant differences between the average responses regarding the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world based on the experience variable. To test this hypothesis, the researcher conducted an ANOVA as shown in table 8:

Table 8. Testing the Second Hypothesis

Items	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.875	3	.625	.443	.722
Within Groups	538.979	382	1.411		
Total	540.854	385			

We find that $0.722 = \text{Sig} > 0.05$, and thus we accept the null hypothesis, i.e. there are no significant differences between the average answers regarding the impact of linguistic proficiency in Arabic on human resources management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world according to the experience variable. Results and Recommendations

1. There is a significant impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world.
2. There are no significant differences between the average responses regarding the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world based on the experience variable.

4.0 Conclusions

The researcher believes that the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world is due to the importance of language proficiency. Having the ability to communicate effectively in the local language enables

companies to build strong relationships with customers and improve understanding and integration into the work environment. This, in turn, contributes to enhancing work quality and increasing productivity and job satisfaction, on the one hand, and strengthening the company's position, on the other. The researcher believes that the lack of significant differences between the average responses regarding the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world, based on the experience variable, is due to the perception held by various employees in foreign companies regarding the importance of language proficiency and its impact on human resource management. This perception reflects the enhancement of the company's reputation and its contribution to increased customer base and revenue. Internally, employees with Arabic language proficiency can serve as a bridge of communication between the company and Arabic-speaking employees, enhancing the atmosphere of participation and cooperation within the organization. Take advantage of the impact of Arabic language proficiency on human resource management in foreign companies operating in the Arab world by investing in enhancing Arabic language proficiency within foreign companies operating in the Arab world, including Iraq. This will contribute to improving overall performance and promoting effective communication at all levels. Selecting employees with high Arabic language proficiency will enable companies to communicate effectively, serving and strengthening business relationships and contributing to building trust between the company and customers.

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