

Research Article

**Arabic Language Education after the Founding of New China**

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**Abstract:**

The Chinese nation is mainly composed of 56 ethnic groups including the Han, Zhuang, Hui, Manchu, and Uyghur ethnic groups. They have different religions, cultures, and customs. The Han believes in Buddhism and Taoism. More than 90% of the Hui and Uyghur ethnic groups believe in Islam. Muslims are mostly Sunni, with only a small number of Shiites. Arabic education in China began with the spread of Islam. Islam has had a huge impact on Arabic education in China. At the beginning of its existence, Islam directly or indirectly laid the foundation of the Arabic language, and it inspired Arabic. The process of fusion with Chinese is a great help in education, so that learning can continue and continue to be popular. After the founding of New China, cultural and trade exchanges between China and various countries, based on the original Arabic language education, began to develop in China in various forms of Arabic language education. This research is conducted through a qualitative method and based on checking information related to Arabic language education and past research, such as journals and articles. The research found that Arabic education in China has continued from the Tang Dynasty to the present day, in order to further improve Arabic language education. Education has cultivated more outstanding talents in multiple disciplines, and the factors of students' understanding, teachers, and environment are also closely related.

**Key words:** New China; founding; Arabic: education;

**Introduction**

There are more than 422 million Arabic speakers worldwide and it is the official language of 22 Arab countries/regions. In 1973, in addition to English, French, Russian, Spanish and Chinese, the

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language was recognized as one of the official languages of the United Nations. In 2010, when UNESCO

declared December 18th every year as World Arabic Language Day, this continued to be recognized. Recognized, therefore, it is still a popular language and is being studied more and more. Now the learning and use of Arabic is becoming more and more widespread all over the world. Current needs, especially in the fields of economy, cultural tourism, and socio-politics, have become a driving force for learning Arabic. In non-Arab countries, the learning of this language is still very popular. In fact, Arabic is a language that cannot be separated from the Chinese and Muslims. Starting from the Tang

Dynasty in China, Chinese Muslims have studied and studied Arabic. After the founding of New China, they gained a place in national education. At the same time, when Chinese vocabulary is affected by the language, Arabic triggers the process of language assimilation, which continues to this

day, and Chinese people's interest in learning and using Arabic continues to grow.

Some Western scholars are skeptical about the influence of Islam on social culture, education and language. They believe that Islam will not have a lasting influence on Chinese Muslims at that time, and deny the importance and influence of Islam on Chinese Muslims. But at present the situation shows that the relationship between Islam and Arabic language learning is inseparable, and Islam has had a huge impact on Arabic education in China. In addition, it is difficult to track formal Arabic language learning in China, and few researchers can clearly articulate the early history of Arabic language learning in China. Some scholars have linked the beginning of Arabic language learning with the emergence of Islam, but the sequence of events and their recordable development are ambiguous. Most studies focus more on the spread of Islam and the influence of Islam on the entire Islamic education. The relationship between influences, few such studies have touched on the influence of Islam on Arabic education in a concentrated and detailed manner. Therefore, early research on the arrival of Islam and its influence on the establishment and development of Arab learning is the first

step that can be taken towards more systematic and detailed research.

### **1. The time when the Arabic language spread in China**

The time when Arabic was spread in China is different in history books. Its history can be traced back to 628 AD. The American historian Wells said in Chapter 30 of *The Compendium of World History*: Muhammad sent ambassadors to China, and the Tang emperor met with Arab ambassadors, praised their faith, and helped them build a mosque in Guangzhou. It is recorded in the Chinese history books "Old Tang Book" and "New Tang Book" that the exchanges between China and Arab countries in the Tang Dynasty became more frequent, especially in the middle of the 8th century, after the establishment of the Abbasid dynasty (749~1258), the two countries The relationship is closer. It is recorded in the *Book of Min* that from 618 to 626 AD, Muhammad sent four people to spread Islam in Guangzhou, Yangzhou, Quanzhou, and finally built mausoleums for the dead Arabs in these places. Based on the above historical evidence, it can be concluded that Islam has arrived in China before the 7th century, which explains that the Arabic language was introduced and studied before the 7th century. Under the influence of foreign Muslim merchants and missionaries, merchants and feudal lords in the coastal areas of China converted to Islam for commercial and economic interests. Foreign Muslims married Chinese non-Muslims, and the spread of Islam to the mainland of China. In order to

| Malay  | Transliteration<br>(transliteration) | Primitive (Arabic) | Chinese meaning |
|--------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Akal   | 阿格力                                  | ل قع               | 智力              |
| Nikah  | 尼卡哈                                  | حاكن               | 婚姻              |
| Salam  | 赛俩目                                  | ملا س              | 问候              |
| Hakim  | 哈开目                                  | مكح                | 法官              |
| Niat   | 宁耶                                   | ةي ن               | 意图              |
| Jumaat | 主麻                                   | ةعمجلا             | 主麻日             |

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|         |      |            |        |
|---------|------|------------|--------|
| Hukum   | 胡昆   | مكح        | 法      |
| Isnin   | 以斯乃尼 | ن ي ن ث لا | 周一     |
| komando | 考麻导  | سودن اموق  | 突击队    |
| Kable   | 卡部力  | ل با ك     | 电缆     |
| Kari    | 咖喱   | ي را ك     | 咖喱粉、饭菜 |
| Kaset   | 卡赛特  | ت ي سا ك   | 盒式磁带   |
| Kartun  | 卡通   | رونك يراك  | 卡通片    |

Since Islam entered China, this phenomenon has greatly promoted the learning process of Arabic in China. Students can easily understand and use Arabic words that have the same pronunciation and meaning in Chinese. In this way, Students can master many words. Start learning Arabic. The influence of Islam has helped the learning of Arabic. Chinese Muslims have gradually learned to write and read. This skill helps the process of learning Arabic. The characters of the Arabic alphabet are already familiar to students. They can pronounce and write well. In China, Muslims realized the importance of Arabic learning very early. It is usually related to religious influence. "It is useful for religion and the afterlife, and you should really learn Arabic." This sentence quoted the importance of Arabic learning at that time and its relationship with religious teachings. At that time, non-Muslims and Muslim scholars in China also recognized the importance of Arabic in China and suggested that universities introduce Arabic to promote the development of Arabic in universities. Strictly speaking, the abovementioned views of Muslims or non-Muslims indicate that they have had a significant impact on the development of the Arabic language in China, and Arabic occupies a high position in China.

### 3. The main forms of Arabic teaching 3.1 Arabic education in mosques

From the Tang Dynasty in China (618~628) to the founding of New China, early Arabic teaching was in mosques, which is very similar to Arab education. Mohammed, the founder of Islam, once said: "A person who enters a mosque to teach or receive education is like a warrior fighting for Allah." The education of Arabs has been linked to Islam and mosques from the very beginning. For Muslims, mosques are not only sacred places of worship, but also places to receive education. Mosques are the earliest school in Arab history. At that time, the content of

study in Chinese mosques was mainly the recitation and recitation of the Quran and religious knowledge and etiquette, and the language of this content is Arabic.

The mosque in China is not only a place for Muslims to conduct religious activities, but also a place for various social activities. It is not only the central place for Muslims to conduct religious activities, but also for Muslims to conduct everything such as politics, economy, culture, education, sports, life and other social activities. The mosques in contemporary cities are not only the legal venues for Islamic religious activities stipulated by the national law, but also a part of the social structure; it is not only the core place for Muslims to correctly understand and practice Islamic law, but also they seek spiritual comfort. , Shaping the mode of life and constructing the spiritual home of the value system. The mosque is a place for cultivating a new generation of religious professionals. It is a school for Muslim children and lost scholars to receive enlightenment education. Through the correct preaching of the Shariah and leading Muslims in the correct practice of the Shariah, it helps Muslims to correctly understand and consciously abide by national laws and regulations. Religious teaching laws, social ethics, folk norms and other social rules shape the consciousness of group rules, regulate individual behavior, participate in social control, maintain social order, and realize the enlightenment and positive guidance of individual Muslims and society. In the process of correctly preaching and practicing the teaching method, the mosque has not only become an effective place for social unity, but also an important bridge connecting the locality and the country.

The construction of mosques in densely Muslim areas generally uses mosques to teach basic content. Most mosques are equipped with a small number of classrooms. Muslim communities are also willing to bear the cost of teaching Arabic courses, all of which are the result of Muslims' increased awareness of Islam. The Arabic language education in the mosque is divided into two parts, one is for professional learners, and the professional learners are to train religious staff for the purpose of spreading knowledge, the other is for amateur learners, and the amateur learners are social learners and students with a fixed learning time. Often learn basic knowledge, such as: Arabic alphabet class, "Quran" class, "Almawlid Alnabawiu" class, the purpose of learning is to use daily content.

China's mosques are not only "Temples of Worship", but also schools, community centers, libraries, and rest places. The mosque presents a pluralistic form of religion, sociality, individuality and organization in society. It has long been embedded in society and culture, and it plays a more important role than religion. As a result, when unfolding the pluralistic picture of society, the mosque has become an integral part of the social composition, exuding a secret splendor. In addition to holding five prayers a day, Friday's gatherings, and festive gatherings, the mosque also organizes special academic lectures, teaches and disseminates knowledge, and regulates Muslims' behavior according to different situations. Each mosque has a collective recitation of the Quran. ", praise the Lord and praise the holy activities.

Islam has a history of more than 1,300 years in China, which has been deeply Islamized in a wide scale. Especially the Arabic teachers have been tirelessly and diligently working on the Arabic language teaching field, which has contributed to the economy, trade, and trade of the Arab world. Unremitting research in politics, culture, religion, history, geography, customs and many other

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fields has made many achievements in Arabic teaching and research, and has compiled and published a large number of textbooks, monographs, essays and translations.

### 3.2 Private Arabic education

Private Arabic education was started through Islamic family education and private institutions before the founding of New China. After the founding of New China, private institutions gradually developed into private Arabic schools, such as Kunming Arabic School, Linxia Foreign Language School,

Ningxia Tongxin Arab Language School and so on. Arabic is one of the core disciplines of the institution. The teaching of private institutions is more focused on Arabic grammar and morphology, which has become a popular learning system in the traditional society at that time. In China, apart from government official universities and official Islamic schools, there are a small number of private institutions and mosque classes. The courses include: learning the Quran, basic Arabic and Islamic subjects.

Chinese Muslims attach great importance to the Islamic construction of the family. In addition to normal worship, they always hold family gatherings with a strong Islamic atmosphere on a regular or irregular basis on holidays, the dead death, and wedding days, except for all members of the family. Mosque imams and religious personnel are also invited to participate. In these gatherings, there are often collective recitations of excerpts from the Quran and praise to the Lord. The influence of Islam's establishment of Arabic education through family institutions is obvious. This is because the unofficial education at the time was to train religious staff and scholars, who could spread Islamic teachings and community education. In order to achieve this goal, students would first learn Arabic to understand religious books. Grammar and translation methods are an effective teaching method. The teaching of the course is based on the text of the book. There is no way to accelerate the understanding. Recitation is a very important learning method.

Since 1966, the "Cultural Revolution" occurred shortly after the founding of New China. Many mosques were forced to close their doors, and religious courses previously used as basic subjects were forced to stop. This has had a negative impact on official and unofficial Arabic language learning. Until the end of the "Cultural Revolution" in 1976, the country began to attach importance to education and economic development, and at the same time encouraged private establishments of Arabic schools, and universities began to resume teaching in Arabic majors, restoring the state before the "Cultural Revolution".

### 3.3 Arabic language education in schools

In the early days after the founding of New China, the status and importance of Arabic began to be greatly affected, and Islamic education also experienced the same fate. This was a legacy of the "Cultural Revolution" until the end of the ten-year "Cultural Revolution" in 1976. Religious beliefs were gradually restored, and Arabic teaching in official universities and official Islamic schools was restored. The subjects of Islamic religious knowledge were introduced into schools, which subsequently led to the establishment of higher learning and other cultural knowledge and skills with Arabic as the main language and obtaining corresponding academic qualifications and skills.

For degree certificate education, official universities have entered the people's field of vision, such as: Peking University, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing International Studies University,

Beijing Language and Culture University, University of International Business and Economics,

Shanghai International Studies University, Xi'an International Studies University, Guangdong Foreign Studies University, Ningxia University, Northwest University for Nationalities and other Arabic majors resume teaching, and set up Arabic majors.

When the government and private institutions continue to provide Arabic, Arabic has been developed in the mainstream of national education. Through the government's education system, Arabic has been used as an important learning curriculum in unofficial private schools and official Islamic schools and universities. Evaluate and update the Arabic language curriculum to enable students to master the language as much as possible. The main purpose of Arabic language teaching in official universities is to cultivate a high level of Arabic language and a wide range of scientific and cultural knowledge, common sense of foreign-related work and the ability to communicate in Arabic, and be able to use it in diplomacy, economics and trade, culture, education, and scientific research. Senior Arabic talents with both ability and political integrity engaged in translation, teaching, research, management and other fields.

China's status as a large country with small commodities and infrastructure has greatly opened the door to update and strengthen Arabic education. Among them, Arabic experts from the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization passed the basic Arabic syllabus of the Ministry of Education at

Hangzhou University, Zhejiang Province on September 22, 1990, and assisted in the compilation of Arabic textbooks in 1989 and 2002. At the end of 1981, Chinese people inspired by the government formulated a plan for compulsory courses in Arabic, so that all Muslim and non-Muslim students have the opportunity to learn the language of the Koran. This course has laid a solid foundation for students to understand Islam and learn Arabic. The Quran is taught in Arabic, and the compulsory courses will also increase the number of Arabic words. All these activities help students improve their language skills.

In China, after graduating from elementary school, you enter middle school. There are no official or unofficial religious elementary schools and religious middle schools. After graduating from middle school, you take the national higher education examination organized by the government and enter different levels of universities to learn their professional knowledge based on test scores. University Arabic courses include: Basic Arabic, Intermediate Arabic, Advanced Arabic, Arabic Writing, Arabic Calligraphy, Arabic Culture, Selected Readings of Literature, Grammar, Rhetoric, Arabic Literature,

Media Arabic, University Chinese, English, Thought Politics, Marxism, etc.

In addition, after graduating from high school, students are allowed to participate in the uniform examinations held by Islamic schools. Students who pass the Islamic school examinations can enter Islamic schools in various regions. Curriculum setting, textbook compilation, and teacher employment are mostly managed by the Ethnic Affairs Commission. The curriculum of the Islamic school has three parts: Islamic subjects, Arabic, and basic subjects. The main courses are: basic Arabic, "Quran" recitation, "Quran" recitation, and non-foreign language basic courses. After

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graduating from these academies, many official Islamic school students can work in local religious bureaus and Islamic associations, teachers in Islamic schools, and imams in mosques.

### **4. Research method**

This research is conducted through a qualitative method and based on the inspection of information related to Arabic education in China and past research, in order to further improve Arabic education and cultivate more outstanding talents in multiple disciplines. Through evaluation of previous research, For example, journals, articles, and books.

### **5. The main problems and solutions in Arabic teaching 5.1 Students' cognitive factors**

Because the status of Arabic in Malaysia and even in the world is not as good as English or French or other general languages, the importance of Arabic is not well understood, so the teaching and dissemination of Arabic has not been given enough attention and investment. Although for Muslims, Arabic and Islam are inseparable, most Muslims only have a narrow understanding of Arabic and Islam, and believe that learning basic religious knowledge is sufficient, but the level of knowledge is insufficient. There are even many non-Muslims who think this is a religious language, thinking that when I learn Arabic, I am learning a religious language.

Most students learn Arabic very passively. Many students believe that Arabic is a small language in

China. For their better job in the future, the masters and doctors who continue to study are to learn Arabic for the purpose of employment, and some students follow their parents. The idea is passive learning, this kind of narrow understanding and passive learning is not good for learning Arabic.

### **5.2 Teacher factors**

The modernity and rapidity of today's world still requires education. Teachers are adults. They are aware of the responsibility of education and guide their students. Teachers play a role in planning, organizing and managing courses for students, and ultimately can be in the learning process. To achieve the ultimate goal, teacher motivation is the teacher's professional determination. Teachers are an important factor in the process. Especially in Arabic language teaching, teachers should give priority to improving their language skills and have sufficient ability before performing their personal duties. When the teaching level in teaching is sufficient, this helps teachers build self-confidence in the implementation of teaching. On the contrary, if the teacher's preparation is limited, the quality of the teacher will affect the student's achievement, which may make it difficult to achieve the teaching goal . The problem in Arabic is due to the lack of technical diversification skills, which also stems from the inaccurate, inappropriate and ineffective teaching methods of the teacher. Many Arabic teachers tend to use grammar translation. They often use translation as a teaching method and eventually cultivate passive students. Teachers use Chinese when teaching Arabic. They use text translation methods to understand the level of their students. Almost all educational institutions practice. Although the teacher has a positive understanding of the way of communication in learning, the application of the testoriented method in their teaching is positive, but the effect is very general. Students start to translate when they see Arabic. Analyze grammar



carefully. Of course, translation is also very important. It should be more about training listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translating, and possess comprehensive language skills.

### **5.3 Environmental factors**

The environment also has an important impact on Arabic teaching. In fact, the decline in the academic ability of Arabic is due to environmental reasons. Most students believe that Arabic is a foreign language and is not widely used in society, which leads students to learn Arabic. The language is incompetent and can't speak Arabic. It is undeniable that the language environment established in China is not comprehensive and is limited to certain regions. In addition, it is also found that teachers do not practice and use Arabic in this process. Chinese students and Chinese teachers use Chinese to communicate and use Chinese to explain grammar and morphology. When faced with a professional grammar, they don't understand. Northwest University for Nationalities has 1,000 students, and there are only two foreign teachers from Egypt, Iraq and other countries every year. When faced with a huge teaching population, it is inevitable that they cannot communicate with every student. If teachers often practice oral English, the number of Arabic teachers will increase, and it will continue to have a positive impact on students.

In China, Chinese has been given a special status as an official language, and the status of English as a test language is particularly valued by the government. Compared with other languages, the wide use of English should be at least equivalent to Uyghur, and it should be used in the Muslim community. Language, Arabic is usually chanted as a special language, but it is a language of racial identity in China. According to the statistics of the Chinese Ministry of Education in 2020, there are 32.853 million general undergraduate students in China. Of this total, only 7,900 students studying Arabic related courses, and from the Northwest University for Nationalities, which has the largest teaching scale in the country, only 80 freshmen each year, and only 100 students a year at most. Very few students learn Arabic, This ratio It is also very low.

Faced with these reasons, it has become a bottleneck hindering the development of Arabic teaching in China. In order to solve the above problems, further improve the teaching level of Arabic, and cultivate more excellent talents in multiple disciplines, the following suggestions and ideas are put forward:

1. The importance of Arabic in the 21st century should be recognized. The Chinese government and relevant functional departments should increase their care and support for Arabic teaching, increase investment, and broaden channels. With the continuous development and strengthening of political, economic, trade, cultural, and social relations with countries along the route, the Arabic language in China and areas along the route will become more and more popular, and the teaching of Arabic and the spread of Arabic culture in China areas along the route, Arabic teaching and research will also usher in new opportunities and developments.
2. Arabic teachers need to change their teaching styles to become more interesting, rich and effective in interaction. Teaching methods are an important intermediary to achieve learning goals. Teachers

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need to think about interesting methods that can produce results, which will help students continue to produce Interest in learning Arabic. More use of media tools can effectively promote the evocative interest in learning. In addition, the use of new teaching aids can clarify the teaching methods of teachers and improve the fluency of teaching, for example: If you can use computers systematically, students frequently use them Like the Internet, it will be able to solve any teaching problems and enrich teaching content. Of course, from the point of view of teaching theory, it is undeniable that teachers have high levels of ability and professionalism, and cultivate knowledgeable in the teaching industry Teachers are also considered to be very successful, and striving to train truly competent teachers is also a very important factor. A good teacher needs to fully understand the morphology, grammar, rhetoric,

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and skills covered by the language. If the goal is detailed, it is obvious that methods and use are the top priority.

3. Arabic and Chinese are both bridges for the two major ethnic groups to strengthen exchanges. Muslims in 22 Arab countries are not only exchanges in religious aspects, but more in all aspects of economic and educational exchanges. The governments and relevant functional departments of the two sides and Universities should strengthen exchanges and cooperation. In particular, to implement the various contents stipulated in the various agreements, China and some Arab countries have signed cultural and educational agreements, but the implementation is not satisfactory, the understanding is insufficient, and the number of learners is also a factor hindering the implementation of the agreement.
4. Arabic teachers in Chinese universities should reduce academic seminars at university colleges, participate more in various international academic seminars, discuss teaching methods through Internet video conferences, and strengthen mutual coordination and cooperation. Invite the foreign staff of each embassy in China to hold various cultural weeks at university and colleges. In fact, an environment with an Arab atmosphere is very important in itself. It creates a positive learning environment among students. In addition, it can improve students' social skills, especially in terms of language mastery. If such an environment can be formed, then of course it can achieve perfect teaching goals.
5. As the world's largest small commodity and infrastructure country, China should offer professional Arabic courses for communication with various countries, for example: Transportation University and Sports University in various regions offer professional Arabic courses. The students trained by the University of Foreign Languages cannot solve the professional vocabulary when they face the professional vocabulary, because they have not been exposed to the highly professional vocabulary, which brings various blows to the Arabic language learners.

## 6. Conclusion

From before to after the founding of New China, Chinese Muslims have always attached importance to Islamic family education and Arabic language learning. Whether it is private education or school education, the number of learners is small compared to other majors, but it has been continuously developing. Basic Arabic education and Islamic education has developed well, but professional language learners and highlevel personnel are generally small. Of course, it has also verified controversial topics. Many scholars who do not understand Arabic can become scholars who only study the Chinese version. Scholars who study Arab culture in China have never been to Arab countries.

The spread of Islam in China has led to a good development of basic Arabic education. Its learning started indirectly and informally, and then became formal, direct and focused. It can be clearly seen that the influence of Islam has led to Changes in the learning form of Arabic, through the integration of Arabic and Chinese, the influence of Islam has promoted the teaching process of the Chinese language. Islam, through the religious awareness and awakening of Muslims, is responsible for mobilizing political parties and strengthening China's Arabic language. Educational ability has also had a profound impact on Arabic education after the founding of New China. Arabic education of different periods, different backgrounds, and different influences is generally progressing steadily, but lacks the pace of

keeping up with the development of the times. It still stays in the mosque teaching mode. It should conform to the trend of the times and continuously update the teaching mode. The teaching of Arabic in China has had a profound impact. Talents who can achieve all-round development must have a certain degree of anticipation of future development. They must have a high degree of understanding, combine their own majors, and strive to create high-level talents with characteristics according to their own advantages, which will improve China Arabic language level .

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