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## **Arabic Perspective of Names with Reference to English**

### **A B S T R A C T**

Though there are some similarities between 'name' and 'noun', there are a lot of differences too. They are treated in the same way just to refer to a word by which a person, animal, place or thing is known. but to think about them in a different way is connected with the levels of language. The use of 'name' is very familiar to semantics, while the use of 'noun' in grammar is found or happening over a large area. (Flanagan, 1972: 48).

It is important to focus attention on semantic aspect to deal with names – origin in order to find out more knowledge and facts.

The study aims at showing names- origin out of the following points:

(a) how did names appear, (b) names of gender, (c) Time, (d) place and (e) position of names in relation to language .it is hypothesized that the notion of names-origin is used in both Arabic and English, yet it is realized differently.

The notion of names-origin seems to be much more important in Arabic than to be in English.

The use of names-origin may have a vital role to show the absolute difference between Arabic and English.

The basic findings arrived at are as follows: (1) it is possible to convey new things in both Arabic and English out of semantic points of view, (2) five important points which mentioned above are specified to be our data, and (3) The study of names – origin can be understood easily and the thoughts suggested may be successful in making the reader believe without having any suspicion in contrast to English which undergoes many difficulties to be conceived well.

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## **1. Introduction:**

In Arabic, the term 'origin' can be expressed for the time or place where names come into existence. An act of trying to study some important points like the way in which names appeared for the first time, considering the time and space which were not chosen by chance or at random .it is significant to make readers know to what extent language is connected with names and their origin .it is important to focus on gender; male and female and this raises the question of why a name of male was taken precedence over everything else. The Arab linguists also put a lot of effort into their studies about showing new things that the reader never heard before (Nasar, 1968: 123).

Grollier (1983:102) argues that the origin of names can be associated with both time and space. but the difference in the way of thinking on one hand, and the difference in time and space of name – appearance on other, are connected with seeing how the two languages are different (ibid: 103).

The study is going to treat Arabic differently from English based on semantic way.

## **2. The appearance of Names:**

Diamond (1965: 63) says that the notion of names may refer simply to a word or words by which a person, place, or thing is known: Do you know the name of his grandfather? Has a university gotten a name? 'Ali, Baghdad, 'chair' and 'schoolboy' are all nouns. The dividing of names may be clear into three separate parts: (1) human beings (connected with a person); a man, woman or child. (2) Living creatures: such as animal, a bird, a fish or an insect but not a plant and (3) inanimate things with a plant. The study of names – origin and how to be realized can show the most important traits of language and it is regarded as the most significant reason for causing a researcher to act in a particular way. This can bring off an amazing result which enables other people to understand the significance of names – origin based on a different way.

### **2.1. Names- origin In Arabic:**

Althahbi (1977: 46) views that the thought of names has been recognized as a phenomenon worthy of investigation in their origin and how to appear; and discovering the nature of the connection between language and names. The names of everything had come into existence since creation of man. in the beginning; in the first form before changes or developments names to be come into sight so as to include the essence of language and very often mean language itself.

Al-Khuli (1982: 120) illustrates that God taught Adam how to know all the names of things. Thus, Adam knew everything by name. There was nothing without a name or with a name that he does not know or wants to say. it is significant to use the Glorious Quran as a reference book for obtaining information as in the following verse:

﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾  
(البقرة: ٣١).

And He taught Adam all the names (of everything), then He showed them to the angles and said "Tell Me the name of these if you are truthful". (Al- Hilali and Khan, 1996: 18).

Abed – alJawad (1990: 185) argues that all the names of everything which is mentioned in the verse above can include language in its entirety (as a whole) since they refer to everything including the names of inanimate things and its traits. The story of Cain and Abel tells us that Cain used 'flint' to kill his brother. This can refer to the fact that Adam knew all the things by name even if inanimate things. God also explained to Adam the names of everything in very detailed and careful way. So, it is hard to differentiate between language and the names of everything. This makes no difference to everyone if he is going to treat both the names of everything and language alike.

## 2.2. Names – origin In English:

Smith and Miller (1966: 61) states that though the English linguists showed a great concern for the study of names, especially how to exist and come into sight, they never took more care and showed great attention to details about the origin of names for the following reasons:

(1) There were only short pieces of information taken from different sources and excerpts, (2) There is a disagreement or difference in thoughts among scholars about the origin of names and (3) there is nothing mentioned about appearing the names before Noah and the flood. Therefore; the end of the flood was the date on which new world was born on one hand, and was the beginning of the good after comprehensive mortality which happened with the universe on the other.

The new Encyclopedia Britannica (1980: 472) has asserted that it is right about the pairs of each kind of animals that Noah took them and went into the boat with his entire family. But there was no available and credible sources to tell us all things by the name clearly just the names of some birds.

British Bible society (1966:6) has suggested that the studies and views as regards the names of inanimate things were few and far between. So, there was no name mentioned even if in Noah's time.

The notion of names concerning the inanimate things does a lot to language, yet there was insufficient knowledge or facts about them. it is important to mention the significant names:

Noah, his wife, his sons and their wives who went into the boat.

There was no name of birds mentioned except three birds:

Raven dove and owl. When the rain stopped and the water gradually went down, Noah sent out the three birds one after another, but they kept flying around until the water completely gone. He sent them to bring the news about finishing the flood in other areas of the world. As for the names

of plant, none was mentioned except the name of olive when the dove returned to Noah with a fresh olive leaf in its beak (ibid: 7).

### **3. Masculine and Feminine:**

The study is still talking about names – origin of both Masculine and feminine. There are different views in both Arabic and English. It is important to talk about this point in a specific way.

#### **3.1. Masculine and feminine In Arabic:**

Nasar (1968: 157) states that the classification of people into two sexes: male and female refer formally to gender. Arabic can have only two genders, e.g. Masculine and feminine unlike some languages which can have three genders like masculine, feminine and neuter. The thoughts on this point can be summarized as follows:

**A.** a male in Arabic was the first to be given a name according to the following verse:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۖ﴾ (البقرة: جزء من الآية: ٣٠)

And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: "verily, I am going to place (mankind) generations after generation on earth ". (Al-Hilali and Khan, 1996: 18).

The last word in the verse is connected immediately with the male.

**B.** The name of a male had to come before the name of a female because of great importance and the man was created before a woman (Adawoodi, 2002: 128).

**C.** Another evidence was the story of Adam's sons when Cain killed his brother Abel and he was the only one who stayed alone. So, his name was clear to the eye and mind, then his wife was named after a long time.

**D.** The first name of masculine appeared and to be seen before any name else except the angles (ibid: 129).

#### **3.2. Names of gender In English:**

Lakoff (1975: 31) argues that there is no a state of not being able to think clearly about masculine and feminine and no one confuses male with female. But the main problem is to see the right that the name of male or female has to come before another because of greater importance. A male is concerned with the qualities that people think are typical of men. This can also refer to male and manly in a clear way. As for the notion of feminine, it means the forms of words that are used to describe females (ibid: 32). The English may deal with gender only to include man and female unlike other people who use gender to include more than two divisions. The views on this subject may be chosen to show the following points:

**A.** The English writers had no a desire to learn or hear more about the names-origin before Noah and the flood. This is a starting point from which names develop or are made. They began to show a great interest with the names and their origin since the events that happened with the beginning and the end of the flood. (Coates, 1933: 145).

**B.** They believe that everything on the earth died and God destroyed all the living beings that he had made. So, the study of names- origin did not concern them, especially before Noah's time.

**C.** The human names either to be male or female appeared and to be conceived simultaneously (i.e. happened at exactly the same time. (ibid: 146).

#### **4. Basic facts of names – origin:**

The study is having further to deal with the subject. So, it is important to show different thoughts of different writers in both Arabic and English based on a succinct way.

##### **4.1. Some information In Arabic:**

The majority of Arab linguists agreed that the careful study of the meanings in the glorious Quran, especially names- origin can cause something good to happen or exists, and to produce as an effect concerning the verses of the glorious Quran. Thus, the study has shown amazing views out of interpreting the following verse:

﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا﴾ (البقرة: جزء من الآية: 31)

"And He taught Adam all names". (Al- Hilali and Khan, 1996: 18). The focus on the following verse, especially the last two words can show the following ideas:

**A.** The notion of ﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا﴾ (i.e. the last two words in the verse above can include language as a whole. These two last words also refer to all the levels of language and its dimensions and everything whether small or big and whatever goes with language because there is more to the man than meets the eye. In addition to that, there are two ways of interpreting the meaning in common either to go along way down inside something or to look back at the outside part of something. The verse above could delve further into intention to show something that the reader never heard before (Asalih , 1958: 71).

**B.** Adam is regarded as the father of human beings. All people who came after him in everywhere from the year dot till the day of resurrection had descended from him. All language with their differences and what will happen to them are concerned immediately with ﴿الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا﴾ (i.e. the names of everything that God taught Adam (ibid: 72).

**C.** all the characteristics of names either human beings or inanimate things, small or big are considered to be immortal features (Heridi and Khames, 2002: 67).

**D.** The beginning of how to teach names was thought to be a type of miracle and the evidence was stated in the following verse:

﴿أَنبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾ ( البقرة: جزء من الآية: 31 )

"Tell me the names of these if you are truthful " (Al- Hilali and Khan, 1996: 18) God challenged angels to tell him the names of everything (ibid: 68).



## 4.2. Useful knowledge in English:

It is preferable to focus attention on the following points :

**A.** though the study of names- origin has intrigued and puzzled some of the English linguists for several decades, nothing could prove conclusively that names – origin was connected with the creation of universe. They never took care over the period which started from the first moment of man's creation till Noah and the flood because of the entire mortality that happened with the universe as a whole (Jespersen, 1921: 242).

**B.** There was nothing mentioned about inanimate things. that's right, the English linguists think that Noah took seven pairs of each kind with him. But the most of names were unknown except some names like Noah, his sons, their wives and some names of birds like raven, dove and owl. The study of birds' features was connected with Noah's time (British Bible society, 1966: 8).

**C.** if there was no desire to know more about names- origin, there would be either the act of mistaking something for something else or the state of being uncertain or unclear, especially in what people believe in, then it may affect the beliefs of people since this notion is connected strongly with language and the latter means everything in life (Hawkins and Gell , 1992: 188).

**D.** The specific study without giving too little or no attention or care to names and their origin can make a strong foundation on which some thoughts and beliefs are built or constructed. (Landsberg, 1988: 171)

## 4.3. Time and Place:

The two terms above may mean the most important points to names- origins. The study is going to specify the space of period and the position for the names to be come into existence.

### 4.3.1. Time and place in Arabic:

Saker (1958: 73) confirms that the names of everything appeared after the creation of Adam. The latter learned first how to know the names of everything and none learned every name before Adam. This was connected with immortality of the universe. You can see the interpretation of verses in the sections 3.1 and 5.1.

The angels were created before Adam. but God taught Adam ﴿الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا﴾ Which mean all the names of everything that include language as a whole. No one could have a contradicted idea in the sense that the majority of Arab linguists and all the commentators of the Glorious Quran agreed unanimously about the immortality of names to exist. This idea as regards the time when names come first into existence (ibid: 74). As for the place, there are two views and it is important to be brief as follows: (a) it is a paradise which created by God and He gave it to Adam according to the following verse:

﴿وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ﴾ (البقرة: جزء من الآية: ٣٥)

And we said: "O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the paradise (Al- Hilali and Khan, 1996: 20).

There are any number of Arab commentators and linguists believe in this view (i.e. all the names of everything appeared in paradise when God taught Adam how to know them (Asalih , 1972 : 91), and ( **b**) another team of Arab thinkers and commentators did not believe so in the view mentioned whereas they asserted that it was no the intended paradise in after life . but it means a paradise which created in life not the intended paradise which is known by all and it will be the reward of pious people. it was created on the earth and that was very easy for God to do that. (Al-obeidi, 1970: 182).

#### **4.3.2. Time and place In English:**

British Bible society (1966: 12) has pointed out that the flood which happened with Noah was the time when some of names but not all appeared to be seen. Though the English linguists think that language was made by God, there was no going into detail to find out something different about names – origin. The view concerning names – origin, especially the time did not become firmer or stronger just with Noah and the flood. There was nothing that the English linguists enjoy doing or learning about the time when names appeared before Noah's time, especially what happened in the flood. It (ibid: 13) added that the flood came on every spot of the earth and none remained alive except Noah and who went with him into the boat. Jerusalem- Land, especially the East – west was regarded to be the place where some names first come to be seen. Another team of linguist's think of another idea is that the area between Syria and Iraq was a starting point on the earth from which the flood begun to include the entire universe and that was the place where some names appeared.

#### **5. The main points of Study:**

The thoughts are used in the study can cause something to be discovered. These issues are arranged as good effect and the general meaning of something rather than all the details. These points happened because of different views and different sources.

Gyorgi (1990: 48) argues that a table can be helpful element to arrange a list of facts in rows down a page. This can enable the reader to understand very well; how something makes difference to something else and see how things are quite different. Thus, it is important to show the difference between Arabic and English out of the study depending on the following tale:

This table is to show the difference between Arabic and English out of the study of names – origin adapted by (Asalih, 1958:78) and (Diamond, 1965:28).

Title	Position of names in relation to language	Time	place	Gender	Human and inanimate names
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<b>Arabic</b>	Names mean language as a whole.	Creation of the universe.	Paradise.	Name of male people appeared first.	All the names of everything appeared on one occasion.
<b>English</b>	Names do not refer to a big part of language.	Noah's time.	Land of Palestine.	Name of male and female appeared simultaneously.	a limited number of names appeared first without inanimate things.

## 6. A comparison of names – origin In Arabic with the same In English:

Though the notion of names – origin is used in both Arabic and English, the way of understanding in Arabic is completely different from that of English. In Arabic, there is no difficulty to understand the study and accept the thoughts willingly. In English, there are difficulties facing readers to conceive the opinions very well. In Arabic, the study of names – origin is having many details or giving a lot of attention to details whereas the Arab linguists consider names – origin as an immortal phenomenon. So, the study may be having less significance in English than in Arabic. The ways of thinking may explain how the two languages are different. In English, linguists never believe that names and their origin and whatever goes with language were arranged before they happened. They give great importance for man to do everything concerning language, yet they point out that language came from God. The English linguists also found it difficult to keep their mind fixed on what the Arab linguists were saying about this topic. In conclusion, the Arab linguists differ with the English people on the origin which means the time or place of names appearance, precedence, human and inanimate names. All of these are considered to be differences in the two languages. So Arabic is quite different, compared with English.

## 7. Conclusion and suggestions

Different thoughts have resulted from investigating names- origin in terms of conclusion, and consequently the two languages are very different in many points of view in this study. it is important to be stated as follows:

**A.** Creating man and earth was connected with knowing the names of everything which regarded as language as a whole. Time added on to the idea as immortal dogma and to be rooted in the beliefs and thoughts of people. Therefore; the study was too important and special to be changed. In English, the English people agree with the Arab just to refer that language came from God but there still a lot of points they disagree with. They did not give a great importance to time when names appeared to be seen first. They claim that the notion of names- origin had become firmer and stronger only in Noah's time. There was nothing mentioned before Noah because of the comprehensive mortality that happened due to flood.

**B.** The divines could cause all the names of everything to be arranged and kept before they happened. Therefore; the role of man in languages and



what belongs to them had come to be subsidiary and to a smaller extent; not so much. In English, The English linguists never agree with the Arab linguists on this point and they suggest that the role of man means everything to language and he was chosen to play a vital role in putting everything in order; to arrange into a system or logical order. The Arab linguists say that all the names of everything were arranged in the second sight of God before they happened even if a baby was given a name before it was born whether a name is nice or ugly.

**C.** paradise was the sacred place in which God taught Adam all the names of everything. So, the study of names – origin and going into detail could have a sacred nature and the appearance of names was a part of God's secrets. In English, the study of names –origin is less important than in Arabic. It is important to be a good subject for language. But it is a topic like other subjects in language besides names are not considered to be language itself. They were regarded as a very little part of language.

**D.** all the names either human or inanimate appeared simultaneously except gender as well as their characteristics. so, Adam could know everything by name. If all the names happened slowly or over a long period of time, there would be a state of disorder and to mistake somebody / something for somebody / something else. As for gender, a name of male seemed to take precedence over everything else because of greater importance. Therefore; a male can have special position rather than a female. This idea had come to be a strong foundation on which other rights of both (male and female) are built or maintained. Knowing the names of everything could enable Adam to be a reformer in the land. In English, as for gender, there was never a liking for a male rather than for a female. Names of male and female happened at exactly the same time. Thus, some English linguists suggested that male and female must be seen equally since there was no a preference for one or the other. Finally, there was no careful way to focus on the names of inanimate things.

The study can leave the door open for further studies for the following reasons: **1.** a semantic study of some unique traits with a limited inanimate names can be conducted in Arabic with their realizations in English , **2.** The influence of psychological element on some human names in Arabic and English can be researched , **3.** There are other topics belong to names in both Arabic and English may be contrastively studied , and **4.** Scholars and people who are interested in both semantic and translation can do researches into some problems of translation concerning names , especially from Arabic into English .

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