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Book review of Diversity in Language: Contrastive studies in English and Arabic theoretical and applied linguistics. Edited by Zeinab M. Ibrahim, Sabiha T. Aydelott and Nagwa Kassabgy.

Kristen Kern

Portland State University, kernk@pdx.edu

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of Light” would have been more instructive. The book’s price tag is a bit high for a paperback. Still, its concern with the Persian cultural heritage, and usefulness for the general reader as well as the scholar make this a book that any university library should have.

DAVID GIOVACCHINI

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Diversity in Language: Contrastive Studies in English and Arabic Theoretical and Applied Linguistics. Edited by Zeinab M. Ibrahim, Sabiha T. Aydelott and Nagwa Kassabgy. Cairo, New York: University of Cairo Press, 2000. Pp. xiii, 235, 20. ISBN: 977-424-578-4.

The foundation for this book came from First International Conference on Contrastive Rhetoric that was held at the American University in Cairo (AUC) in 1999. Some chapters are manuscripts based on conference presentations; the works of other scholars are also included. The volume is divided into four sections with the overall emphasis on English and Arabic linguistics and teaching.

The first section of the work, “Arabic language: distinctive features,” opens with the English summary of El-Said Badawi’s “An opinion on the meanings of *Iṣrāb* in Classical Arabic: the state of the nominal sentence.” The original composition by this eminent scholar is presented as the only Arabic text. Part of a larger study, Badawi argues here to maintain the distinction between nominal and verbal Arabic sentences because they express structural extremities and contribute to the total semantic value of sentences. Next, Ghali in “The Syntax of Colloquial Egyptian proverbs” uses Chomsky’s Minimalist Program to analyze the proverbs’ syntax, maintaining that the word order of these is not entirely free. For instructors using proverbs in teaching Arabic, this discussion, while somewhat densely theoretical, would be beneficial reading.

In the last chapter of the section, Stewart addresses an ever more vital field of instruction in his “Understanding the Quran in English: notes on translation, form, and prophetic typology.” With the modern Western university student in mind, Stewart discusses translation issues that can make the Quran less accessible. Stewart explains an approach for introducing the text that accounts for the expectations of Western students that the Quran is chronologically organized like the Old Testament, and a narration of Muhammad’s life as the New Testament is

for Jesus, neither of which is the case. Instead, his approach advocates “the use of the pattern of Biblical prophecies in order to comment on or to serve as a model for the prophecy of Muhammad.” The author also notes the importance of using terminology correctly, including the use of “Allah” for “God” where “Allah” of the Quran and Islam is the Biblical “God.” Stewart’s insights, only briefly touched on here, would be valuable for anyone studying or teaching the Quran.

Section two is devoted to Arabic and English comparative studies. For teachers of both target languages, the studies here explore linguistic differences that can cause learning problems. Kassebgy and Hassan explore the issue of relative clauses, and Al-Khawalda reports on his study of four textual sources that Arabic has a true future tense expressed generally as /sayafʿalu/ while English has five ways of articulating the future that have different, noninterchangeable meanings. Allam has written an informative exposition, “A sociolinguistic study on the use of color terminology in Egyptian Colloquial and Classical Arabic” that details the context dependent meanings for six color categories. The discussion addresses a neglected area of terminology, explaining the many possible Arabic meanings and providing comparisons and contrasts with English uses of color terminology. The last piece in the section, “The canons of Aristotelian rhetoric: their place in contrastive Arabic-English studies,” shows that “profound differences between Arabic and English rhetoric are to be found.” Hottel-Burkhart makes the argument that examination of each of the canons, invention, arrangement, stylistics, memory and delivery, in the light of Arabic-English rhetorical studies “can deepen our understanding of what constructs and values may indeed be involved in a culture’s rhetoric.” Clear contrastive expositions on the canons make this chapter a source of potential rhetorical research ideas.

The third section of the work focuses on learning style and form related to writing. In the first chapter, El-Seidi discusses the result of a study, “Metadiscourses in English and Arabic argumentative writing.” Metadiscourse expressions indicate an author’s credibility and attitude toward propositional content and mental attitude about information. These expressions include hedges (“perhaps” *rubbamā*); emphatics (“undoubtedly” *bi-lā-shakin*); and attitudinal markers (“regrettably” *maʿ al-asaf*). The results of the study illustrate that these expressions are used in both languages, though not always to the same degree by native and nonnative speakers. The discussion suggests that metadiscourse is a useful concept for review in second language writing classes.

The following chapter, “The impact of Arabic on ESL expository writing” by Sheikholeslami and Makhlouf, delves into the issue of rhetorical style transference from native Arabic speakers onto their English writing and argues that a clear source of transfer is the genre of the classic five-paragraph essay taught in school. Students of English would benefit from discourse level revision to better comprehend rhetorical organization beyond sentence level syntax and vocabulary. Moreover, the authors contend, research into Arabic written and oral discourse would lead to greater understanding of the impact of Arabic on Arabic speakers’ English writing. Examples of Arabic and English as a Foreign Language essays are provided to illustrate the thesis.

The writing section’s last chapter presents Youssef’s approach to teaching poetry to Egyptian students in American University in Cairo’s (AUC) Freshman Writing Program. Youssef first reviews the Arabic poetry taught in schools leaving students most familiar with the couplet form of a line of poetry, not the form of a complete poem. For teaching purposes, Youssef uses sonnets by Shakespeare and Shelley, explaining the literary term “form” as structure, development, cohesion and analysis of the end. The author finds that experiencing another culture’s poetry can improve writing skills and understanding of the connection between form and content.

The book’s final section focuses on attitudes and comprehension related to language acquisition. Horger writes about a study that measured the attitudes of a small sample of beginning and more advanced AUC English writing students toward American and British dialects. The students found the British dialect more intelligent, educated, sophisticated, upper class and cultured, while the American dialect was more articulate (easier to understand), friendlier and less arrogant. The students generally found American English more appropriate for instructional use; AUC students for the most part use the American dialect or have adopted it by the end of their AUC career. Horger suggests that the reasons for these attitudinal discrepancies may be the result of mass media, language school training or even Egypt’s colonial history.

In the next chapter, the results of Kasem’s study appear to be consistent with other research indicating that the process of second language acquisition, in this case the copula “to be,” is similar to that of the first language. The last chapter presents Kamel’s “Categories of comprehension in argumentative discourse: a cross-linguistic study” that begins with an informative discussion on how linguistic cultural differences can impact comprehension and focuses on argumentation as a type and

form of discourse. The terms used in the study are well defined and the piece exposes differences that impact Arabic speakers' comprehension of English, indeed suggesting that coherence, thematic continuity and unity as such may be English concepts only. Analyzing the results of testing fourth year students on their comprehension of a passage of argumentative discourse, Kamel concludes that exposure to and proficiency in English does not in itself lead to comprehension of global designs or superstructures, textual schematic organization frameworks essential for grasping a text type such as argumentation that depends on its form.

On the whole, this collection offers thoughtful works devoted to promoting the exchange of ideas and understanding in the fields of Arabic and English linguistics and instruction. Teachers of both Arabic and English as a second/foreign language will discover useful ideas for their classes, especially beyond the beginning level. For English speakers, Ghali's chapter on proverbs and particularly Stewart's approach to introducing the Quran discuss fundamental texts and uses of Arabic language. The contrastive pieces by Allam on color, Hottel-Burkhart on the canons of Aristotelian rhetoric, and El-Seidi on metadiscourse reveal crucial as well as interesting differences in the use of seemingly similar vocabulary and discourse structure. For Arabic speakers, Youssef's approach to teaching English poetry and Kamel's study of how English argumentative discourse is understood underscore the importance of comprehending, and therefore teaching, the "superstructure" of genres and discourse.

The volume includes an annotated list of contributors and the expected notes on transliteration and transcription of Arabic. Each chapter ends with citations for further study. This title deserves a place in libraries of institutions with foreign or second language teaching and learning programs and is essential for those outside Arabic speaking countries where Arabic speakers are among the student body.

KRISTEN KERN

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

A Certain Woman. By Hala El Badry ; translated by Farouk Abdel Wahab. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2003. Pp. 216; 24 cm. ISBN 9774247876

Egyptian novelist Hala El Badry was born in Cairo in 1954 and became editor-in-chief of Egypt's radio and television magazine.