



"Light is more important than the lantern,  
The poem more important than the notebook"  
- Nizar Qabbani

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## LEARNING ARABIC



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**A**rabic learning is compulsory at schools, however the expat children, who study Arabic are not fluent Arabic speaker and don't understand the language. Why?

First of all I would like to say that it is very important to study languages, every new language makes us a different person, as the language determines the culture and the characteristics. I am not sure if one has noticed that the food, the books, the body language and even the way people talk are different when one visits different countries. Italians talk with their hands, French with their shoulders, Arabs shout, German stand like logs and so on. I recall when I first studied French, unintentionally I moved my shoulders with the words. Funny.

### Immersion in the language:

Back to the story, studying a language requires immersion, so the student has to learn not only the four important capabilities (reading, writing, listening and speaking) he or she also needs to have conversational skills and a wide vocabulary to enable strong expression. Are we teaching it in this manner to the expat community? I don't think so.

### Are we following TESOL in our Arabic language teaching?

What lacks is the methodology, our teachers are not experienced in teaching a language to foreign students (same way TESOL is taught), so to do this we must start with the teachers, bring them up to speed with the new methodologies of teaching and learning a language. Also we teach Arabic by starting with

the grammar, and that is wrong, we must teach the conversation first and then the grammar will fall into place. We also teach words instead of sentences. I know this first hand as my children learnt Arabic as a second language (having a foreign passport compel you to learn Arabic as a foreign language even though both my husband and I are Arabs, however to the school it doesn't count, they go by the passport)

### The importance of becoming a fluent Arabic speaker for both Arabs and expats from a career perspective:

Having a multi language in one's CV is as important as the qualifications and the rest of the skills. After all the languages are skills of communications and one must ensure to list the spoken languages down as we never know when that will be utilized.

### There are more things I wish to highlight about Arabic speaking:

I would like to mention that we have very few language schools that teach Arabic language in the same way other languages are taught. We need to have more schools and we need to make it a must to have the language. Other countries insist that those living in the country must speak its language and all of them are successful in doing so, why are we not doing this even though we have a language that is so powerful. Think about it, the Quran, which is the miracle of the languages, is written in Arabic, the best poetry is written in Arabic and our famous tale (one thousand and one night) is in Arabic. Also having more than half the population of expats who speak no Arabic is a shame, so we need to start.

## BAHRAIN POLYTECHNIC REVEALS HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER PERFORMANCE REPORT

### Manama:

**I**n July 2015, the Head of The Health & Wellness Centre at Bahrain Polytechnic, Ashraf Jaber revealed the 2014-2015 performance report, in which the facility has attracted 136 students and 24 staff to join the center.

The Health & Wellness Centre at Bahrain Polytechnic offers a range of Health & Sports services for the students and staff of Bahrain Polytechnic and The University of Bahrain. The facility is comprised of a Gymnasium which includes sports equipment, showers and classes. Amongst the classes offered is circular training, Tai Chi, Yoga, Weight Loss, Body Building, Toning, and Fitness. During the year, new machines have been purchased which include Decline Bench, Olympic Curl Bar, Olympic Bar, and Leg Curl.

In an aim to develop the quality of services further, a database system has been created to follow up on progress of members and the training programs. The data has been utilized to create the monthly and annual performance reports. All members have a code, which alerts the personnel in charge of the membership details, such as joining date, duration, or even the training programs enrolled in. The trainer records the member's data such as the Body Mass Index and fitness goals.

The 2014-2015 Academic Year saw further development in terms of the services and activities offered such as training the Polytechnic team to join a number of championships and



Mr. Jaber

competitions nationally against university students and Sports Organizations, such as: Kingdom University 2014 Football Championship, Zain Football & Basketball Championship 2015; in addition, the staff and students have also taken part at the Bahrain RoadRunners, the annual charity run in 2014.

The Zain Championship organized by Mr. Jaber gained appraisal from the participating University teams for the efficiently planned championship, which included 2 referees in both the basketball and football championship. Mr. Jaber was keen in arranging a fully organized championships; he has arranged a physiotherapist to be present during both championships to protect the participants against any injuries happening during the matches.

The Health & Wellness Center is staffed with highly qualified and experienced trainers who are dedicated in their fields of practice. Both male and female trainers are available to assist and train members, during classes and self-led workouts about training behaviour and health safety.

Mr. Jaber has been keen to

train the University's team for the annual running marathon, in addition to football and basketball coaching. Since joining in July 2014, Mr. Jaber worked on developing various aspects of the center.

Mr. Jaber, holder of Master's Degree in Basketball and Sports Coaching, has received internationally accredited courses in Basketball Coaching. His work experience includes working in sport clubs, schools, and universities in a national and international level.

The Medical clinic serves to treat and support both the students and staff from illnesses or injuries, which includes first aid services. The clinic includes evaluation, observational, and treatment rooms. All these services are free of charge and the patients' information is highly confidential. This clinic is currently led by Nurse Karen Quinn.

As part of the aim to raise awareness about health matters, Ms. Quinn organized a diabetes awareness program, and a number of campaigns and lectures which include, drug use, heart health protection, and nutrition.

Speaking of the Academic aspect, Bahrain Polytechnic has introduced sports education as part of its newly introduced elective courses, fulfilling the Strategic Plan set at the Polytechnic. The course "History of Football and Sports" has followed the problem based (PBL) educational approach which the Polytechnic follows. This course has gained the interest of students, as the course covered various topics including money in football, racism, corruption and the

development of women's football. The collaboration with the curriculum advisory committee at the Polytechnic is underway to include further courses, which shall help build a local sports culture.

Mr. Jaber announced that developments are also underway to develop the student intranet and the Polytechnic website to include the latest information about the Health & Wellness Center. It shall include a section to inform the current classes on offer, which shall be active in the upcoming academic year (2015-2016). This shall include training the center's administrator to operate this system. Cooperation with the Security Department is also underway to create ID cards for the members.

Amongst the future plans fully renovate Awal Hall (Building 16) where the Health and Wellness Centre is located, in addition to adding squash, badminton and tennis courts. Renovation will include the current football pitch. Expansion on current gym, which shall include purchasing new state of the art equipment and machines, in addition to developing a Ladies gym to offer utmost level of privacy to the members. It is also in the plans to include additional trainers to support the center, including physiotherapy and sports related injuries facility.

Mr. Jaber also plans to initiate a National Level Committee for the universities across the Kingdom of Bahrain and that is to organize sports competitions between universities regularly, in addition to offering the necessary needs and requirements.



The students of the 7th Royal Academy of Police (RAP) summer camp are continuing with a host of activities and visits.

Organised by the Interior Ministry in cooperation with Tamkeen, the students have visited the Gulf Aviation Academy and taken part in a workshop on creativity. They have also taken part in sports activities.