Book Review of Manning and Kendall's *Intelligence Arabic**

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The book titled *Intelligence Arabic*, which may be translated into لسان المخابرات (Intelligence Tongue), is a unique publication bringing to spotlight an Arabic jargon which has been locked away in modern Arab history in the mazes of secrecy in intelligence headquarters and centers across the Arab World. The Arabic trilateral root /kh b r/ originally involved a connotation-free process of derivation producing words like *yukhbir* 'to inform', *khabar* 'a piece of news', khibrah 'experience', etc. With the establishment of 'modern' Arab states, this tri-consonantal root has given us some negatively-nuanced terms in Modern Standard Arabic, namely *'istikhbaaraat/mukhaabaraat* 'intelligence' and *mukhbir/ mukhbiruun* 'mole/moles'. For the Arab masses, these words have become extremely taboo and scary due to the ill-reputed practices of the intelligence services which have been mainly institutionalized by Arab dictatorships to spy on and persecute their own peoples rather than protect national security, the way it is in western democracies. However, as a result of complications of regional and world politics, especially with the ever-increasing phenomenon of terrorism worldwide, such intelligence services have started to assume an instrumental role in regional as well as world security.

Julie C. Manning along with Elisabeth Kendall has linguistically penetrated 'a black spot' in Arabic jargons by compiling, based on their relevant academic expertise and Manning's firsthand experience in some Arab countries, a dictionary of intelligence Arabic terms. Their presentation of the material starts with general terms and then moves on to more thematic-based terminologies including areas of analysis, human intelligence, operations, counterintelligence, signals intelligence, and acronyms. The user can comfortably and easily follow the material, especially that each term is immediately supplemented with an explanation. At face value, on the one hand, the reader may feel that such explanations are superfluous in the context of familiar terms but she/he soon realizes that what seems a transparent term may in fact have a different interpretation within intelligence services. For example, the reader may deem the term التقاء عرضي 'bump' (p. 56) a familiar expression but in the insider's use it refers to a 'contrived encounter'. Similarly, the word أشباح 'ghosts' (p. 67) is so familiar and may evoke different connotations for the reader but as an intelligence term it means معتقلون غير معترف بوجودهم 'detainees whose existence is denied'.

On the other hand, the user may be perplexed by other opaque terms whose meaning cannot even be guessed due to their idiomaticity rather than their lexicalization. Terms such as فخ العسل 'honey trap' (p. 68), which refers to 'using sex to entrap a target' and مواد اللعب 'play material' (p. 134), which is explained as معلومات مفصح عنها عمدا لصالح وكالة أجنبية لتأسيس مصداقية عميل متسلل have jargon-specific imports that need to be unpacked to ensure correct interpretation. More puzzling, however, are some terms whose lexicalization joins forces with idiomaticity to render them doubly opaque. Examples such as رمية باردة 'cold pitch'(p. 57), which is explained as meaning اقتراب من هدف للتوظيف دون اتصال مسبق أو تطوير and رفع الكعب 'heel-lift' (p. 99), which refers to جهاز مستخدم ليسبّب عرجاً في مشية مرتديه من أجل تغيير مظهره are puzzling from an idiomatic as well as a lexical perspective.

In this way, *Intelligence Arabic* presents itself as a *par excellence* jargon-driven publication on the hardly trodden area of intelligence services. The book can serve several readerships. Firstly, it can be of interest to the generally educated Arab citizen who may want to know the secret language employed by intelligence services, which played and are still playing a negatively-viewed role in Arab societies. Most likely, it would be hard to find an Arab citizen who has not been subjected to some security measures by such services which may range between permission/denial to have a job in a government body to an arbitrary travel ban to even death under torture. I am sure this category of audience will find this book enlightening as it sheds a linguistic light on intelligence practices.

Secondly, this book will certainly serve regional as well as international intelligence services by making it possible to establish a common terminological ground/bank that will enhance collaboration and understanding between them. Regionally, the book may instigate a process of linguistic standardization to facilitate communication among intelligence bodies in the Arab Middle East and North Africa. In fact, as an outsider reviewer of this of this publication, I cannot determine the extent to which the terminology employed in this work is pan-Arab. One may expect to find ample terminological variation across Arab countries. Internationally, the book would facilitate and upgrade communication between Arab intelligence services and their international counterparts, especially those in the West. This is important today more than ever because the linguistic component plays a key role in the global war waged against what so-called 'across-the-border terrorism'. Thus, this jargon-specific contribution will add to the increasingly renewed interest in the Arabic language and Arab culture which started in the aftermath of 9/11 and is still going at full speed with the Arabs/Muslims being particularly placed under spotlight.

Thirdly, the linguist is expected to find this publication useful from a semantic as well as a translational perspective. Semantically, the sense relations between the signifier and the signified may be investigated to see whether a conceptual/ cognitive link can be established between form and meaning in the process of terminologizing in this area. In such study, the intricate relationship between literal and non-literal meaning can be brought to focus from both a quantitative and qualitative aspect. For their part, the lexicographer and students of lexicography can add one more specialized dictionary to the existing list, which fills a gap in the domain of the use of language for specific purposes. From a translational perspective, this work is revealing because it provides translation equivalents for intelligence terms and expressions that have always been thought to only be accessible to insiders. The practitioner and the student translator working between Arabic and English can seek help from this book in looking up the meaning of intelligence terms they may encounter.

In addition to the main material, the book includes two interesting features: an index and supplementary audio recordings. The alphabetically-ordered English index may give the impression that English has been the source language. I think this is a practical rather than a logical option because of the complications involved in presenting Arabic material alphabetically. As for the audio recordings, they feature native pronunciation of Arabic expressions preceded by their English equivalents and are transferrable to different devices, e.g. iPod or mobile phone. Apparently, these recordings are meant for people who are working or are expected to work within intelligence services rather than general users.

One important chapter in this book is on English acronyms, which are usually familiar to insiders but mostly opaque to outsiders. One should note that English general acronyms are often borrowed into Arabic and they, subsequently, function as familiar words. Examples such as سي أي أي الأيدز ‘AIDS’, الناتو ‘NATO’ and ‘CIA’ are only few from a multitude. The same procedure usually happens with domain-based acronyms whose signification may be accessible to insiders only. Thus, acronyms such as ACINT for استخبارات صوتية ‘acoustic intelligence’, NCP for قائمة مؤشرات ‘indicator list’, IL for خطة الطوارئ الوطنية ‘National Emergency plan’, and IP for حماية البنية التحتية ‘infrastructure protection’ may make sense to only those working for intelligence bodies. The list of acronyms, therefore, is very useful for the specialized as well as the general user, particularly to the translator who may be perplexed by such acronyms when working on intelligence documents between English and Arabic. Whether or not such acronyms will be unpacked in translation depends on the identity of the target audience, i.e. whether the target is an esoteric or exoteric audience.

To conclude, the book treads on a terminologically opaque domain that can be of interest to a variety of readerships. Through their notable expertise and experience, Manning and Kendall have managed to offer a coherent and well-organized reference on original material. One could say that without the publication of this book, intelligence Arabic terminologies would have remained safeguarded in the strongrooms of intelligence services. It is hoped that this publication will push the door wide open for more linguistic work in this area. Of particular interest here would be reviews of this publication by competent intelligence people in order to shed more light on the quality of the material presented in this book.

Endnote

*Manning, Julie C and Elisabeth Kendall. (2017). *Intelligence Arabic. Edinburgh.* University Press. 240   pages. ISBN Paperback: 9781474401463; eBook (PDF): 9781474401470