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## RE-THINKING ROMANIZATION OF ARABIC-ISLAMIC SCRIPT

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### Abstract

Arabic Romanization has been revolutionized by the impact of information technology. The driving-force in this regard is the need to make the reading of Arabic scripts through Romanization easier than what it is used to be. The needed vital instrument to achieve this venture requires the invention of transliteration and transcription of Arabic letters into non-Arabic letters which were successfully done in Romanization of Arabic-Islamic Scripts. Thus, the paper attempts to examine the Romanization of Arabic-Islamic Scripts in the twin discipline of Arabic and Islamic Studies in the occidental world. It is a case study research examining the historical evolution of transliteration and transcription of Arabic letters into non-Arabic letters in which the distinction and lack of uniformity of Romanization of Arabic-Islamic Scripts are fully explored. The paper would finally take us through the fundamental role played by the CJKI Arabic Romanization System (CARS) in the recent innovation in the Romanization of Arabic-Islamic Scripts in the twin discipline of Arabic and Islamic Studies in the western-oriented institution of learning. The purpose is to see what element of innovative development ushered in the recent Arabic-Islamic scholarship in the methods of transliteration and transcription of Arabic letters into non-Arabic letters.

**Keywords:** romanization; re-thinking; transliteration; transcription; Arabic-Islamic

### Abstrak

*Romanisasi Arab telah berevolusi karena dampak teknologi informasi. pendorong hal tersebut adalah adanya kebutuhan untuk membuat pembacaan naskah Arab melalui Romanisasi lebih mudah dari yang digunakan sebelumnya. Instrumen vital yang dibutuhkan untuk mencapai usaha ini memerlukan penemuan transliterasi dan transkripsi huruf Arab menjadi huruf-huruf non-Arab yang berhasil dilakukan dalam Romanisasi Skrip Arab-Islam. Dengan demikian, makalah ini mencoba untuk mengkaji Romanisasi Skrip Arab-Islam dalam disiplin ganda Studi Arab dan Islam di dunia barat. Ini adalah penelitian studi kasus yang meneliti evolusi historis transliterasi dan transkripsi huruf Arab menjadi huruf-huruf non-Arab di mana perbedaan dan kurangnya keseragaman Romanisasi Skrip Arab-Islam sepenuhnya dieksplorasi. Makalah ini akhirnya membawa kita melalui peran mendasar yang dimainkan oleh CJKI Arabic Romanization System (CARS) dalam inovasi baru-baru ini dalam Romanisasi skrip Arab-Islam dalam disiplin ganda bahasa Arab dan studi Islam di institusi pembelajaran yang berorientasi barat. Tujuannya adalah untuk melihat elemen pembangunan inovatif yang mengantar kajian Arab-Islam baru-baru ini dalam metode transliterasi dan transkripsi huruf Arab menjadi huruf non-Arab.*

**Kata kunci:** romanisasi; meninjau ulang; transliterasi; transkripsi; Arab-Islami

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## Introduction

Transliteration and transcription are two terms used for representing Arabic characters in Latin alphabet. There is slight difference between these two terms as being defined by the experts. Habash, Souidi & Buckwalter (2007) citing Beesley who defines transliteration as a term that denotes an orthography using carefully substituted orthographical symbols in one-to-one while the term transcription denotes an orthography that characterizes the phonology or morpho-phonology of a language.

Similarly, Halpern (2009) defines both transliteration and transcription in the following ways; transliteration refers to representing the source script (graphemes, not phonemes) with characters of another script, as in *mhmd/* while transcription is a method of representing the source script in the target script in a manner that reflects pronunciation. So, the previous Arabic word will be transcriptionally reflected as */Muhammad/*. A meticulous examination of the above-cited definitions brings out a clear distinction between these two terms. Nevertheless, the two terms have been erroneously assumed to be synonymous as noted by Jaleel & Larkey (2003) through the following assertion.

Much confusion surrounds these terms, (i.e. transliteration and transcription) with the former often being misleadingly used in the sense of the latter even in academic papers.

It should be noted that the word Romanization applies to both transliteration and transcription. According to Halpern (2009) "Romanization" is using the letters of Latin alphabet to represent a language written in a non-Roman script such as Japanese, China or Arabic.

## Method

This was a qualitative study with the case study approach. The unit analysis in this study was CJKI Arabic Romanization System (CARS) utilized in Arabic-Islamic scripts. It examined the historical evolution of transliteration and transcription of Arabic letters into non-Arabic letters in which the distinction and lack of uniformity of Romanization of Arabic-Islamic Scripts are fully explored. We examined the Romanization of Arabic-Islamic Scripts in the twin discipline of Arabic and Islamic Studies in the occidental world. We also collected some studies about this topic to compare the distinction of the CARS from another system of Romanization. To more deeply understand and then find the sources containing information about the issue of this article, we attempted to relate a research result with the other research results.

## Findings and Discussion

### Discussion

#### The Evolution of Romanization of Arabic-Islamic Script

The campaign for Romanization of Arabic scripts began in 1922 in the form of movement as published in one of Beirut newspapers called *La Syrie*. This movement was spearheaded by Louis Massignon, a French Orientalist who advocated the changing of Arabic script to Latin script. Massignon brought his concern before the Arabic Language Academy in Damascus in 1928, but his proposal was repudiated because the members of Academy viewed it as a plot from the Western world to take over the Arab world. Sa'id Afghani, a member of the Academy, declared that the movement was a Zionist plan to dominate Lebanon.

The second attempt for Romanization of Arabic script was witnessed in Egypt. The rationale behind this was an attempt to restore Egyptian culture which was eroded away by colonization. To realize this objective, some Egyptians championed a cause of nationalization of Arabic language in which formal Arabic and colloquial Arabic would be combined with one language, and Latin alphabet would be used. Besides, the idea of using Hieroglyphics instead of using Latin alphabet was also suggested. Eventually, using of Latin alphabet was preferred because of the following reasons forwarded by a scholar, Salama Musa that;

- a. Using Latin alphabet would allow Egypt to have a closer relationship with the West;
- b. Latin alphabet was key to the success of Egypt as it would encourage more advances in science and technology and;
- c. Using of Latin alphabet would solve the problems inherent with Arabic, such as a lack of written vowels and difficulty in writing foreign words.

However, Salama Musa was not alone in this movement as his idea was supported by two Egyptian intellectuals, Ahmad Lutfi As-Sayid and Muhammad Azim. This movement continued until 1944 when Abd Al-Aziz Fahmi, the chairman of the Writing and Grammar Committee for the Arabic Language Academy in Cairo decided to implement the Romanization of Arabic script in a way that would allow words and spellings to remain somewhat familiar to Egyptian people. Unfortunately, this effort was aborted because Egyptian people felt a strong cultural tie to the Arabic alphabet particularly the older generation.

### Distinctions between Transcription and Transliteration in Arabic-Islamic Romanization

The concise distinction between transcription and transliteration is that the former renders what is heard while the latter renders what is seen. That is, transcription produces the sound of the words according to the orthography rules of the target language. For a non-native speaker, transliteration would hinder accurate pronunciation of Arabic words because it deals with graphemes, not phonemes. Also, many rules that guide reading of Arabic are usually ignored. For instance, writing of vowels, non-assimilation of the definite article (al-) particularly the one that is connected with 'sun' letters, *Sukūn*, inability to differentiate between ordinary *Alif* and *Alif Maqsūrah* and other contexts where *Hamzah* is placed either on the top of *Alif*, *Wa'* and *Ya'*. A few examples will suffice in buttressing the claim made above.

The Arabic word *كاتب* is simply transliterated as {*ktb*} but the same word, when transcribed, will be rendered as {*kātibun*}. The reason for this is that in transliteration vowels are usually omitted (Mike, 2012).

Secondly, the Arabic word *النار* in its transliteration form appears as "*alnī*" but in its transcription form it is read as "*an-nār*." The indication here is that the definite article "*al*" might be pronounced by somebody who is not good at reading of Arabic script and who relies on transliteration hence the correct pronunciation can be realized through transcription due to the fact that transliteration renders what it sees while transcription renders what it hears.

### Factors Responsible for Lack of Uniformity in the Romanization of Arabic-Islamic Script

Apparently, Romanization of Arabic script exists in various forms as found in different

books. Different authors adopt different formats for either transliteration or transcription. However, the great challenge with Romanization of Arabic script is lack of uniformity in the format among the various existing bodies that specialize in the Romanization schemes because character differences usually pose challenges in the process of transcription particularly from Arabic to English. Jaleel & Larkey (2003) opine that the factors that are responsible for this include the following.

- a. Irregularity of English spelling;
- b. The disparity in phonetic inventories of both Arabic and English;
- c. Lack of representation for short vowels in Arabic orthography.

The following are some of the world renowned organizations that specialize in transcription scheme according to Mike (2012). This is presented in the table 1.

Table 1. Organisations specialized in transcription scheme

Name	Acronym	Year of Est.
Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft	DMG	1936
The Encyclopedia of Islam, New edition	EI	1960
International Standards Organisation	ISO	1961
British Standards Institute	BSI	1968
United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names	UNGEGN	1972
Deutsches Institut für Normung	DIN	1982
Qalam	-	1985
American Library Association – Library of Congress	ALA-LC	1997

Apparently, the existence of these various bodies is an indication that there is the possibility of different formats of Romanization of Arabic scripts. The following table 2 shows

variant formats of Romanization as used by some of these organizations.

Table 2. UNICODE Representation of Arabic-Islamic Characters in Latin Alphabet

Unicode	Arabic Letter	Name	DI N	IS O	UN GE GN	AL A-LC	EI
0621	ء	hamzah	'	'	'	'	'
0622	ا	Alif with Maddah Above	'ā	'ā	Ā	Ā	Ā
0627	ا	Alif	Ā, ā	'			
0628	ب	Bā'	B, b	B, b	B, b	B, b	B, b
0629	ت	Tā' Marbuṭa	h, t	t	h, t	h, t	a, at
062A	ت	Tā'	T, t	T, t	T, t	T, t	T, t
062B	ث	Thā'	Ṭ, ṭ	Ṭ, ṭ	Th, th	Th, th	Th, th
062C	ج	Jīm	Ĝ, ĝ	Ĝ, ĝ	J, j	J, j	Dj, dj
062D	ح	Hā'	Ḥ, ḥ	Ḥ, ḥ	Ḥ, ḥ	Ḥ, ḥ	Ḥ, ḥ
062E	خ	Khā'	Ḫ, ḫ	Ḫ, ḫ	Kh	Kh	Kh
062F	د	Dal	D, d	D, d	D, d	D, d	D, d
0630	ذ	Dhāl	Ḍ, ḍ	Ḍ, ḍ	Dh, dh	Dh, dh	Dh, dh
0631	ر	Rā'	R, r	R, r	R, r	R, r	R, r
0632	ز	Zayn	Z, z	Z, z	Z, z	Z, z	Z, z
0633	س	Sīn	S, s	S, s	S, s	S, s	S, s
0634	ش	Shīn	Š, š	Š, š	Sh, sh	Sh, sh	Sh, sh
0635	ص	Ṣad	Ṣ, ṣ	Ṣ, ṣ	Ṣ, ṣ	Ṣ, ṣ	Ṣ, ṣ
0636	ض	Ḍaḍ	Ḍ, ḍ	Ḍ, ḍ	D, d	D, d	D, d
0637	ط	Ṭā'	*	*	Ṭ, ṭ	*	*
0638	ظ	Zā'	Z, z	Z, z	Z, z	Z, z	Z, z
0639A	ع	'Ayn Ghayn	Ĝ, ĝ	Ĝ, ĝ	Gh, gh	Gh, gh	Gh, gh
0641	ف	Fāf	F, f	F, f	F, f	F, f	F, f
0642	ق	Qāf	Q, q	Q, q	Q, q	Q, q	K, k
0643	ك	Kāf	K, k	K, k	K, k	K, k	K, k

Unicode	Arabic Letter	Name	DI N	IS O	UN GE GN	AL A-LC	EI
0644	ل	Lām	L, l	L, l	L, l	L, l	L, l
0645	م	Mīm	M, m	M, m	M, m	M, m	M, m
0646	ن	Nūn	N, n	N, n	N, n	N, n	N, n
0647	هـ	Hā'	H, h	H, h	H, h	H, h	H, h
0648	و	Wā'	W, w	W, w	W, w	W, w	W, w
0649	ي	Yā'	Y, y	Y, y	Y, y	Y, y	Y, y
064A	آ	ĀlifMaqṣūrah	Ā, ā	Y, ÿ	Y, y	Y, y	Ā, ā
064B	أ	Fathatān	An	á'	A	an	An
064C	إ	Ḍammātān	Un	u	U	un	Un
064D	إ	Kasratān	In	i	I	in	In
064E	ا	Fathah	A	a	A	a	A
064F	ا	Ḍammaḥ	U	u	U	u	U
0650	ا	Kasrah	I	i	I	i	I
0651	ا	Shaddah	Dou-blette	-	Dou-blette	Dou-blette	Dou-blette
0652	و	Sukūn		o			

The UNICODE column indicates that all these Latin symbols as appear in the table above are characters represented Arabic-Islamic scripts in computer encoding scheme and is equivalent to the ISO/IEC standard. The UNICODE character indices are usually given as four digit hexadecimal number (hexadecimal is base 16, and uses the numerals 0-9 and letters A-F to represent the 16 possible numbers), (Mike, 2012:11).

### Recent Innovation in Arabic-Islamic Romanization

The purpose of innovation is to update an existing program which might form a part of the curriculum. Innovation, particularly in the

educational sector is usually inspired by the needs to improve methods of teaching for greater and efficient output. Ogunlade and Ahmed (2011) regard innovation as; “changes created in the society by science, technology, politics, education and a host of others”. Science and technology are crucial forces that drive innovation in every sphere of human endeavor to the extent that any program that fails to comply will become obsolete.

Arabic Romanization has been revolutionized by the impact of information technology. The driving-force in this regard is the need to make the reading of Arabic scripts through Romanization easier than what it is used to be. To achieve this, certain phonemic symbols have been discovered, for the first time, indicating word stress and vowel neutralization. The innovation was made possible by the emergence of CJKI Arabic Learner’s Dictionary which has various unique features that cannot be found elsewhere. The significance of CJKI Arabic Learner’s Dictionary is that it helps “the linguists in analyzing the phonological structure of Modern Standard Arabic.” The act of using CJKI Arabic Learner’s Dictionary in Arabic Romanization is known as CJKI Arabic Romanization System (CARS). It is an innovation that makes its debuts under the auspices of the CJK Dictionary Institute (CJKI)

Halpern (2007) argues that Romanization of Arabic scripts could pose a serious challenge for somebody who relies on a reading of Arabic scripts through Romanization because there are some letters that are written but not pronounced. To buttress his argument he gives five examples which include the following;

- a. ĀlifAl-Waṣl (Assimilated Ālif) is not usually pronounced even if the word is vocalized as in *من الممكن*
- b. ل (Letter Lām) in assimilated articles as in *لدخل* are not pronounced.

- c. The final long vowels which are usually shortened such as *أنا* ('Anā) and *هنا* (Hadhā).
- d. Final double consonant, as in *حب* (Hubb).
- e. Alif Al-Waṣl that indicates plural in verbs such as *كتبوا*, *جمعوا* (*Jama'ū*, *Katabū*) are usually not pronounced.

These above-cited samples might be very ambiguous in the context of Romanization because any attempt made in pronouncing them will actually bring about wrong pronunciation. He further argues that ability to read Arabic scripts might not necessary interpret the correct pronunciation because word stress and vowel neutralization play a significant role in the correct pronunciation of Arabic words. Discovery of certain phonemic symbols that helps in overcoming this challenge is the contribution that CARS wanted to make in Romanization of Arabic-Islamic scripts. Thus "CARS is primarily a phonemic transcription system whose principal goal is to represent the phonemes of Arabic as they occur in actual pronunciation (Halpern, 2007: 3).

### Categories of CARS and their Phonemic Symbols

CARS is of three categories namely; Standard CARS, Extended CARS, and Proxy CARS.

- a. Standard CARS consists of certain symbols that perform three functions which include the following; 1) Representing Arabic phonemes in an unambiguous way (phonology); 2) An accurate indication of word stress (accentuation); 3) Explicit indication of shortened vowels and single consonants (neutralization).
- b. Extended CARS, on the other hand, adds three useful optional features to

Standard CARS which are: 1) an indication of case endings (declension); 2) indication of velarized /a/ (velarization); 3) an indication of syllable boundaries (syllabification).

- c. CARS is a set of substitute symbols which eases the input, search and manipulate the symbols used in Standard and Extended CARS. It is a proxy in nature (Halpern, 2007: 3).

Here, the attention will be restricted to Standard CARS because it is the most important of them all. The distinctive feature of Standard CARS' characters is their existence in lowercase letters of the Latin alphabet as opposed to some systems that use capital letters. Besides, the Standard CARS also uses certain auxiliary symbols and diacritics which are innovative which unambiguously aids the correct pronunciation of word stress and neutralization. The following table shows Standard CARS symbols.

Table 3. Standard CARS Symbols

Sy m bol	Unic ode	Symbol Name	Proxy Symbo l	Description
-	U+0 304	Macro n	VV	The <b>macron</b> , as in <i>inā ī ū</i> ( <i>aa iiiuu</i> ), indicates a long Vowel, as in <i>سافرت</i> <i>Sāfarṭu</i> . A <b>double vowel</b> can be used as a proxy symbol, as in <i>Saafa/rtu</i> .
'	U+0 301	acute accent	/	The <b>acute accent</b> , as in <i>á í ú</i> , ( <i>a/ i/ u/</i> ) represents a stressed syllable, as in <i>أنا</i> <i>Ána</i> . • A <b>slash</b> can be used as a proxy, as in <i>'Á/n.á</i> .
'	U+0 304+	macro n+	vv/	The <b>macron plus acute accent</b> , as in <i>ā' ī' ū'</i> ( <i>aa/ ii/ uu/</i> ), indicates a long stressed vowel, as in <i>الصراف</i> <i>Assṣarrāfu</i> . A <b>double vowel plus slash</b> can be used as a proxy, as in <i>'aSSarraa/fu</i> .
-	U+0 331	macro n below	x_	The <b>macron below</b> , as in <i>a i u b d</i> etc. ( <i>a_ i_ u_ b_ d_</i> ) etc.), represents neutralization: either a long vowel that

.	Under dot	Caps		is shortened, as in <i>أنا</i> <i>ana</i> , or a double consonant that is Undoubled, as in <i>حُب</i> ( <i>Hub_</i> ). A <b>vowel plus macro</b> can be used as a proxy, as in <i>a/na_</i> . The <b>underdot</b> -modifies certain consonants to represent others, especially the emphatics: i.e., <i>ص</i> ( <i>s</i> ), <i>ض</i> ( <i>d</i> ), <i>ط</i> ( <i>t</i> ), <i>ظ</i> ( <i>ẓ</i> ) and <i>ح</i> ( <i>h</i> ). <b>Capitals</b> can be used as a proxy, as in <i>S, D, T, Z, H</i> .
~	U+2 03F	Under tie	~	The <b>undertie</b> -indicates liaison between words resulting from the omission of <i>ʿAlif Al-Waṣl</i> ( <i>هـ</i> ) in word initial position, as in <i>أبي الصين</i> <i>ʿaṣīni</i> . A <b>tilde</b> can be used as a Proxy, as in <i>fi_~SSii/ni</i> .
ʾ	U+0 2BE		None	The <b>right half ring</b> represents the <i>Hamzah</i> in all its written forms ( <i>ء</i> <i>أ</i> <i>إ</i> <i>ؤ</i> ) <i>Thu</i> , <i>ʾ</i> are represented by <i>ʾa</i> , <i>ʾi</i> and <i>ʾu</i> , as in <i>أخ</i> <i>ʾakhadha(a/khadha)</i> . The Greek letter Epsilon represents the letter <i>ʿAyn</i> ( <i>ع</i> ), as <i>سعید</i> <i>saʿīd</i> . A capital Ecan be used as a proxy, as in <i>saEiid</i> .
ε	U+0 025	Epsilon n	E	The <b>breve</b> disjoins the letters <i>t, s, d</i> and <i>kh</i> from a following <i>h</i> to show that they are distinct letters when not separated by a vowel; that is, <i>tʰ, sʰ, dʰ</i> and <i>khʰ</i> represent <i>toth, sh, dh</i> and <i>kh</i> , which represent <i>thā</i> , <i>ṣn</i> , <i>dhāl</i> , and <i>khā</i> . A circumflex can be used as proxy, as in <i>t^hs^hd^hk^h</i> .

Source: Adapted from CJKI Arabic-Islamic Romanization System ((Halpern, 2007, 4)

The CARS system maintains the conventional way of writing vowels. However, long vowels are differentiated from short vowels by placing macron on short vowels rather than doubling the consonant letter the only context where consonant letter is doubled to represent

long vowel is when it is used as proxy. Remarkably, neutralization and word stress are the major innovation introduced by CARS system to vowels. Neutralization of vowel is indicated by placing macron underneath vowel as in *أليابان* (*ʿAlyābān*) which is translated as ‘Japan’ while the word stress is indicated by placing acute accent on the vowel to show the stressed vowel as in *كَتَبَ* (*Kátaba*).

Table 4: CARS System for Short Vowel

CARS	Proxy	Description
A	a	short /a/
I	i	short /i/
U	u	short /u/
Ā	a/	stressed short /a/
Ī	i/	stressed short /i/
Ū	u/	stressed short /u/

Table 5. CARS System for Long Vowel

CARS	Proxy	Description
Ā	aa	long /a/
Ī	ii	long /i/
Ū	uu	long /u/
ā	aa/	stressed long /a/
ī	ii/	stressed long /i/
ū	uu/	stressed long /u/

Source: Adapted from CJKI Arabic-Islamic Romanization System ((Halpern, 2007:4)

The major innovation of CARS is in the area of consonant despite the fact that the conventional consonants are maintained except few of them which includes the following;

- Consonant Assimilation:** Definite article ‘Al’ as in *ال* whether it either appears as moon or sun letter is transcribed as ‘Al’ in some Romanization systems, but CARS shows a difference when article ‘Al’ precedes sun letter by doubling the particular sun letter in question in order to indicate the assimilated pronunciation explicitly as in *أَلرَّجُلُ* ‘Arrájlu’.
- Hamzah:** CARS adopts a new way of writing Hamzah differently from the conventional way which is represented by the apostrophe in some Romanization systems. But in case of CARS, the right half

ring is used to represent Hamzah which is maintained no matter its position in a word to remind the reader that it is a consonant that must not be omitted. Hence,  $\text{h}$  and (their variants  $\text{ء, ؤ, ة, ة}$ ) are represented by 'a, 'i and 'u, as in  $\text{أخذ}$  *akhadha*. Interestingly, Halpern, (2007) opines that using of apostrophe to representing Hamzah is inadequate because Hamzah is often omitted, more so it is not prominent enough particularly when it is found within the word and above all it can be mistakenly taken for *ʿayn*.

- c. **ʿayn:** the outstanding innovation of CARS is the use of Latin symbol of epsilon 'ε' to represent 'ع' which has no equivalent in Latin alphabet. This has resulted in the use of apostrophe or letter 'C' in superscript form to denote it in some Romanization systems. Indeed it is a breakthrough because 'ع' is most difficult Arabic letter to pronounce in the system of Romanization. Perhaps, this problem could be ascribed to lack of its equivalence in the Latin alphabet. Halpern, (2007) remarks that 'ʿayn' is the most difficult letter to pronounce for non-Arabs and it is most commonly used letter in Arabic.
- d. **Diagraph Disjunction:** A digraph is a sequence of two letters used to transcribe a single phoneme, such as sh for  $\text{ش}$  kh for  $\text{خ}$ , dh for  $\text{ذ}$  and th for  $\text{ث}$  (Halpern, 2007:7). The problem arises when there is need to transcribe words such as  $\text{شاه, شاه, شاه}$  which their normal transcription is the same thing as "sh", "kh" and "th" respectively. The innovation introduced by CARS in this regard is known as digraph disjunction by using a breve symbol ( $\text{˘}$ ) to indicate disjoin letters rather than join letters as in the following;  $t\text{˘}h, s\text{˘}h, d\text{˘}handk\text{˘}h$ .
- e. This is a feature that learners of English language are very familiar with. Undoubtedly every language has word stress. However, application of word stress in Arabic is not familiarized with among the learners of Arabic because there is no orthographic sign for it either in Arabic or transcription. In this regard, it is another major innovation of CARS system by introducing acute accent symbol as in  $\text{كَتَبَ}$  *katába* where acute accent is placed on the vowel /á/. Halpern, (2009) observes that:
- Arabic stress rules are of great academic and theoretical interest and have practical applications in pedagogy, speech technology, and lexicography. However, almost all grammar books give stress rules that are inadequate or incomplete, giving the erroneous impression that stress can be easily predicted (Halpern, 2009:7)
- f. **Neutralization:** Transcription of the long vowel that precedes definite article of both moon and sun letters or long vowel that appears as final letter as in  $\text{أنا}$  and  $\text{هنا}$  when pronounced in such a way they are written, it will produce wrong pronunciation. This occurs as a result of symbol that indicates that this long vowel should be shortened if correct pronunciation has to be realized. Similarly, the double consonants that appear as final letter as in  $\text{حَب}$  also lack symbol to show that it has to be single when pronounced. Interestingly, one of major innovations of CARS is the introduction of vowel or consonant neutralization by placing macron below the vowel or the consonant so as to indicate their correct pronunciation. For example, the words  $\text{أنا}$  and  $\text{هنا}$  can be transcribed as  $\text{ʾánā}$  and  $\text{dhā}$  but because the long vowel has to be shortened according to the rule of correct pronunciation, their transcription would



then be realized as 'anaandh•dha. Likewise the word **هَبّ** instead of transcribing it as *hubb* it would rather be transcribed as *hub*.

Table 6. Neutralized Vowels

CARS	Proxy	Description
<u>A</u>	a	Neutralized /a/
<u>I</u>	i	Neutralized /i/
<u>U</u>	u	Neutralized /u/

Source: Adapted from CJKI Arabic-Islamic Romanization System ((Halpern, 2007:9)

- g. **Liaison:** *Hamzah Al-Waṣl* of definite article as in **ال** is not often pronounced if is preceded by another letter as in **السّيّارة** and **لبيت آفي**. To indicate that the letter is not pronounced CARS introduces undertie symbol as in *a\_b* indicating assimilation between words in liaison that occurs when the second word begins with an 'Alif Al-Waṣl. Hence, the proper transcription of these two words is; *fīssayy•rahand fīlbáyt*.

By and large, CARS system has made a fantastic contribution to the Romanization of Arabic letters. But in spite of this, the non-native speakers of Arabic who rely on Romanization in reading Arabic scripts will still have challenge with accurate pronunciation of Arabic.

### Limitation of Arabic-Islamic Romanization

No matter the effort geared towards revolutionizing the act of Romanization, some scholars still express dissatisfaction with reading of Arabic scripts through Romanization. Haroon (2003) sees it as an anti-Arabic language in one hand and Islam in another. Furthermore, the scholars contend that without having knowledge of Arabic it is practically impossible to pronounce Arabic words accurately. (Oladosu, 1985, Musa, 1998, and Badmos, 2007)

Al-Faruqi(1995) lamented on the negative effects that transliteration has on the Arabic

names particularly where the name includes a divine attribute, or one of the names of Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W) were written. The incorrect spelling is not only irritating; it can be downright blasphemous (Faruqi, 1995:8). He further observes that Muslims are particularly prone to having their beautiful Islamic names mutilated, because of the general ignorance of Arabic or the difficulties of transliteration. Every Muslim who needs to have his name transliterated into the Latin alphabet must have seen his name spelled in a large variety of ways. Most of these ways mutilate the Muslim's name beyond recognition.

One thing that cannot be denied of in the process of transliteration is the problems associated with transliteration itself. Obviously, there is the possibility of realizing one single Arabic word in different transliterations because there are different authors, writers and publishers who adopt different methods of transliteration. For instance, the Library of Congress, the American Oriental Society, the Middle East Studies Association, and other major universities, each had adopted its own universally acceptable method of transliteration. However, al Faruqi (1995) opined that none of the method adopted by each organization is error-free.

None succeeded; and none proved its viability without question since each had set its own rules, some of which were quite arbitrary. All were incomplete and inadequate for the English speaking Muslims (al Faruqi, 1995:10).

### Conclusions

From the preceding, it is understood that the technicality of Arabic-Islamic Romanization is cumbersome and ability to transliterate and transcribe accurately largely depends on the working knowledge of Arabic. This is an indication that learning Arabic and Islamic Studies to read Arabic scripts is without

alternative rather than being well-grounded in the Arabic language which is the traditional and professional tongue of the twin discipline. In realization of this important fact, several instructional learning materials and gadgets are easily available and accessible in some academic institutions of learning where both twin discipline of Arabic and Islamic Studies are run.

Based on this reasons, the study recommends that: Literacy in reading and writing Arabic scripts should be highly encouraged for the learners of Arabic and Islamic Studies in the western-oriented institutions of learning because they can neither perfectly transliterate nor transcribe Arabic words into non-Arabic words without working knowledge of Arabic. Arabic and Islamic Studies teachers and learners should be courteous of wholeheartedly relying on transliterated and transcribed materials of Arabic scripts.

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