EGYPTIAN ARABIC  
Course Syllabus (Sample)

Instructor: Benjamin Koerber  
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Office Hours: By Appointment  
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Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 1:40-3:00pm  
Place: Beck Hall, Room 250, Livingston Campus

COURSE DESCRIPTION:  
This is an introductory course in Egyptian Arabic (EA) or masri, the most widely spoken of the Arabic vernaculars. The language of everyday life – of conversation, romance, music and gossip – masri also has an increasingly significant role to play in the “formal” settings traditionally claimed by Modern Standard Arabic – e.g. politics, religion, literature and even scholarship. It is, in addition, familiar far beyond the borders of Egypt, given the proliferation of Egyptian television serials, films, music, and literature throughout the Arab World. For these reasons, masri is essential to achieving full linguistic and cultural competency in Arabic.

The course is dedicated to developing the students’ skills in speaking, listening, writing and reading, with an eye to future study in Egypt. In addition to the textbook (see below), students will encounter the language through a variety of contemporary media forms such as blogs, music videos, advertisements, comics, and films. The class time will be dedicated exclusively to communicative activities, exclusively in masri, while grammatical structures will be reinforced through the homework. Contingent upon student interest, an additional semester of the course will be offered.

PREREQUISITES: Elementary Arabic I and II (013:140-141)

REQUIRED TEXTS:


GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Attendance and Participation: 30%  
Homework: 25%  
Vocabulary Quizzes: 15%  
First Presentation (Poem Recital): 15%  
Second Presentation (Report): 15%
ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

Class time will be devoted to activating the vocabulary and structures that you have prepared at home through your homework. You should expect to spend the better part of class time doing activities in pairs and small groups. Thus, attendance and active participation in class is essential to your making good language proficiency gains and doing well in the class. This part of your grade will be based on a daily “attendance and participation” grade assigned by your instructor, according to the following criteria:

3- You are actively engaged in developing your Arabic proficiency and communicating in Arabic as much as possible with your partner/classmates/teachers from the moment you walk into the class until you leave it.
   Full credit will be given when you,
   i. arrive to class on time
   ii. are well prepared for the class, which means that you have learned the new vocabulary, read the grammar explanations carefully and done the homework drills based on these explanations before coming to class
   iii. you submit fully completed homework at the beginning of class
   iv. are alert
   v. participate actively when we are working together as a class
   vi. make maximum use of pair/group work time by
       a) understanding the learning objectives of tasks assigned
       b) staying focused on those objectives
       c) continuing to work with your partner on the task objectives even if you “finish” an assigned task before the allotted time is up (Ask your instructor for additional instructions if you aren’t sure what to do next).

2- You are present but lacking in one of the above criteria for full credit in participation.

1- You are present but lacking in more than three of the above criteria. For instance, you come late to class, submit incomplete homework, use English to say something that you could say in Arabic and are not focused on the assigned task during group work.

0- Absent

HOMEWORK:

Homework will be assigned for each day of the class (Tuesday and Thursday). Students should expect to spend at least 2 hours on the assignment due Thursday, and at least 4 hours on the weekend assignment. Late homework will not be accepted.

VOCABULARY QUIZZES:

Students are expected to develop a strong auto-didactic regime for the accumulation and memorization of vocabulary. In order to encourage this, short vocabulary quizzes will be given every other week on Tuesdays, during the first five minutes of class. Students will be responsible for having memorized a list of 10 words, and give the Arabic or English equivalent.
Presentations (2):

In lieu of a midterm and final exam, the students' linguistic and cultural competence will be evaluated on the basis of two presentations. The first, a poetry recital, will require each student to recite from memory a short poem in Egyptian Arabic, to be selected with the assistance of the instructor. (Typically, one of Salah Jahin's *Rubaiyyat*). The final presentation will be a report on a famous Egyptian personality, also to be selected with the approval of the instructor. Rubrics for each presentation will be provided and discussed in class.

Additional Resources:

- [http://www.arabicmusictranslation.com](http://www.arabicmusictranslation.com) (songs with lyrics and translation)