

## A Sociolinguistics Study in Arabic Dialects

Abdullah Hussein Ali Alnosairee<sup>1</sup>, Ni Wayan Sartini<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Master Program of linguistics, Faculty of Humanities,  
Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Department of Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities,  
Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup>Email: [abdullahalnosairee@gmail.com](mailto:abdullahalnosairee@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Email: [yaniwiratha@yahoo.com](mailto:yaniwiratha@yahoo.com)

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### ABSTRACT

Arabic language is one of the most crucial spoken languages in the world due to its widespread among a huge number of speakers. This spread has coincided with the spread of a large number of varied dialects of this language. Arab people use their dialects which are inspired by Standard Arabic and differ from one Arabic country to another. This study attempts to highlight the diverse variations of these dialects among Arab speakers. It is a descriptive study and the data was collected from secondary sources such as books, websites action/empirical research, case studies, observations, and so on. The findings of this study showed that standard Arabic is widely written but not used in everyday conversation, in the parallel, dialects are widely spoken in everyday life but rarely written. A great number of dialects with some examples of their various forms which are attributed to the Arabic regions, countries, or tribes are also explained based on the findings of this study.

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### Corresponding Author:

**Abdullah Hussein Ali Alnosairee**

Department of Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities

Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia.

Email: [abdullahalnosairee@gmail.com](mailto:abdullahalnosairee@gmail.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

Arabic is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, with 28 countries claiming it as their official language. The population of the Arab world is about 369.8 million, and a geographical area extends from Morocco to Dubai. With such a large area to cover, it is no wonder that this language has so many different and important dialects (Bouhama, 2018).

The most popular version of Arabic, specially adapted to standardize speech and writing, is Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). MSA is used in writing and most formal speeches throughout the Arab world, and it serves as the linguistic glue to this incredibly diverse cultural landscape. This language was spoken for several centuries, which led to its separation from Standard Arabic. Classical Arabic is commonly found in religious texts such as the Qur'an and has been preserved since the seventh century (Suleiman, 1985).

In total, the GDP of the Arabic speaking countries is \$ 2.851 trillion, making Arabic an important language in commerce and business. Arab countries possess a large amount of oil production in the world which represents a large portion of their GDP. While petroleum is the most common, it is certainly not the only thing that represents the enormous wealth of this region. Jordan has one of the largest banking and financial

empires in the world, the Arab Bank. This reinforces Arabic language as a powerful skill for anyone conducting business throughout the Arab world (*Arabic dialects across the Arab World - ARABIC ONLINE*, 2018).

Various forms of Arabic language are spoken in many different countries and regions around the world, and it is most common throughout North Africa and the Middle Eastern countries. However, in many areas, differences in regional dialects may render one Arabic speaker nearly incomprehensible to another. In most cases, the different dialects do not have a specific written form for the language, but there is usually a certain amount of literature accompanying each dialect, including poetry and plays. This applies especially to the dialects used in Egypt and Lebanon (Kamusella, 2017).

To talk about the variety of spoken Arabic dialects, some of them are attributed to the country itself like "Sudanese, Yemeni, Egyptian, Iraqi, Maltese", and some are attributed to the region such as, Maghreb Arabic which is Spoken mostly in Algeria, Tunis, Morocco, and western Libya. Also, Gulf Arabic is mostly heard throughout the Gulf Coast from Kuwait to Oman. In addition, Levantine Arabic is often heard in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and western Jordan. Moreover, in some regions in Saudi Arabia, there are Hijazi Arabic that is spoken in the Hijaz region, and Najdi Arabic which is most often heard in the desert as well as oasis areas of the Najd region. Furthermore, there is the Hassaniya dialect which is spoken in Mauritania. Finally, the Andalusian Arabia that is now extinct, but still holds an important place in literary history (Harrat et al., 2018).

The most important factor in the formation of these individual dialects was the language originally used in the region. As native Arabic speakers moved to different regions, aspects of the native language were eventually absorbed into Arabic speech patterns. New words were added to the language and the pronunciation of words changed over the years. Fortunately, although there are now a large number of dialects in Arabic language, there is a common dialect that most people who speak Arabic understand (Abdullah & Suwaiyan, 2018; Mazraani, 1997).

The common dialect in Arabic language is called MSA. This dialect is understood or spoken as a second dialect by more than 206 million Arabic-speaking people. Classical Arabic is spoken in most official situations, such as radio broadcasts, lectures, and sermons because it is the most common Arabic dialect. This dialect was chosen in most Middle Eastern countries as the country's first language, or at least the second in cases where a specific dialect predominates. (Vollers K, 2011).

It is clear that language variations, especially the term contact which covers the variety of languages or dialects in contact have been a subject of interest. To indicate the significance of dialects, Trudgill, 1986, asserted that the area of contact turned from language studies to dialects studies due to the various use of such dialects in people's daily life. Like other people around the world, Arab people widely use dialects to contact each other. The various forms of dialects spoken in the Arab world lead to their widespread and used by people living in the Arab countries (Trudgill, 1991). As a result of which, this study lights on such a variety of dialects in contact among Arab people and by linguistically shows the similarities and differences of various forms of dialects spoken in the Arab world and those spoken around the world. Based on the above, this study tries to characterize the term "dialect by illuminating Arabic dialects and their varieties in each Arab region." Some illustrations of Arabic-language words used in their everyday correspondence reflect this.

## **THEORY AND METHODS**

In simple terms, secondary data is every dataset that the author has not obtained, or "analyzing data collected by someone else" (Boslaugh, 2009) to be more specific.

Secondary data may include data previously collected and is under study for reuse for new questions, for which the data collected was not originally intended (Martins et al., 2018). Secondary sources such as the academic literature which include course books, journals, white papers, and teaching materials provide crisp theoretical insight, the methodology to apply, and interpret results pertinent to study (Lee & Lings, 2008). Therefore, this study was contacted by a secondary source. The data was collected from secondary sources such as books, journals, white papers, action/empirical research, case studies, observations, and so on.

### **Limitations of the research**

The focus of this paper is twofold: Firstly, to highlight the definition of dialect; and secondly, to study and give some examples of Arabic dialects.

### **Data Collection**

This is a secondary source study; in other words, information is collected from secondary sources such as books, journals, white papers, action/empirical research, case studies observations and so on.

### **Definition of Dialect**

Based on the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, an accent in the form of a language spoken in a region may differ with grammar, words, and pronunciation from other forms of the same language. A variety of language spoken by a group of people characterized by systematic features (for example, phonetics, lexical, grammatical, pronunciation, vocabulary) that distinguish it from other types of the same language called a dialect. For example, the word *tog* in English denotes the clothes one wears for a casual dinner, but in New Zealand, it refers to the clothes one wears for swimming. Dialects, as a regional variety of a language, have differences in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. It is also defined by a language spoken by a class or profession and is a form of language spoken by members of a particular social class or profession. Everyone speaks with a dialect (in fact, many dialects at different levels). People who speak a certain dialect are called a speech community. A speech community is a group of people who speak a common dialect. A group can be defined in terms of non-linguistic factors, such as age, region, socio-economic status, and group identification. However, it is extremely rare for the speech community to define a "pure" dialect. The dialect that an individual speaks is called a dialect. Everyone has slight differences between the way they speak even their families and best friends, which creates a "minimum dialect". An idol is the diversity of speech for an individual speaker. So, the dialect is a continuum of idols (Aini, 2016; Upton, 2012).

### **Preview Study**

Arabic dialect studies have developed rapidly in recent years and most of the previous work has focused on a spoken dialect. There are many languages spoken and written of the world's population and each language has different dialects, which are divided mainly by their geographical locations. Arabic is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. It is considered the fifth most-spoken language and one of the oldest languages in the world (Biadisy et al., 2009). Additionally, the Arabic language consists of multiple variants, some formal and some informal (Habash, 2010). Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is the official form in the Arab world, and it is understood by almost all people in the Arab world. Classical Arabic is based on Classical Arabic, which is the language of the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam. Standard Arabic is used in media, newspapers, culture, and education. In addition, most automatic speech recognition (ASR) and language identification (LID) systems are based on MSA. In contrast, the Arabic dialect

(DA) is an informal variant used in everyday life communications, TV shows, songs, and movies (ibid.). Unlike Classical Arabic, Arabic dialects are less related to Standard Arabic. DA is a mixture of Classical Arabic and other ancient forms from different neighboring countries that developed as a result of social interaction between in Arab countries and people of neighboring countries (Biadisy et al., 2009).

Arabic dialect studies have developed rapidly in recent years and most previous work has focused on the spoken dialect. Recently, people started using accents in social media making Twitter a source for written Arabic. Created a research project related to Malay Scripts Collection using Twitter. They did not only rely on location but also checked the language to ensure that they were writing in the unofficial Malay language; therefore, any commercial and political tweets are ignored and try to cover the different writing styles with differences in the use of grammar, vocabulary, and discourse features. After applying these criteria, the researchers found that the sample frame equals 321 users who posted their tweets in Malay language similar to chat, out of 4,500 users. Then they used a computer application to extract 3,200 tweets from each user to create a group containing one million tweets consisting of 14,484,384 words and 646,807 terms (Saloot et al., 2016).

A multi dialect Arabic speech parallel corpus was built by studying the Arabic dialects that created a speech group focusing on four major Arabic dialects: MSA, GLF, EGY, and LEV in the field of travel and tourism. They obtained 67,132 speech files, 15492 for MSA, 15492 for GLF, 25820 for EGY, and 10328 for LEV by recording dialect claims from 52 speakers aged 16 to 60 years, 49 males and 3 females. They obtained 32 hours of talk with an average instant length of 37 minutes. After recording, they began splitting the prompts into audio files in which each file contained one sentence (Almeman et al., 2013).

Mubarak and Darwish (2015) used Twitter to bring together a diverse array of Arabic dialects. Researchers classified the dialects as Saudi, Egyptian, Algerian, Iraqi, Lebanese, and Syrian. They used a generic query lang:ar and issued it against the Twitter API to get the tweets written in Arabic. They collected 175 million Arabic tweets, then they extracted the user's location from each tweet to classify it as a specific dialect by location. After that, they categorized these Tweets as dialectal or not dialectal by using the dialect words from the Arabic Online Commentary Dataset (AOCD) described in Zaidan & Callison-Burch (2014). Each dialectal tweet was mapped to a country according to the user location mentioned in the user's profile, with the help of the Geo Names geographical database.

The next step was to delete any non-Arabic characters and also to delete duplicate characters. Finally, they asked native speakers from the countries that have been identified as tweet sites to confirm whether or not this tweet uses their dialects. At the end of this classification, the total number of tweets was about 6.5 million in the following distribution: 3.99 million from Saudi Arabia (SA), 880,000 from Egypt (Egypt), 707,000 from Kuwait (KW), 302,000 from the United Arab Emirates (AE), 65 thousand from Qatar (QA), and the rest 8% from other countries such as Morocco and Sudan (Mubarak & Darwish, 2015).

Abu Nasser (2015) contrasts five lexical and pronunciation difference Arabic dialects (MSA, Gulf, Levantine, Egyptian and Morocco). He relies on the Swadesh list [Swadesh, Morris, 1950] and the idea of unknown terms to quantify the sum of linguistic differences between dialects. As the Swadesh list is a phonological list rather than a lexicon, for each dialect, the author gathered data from two male speakers. The Swadesh list was modified to the MSA list with two contemporary Arabic dictionaries (almwrđ Baalbaki, Munir. 1982) and qamws abn' ay' as' Elias, Elias Antoon and Ed E Elias, 1983). To rule out lexical ambiguity, a background sentence for each lexical object was given. Thus, dialect distance is calculated based on the percentage of non-cognates in the MSA Swadesh list. He also uses Levenshtein distance to calculate the phonemic degree distance between lexical products based on the Swadesh list's IPA transcription. He concludes that Gulf and

Levantine are MSA's closet dialects followed by Egyptian, while Morocco's farthest. The most important drawback of this experiment is how data were gathered where speakers, gender and position were restricted to only two male speakers per dialect. Also, the two modern dictionaries used to translate the Swadesh list to the corresponding MSA list have been penned by Levantine scholars, which may somehow skew MSA to Levantine. Finally, the analysis uses phonemic representation of terms to assess lexical variation, and can also show other subtler non-lexical variations.

## DISCUSSION AND RESULT

### 1. Phonological Variation Between Arabic Dialects

The Arabic dialects differ phonetically from MSA and from each other (Elmahdy et al., 2010; Habash, 2010). They suggested that these differences between Arabic dialects help users distinguish one dialect from another and recognize it. The following summary presents some common differences in the pronunciation of some Arabic consonants.

The MSA consonant Qaaf (ق) (/q/) is pronounced as a glottal stop (/ʔ/) in EGY and LEV, as (ج) /g/ in GLF, and IRQ (Alorifi, 2008; Elmahdy et al., 2010; Habash, 2010). For instance, the word "road" in MSA and LEV is pronounced as (طريق) "Tariq", and in GLF and IRQ is pronounced as (طريق) "Tarig". Also, sometimes Qaaf (/q/) is pronounced as (ك) (/k/) in IRQ; for instance, the word "time" in MSA is pronounced as (وقت) "Waqt", while in IRQ it is pronounced as (وقت) "Wkt". Another variation is in consonant Jiim (/dʒ/) which is pronounced as (/g/) in EGY and LEV and as /y/ in GLF, for example, the word "beautiful" is pronounced as (جميل) dʒamil in MSA, IRQ and MAG, while in EGY it is pronounced as gamil and in GLF as yamil, which means "tend to" (ibid). Moreover, the consonant Thaa (ث) (/θ/) in MSA is pronounced as (/t/) or (/s/) in EGY, LEV and MAG. For example, the word "three" is pronounced (ثلاثة) θalaθa in MSA, GLF, and IRQ whereas in EGY and LEV is pronounced (تلاته) (talata). Another example, the word "then" is pronounced as (ثم) "θuma" in MSA and GLF; however, in EGY and LEV, it is pronounced as "suma". A final difference is in consonant Dhaa (ذ) (/ð/) which is pronounced as (/z/) in EGY, LEV, and MAG. The word "appear" is pronounced as (ظهر) ðhar in MSA, GLF, and IRQ while in EGY and LEV it is pronounced as (زهر) "zhar", which means "flower". Another variation is in the consonant Jiim (ج) (dʒ) which is pronounced as (/g/) in EGY and LEV and /j/ in GLF such as the word "chicken" is pronounced as (دجاجه) ddʒa:dʒh in MSA, and NOR, while in EGY it is pronounced as (دكاكه) (dga:gh), and in GLF and IRQ as (ديايه) (dja:jh). Table 1 summarizes the major regional variations in the pronunciation of alphabetic characters in Arabic.

TABLE 1: Regional Variations in Arabic Phonetics (Alshutayri & Atwell, 2017)

	MSA	GLF	EGY	NOR	LEV	IRQ
ق	q	g	ʔ	g	ʔ	k
ج	dʒ	dʒ(or) y	g	dʒ	dʒ	dʒ
ث	θ	θ	s (or) t	t	s (or) t	θ
ذ	ð	ð (or) d	z (or) d	ð	z	ð
ظ	ðˤ	ðˤ	z	ðˤ	z	ðˤ



## 2. Morphological Differences

Arabic has a rich morphology and vocabulary. For starters, the Arabic word hazardous. (وسيعطيك) *wsyTyk* means "and he'll send you" in English, so that one word in Arabic will equate to 5 words in English (Saad, Motaz, 2015), making it difficult to compare languages/dialects. This applies to both MSA and Arabic dialects. MSA and DA, though, have a range of variations that make it impossible for us to apply state-of-the-art natural language techniques to DA. Previous efforts to do so resulted in very poor success due to substantial variety disparity. Report that over one-third of Levantine verbs cannot be analyzed using a morphological analyzer MSA. Degree of difference between MSA and dialectal Arabic depends on Arabic's particular dialect. MSA and dialectal Arabic differ phonologically, orthographically, morphologically, syntactically, lexically and semantically to varying degrees (Qwaider, Chatrine, Motaz Saad ,2018). Dialectal Arabic (DA) has no regular orthography like MSA. Mostly, Arabic script is used to write DA, but often, e.g. in Lebanese, the Latin alphabet is used to write brief messages or post on social media. For instance, (كيفك) *Keifk* is represented as *Keifk*. Another example is the pronunciation of dialectal words with letter q depending on the dialect and areas. For instance, rural and urban Palestinian speakers pronounce it like /'glottal stop or /k/ while Bedouin pronounces it as /g/. (قال) *qal* /say is pronounced and sometimes written as *qal*, *ka*, *al* or *ga* (Jarrar, Mustafa, Nizar Habash, Diyam Akra, and Nasser Zalmout, 2014). Dialects, like MSA and other Semitic languages, make heavy use of specific morphological patterns in addition to a wide range of affixes (prefixes, suffixes or infixes) and clitics, and therefore there are some significant morphological variations between MSA and dialectal Arabic due to the use of these clitics, particles and affixes (Habash, Nizar, Mona T Diab, and Owen Rambow, 2012).

**Table 2. Examples for Morphological differences (Qwaider, Chatrine, Motaz Saad ,2018).**

Example	Dialect word	Dialect	MSA	English
Using multiple words together	كيفك <i>kyfk</i>	Levantine	كيف حالك <i>kyf h. alk</i>	How are you?
Sharing the stem with different affixes	معلش <i>młš</i>	Egyptian	لا يهم <i>la yhm</i>	Does not matter
	مبدرسش <i>mbydrsš</i>	Palestinian	لا يدرس <i>aydrs</i>	He does not study
The future marker	مايبدرس <i>ma bydrs</i>	Syrian	سوف <i>swf</i>	will
	مبيدرسش <i>mbydrsš</i>	Egyptian	سوف يلعب <i>swf ylb</i>	He will play
Clitics	راح <i>h. , rah</i>	Palestinian	سوف يلعب <i>swf ylb</i>	He will play
	ح يلعب <i>h.ylb</i>			
Clitics	راح يلعب <i>rah . ylb</i>	Egyptian	ياكل <i>yakl</i>	He is eating
	b for present		Syrain	انا اطيخ <i>ana` atbh</i>
	بياكل <i>byakl</i>			
	عم بطبخ <i>m bt. bh</i>			

The Arabic-speaking world is characterized by diglossia (Ferguson, 1959). Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is the shared written language from Morocco to the Gulf, but it is not a native language of anyone. It is spoken only in formal, scripted contexts (news, speeches). In addition, there is a continuum of spoken dialects (varying geographically, but also by social class, gender, etc.) which are native languages, but rarely written (except in very informal contexts: blogs, email, etc.). Dialects differ phonologically,

lexically, morphologically, and syntactically from one another; many pairs of dialects are mutually unintelligible. In unscripted situations where spoken MSA would normally be required (such as talk shows on TV), speakers usually resort to repeated code-switching between their dialect and MSA, as nearly all native speakers of Arabic are unable to produce sustained spontaneous dis-discourse in MSA.

### 3. Syntactic Differences

Syntactically, MSA and DA are very close to word order variations. For e.g., OVS and OSV word orders are most widely used in MSA, although other word order patterns are used in dialects. For e.g., SVO is most commonly used in Levantine, while VSO is widely used in Maghrebi. Moreover, male plural or singular forms are popular in dialectal Arabic instead of dual and feminine plural forms (Darwish, Kareem, Hassan Sajjad, and Hamdy Mubarak, 2014).

### 4. Lexical and Semantic differences

Many DA words are borrowed from a variety of other languages, such as Turkish, French, English, Hebrew, Persian and others, depending on the speaker's experience with these languages, lexical elements occur mainly in dialects and not in MSA, as seen in Table 3. Dialects are another thing to remember, and MSA shares terms of different meanings. For example, *دول* *dwl* means 'these' in Egyptian, but "countries" in MSA. New lexical items appear mostly in dialects and not MSA as shown by the example in in Table 4. For instance, the word ((الان) **al`an**) in MSA which means now in English has many lexicons in Arab world as examples are illustrated in Table 4. These changes may occur as the prefix or suffix of a word; for example in the Egyptian dialect the prefix ((س) *s*) meaning "will" used to express future in MSA is converted to (هـ) (*h*) or (ح) (*h*). Also, in negation, some Arabic dialects add (ش) (*ʃ*) as a suffix at the end of a word. In addition, there are some changes occurring in stems for example in Gulf, the (ك) (*k*) in pronounce "yours" (لك) (*lk*) is converted to (تش) (*tʃ*) (تس) (*ts*), or (ج) (*dʒ*).

**Table 3. Examples of borrow words from other languages (Saad, Motaz, 2015)**

Word	Original	MSA	English	Word	Original	MSA	English
طرييزة <trbyzh< td=""> <td>Turkish</td> <td>طاولة <i>tawlh</i></td> <td>Table</td> <td>بندورة <i>bndh</i></td> <td>Italian</td> <td>طماطم <i>matˤm</i></td> <td>Tomatoes</td> </trbyzh<>	Turkish	طاولة <i>tawlh</i>	Table	بندورة <i>bndh</i>	Italian	طماطم <i>matˤm</i>	Tomatoes
أستاذ <i>astad</i>	Persion	مدرس <i>mdrs</i>	Teacher	توف <i>twf</i>	Hebrw	جيد <i>gyd</i>	Good
أفوكادو <i>afwkadw</i>	French	محامي <i>mh.amy</i>	lawyer	تلفون <i>tlyfwn</i>	English	هاتف <i>hatf</i>	Telephone

**Table 4. Examples for new lexicon in dialects (Saad, Motaz, 2015)**

MSA	English		
الألآن	Now		
Levantine	Bedouin	Saudi Arabia	Iraqi
هلا، هلقيت hlqyt hla	هلحين hlh. yn	دحين dh. Yn	هالوقت halwqt
Libyan	Tunisian	Algerian	Egyptian
توا twa	توة twh	توة twa	دلوقت dlwqty

### The Branches of the Arabic language

Arabic language consists of two linguistic branches: Modern Standard Arabic and Classical Arabic spread throughout the Arab world. There are different Arabic dialects that differ in different regions (Abdullah & Suwaiyan, 2018; *Arabic dialects across the Arab World - ARABIC ONLINE*, 2018; Zaidan & Callison-Burch, 2014):

#### Modern Standard Arabic fusHa

Fusha is the mother tongue of anyone; it is the language which is used in schools and officially spoken by elite and the intelligentsia. Compared to the Arabic dialects, the classical language will appear clearer and more measured. In the same way, it is easier to talk to other language learners than to speak to native speakers because language learners are slow to think about their speech.

#### Classical Arabic

The sacred language of the Qur'an preceded the classical one. Muslims all over the world learn this form of Arabic to read their holy book and it is not read so much as it is read melodically in a beautiful stream of more formal Arabic, where grammatical cases flow into a structured poetic rhythm. Like MSA, there are no native speakers of Standard Arabic. There is a myth that Arabic dialects differ as widely as French from Spanish. However, on closer inspection, you can see that they are the same language. The dialects of the adjacent areas will be closed dialects.

#### Egyptian ammiya

The Egyptian Arabic language is famous throughout the Arab world due to the abundance of films, music, and books published in this dialect. Several foreign TV shows are also dubbed into the ammiyah, including very popular Turkish series and heavily censored Game of Thrones episodes. There are a few pronunciations of the region that pronounce jeem as "G", a phoneme not found in Arabic (there is no letter for it). Also, Qaaf becomes a glottal stop in Ammiyah, pronouncing QaHwa (coffee) as 'aHwa.

#### Levantine shaami: Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine

Like ammiyah, the shaami dialect is also used for dubbing foreign films and TV shows and can be broadcast in Arab homes around the world. The main differences from



Standard Arabic include everyday languages such as greetings, expressions, and verb simplification.

### North African *maghribi*: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya

North African dialects, often known as Darij, are influenced by French, a remnant of the French occupation of the region, and to some extent Berber. This can be found especially in this dialect and some basic vocabulary. I.e. the letter jeem in *dajaaj* (chicken) sounds like the J in bonjour rather than the J in James. The Moroccan voice in particular is known to be extremely fast. Arabs from other regions may find that they need a great deal of concentration in understanding Maghreb dialects.

### Gulf *khaleeji* : Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Saudi

Many consider the Gulf dialect to be the closest to MSA. It contains fewer words borrowed from other languages- such as Farsi, French, English, and Hebrew - than other dialects.

**Table. 5 Contains the interrogatives words and how they differ across these Arabic regions**

	What	Where	When	How	Why	Who
<i>fusha</i>	<i>maatha</i>	<i>ayna</i>	<i>mataa</i>	<i>kayf</i>	<i>limaaatha</i>	<i>man</i>
<i>aamiyah</i>	<i>eih</i>	<i>feen</i>	<i>imta</i>	<i>izzayy</i>	<i>leih</i>	<i>miin</i>
<i>shaami</i>	<i>shoo</i>	<i>wayn</i>	<i>imta</i>	<i>keef</i>	<i>leesh</i>	<i>meen</i>
<i>maghribi</i>	<i>shnool</i>	<i>feen</i>	<i>foquash</i>	<i>kifash</i>	<i>3lash</i>	<i>shkoon</i>
<i>khaleeji</i>	<i>maa aysh</i>	<i>ayn</i>	<i>mata</i>	<i>kayf</i>	<i>limih</i>	<i>man</i>

### Types of Arabic Dialects

Although Modern Standard Arabic is the written and academic standard, as it is in many languages, this is not the version that people speak in their daily lives. There are some differences between Standard Arabic and classical Arabic, for example, Spoken Arabic (Zaidan & Callison-Burch, 2014):

1. It has a simpler grammatical structure.
2. It has some letters pronounced differently, which can also differ depending on the dialect.
3. It has some words or expressions that differ from certain dialects.
4. It only occurs in written form when a personal or funny touch is desired.
5. It has a more casual vocabulary and style.

In addition to these differences between MSA and the Arabic dialect, there can be many differences between the dialects. As in many languages, sometimes these dialect differences are not large enough that native speakers have difficulty in understanding each other. As a language learner, it is important to be aware of this, as a difference in accent is likely to make you stumble when speaking with native speakers (Abdullah & Suwaiyan, 2018).

The different Arabic dialects of the Arabic language are spoken in many different countries and regions around North Africa and Middle Eastern countries. However, in many areas, differences in regional dialects may render one Arabic speaker nearly incomprehensible to another. In most cases, the different dialects do not have a specific

written form for the language, but there is usually a certain amount of literature accompanying each dialect, including poetry and plays. This applies especially to the dialects used in Egypt and Lebanon (Cote, 2009). As mentioned below, there is a list of the top 10 Arabic dialects and where to find them:

### **Egyptian**

The Egyptian Arabic language has more than 55 million speakers, and it is the most widely spoken in Egypt. This is the form of the Arabic language you are most likely to hear on film and television, as the Egyptian media industry has had a major impact on the world of Arab cinema. Because of this, the Egyptian dialect is one of the most understandable dialects of the Arab world. It is also one of the most widely studied areas, which makes Egypt a great place for Arabic language learners. The Egyptian Arabic language is strongly influenced by the Coptic language, which was the mother tongue in Egypt before the Arab conquest. It was mixed with Classical Arabic to create something specific. Egyptian dialect today also contains linguistic influences from French, Italian, Greek, Turkish, and English. The Egyptian dialect is written nearly all over the world using the Arabic alphabet, although it is usually translated into Latin characters for textbooks for non-native language learners, making it an incredibly accessible language for new learners (Haeri, 2003).

### **Gulf**

Gulf Arabic is a dialect most commonly spoken in Eastern Arabia. There are 36 million native speakers of Gulf, spread throughout the Arab world. This area includes the Persian Gulf in Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, parts of eastern Saudi Arabia, southern Iraq, southern Iran, and northern Oman. Gulf Arabic is not necessarily its own dialect but is more like a collection of dialects that are so close that they can all be understood by the same groups. Within Gulf Arabic, there can be vast differences in vocabulary, grammar, and especially accent. The differences get bigger with distance, so there can be significant differences between dialects that are further away geographically. A good example is the version of Gulf Arabic spoken by people in Kuwait and in Qatar. These dialects can be so different that speakers may have trouble in understanding each other (Versteegh, 2014).

### **Hassaniya**

Al Hassania Arabic is spoken by 3 million people across the Arab world. It is spoken in Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Western Sahara. It was originally spoken by the Bedouin tribes of Bani Hassan. These tribes spread their authority over many regions between Mauritania, Morocco, and Western Sahara between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, leaving behind their linguistic legacy. Phonologically, the Hassani dialect can be called both incredibly innovative and incredibly conservative. All the sounds present in Classical Arabic are present, but many new sounds have joined them. This can make this dialect complex for new learners. Many Arabic-speaking learners also practice Hassaniya code-switching and demonstrate their linguistic talents. This can occur between Hassani Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, Spanish and French (Jeffrey, 2004).

### **Levantine**

The Levantine Arabic language has more than 21 million speakers, and it is spoken on the coastline of the eastern Mediterranean which is 100-200 km in width. This dialect is used largely only as a spoken language, while many speakers remain true to MSA when writing. The Levantine Arabic language was produced along with northern Mesopotamia Arabic, Anatolian Arabic, and Arabic Cypriot through the language shift from Aramaic to

Arabic. This process occurred through the two generations of Aramaic and Arabic bilinguals. This transformation began in the seventh century, and some argue that it is still happening today. This means that Levantine Arabic is an incredibly interesting dialect and can be a study in the influence of ancient languages on the way we live today (Bassiouney, 2009).

### **Maghrebi**

Maghreb Arab has more than 70 million speakers in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Western Sahara, and Mauritania. This dialect includes many small dialects, such as Moroccan Arabic, Algerian Arabic, Tunisian Arabic, Libyan Arabic, and Hassaniya Arabic. It has many differences in its spoken variation from Modern Standard Arabic. In fact, there are so many differences that speakers of Maghreb Arabic have their own names in their own language. They call it *Derja*, *Derija* or *Darija*. In Arabic, this is written as *الدارجة* and it means "to rise or advance step by step". Maghrebi Arabic continues to rise and advance through its speakers, who are slowly evolving and integrating new concepts into the language. This is most notably evident in the amalgamation of French and English words in technical areas, and the replacement of old French or Italian words with words from Modern Standard Arabic. Through this development, the speakers of the Maghreb language are constantly progressing and advancing (Tilmatine, 1999).

### **Mesopotamian**

Arabic language in Mesopotamia is also known as Iraqi Arabic and it has over 15 million speakers. It is made up of a continuum of Arabian varieties that are native to the Mesopotamian basin. This includes Iraq, parts of Syria, Iran, and southeastern Turkey. Like Levantine Arabic, this dialect arose from the conversion from Aramaic to Arabic. Due to the amazing multiculturalism of Iraq, this dialect also derives from its Akkadian, Persian, and Turkish origins. Due to the differences among many speakers of this dialect, it can be difficult to define phonology. It closely follows the 28 consonants of the Arabic language, but there can be wide variations in the emphatic sounds used (Al-Masri, 2015).

### **Sudanese**

Sudanese Arabic is spoken all over Sudan and has more than 17 million native speakers. This dialect is similar to Egyptian Arabic due to the geographical proximity between the two countries but has distinct characteristics that justify its own dialect. In general, Sudanese Arabic is closely related to Hijazi Arabic in pronunciation. Sudanese Arabic is referred to as a pure and ancient interpretation of the Arabic language. This is because Sudanese Arabic has preserved many ancient pronunciations and sequences that other dialects have long denied. This represents a stark change from Egyptian Arabic and a correction to some extent for current modern standards (Dickins, 2007).

### **Yemeni**

Yemeni Arabic is another great example of Arabic dialects that have preserved many classic practices and tones. Yemeni Arabic is spoken by more than 15 million people in Yemen and southwestern Saudi Arabia, Somalia, and Djibouti. Because of the wide range of speakers, Yemeni Arabic can be divided into many different dialect groups. It maintains many classic features that are not used in other parts of the Arabic speaking world. Yemeni Arabic remains a language only spoken, and many people in the region use Standard Yemeni Arabic for all written purposes. Linguistically, the Yemeni Arabic is influenced by the Himyarite languages, modern southern Arabic, and ancient South Arabic languages. These languages add some different vocabulary to Yemeni Arabic and help distinguish it from Standard Arabic. Yemeni Arabic dialects is one of Arabic variants used in Yemen. In Yemeni Arabic, there are several major dialects each with its own vocabulary

and phonology. These dialects include Al-Sanani, Adani, Abi, Taizi, Tihama, and Hadrami. However, the most prominent difference lies in the distinction between the dialect of the northern part of Yemen and the dialect of the southern part of Yemen (Al-Qaderi, 2015b, 2015a).

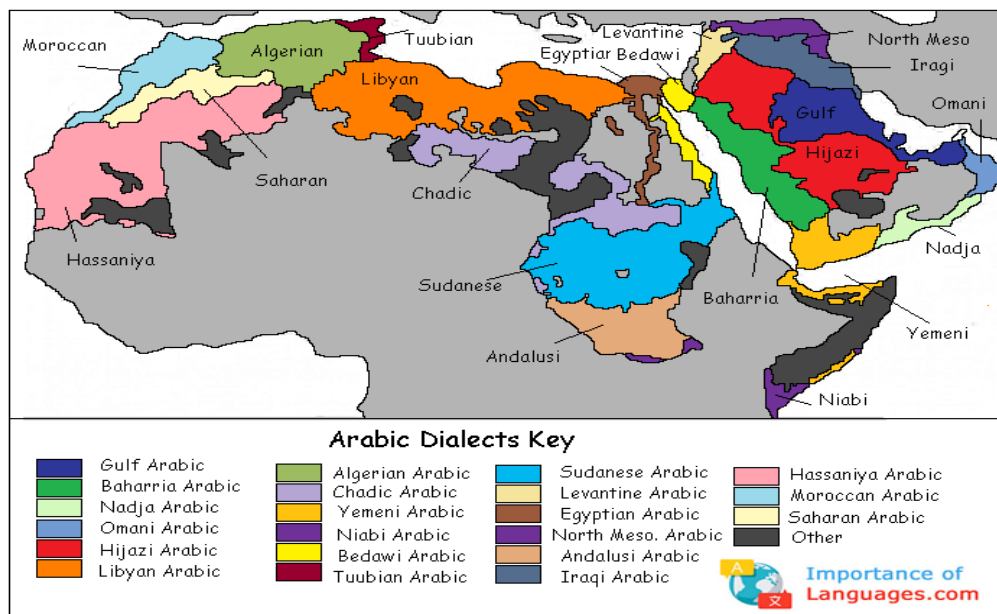
**Hijazi Arabian**

Hijazi Arabic is also known as Hijazi Arabic or, more commonly, Western Arabic. More than 14 million people speak this dialect in the Hejaz region of Saudi Arabia. This dialect is further divided along city and country lines, with an urban and rural version. The urban version is widely spoken in the cities of Jeddah, Mecca, and Medina. This dialect is interesting because it displays features of both a sedentary and nomadic dialect. It merges the classic forms usually more present in the Bedouin dialects with new standards. This dialect was born as a result of the joining of many different tribes and cultures in the 7th century and it continues to nowadays (Alqahtani, 2019).

**Maltese**

Maltese is an interesting dialect because it differs markedly from Standard Arabic. It is classified separately from Arabic, as it has many noticeable differences. It descends from the Sicilian Arabic, which is an extinct group of the Arabic language that was developed in Sicily before its introduction to Malta. This first happened at the end of the ninth century and continued throughout the twelfth century. The Maltese language contains a variety of different vocabulary words from different language backgrounds. About 30% of the language consists of around the original Semitic base, while about 50% is derived from Italian or Sicilian. The Maltese language is written in Latin script, in contrast to literary Arabic, and has been around for a long time as historians can trace its origins. The earliest surviving example of Maltese is from the late Middle Ages. This makes Maltese the only surviving Semitic language written in Latin script (Abdullah & Suwaiyan, 2018; Fabri, 2010).

**FIGURE.1 Map of the different Arabic Language Dialect (Ali et al., 2014)**



## Examples of Arabic dialect

Many Arabic learners may learn a word, such as “أريد” which means “I want”. But when they deal with Arabs, they hear other words that mean “I want” and they think that they have learned the wrong word, or that “Arabs do not speak Arabic !!!” The thing is that they learned one word that means something, while there are many words used for the same thing. Of course, when you learn Arabic, you are not expected to know all the vocabulary; It suffices to know one or two words for one meaning, but keep this information in your mind as you deal with Arabs. Arabs are spread over a very wide geographical area. Some words are common in some areas and uncommon or even not used in others. This is why there are many dialects, but they are all Arabic and have roots in the language (except for foreign words of course) (*How to say “I want” in different Arabic Dialects?*, 2018).

As mentioned at the beginning, there are many words in Arabic language used to mean “I want”. Here are the words that mean “I want” with the dialects used and their roots:

How to say “I want”?

1. **أريد – Areed:** The mostly used word by Arabic learners. It is used in some dialects such as Iraqi dialects and understood by all Arabs. Its root is ر ي د, which is the need and the desire of something. Here are examples of its usage in the Holy Quran:

مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُونِ (سورة الذاريات 57)

“I do not **want** from them any provision, nor do I **want** them to feed Me.” Adh-Dhariyat (The winnowing winds) 27:57.

A popular word from the root ر ي د is “إرادة – Iradah” which means “Will”.

2. **أرغب – Arghab:** from the root ر غ ب. This word is not very popular in Arabic dialects due to its specific meaning. A popular word from this root is “رغبة – Raghbah” which means “strong desire”.

3. **أبغى – Abghy:** its root is ب غ ا. This is the standard form of it. The word is used in the Holy Quran here are some examples: قُلْ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ أَبْغِيَ رَبًّا وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا عَالِيهَا وَلَا تَزُرُ وَاِزْرَةً وَزُرَّ أَحْرَى ثُمَّ إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ (سورة الأنعام 164)

qul 'aghayr allah 'abghi rabana wahu rabu kuli shay' wala taksib kulu nafs 'iilaa ealayha wala tazir waziratan wizr 'ukhraa thuma 'iilaa rabikum marjiekukum fayunabiyyukum bima kuntum fih takhtalifun (164) surat al'aneam.

Say: “Am I, then, **to seek** a sustainer other than God, when He is the Sustainer of all things?” And whatever any human being commits rests upon himself alone; and no bearer of burdens shall be made to bear another’s burden. And, in time, unto your Sustainer you all must return: and then He will make you. [truly] understand all that on which you were wont to differ.” *Al-An’am (The Cattle) – 6:164.*

وَلَمَّا فَتَحُوا مَتَاعَهُمْ وَجَدُوا بِضَاعَتَهُمْ رُدَّتْ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مَا نَبْغِي هَذِهِ بِضَاعَتُنَا رُدَّتْ إِلَيْنَا وَنَمِيرُ أَهْلَنَا وَنَحْفَظُ أَخَانَا وَنَزَادُ كَيْلَ بَعِيرٍ ذَلِكَ كَيْلٌ يَسِيرٌ (سورة يوسف 65)

walamaa fatahuu mataeahum wajaduu bidaeatuhum rudat 'iilayhim qaluu ya 'abana ma nabghi hadhah bidaeatuna rudat 'iilayna wanamir 'ahlana wanahfaz 'akhana wanazdad kayl baeir dhlk kayl yasir (65) surat yusf.



“Then when they opened their baggage, they found their stock-in-trade had been returned to them. They said: “O our father! What (more) can we **desire**? this our stock-in-trade has been returned to us: so, we shall get (more) food for our family; We shall take care of our brother; and add (at the same time) a full camel’s load (of grain to our provisions). This is but a small quantity.” *Yusuf (Joseph) – 12-65*

In dialects, there are some changes made to the word. Keep in mind that these changes are normal and do not make the word not فصحي Fusha. Here is the variation of the word for different dialects:

4. **أَبْنِي** – Abghy: the standard form is used in UAE.
5. **أَبْنِي** – Abgha: the last “ياء letter yaa” is changed to an “ألف letter alef”. It is used in Saudi Arabia especially the western region and Sudan.
6. **أَبِي** – Aby: the letter “غين ghayn” is omitted. It is used in the gulf region and Oman.
7. **أَبِي** – Aba: the letter “غين ghayn” is omitted and the last “ياء letter yaa” is changed to “ألف letter alef”. It is used in Bedouin dialects of the gulf region, Oman, and Hijaz region (west of the Arabian Peninsula).
8. **بَغِيْت** – bghheet: is the present form of the verb “بَغَيْتُ baghaytu” in standard Arabic, with changes to the diacritics.
9. **أَوْدُ** – **Awaddu**: which is from the root و د د , derived from it the past form وَدِدْتُ or دَدْتُ which means I wish and the future form is يَوْدُ, أَوْدُ and تَوْدُ. This form is not popular in the Arabic dialects, but the avaration of it is as follows:
10. **بَوْدِي** – Bewoddi: the word is made off two parts: the “باء letter baa” at the beginning which is a “حرف جر” and the word وَدِي which is from the root و د د. It means in my wish. Also, it is used to mean I want. This is the standard form of it but there are some changes made to it when used in dialects, here are they:
11. **وَدِي** – Woddi: the change made is obviously the omitting of the letter “باء baa” for simplification. It is used in the Arabian Peninsula.
12. **بَدِي** – Beddi: here the letter “واو waw” is omitted, which original in the word but dropped for simplification in everyday conversations. This form is used in the Sham region.  
*A popular word from the root و د د is “وَدّ – Wodd” or “مَوَدّة – Mawaddah” which means “amicability”.*
13. **عَاوِز** – **Aawez**: the words root is ع و ز meaning need. The word is in “فاعل” subject form. There is another variation of it “عَايِز – ‘Aayz”, both are used in Egypt and Sudan. There are other forms that are used in other regions:
14. **مُعْتَاز** – Mu’taz: in the “اسم فاعل” form meaning I’m in need. It is used in Arabian Peninsula.  
*A popular word from this root is “العَوَز – Al Awaz” which means “abject or extreme poverty”.*
15. **أَشْت** – **Ashtahi**: from the root ش ه ي meaning want or desire. It is used around the Arab world with food or sensual things. Other variation of the word is:

16. أَشْتِي – Ashti: the letter “هاء haa” is omitted. This form is used in Yemen to mean “I want” in general.

A popular word from this root is “الشَّهْوَة– Ash Shahwah” which means “(burning) desire”.

## CONCLUSION

As a member of the Semitic family, Arabic language and their variations are widely used. In its standard form, Arabic becomes a language of media and education in the Arab world. However, Arabic dialects as a variation inspired by the standard one also widely spread these days and used in many different areas of the Arab world. Indeed, Arabic language is a term that is used loosely and refers to many different varieties of Arabic. Although all kinds of Arabic are generally related in their primary linguistic features, the language’s diverse dialects form drastically different variations. Some of them are attributed to Arabic regions, and some are attributed to countries. Such a variety becomes a major topic and opens the gate for those who are interested to do research in this area of study. This research was limited to the dialects Arab world, which varied according to the various regions in it, and the researcher, finally recommends researchers to study the dialects from a social aspect in each region separately.

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