

**Classical Standard Arabic Versus Modern Standard****Arabic: A theoretical Framework**

اللغة العربية الفصحى مقابل اللغة العربية الفصحى الحديثة: إطار نظري

**Nouran Ehab Fakhr Eldin Ibrahim**

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

**Suez Canal University****الملخص:**

من المغرب شمالاً إلى السودان جنوباً ومن موريتانيا إلى اليمن، تستخدم كل هذه الدول اللغة العربية كلغة رسمية. هناك ثلاثة وعشرون دولة تستخدم اللغة العربية، بينما يبلغ عدد المتحدثين الأصليين للغة العربية حوالي ٣٠٠ مليون شخص. تعتبر اللغة العربية هي اللغة الرئيسية الثالثة على مستوى العالم فيما يتعلق باللغات التي تستخدمها الدول كلغة رسمية وليس فيما يتعلق بعدد متحدثي اللغة. وجاءت اللغة العربية في المرتبة الثالثة بعد الإنجليزية والفرنسية. يلقي هذا البحث الضوء على التطور التاريخي للغة العربية من شكلها الكلاسيكي حتى العصر الحديث، كما يوضح التباين بين اللغة العربية الفصحى واللغة العربية الفصحى الحديثة. يستعرض البحث التصنيف اللغوي والخصائص المميزة لكل نوع من حيث السمات النحوية والصرفية والمعجمية. كلمات مفتاحية: اللغة العربية الفصحى، اللغة العربية الفصحى الحديثة، التصنيف اللغوي

**Abstract**

There are twenty-three countries using the Arabic language, whilst the native speakers of Arabic are around 300 million people. Arabic is considered the third major language with regards to the countries that use it as its official language. Arabic is in the third place after English and French. This research reviews the historical development of the Arabic

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language from its standard classic form till the modern period and sheds the light on the variance between the classical Arabic and modern standard Arabic. It manifests the linguistic typology and defining characteristics of each variety in terms of their syntactic, phonological morphological, and lexical features.

**Keywords:** Arabic – Classical Arabic – Modern Standard Arabic

### **Introduction**

Ferguson's (1959) article illustrated the difference between the standard language and the various vernaculars of each Arab country. In the following years, Arabic variationist sociolinguistics research has focused on relating the diversity in language use to the demographic factors such as age, education and gender, and more latterly on factors related to identity and language and its nationalistic and ethnic manifestations (Reem, 2020)., Holes (2004, p.8) mentions that “the earliest definite textual evidence we have for the existence of a distinct language identifiable as Arabic is an inscription on a tombstone found at Nemara in the Syrian desert. This has been dated to AD 328 – recent by the standards of Semitic languages”. He also points out that a spoken language may have existed previously.

## Classical Standard Arabic

Early before the revelation of Qur'an in the 6th century, Arabic scripts are mostly unknown, and the rare availability of the data is restricted to some revealed inscriptions, along with the other mentions by Arabs in their literature in the pre-Islamic period (Dayf, 2003). The literary heritage, of the pre-Islamic period, actually belongs to philosophers, poets and preachers, and this heritage has been conserved by early collectors and anthologists, who accomplished their compiling works throughout the 8th century (McDonald, ٢٠١٠). Most features of CSA were solidified in this period, after various stages of growth and development. There is a cautiously accepted claim by scholars such as Assalih (1960) and Dayf (2003), which regards CSA to be the language of pre-Islamic poetry reinforced by Arab poets from diverse regions and tribes in the Arabian Peninsula. There is no clear substantiation to manifest that such poems were composed throughout those early times, other than mentioning them in works related to the 8th century AD. As a matter of fact, they do not reflect the diverse Arab tribal dialects of Arabia, so it was dubitable whether they were composed or added in the early times during the Islamic era (Monroe, 1972).

The establishment of the Arab empire, in the early decades of Islam in the 6th century, led to introducing new trade routes for wide-scale transactions, which resulted in the

desertion of the old routes along Arabia. The empire boundaries expanded across several continents, it stretched from Turkey in the north to the Arabian Sea in the south and from India in the east to Spain in the west (Chejne, 1969). The invasion introduced the new religion as well as the Arabic language, which progressively became standardized after the endeavors for the sake of codification. Subsequently, people began to adopt the main language of the empire to communicate knowledge and intellect (Versteegh, 1996). Surprisingly, Islam and the Arabic language persisted and the Islamic states continued to have unity bonds even after the fall of the empire.

### 2.1.2.1 Phonology

Classical Standard Arabic is a cursive script that consists of twenty-eight consonant graphemes and is read from right to left. The phoneme inventory of CSA includes a number of aspects that are comparatively scarce among the languages of the world, specifically the pharyngals and the so-called emphasis. Actually, Classical Arabic has four emphatic consonants namely: /t/, /d/, /s/, /d/ (occasionally recognized as /z/). Furthermore, CSA has an emphatic /l/, that takes place solely in the word *Allāh* [aɫɫa:h], when the vowel /i/ is not preceding. Arabic dialects secondary emphatic phonemes occur, such as /r/, /m/, /b/, /l/. In some studies, the pharyngals /ħ/ and /ʕ/ and the uvular /q/ are considered among the

emphatics since they have the same aspect of constriction of the pharynx with the oral emphatics. However, there are obvious differences in how they affect the quality of the immediate neighboring vowel quality: the vowel /a/ when it occurs before or after oral emphatics is usually recognized as [ɑ], but when it occurs before or after uvular /q/ or pharyngals, it is recognized as [a]. The clear distinction between these two factors is manifested in the phenomenon of emphasis prevalence in the modern dialects, which is, “the emphatic pronunciation of adjacent consonants and vowels, and also in the rounding of the lips that often accompanies emphaticisation” (Versteegh, 2014, p. 87).

#### 2.1.2.2 Word Structure

The most distinguishing aspect of all Semitic languages is the distinctive relationship between meaning and form. The traditional concept illustrates that root consonants (radicals) represents the lexical meaning, whereas to these radicals the morphological meaning is added in the form of a vowel pattern, occasionally with auxiliary consonants. This is called root-and-pattern morphology, in the recent morphological theories. The syllable structure of the word, in this kind of morphology, is identified by a form which is applied to the CV skeleton. This is to some extent close to the method in which Arabic grammarians explained the structure of a word with the help of the f-‘-l notation. It is referred to root-and-

pattern, or template, morphology is as non-concatenation. This term emphasizes the certainty that the vocalic melody is applied intermittently to a consonantal root.

The analysis of the root-and-pattern implies the linguistic reality of the root structure. Versteegh mentions that the “proponents of the root-based approach cite as evidence the Obligatory Contour Principle (OCP), which states that similar adjacent elements are not permitted. This principle works from left to right at the level of the CV skeleton, and forbids the occurrence of roots like \* d-d-r or \* m-m-d” )” (2014, p. 89). As for the homorganic consonants (i.e., consonants that have similar articulatory class) when they occur in adjacent position, they are not allowed either, as a result a root like \* b-m-f is also not allowed, since it has two adjacent bilabials (Rosenthal 2008). Long time ago, it has been agreed that such co-existence constraints occur in Arabic, in addition to other Semitic languages (Greenberg 1950).

In case roots are the fundamental building blocks of Arabic morphology or merely a by-product of the stem derivation, modern linguists as well as Arabic grammarians use them as an advantageous tool to explain the Arabic lexicon. In most words, three is the number of root consonants, yet there are a few numbers of biconso - nantal nominal roots, the majority of them belonging to the basic lexicon, for instance, ibn

'son', dam 'blood', yad 'hand' etc. Some verbs display a specific number of variants, which might be explicated as resulting from biconsonantal roots. The variants, in some cases, are possibly derived from an original noun that no longer occurs, for instance, kanna 'to shelter', kāna 'to be', sakana 'to settle'. The case is different when the variation is caused by weak consonants and/or reduplication, for instance, 'to be hot' ḥamma / ḥamiya / ḥamā. Consequently, some comparative linguists suggest that all words in Semitic were originally biradical, the third consonant which acts as a type of prefix or suffix, functions as a 'root determinative' (Ehret 1989).

### 2.1.2.3 Morphology

Most approaches to Arabic morphology suggest a root-and-pattern morphology, where derivations occur by adding a pattern to a root, for example, when the root k-t-b is joined with the pattern maCCaC (in the traditional notation, maf'al) to form the word maktab 'place of writing; office'. There was a suggestion made by Larcher (2006), to question the principal practice of deriving all words from a consonantal root. He mentioned that there are words that cannot be derived straight from the consonantal roots k-t-b 'to write' and ṭ-y-r 'to fly', yet it should be derived from the nouns ṭayyāra 'airplane' and kitāb 'book'. Similarly, the verbal measure if'alla is mostly linked with adjectives of the form

'af'alu indicating physical defect or color, for instance, iḥḍabba 'to have a hunchback' and iṣfarra 'to be yellow' from 'aḥḍabu 'hunchbacked' and 'aṣfaru 'yellow'. This manifests that they are not straightly derived from an abstract consonantal root, yet from an adjective. The case is the same with the denominal verbs of measure II, for example 'arraba 'to Arabicise' (from 'arabī 'Arabic') or raḥḥama 'to pave with marble' (from ruḥām). The verbs are directly derived from nouns, instead of a root, which demonstrates that, at least in few cases, the semantic union of the consonantal root is considered as an emergent quality instead of a genuine feature of an abstract root. (Versteegh 2014, p. 92).

The majority derivational processes, in nouns, occur through root-and-pattern morphology. There are solely a few numbers of suffixes, the sound plural and dual suffixes are among them in addition to the nunation and the feminine ending, and the named nisba suffix -iyyun (e.g., from jism 'body' jism-iyyun 'corporeal'). The basic non-suffixed derivations of the noun are the diminutive and the broken plural. McCarthy states that the diminutive with its constant pattern fu'ayl (e.g., from kitāb 'book' the diminutive kutayb 'booklet') demonstrates the same iambic pattern, solely this condition takes place with the combination vowel + y rather than a long vowel. As for broken plurals, they do not exist in all Semitic languages; actually, this grammatical device is



sometimes considered as one of the special features of the South Semitic languages. On the other hand, the broken plurals of Arabic are identified by standard grammars as one of thirty-one patterns. This variation could be decreased significantly by generalization. As pointed by McCarthy (2008), a large number of nouns have a plural pattern of the form CvCvv, it is named iambic pattern, which exists with such various singulars as jazīra / jazā-'ir 'island', nafs / nufū-s 'soul' and rajul / rijā-l 'man'. It should be noted that a long vowel is considered as two short vowels and ninety percent of all nouns have this plural pattern. The broken plurals, syntactically, function as feminine singulars, which demonstrates that semantically they are collectives.

Regarding the declensional system, a certain place is given to the so-called diptotic nouns, which is known to have solely two case endings. Baerman (2004) mentioned that the genuine Semitic declension had two endings: in the direct case (nominative) -u, and in the indirect case (accusative) -a; this is paralleled by the endings of the sound plural, -ūna / -īna. From this perspective, the genitive ending -i is linked to the nisba suffix -iyyun and manifests a later development. Proper names preserved the original state, which are predominantly diptotic. However other people argue that there were always two diverse declensions from the beginning.

#### 2.1.2.4 Syntax

There are three primary types of words in Arabic: nouns, verbs, and particles. The nominal morphology includes pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, since morphologically they do not differ from the noun (Chejne, 1969). Nouns are the names of people, places, and things, like the nouns in other languages. They also indicate intangible and abstract concepts as 'mind', 'law' and 'consternation'. They convey a meaning and are inflected for case to denote their functions in a sentence, specifically, genitive, accusative and nominative. As for verbs, they are linguistic explanations of 'events' that are built up from a 'patient', 'result', an 'action' or an 'agent'. They signify meaning in themselves and are inflected to refer to a tense and a person. Number and Gender, in Arabic, are mandatory categories in nouns as well as verbs. Particles are the last category, they meaningless in themselves yet they become meaningful when linking them with other words.

The normal CSA sentence word structure includes one or more clauses, that can be either nominal or verbal. Nominal clause, show noun-initial word order and includes a 'noun phrase: mubtda'', and a 'ḵabr: report', which can be verbal clause or another noun phrase (Chejne, 1968). On the other hand, verbal clauses follow a verb-initial word order and consists of a transitive/intransitive verb and which include either a nominal clause, noun phrase or a noun (Kremers,

2003). A certain level of flexibility is permitted in the Arabic word structure, , and word orders such as VOS, OVS, and noun+VSO are possible as well (Newman, 2013). Although, CSA prefers the use of verbal sentences, whereas the nominal sentences are used in specific purposes as conveying specification or interest (Badawi, 1973). The subject of the verb can be a place, person, a cause, an idea, etc., however the object cannot act as agent or cause (Kremers, 2003). As for the pre-verbal subjects, they should have a complete agreement in number and gender, while post-verbal subjects require gender agreement only (Mohammad, 2000). In case of verb separation from its subject, there should be a masculine singular agreement, no matter what is the gender or number of the subject, actually this is called a neutralization agreement.

#### 2.1.2.5 Classical Standard Arabic Dialects

Despite the fact that CSA was the official language adopted throughout the Islamic era, almost in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, specific dialectal traces could be recognized at the time of standardizing the language. This particular diversity in Arabs' dialects demonstrate themselves in two ways. Initially, the diversity is represented in the readings of the Qur'an, so-called Qira'at, which proposes various techniques of recitation (Wafi, 2004). Dissimilarities instances can be detected also in the phonological differences occurring

between the Hijazi tribes and the Tamīm tribes, who lived in Najd, in the way of reciting the Qur'an. It should be noted that the difference in the technique of recitation do not change the word's meaning, that can solely be recognized by the context in which the word exists, in addition to its syntactic and semantic use. Further explanation for the diversity in Arab dialects is shown in works of the 8th century. According to Ibn Faris (1993), he identified such diversity by classifying them into seven discrete categories.

The first category is using short vowels, the short vowel coming after the consonant /n/ in the word 'nast'īn' can be /a/ or /i/. It could be identified orthographically as a short vowel diacritic ' ' or ' .. ' occurring above the character for /a/ or below it for /i/, i.e., or ن.ن. the second category is when no short vowel exists, for example there are two ways for pronouncing the word معكم either 'ma'akm', with a short vowel /a/ coming after the consonant /' / or with no vowel 'ma'km', which could be identified orthographically as a short vowel diacritic َ ' or no vowel diacritic ُ : ' located above the character, i. e. مع or مع. The third category is placement of letters in words, whether it is placed inwards or backwards, such as šā'īqa = šāqi'a. The fourth category is replacement of letters, for example, 'awlālk = 'awli'k. The fifth category is either to pronounce the glottal stop or not as in hamza /' / and the example musthzi'wn = musthzūn. The sixth category is

the variety of nouns' gender, as in 'hadh albaqr' (f.) = 'hadā albaqr' (m.). The last category is the phonological and orthographical presentation of the plural form of words such as /'asārā' /أسارى' = /'asrā' /أسرى'.

### 2.1.3 Modern Standard Arabic

The Arabic language encountered a period of decay, between the 13th and the 18th century (Ryding, 2011). This period was called the Period of Decadence, it began with the collapse of Baghdad in 1258 AD, which witnessed the end of the huge Islamic Empire and resulted in the increase of power and influence of independent Muslim dynasties (Newman, 2013). Consequently, the state of language deteriorated under the Turkish yoke, since all the official documents were produced in Turkish as well as being the language of high culture, meanwhile Arabic retained significance as the language of religion (Ryding, 2011; Newman, 2013). Thus, the CSA of early Islam continued to be the literary language, whereas spoken Arabic of everyday life evolved naturally into a distinctive vernacular related to a particular geographical area (Ryding, 2011).

The end of the 18th century witnessed the distinction between CSA and the Arabic dialects, when Napoleon occupied of Egypt (1798-1802 AD). CSA was employed by few groups of educated men to discuss traditional Muslim sciences whereas the majority of the population, were

entirely or mostly illiterate and adopted dialects in their oral communication (Blau, 1981). Napoleon had a scientific mission, he brought their printing press, in French as well as Arabic, thence, Arabs were able to be in contact with the West and language was influenced with Western culture. The Egyptian press came after the Syro-Lebanese press, yet the former seems to influence significantly the development of a novel style and novel literary techniques in Arabic.

Governments were using European languages, specifically French, for a long period in nations like Algeria, Lebanon and Morocco, which resulted in influencing most Arab countries. It should be mentioned that CSA had two competitions, the first one with the European languages, and second one with the vernaculars (Blau, 1981).

The Arabic Renaissance flourished in the 19th century during favorable circumstances. When the Arabs gained the opportunity to get exposed to the Western literature, for instance novels, it led to the modernization of literary techniques in the Arabophone countries, which had a substantial influence on the terminology used and the language style (Ryding, 2011). These countries enjoyed the spread of literacy, because of creating an educational system that mimics the European model, which in turn reinforces the rise of a 'new' type of Arabic, namely the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), by excluding the various dialects and

raising Arab children into their historical tradition and literary heritage (ibid.). Moreover, the advent of journalism in the Arabophone countries substantially favored the prevalence of the new form. Journalists reinforced the reform of the language and initiated a translation movement that, with the support of the press, participated in the propagation and creation of the modern language (Newman, 2013).

The significance of MSA goes beyond being the major symbol of ethnic unity and sharing history for Arab society, hence it represents identity and cohesion (Ryding, 2011). Nevertheless, as mentioned by Blau (1981), most of educated Arabs use MSA as their main cultural language yet they scarcely use it as their mother tongue. He based his claim on a “very unusual” and “quite abnormal” case of a number of boys whose families moved from one Arabic-speaking country to other one and were inspired by Pan Arab stimulus in addition to personal motives to use MSA in oral communication (Blau 1981, p. 24). Furthermore, Blau states that Arabs utilise dialect in everyday conversations, even though they are equally not favoring dialects as they threaten to divide the Arabophone countries and have the potential of endangering Arab national unity and (ibid.). Considering the fact that MSA is limited to cultural scope and has not infiltrated everyday speech, Blau (1981) argues that MSA be regarded as an evolved form of its predecessor, CSA, which

manifests relative uniformity. Nevertheless, such an equal situation in the utilization of the two types of Arabic, i.e., the vernaculars and the standard variety, advocates some of the criticism raised by researchers like Rabin (1955, p.51), who regards MSA “an ill-defined system” when comparing it to Arab dialects. For the author, ‘ill-defined’ identifies a language variety that includes too many non-linguistic and linguistic variables for it to recognize human behavior in a rigorous, scientific way.

### 2.1.3.1 Phonology

A number of MSA phonemes dialectal pronunciation has been realigned as allophonic variants over the Arabophone countries. The common variations may have the following: first, the MSA voiceless uvular plosive /ق/ /q/ has three reflexes in Arabic dialects: a glottal stop [ʔ], [g], and [dj]; hence, the word *ṭarīq* [road], for instance, is pronounced in main cities of Egypt and Levant /tarīʔ/, and pronounced as /tarīdj/, /tarīdz/ or even /tarīg/ in Iraq and most Gulf countries (Holes, 2004; Kaye and Rosenhouse, 2006; Watson, 2011). Second, MSA /ج/ /j/ has three main reflexes: [ǧ], [g], and [j]. For instance, MSA word *jaml* [camel], pronounced as /ǧaml/ (emphatic j) in most dialects of the Mesopotamia, Levant, and some parts of North Africa; and it is pronounced as /gamal/ in Yemen and Egypt; and as /jamal/ in some parts of Iraq, the Gulf and the Syrian desert. Third, there are letters which are



pronounced in the same manner in most dialects such as MSA /ك/ /k/. Even though, the reflex is either [ch] or [ts] in rural dialects of the Levant, Iraq, the Gulf and parts of Jordan. It should be noted that such deviation is more observable when addressing females. For instance, the question expression *kayfk?* [how are you?], pronounced as /kayfts/ in some central to northern parts of Saudi Arabia and as /kayfch/ in Kuwait. The existence or absence of interdentalals as /d̪/ and /t̪/. The sound /d̪/, is the most familiar allophonic realization of the phoneme, which have two variations either [d̪] or [d], as in the word /d̪ahb/ /dahb/ [gold] (ibid.). on the other hand, the MSA /t̪/ is the most favored articulation in the majority of dialects excluding those in the Levant and Egypt. For instance, *talāta* [three] can be pronounced as /talāta/ and /falāfa/ in Eastern Saudi Arabic and Bahraini. In addition to their existence in loanwords, there are a number of Arabic dialects that developed the pronunciation of the voiceless /p/ or /v/ sounds in native words. For example, Moroccan Arabic has the word *Java* [inside] and Yemenite Arabic has the word *sapāk* [pipe fitter] (Holes, 2004; Kaye and Rosenhouse, 2006; Watson, 2011).

### 2.1.3.2 Morphology

The morphological root-and-pattern system is similar in MSA and Arabic dialects. Generally, primary changes to the meaning of the stem can be caused by derivational and

inflectional morphemes, which are utilized to mark grammatical data. Moreover, they have also some of the morphological rules and morphological lexicon in common (Habash et al., 2012). Although, there are observable differences which exists in the Arabic dialects use of affixes and clitics which do not occur in MSA. Clitics are [morphemes](#) that have syntactic aspects of a word, yet it relies [phonologically](#) on another word or phrase; and they are not inflectional affixes (Zwicky and Pullum, 1983).

Generally, in the Arabic dialects they drop the case and mood aspects almost totally and substitute these categories by a number of affixes, which are considered among the main morphological differences. For instance, the MSA feminine suffix marker /+t/ is never to be omitted unless it occurs in a pre-paused position. Although, it is deleted in most dialects and substituted by /+a/, as in the Levant dialects and some western parts of Saudi Arabia, or by /+ih/ in Iraq; or it is even pronounced in the pre-paused position, as in many Yemenite dialects (Kusters 2003).

The extended utilization of the dual method that can exist in MSA is preserved in Arabic dialects solely with nouns.

Furthermore, there are also some instances of stylistic diversity between the utilization of the dual suffix /+īn/ or the free numeral, two-ness, in addition to the plural form. For example, the phrase 'his two boys' in MSA /waldīh/ ولديه. The

dual form of the word *wald* in MSA, is formed by adding the dual suffix, to be /waldīn/. The /+n/ of the dual suffix is omitted due to the connected pronoun /+h/ which means 'his'. As for the Arabic dialects they are similar to that of MSA, however the /+n/ of the dual suffix is articulated due to the freestanding pronoun that comes after the word. Nonetheless, some dialects have made a phenomenon named as 'pseudodual', which includes the utilization of the dual suffix /īn/ to indicate the plural of a few numbers of nouns, specifically paired parts of the body, e.g., /'aynīn/ [eyes], /rijlīn/ [feet], and /eadīn/ [hands] (Blanc, 1970). As for the case of MSA broken plural, generality of patterns is familiar in Arabic dialects, yet some are typical for other dialects. For instance, patterns that have /+a/ and /+an/, as in /fursān/ [mares] and /talāmḍa/ [students] are preferred in Moroccan dialects. Moreover, the combination of two types of plurals by suffixing the sound plural to the broken plural, is one of the Arabic Dialects methods of pluralization. For instance, the Gulf words /za'āmāt/ [leaders] and /furūqāt/ [differences]; the Syrian word /ṭar'āt/ [roads]; and the Moroccan term /dmū'āt/ [tears] and /ḵawātāt/ [sisters].

### 2.1.3.3 Lexicon

With regards to the literary domain, the lexicon of Arabic dialects is limited in scope when compared to the diverse and

wealthy lexicon of MSA and CSA. It is known that the Arabic dialects are not used in normative and educational domains, yet it expands its lexicon by borrowing from various dialects and languages. This can be identified in the following forms: first, diglossic borrowing from MSA; second, borrowing from neighboring languages employed as well in the areas, as Turkish and Persian; third, borrowing from the European colonial languages, primarily French and English. It should be noted that any borrowed word may have gone through semantic and/or phonological change. As a distinctive feature of the diglossic situation, Arabs have the tendency to keep two lexical items, i.e., doublets, for the same word in two different domains: one in MSA and the other in their dialect. In various dialects, an original lexeme may be employed in a high register in one situation and in a household register in another situation. instances of such doublets exist in Bahraini word *gidr* [cooking pot] vs MSA *qadir* [he was able] (Holes, 2004: xxix); and Najdi *kān* [if] vs MSA *kān* [it was] (Ingham, 1982). Moreover, Jabbari (2013), in his contrastive analysis for be Levantine Arabic dialects and MSA in terms of morphology, phonology, syntax and lexicon, mentions that these dialects have a complementary lexicon that involves all parts of speech that have similar meaning yet have a different form.

#### 2.1.3.4 Syntax

The substantial changes in Arabic dialects syntactical aspects are directly connected to morphological evolution. Haeri and Belnap (1997) mentioned that when a language is considering morphological simplification, as a result of an external or internal causes, it turns to be increasingly synthetic, and word order tolerates more burden. From a syntactical perspective, these changes offer various ways in which Arabic dialects can be topologized. The three main topics are nominal syntax, verbal syntax, and sentence typology, will be illustrated, in terms of differences such as the issue of agreement and word order patterns. One of the cases of agreement rules of Arabic is the 'deflected agreement', that is the utilization of feminine singular forms in pronouns, verbs and adjectives in order to agree with broken plurals (Haeri and Belnap, 1997). The agreement is also detected in MSA, yet is only used for non-human references, whereas the novel pattern of favored or permitted deflected agreement with human and non-human references is well identified in ADs. There is an agreement neutralization as well, since the marking of number (singular) or gender (feminine) on adjectives and adjectives, whose head nouns or subjects are plural or feminine, is neutralized and made as masculine because unmarked words for gender are masculine in Arabic (Blanc, 1984). Like MSA neutralizing the agreement when a verb occurs in an initial position and

separated from its subject, Arabic dialects have extended the neutralization to be on noun-initial as well as verb-initial sentences, and they depend on the extensive utilization of such agreement between a noun and its verb or complement (Brustad, 2000).

### 2.1.3.1 MSA Versus CSA

Shraybom-Shivtiel (1995) believed that MSA has proved to be successful when compared to CSA in terms of penetrating all levels of society along the Arabophone countries, as it is utilized in scripted speech and written forms, nationally as well internationally. MSA is used as the standard norm for all types of printed materials such as books, newspapers, journals, advertisements and street signs; moreover, it is utilized in a number of scripted spoken communication for broadcasting on radio and television and public speaking, in addition to using it in film dialogue, subtitling and dubbing. The MSA has the same syntax and morphology like its predecessor, moreover it shares three other characteristics with it: it is the language used in education, it has a diverse and comprehensive literature, and it flourishes various dialects (Chejne, 1969). The two language varieties CSA and MSA are both considered here as standard Arabic. They mainly vary in style, specifically shown in writing practices and vocabulary, as they manifest the written traditions of two diverse cultural and historical eras,

namely, the early medieval period and the modern one, respectively.

The significant shift in the lexicon was due to the influence of the translation techniques adopted for the transfer of technical terminology from different languages (Bateson, 2004). Scholars like Ghazala (2006), Ryding (2011) and Newman (2013) have categorized such techniques to include: borrowing or transliteration, Naturalisation, Loan translation, semantic extension of existing words and Derivation. First of all, borrowing a foreign term like بطارية /baṭārya/ 'battery' for the Italian batteria. Furthermore, the Arabic inflectional morphology can adapt borrowed words, as in the plural of بطارية/baṭārya/ 'battery', which in the plural form becomes بطاريات/baṭāryāt/ 'batteries'. Second, the paraphrasing technique is used to make a brief illustration of the original term: [لحم شريحة البقر] a slice of beef meat] to be the translation of the English word 'steak'. Third, the naturalization technique is used to adapting the word to the Arabic morphology: ديموقراطية/dīmūqrāṭya/ as a translation for the word 'democracy'. Fourth, the Loan translation is used to reproduce the same term precisely item by item: الأبيض البيت as a translation for 'the White House'. Fifth, the Semantic extension of existing words as in the example قطار/qiṭār/ as a translation for 'train', this particular term was utilized in earlier times as a definition to camels walking in a line. Sixth,

the process of creating novel terms in conformity with the structural pattern of Arabic: هاتف/ hātif/ for 'telephone', from the Arabic lexical root h-t-f. It should be noted that Arabic language Academies approve this order of preference in terms of coining neologisms in Arabic: semantic extension of existing words, derivation, and borrowing (Shraybom-Shivtiel, 1995).

In the Arabophone countries, MSA is considered as the language of science, and its lexically diverse from CSA in terms of its reliance on Arabisation, derivation and other neologisation techniques to accommodate scientific progress and formal research (Badawi, 1973). A number of CSA words may have new meanings in their present use, or one of their synonyms may be more common in particular contexts. For instance, the use of the CSA word [قدح] qadah, cup] in the MSA dubbed version of Snow White, whereas its synonyms [كأس] ka's, cup] and [كوب] kūb, cup] are more extensively used in present times. On the other side, syntax ranges from the utilization of erudite and comprehensive forms of discourse in learned contexts, such as academic papers, to the demonstration of more streamlined expressions in advertising, broadcasting and journalism. MSA utilizes a series of permissible simplifications word order that gives it broader linguistic freedom (Bateson, 2004). On the other hand, other stylistic changes are caused as a result of the large scale of



bilingualism and translation activity, primarily from European languages (Bateson, 2004).

#### 2.1.4 Modern Standard Arabic Dialects

Modern standard Arabic dialects can be classified according to parameters such as sectarian and religious affiliation, lifestyle, or and geography. Blanc (1984) argues, with regards to communal classification, that Arabic-speaking countries represent a spectrum that goes from existence to complete absence of communal dialects employed by various ethnic or religious groups. Nevertheless, Watson (2011) mentioned that this spectrum might demonstrate that these particular communities lived detached lives, as protected minorities, actually these communities adapted to the dialect of the predominant group in public places. Bateson (2004) gave an example for the Christians and Jews of Baghdad, they use their dialect at home while adapting to the Muslim dialect in public places. A similar case exists in Bahrain, as the Shi'ite majority adapts to the dialect of the predominant Sunnis in group communication. Watson (2011) stated that lifestyle classification is concerned with old dialects, since, in the situation of modern dialects, it has been manifested to be of diminishing sociological fitting and an oversimplification. It somehow sophisticated to associate some linguistic aspects as universally Bedouin or sedentary since the feature which is considered as a Bedouin in one region could be considered as

a geographical marker in another. For instance, the third masculine singular object pronoun, -u; it is a 'Bedouin' feature in the Euphrates, yet a 'geographical marker' in Saudi Arabia, which differentiates northern Najdi dialects from Central dialects (Ingham, 1982: 32).

Arabic Dialects may differ significantly from one another according to their geographical distance. As for the neighboring dialects, for instance the speakers of Kuwaiti and Iraqi dialects can simply equivalently comprehensible to the native Arabic speakers of those particular vernaculars. On the other hand, remote regional dialects as Moroccan and Syrian have developed accumulative varieties that make them less comprehensible and might require a conscious effort on the part of the speaker may need to exert effort to modify their conversational language to a more mainstream level. Ryding (2011) believed that the process is relatively simple for educated native Arabs, who can recognize dialectal characteristics and adapt to the communicative requirements of any situation. Wafi (2004) added that their good knowledge of standard language supports them with a number of grammatical and lexical rules that can be helpful in understanding differences in everyday communication.

In fact, Arabic speakers use various accommodating strategies, speakers in their everyday communicative exchanges, including code-switching from one Arabic dialect

to another; total or partial code-switching from Arabic to a European language, mainly French and English; and diglossic switching from their dialect to MSA. Thus, it is to some level in accurate to mention that the speakers of various Arabic dialects use MSA to simplify comprehension in informal conversational situations.

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