# Foreign Terms in the Daily Arabic Discourse of Arab University Students

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## Introduction

The use of foreign lexis in the Arabic daily oral discourse has witnessed a drastic increase in the past few years. English terms have become almost unavoidable in any conversation that extends for a few minutes. The advent of the technological revolution with its myriad types of commodities has flooded world markets with products that have alien labels. The consuming world had to decide whether to accept the products together with their foreign labels or to propose plausible renditions for every term. The Arabic Language Academies in different Arab countries made some effort, particularly in the beginning of the industrial surge; yet such efforts weakened as commodities started pouring with their alien labels virtually every day. Thus, the first phase of the Academies' effort featured appropriate renditions for many commodities. For instance, products such as 'fridge' and 'washing machine' had *thallajah* and *ghassalah* as their Arabic counterparts. Such Arabic renditions are so apt that the foreign terms referring to these two house items are never heard in daily Arabic discourse. However, this marvelous effort did not continue; today, we encounter very many products and commodities that have retained their alien names.

## Non-Arabic Words in Arabic Attire

The presence of foreign terms and expressions in languages is a normal phenomenon in all languages. It is impossible to find a language that does not manifest borrowed terms and expressions. Linguistically speaking, languages do affect one another in different ways for various reasons. Thus, Arabic has affected many languages including Spanish, Urdu, Persian and English, to mention a few examples. A prayer in Urdu such as: اوہ خدا ہماری دعا قبول کرتے ہیں and translated as 'Oh God accept our prayer,' contains two Arabic words: دعاء du'a 'prayer' and قبول qubool 'acceptance'. On the other hand, Arabic has come, throughout its history, under the influence of many languages, including Turkish, Persian, English, among others. However, it is essential to note that borrowed words into Arabic are not allowed into Fusha (standard form of Arabic) straight away; the first destination of the borrowed terms is usually the spoken variety of the language. Arabic is diglossic in that the language possesses two codes; the Standard, which is used in formal settings and the colloquial which is used in informal daily communications (see Saeed, 1997, Fasold 1990, Badawi (1973), Ferguson 1959, among others). The standard form of the language, Fusha,

does not permit the use of non-standard Arabic lexis, nor does it easily allow the use of foreign ones. Non-Standard Arabic, or conversational Arabic, however, does not comply with the strict rules of Standard Arabic and, therefore, allows the use of foreign lexis. Thus, Arab interlocutors are often heard using non-Arabic terms and expressions in their daily discourse. Some of these words are English, French, Turkish, Persian, Spanish, among others.

### a. Turkish Influence

While foreign words are heard in virtually all the Arabic dialects, some regional Arabic dialects host more words from certain languages than other dialects. For instance, while Yemeni colloquial Arabic, particularly Sana'ani Arabic, is replete with Turkish words, Adeni Arabic is packed with words from both English and Urdu origins probably more than the northern Yemeni Arabic dialect. Turkish words such as *bardaq*, 'a glass', *titan* 'tobacco' *tali,* ' a lamb', *quti* 'a can' are examples of the very many words heard in the daily conversation of Sana'ni Arabic. In fact, some of these words have no equivalents in Arabic. The word *titan* is a case in point. On the other hand, words such as *tali* and *quti* have equivalent Arabic words including *xaruf* and *kabsh* for the former and *'ilbah* for the latter, yet the foreign words tend to be used more than the pure Arabic ones. The word *tali* is used in virtually all the Arab Middle Eastern countries, again due to the presence of Turkish (Ottomans) for a long period of time in most Arab countries during the 19th and part of the 20th centuries. Some of the Turkish terms have been integrated into conversational Arabic to the extent that they are felt to be of Arabic origin. Words that are heard in virtually all Middleastern countries include: *istimara*, 'form', *bagha*, transparent plastic material, *dafter*, a copybook, *mishwar* a walking mission, etc. (See Hassib, 2010 for more terms). Today, the word *istimara* is used in all Arabic forms and in all regional varieties.

Indeed, some of the foreign words take Arabic morphological rules such as plurality, duality, diminutive states, etc. For instance, in Kuwait, the word *telai* is derived from *tali* 'lamb' to imply diminutive. The word *dafter* spelt in Turkish as *defteri* 'notebook' (see www.almaany.com) is used in all Arabic dialects and has *dafaatir* as its plural form. The Turkish influence in Arabic was not merely lexical, but, in some cases, was also morphological. Certain Turkish suffixes such as 'ci' pronounced as /ji/ are added to certain Turkish and Arabic words to indicate profession. For instance, a Turkish word such as *baklavaci* written in Arabic as بقلاوجي and pronounced as/baqlawji/is heard quite often in Egyptian Arabic as well as in the Gulf and Levant dialects. Of course, the influence of Turkish in Egyptian Arabic was even stronger. In this respect, Watson (2002) states "San'ani has fewer additional suffi-xal morphemes than Cairene, in particular those due to foreign influence. This is largely due to the fact that the Turks had considerably less influence in Yemen than in Egypt" (198). Indeed, the suffix /ji/ is added to pure Arabic words to denote profession. For instance, the Arabic words *qahwah* 'coffee' and *jazmah* 'shoe' take this suffix: *qahwaji* to mean a person who sells coffee, *jazmaji*, a person who fixes shoes, etc. Such terms are heard in the

Levant and Egyptian dialects, but not in the Yemeni and Gulf dialects. This agrees with Watson's claim that foreign morphemes are not productive in Sa'ani Arabic. She states "Although foreign morphemes have been adapted to the Sana'ani phonological system, they are rarely productive and are found predominantly in frozen forms or borrowings" (198).

### b. Persian Influence

While the Turkish language appears to have noticeably substantial room in the Yemeni and most gulf Arabic lexicon, other foreign languages have space in these regional Arabic dialects, too. Words of Persian origin, for instance, are commonly heard in the oral daily discourse of Arabs, particularly in the fields of food and furniture. Words such as *burghul*, 'crushed grain' *bathinjan*, 'eggplant', *zanjabil* 'ginger' are just examples of Persian words that have no Arabic equivalents. Words such as *istabraq* 'brocade, *ibrīq* 'water jug' *zanjabīl* 'ginger', etc. are recognized by Arab linguists as Persian. Cheung (2017), for instance, maintains, "It has long been recognized by Arab philologists that *istabraq* is a borrowing from Persian, cf. Persian istabrah." No one is certain as to the date when these words came into Arabic but judging from ancient Arabic books, which mention these words, one can be certain that they entered Arabic many centuries ago. Arabs used the word *zanjabil* even before the advent of Islam. Indeed, it is used in the Holy Qur'an as in Chapter 76 verse 17 which reads: وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيلا, translated by Ali (2006) as: "And they will be given to drink thereof a Cup (of Wine) mixed with Zanjabil" [ginger]."

In his article about the benefits of 'eggplants', Yusuf (2016) cites some ancient Arabic tales and poems that mention the benefits of this type of vegetable. Other words borrowed from a Persian origin include *tumbak*, 'tobacco', *birwaz*,'frame', *shal*, 'male head cover' *kamar*, 'male belt' and *sadah*, 'beige'. While all these words are heard in Yemeni Arabic, some of them such as *birwaz, kamar*, and *sadah* are also heard in many Middle Eastern Arab counties including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Egypt, etc. The word *jaadah*, which means road or path, is used officially to refer to certain small roads and streets in Kuwait. Of course, Arabic daily conversations in most Middle Eastern countries use words such as *baaz*, 'hawk,' *bustan* 'garden', *tannor* 'oven', *kooz*, a jack for water made of clay, etc (see Hassib, 2010). Indeed, very few people are aware of the origin of these words. The word *kamar*, a type of belt made of either thick nylon material or leather with pockets in the front and the sides, and the word *shal*, a piece of cloth worn by men on the head or placed over the shoulders are so essential pieces of clothes in the casual attire of Yemenis that they are passed to be pure Arabic by most Yemenis. Other words of Persian origin that are used in virtually all Arab countries and have been thought to be pure Arabic include *baws* kisses, *misk* 'type of perfume, *darzi* 'tailor,' etc. (see Ridhai and Akbari, 1389).

### c. English Influence

The influence of the English language was very strong in the Arab World due to the British occupation of most Arab countries including virtually all Arabian Gulf countries as well as south Yemen. This colonization, for instance, lasted more than 120 years in South Yemen. During this long period, the medium of instruction in most schools in Aden was English. In addition, official institutions as well as major companies used English as a second language for both oral and written forms of communication. Consequently, very many words sneaked into the daily Arabic of the public, educated and non-educated alike. Words such as *serwis*, 'service' *reiwes*, 'reverse' *geer* 'gear' *carbaiter* 'carburetor' *kawar* 'cover' are among the dozens of words commonly heard in the daily Arabic discourse of Yemenis. Of course, Arabic phonological features manifest themselves when pronouncing these words. For instance, a word such as *serwis* 'service', which refers, in its Arabic use, to the place where a car is washed and maintained, exhibits apparent Arabic phonological features, including the change of the quality of the vowels in both syllables, i.e., the vowel in the first syllable changes from front mid short vowel /e/ to high back short /I/, whereas the vowel in the second syllable changes from high back short into a long vowel. As for the consonants, the voiced labiodental fricative which does not exist in Arabic was expected to become voiceless, but this sound becomes a glide /w/, due to the influence of Hindi, which was also heavily present in Aden due to the large Hindi population working in the various offices of the British administration in Aden.

The influence of English in the twentieth century increased considerably due to the rise of the US as a superpower and due to the technological advances made by the manufacturing West, especially the US. The west flooded the world with commodities that were never known before. Naturally, as producers, they were the ones to label their products with names. The burden was on the consuming world, particularly the third world that found itself obliged to keep racing with the flood of western products. They had to work day and night to come up with equivalent terms. Arabic Language Academies were very active at some point, as mentioned above, and thus endeavored to propose Arabic equivalents for the newly arrived commodities. They, for instance, coined words such as *hatif*, *ghassalah*, *thallajah*, *sayyarah* for 'telephone', 'washing machine', 'fridge', and 'car' respectively. These attempts were a success; however, some of the rendition suggestions were not and, therefore, were either forgotten or used together with the foreign terms. The terms *hatif*, *telfaz*, *barraq* for 'telephone', 'television' and 'fax' respectively are examples. The words *hatif* and *telfaz* are used today, but minimally; the words 'telephone' and 'television,' pronounced as *tilifun* and *telifiziun*, are used by most Arabs, particularly in the Middle East. As for the word *barraq*, nobody to the best knowledge of the writer uses it today, except if the user wants to joke. The author checked the Arabic Corpus of Alexandria, which consists of more than 200 million words and found no single use of this word (see www.arabicorpus).  Similarly, the word *masarrah* that was coined at some point to refer to 'telephone' had zero presence in the corpus. Indeed, it is never heard in daily conversations, formal or informal, again unless a user wants to joke. The oddness of the term

motivated Arab linguists to propose *haatif* which was fairly better than *masarrah*, but, even *haatif*, was not able to make a perceptible presence in the daily conversations of Arabs; as already indicated, the transliteration of 'telephone,' i.e., *tilifun* is heard far more often than the word *haatif*.

**Objectives of the Study**

The study investigates the presence of foreign terms, especially communication-oriented ones, in the daily Arabic discourse of University students. More specifically, the study seeks answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent do Arab university students use communication related foreign terms in their daily Arabic discourse?
2. Do these foreign terms have Arabic equivalents? If yes, why do the foreign terms persist?

**Methodology**

To carry out the study, the author followed two methods of data collection: an elicitation method and a survey. First, the author selected a random sample comprising 20 Arab Open University students who had just joined the university and had not started their major studies. The students were given blank sheets of paper and were asked to jot down whatever words, terms and or expressions pertinent to computer and computer use, mobile and mobile programs they use in their daily exchanges. They were required to write down the exact words that they actually use in their daily exchanges. They were given ten minutes to carry out the task.

The second step involved examining the data provided by the students and classifying them in terms of type and frequency. The terms were classified into five categories: program-related words such as 'Wi-Fi', 'software' etc.; part-name terms, such as 'mouse', 'flash memory' etc.; command terms (verbs) such as 'cut', 'download' etc.; and terms referring to processes, such as 'charging', 'formatting' etc.; miscellaneous terms, such as 'email', 'in-box' etc. The most repeated ten terms in each category were selected and were made into a survey comprising fifty items (terms). In the survey, the fifty terms were listed randomly, not based on category, with each foreign term having its Arabic counterpart next to it.

The survey was distributed to another randomly selected group of fifty (50) newly admitted students at the AOU, Kuwait. The English level of this group was lower intermediate. They were to study English for a period of six months to one year to attain an acceptable English level that would enable them to join one of the University's three majors: English, IT or Business Administration. Since the English of these freshman students is rather shallow, the instructions were written in Arabic. Also, a transliteration of the English words was provided, with the English spelling between parentheses (see appendix). The students were asked to read each word in the

survey together with its equivalent and decide which one they actually use in their daily conversations. They were instructed to underline the one that they use in each item. If they use both words, then they were asked to circle the one that they use more than the other (see appendix).

**Results**

The findings of the analysis reveal interesting results. First, none of the English terms was alien to the respondents. On the contrary, a number of the Arabic equivalent terms sounded both alien and exotic to the group. Second, the English terms emerged as the vividly dominant code of communication as far as the terms in the study are concerned. See Table (1) and Charts (1-6) below. Indeed, in some cases, all the respondents opted for the English terms exclusively with no use of Arabic equivalents at all.

**Table (1)**
Subjects' responses in all categories

| NO | Category Type | Arabic | English | Arabic more than English | English more than Arabic | No answer | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Part names** | 18 3.6% | 460 92% | 10 2% | 7 1.4% | 5 1% | **500** |
| 2 | **Programs** | **31 6.2%** | 429 85.8% | **7 1.4%** | 33 6.6% | | **500** |
| 3 | **Commands** | 60 12% | 368 73.6% | 33 6.6% | 32 6.4% | 7 =1.4% | **500** |
| 4 | **Processes** | 108 21.6% | 295 59% | 25 5% | 72 14.4% | | **500** |
| 5 | **Miscellaneous** | 84 16.8% | 319 63.8% | 50 10% | 47 9.4% | | **500** |
| | **TOTAL** | **301 12.04%** | **1871 74.84** | **125 5%** | **191 7.64%** | **12 0.48%** | **2500 100%** |

The general findings show that the foreign terms dominated in the responses of the students in the study with a striking majority of the respondents opting for the foreign options. As Table (1) shows, three fourths of the students selected the foreign terms all the time, i.e., with zero use of Arabic. The terms referring to parts emerged as the first category that exhibits heavy reliance on the foreign language. In this group, 92% of the respondents opted for English only, a strikingly high percentage indeed. The terms referring to programs ranked second in terms of reliance on non-Arabic terms with 85.5% of the responses being in the foreign language. The category of process terms was the one receiving the least number of foreign responses compared with the four other categories with a 59% of the responses only being in English. The Miscellaneous and command categories ranked

third and fourth in terms of use of non-Arabic with percentages as high as 75% for the former and 73% for the latter.

The following bar chart further illustrates the results of the analysis.

**Chart (1)**

Subjects' responses in all categories
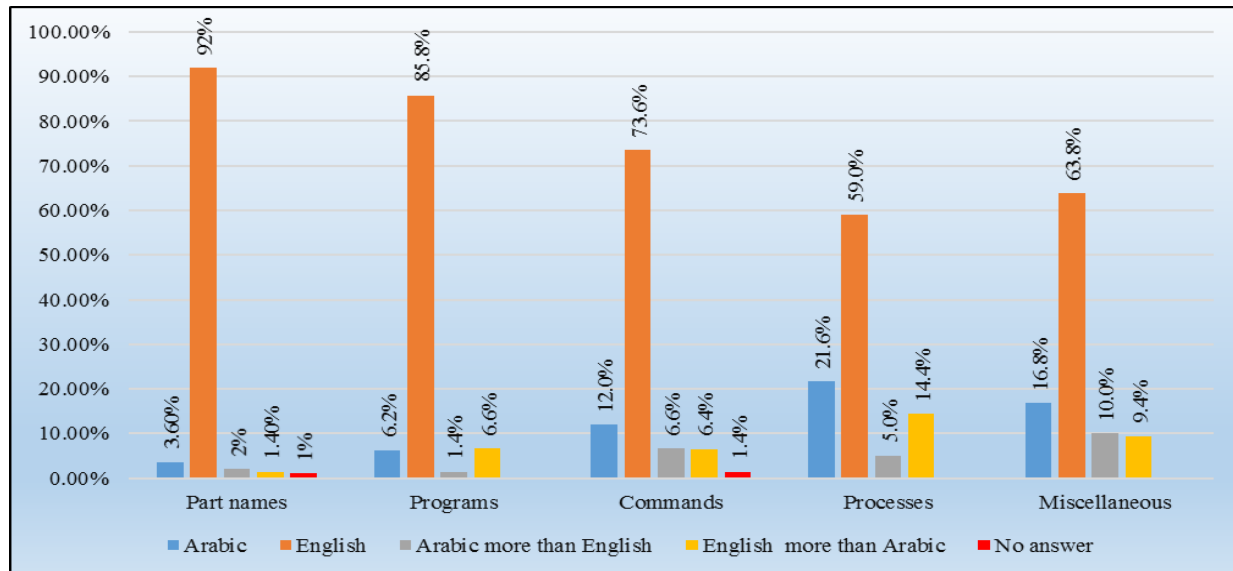


In what follows, the results of students' responses to the survey items in the five categories are discussed.

**Chart (2)**
Subjects' responses in the category of 'Part Name Terms'
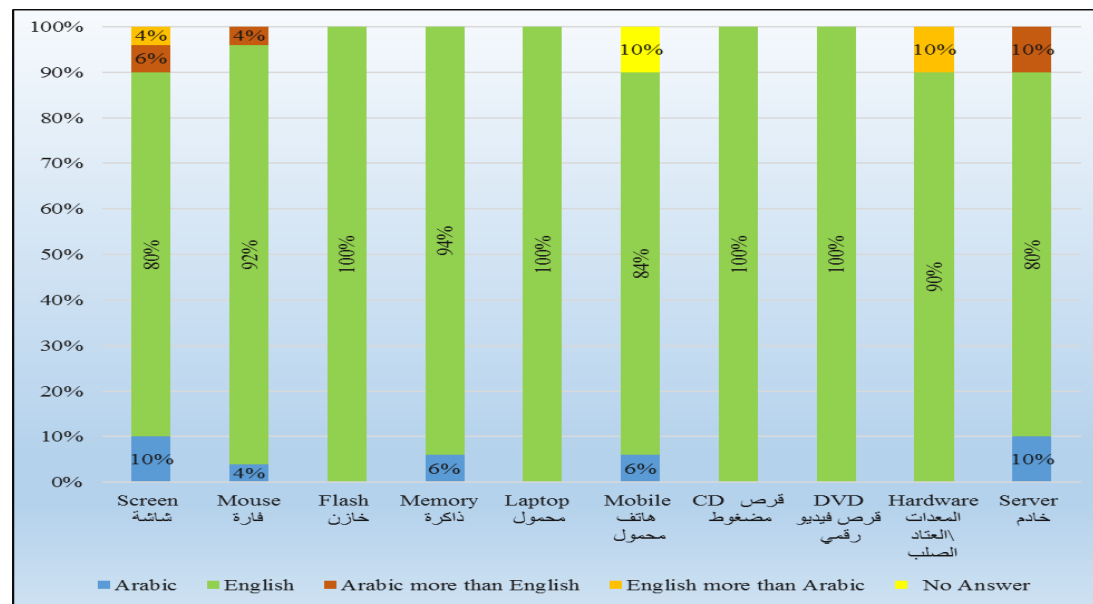**N=50**



Chart (2) shows that the respondents virtually always opted for the foreign terms when referring to computer parts, telephone parts and or to the hardware items connected to these devices. 40% of the terms in this group showed zero use of Arabic, as seen in: 'flash,' 'laptop,' 'CD' and 'DVD.' Even the term 'hardware' is responded to mainly by means of English. Indeed, the ten items in this category showed a striking reliance on English; 92% of the responses exhibited no use of Arabic at all. Only two terms received peripheral use of Arabic, namely 'screen' and 'server'. Still, even in the case of these two terms, more than 75% of the respondents opted for the English options. The Arabic equivalent of the word 'screen', *shashah*, is heard quite often in daily Arabic discourse; however, the word *khadim*, the equivalent of the word 'server', is not. The literal Arabic rendition of the term sounds rather strange, which undoubtedly contributes to the attitude of Arabic speakers to prefer the foreign word over its Arabic counterpart. Related to the oddity felt in the Arabic counterparts of some of the terms in this group is the translation of 'mouse' as *farah*, a female mouse. The only conceivable explanation for deciding to translate the term in the feminine state is to convey a sense of tininess. Yet, Arabic speakers favour the use of the word 'mouse', possibly due to the scarcity of using the word in the feminine sense and probably due to the widespread use of the term in most applications, programs and computer-oriented writings. Furthermore, the negative image mice have in Arabic culture tends to motivate people to shy away from using this word, even if the reference is to an electronic mouse rather than to the animals. Resorting to the English equivalent seems to lessen the degree of negativity felt when using the Arabic equivalent term, i.e. *farah*,

Among the terms that received zero Arabic responses are CD and DVD, two acronyms that are widely used in daily discourse. None of the respondents used the expression *qurs madhghut* or *qurs fidju raqmi*. The English acronyms sound easier, quicker and probably neater. Again, part of the tendency to opt for the English expressions here boils down to the easiness of the English alternative and oddity and/or difficulty of the Arabic equivalents. Unlike English, Arabic does not use acronyms as often as is the case in English (see Hamdan and Fareh, 2003). In translation, rendering acronyms by means of equivalent acronyms in Arabic is virtually rare, which means that either Arabic translates every word in the foreign name or expression, as in 'Digital Video Disc' *qurs fidju raqmi* or simply retains the foreign acronym (DVD).  In this respect, the World Bank Report (2004) states:

> For Translation from Arabic into English, it must also be noted that Arabic does not use acronyms and abbreviations. Some abbreviations and acronyms of well-known international organizations and institutions are used in Arabic as Arabized names. For example, UNESCO (اليونسكو), FAO (الفاو), ICARDA (الإيكاردا), GAT, (الغات) etc. (15)

Renditions, such as عتاد الصلب, which is used as equivalent of the term 'hardware' is also rather strange. The Arabic words do not make a clear sense semantically, which might account for the students' tendency to shy away from such terms.

Students' responses to the second group of terms, the one labeled 'Program Terms,' also reveal a vivid preference for the foreign terms over the Arabic equivalents. The following Chart summarizes the results of the students' responses.

**Chart (3)**

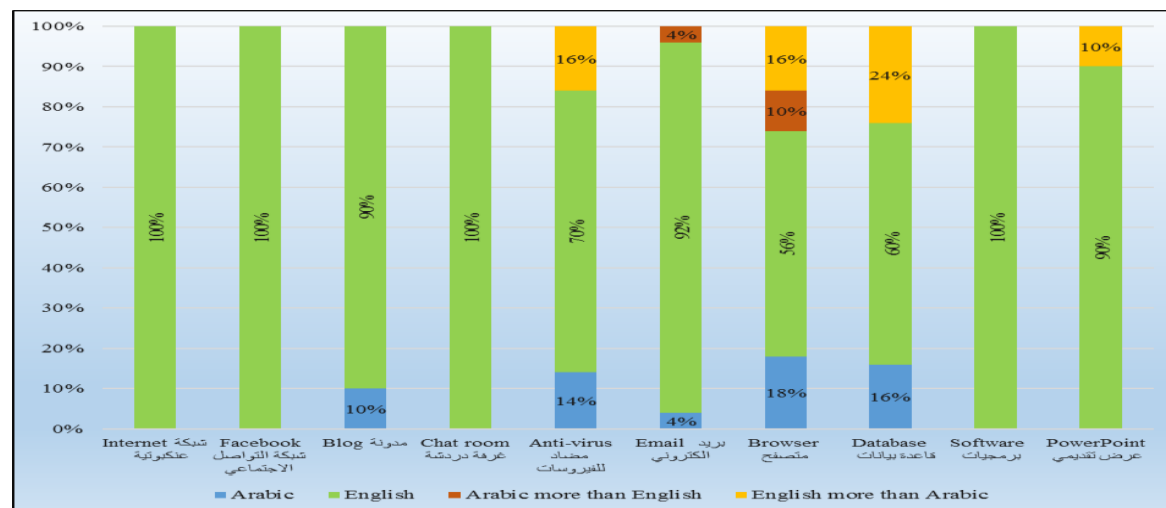Subjects' responses in the category of 'Program Terms'

**N=50**

Chart (3) reveals many interesting findings, the most noticeable of which relates to the terms whose Arabic counterparts were never chosen. All the respondents used the foreign terms referring to 'Internet', 'Facebook', 'Chatroom,' and 'Software', all of which are very highly used in people's daily life. Likewise, they used the English labels 90% of the time in the case of the terms 'blog,' 'email', and 'PowerPoint.' This remarkably considerable use of English in Arabic discourse when referring to program names is quite expected, since names of programs tend to defy rendition attempts.  When a net program is introduced to the world of users, it is usually advertised via its foreign name, which means that users' first encounter with the term will be in its original name. Besides, the proposed Arabic translations tend to be a little lengthy and rather odd; the Arabic شبكة عنكبوتية and شبكة التواصل الاجتماعي, two renditions for the term 'Internet', are too long. Indeed, English people tend sometimes to use the word 'net' rather than 'internet', since the former is shorter and thus faster for communication purposes. The notion of economy in language use should have been brought to the attention of the Arabic Language Academies before proposing such long equivalent terms. However, the notion of economy should not be sought at the expense of semantic accuracy. Chart (3) shows that the term software was rendered by means of one word, برمجيات. Nonetheless, all subjects showed a categorical rejection to this Arabic equivalent. It seems that the subjects did not find the term denoting the actual meaning of the English counterpart.

The 'Command Terms' group did not show as heavy a reliance on the foreign terms as was the case in the previous two groups, as revealed in Chart (4) below.

**Chart (4)**
Subjects' responses in the category of 'Command Terms'
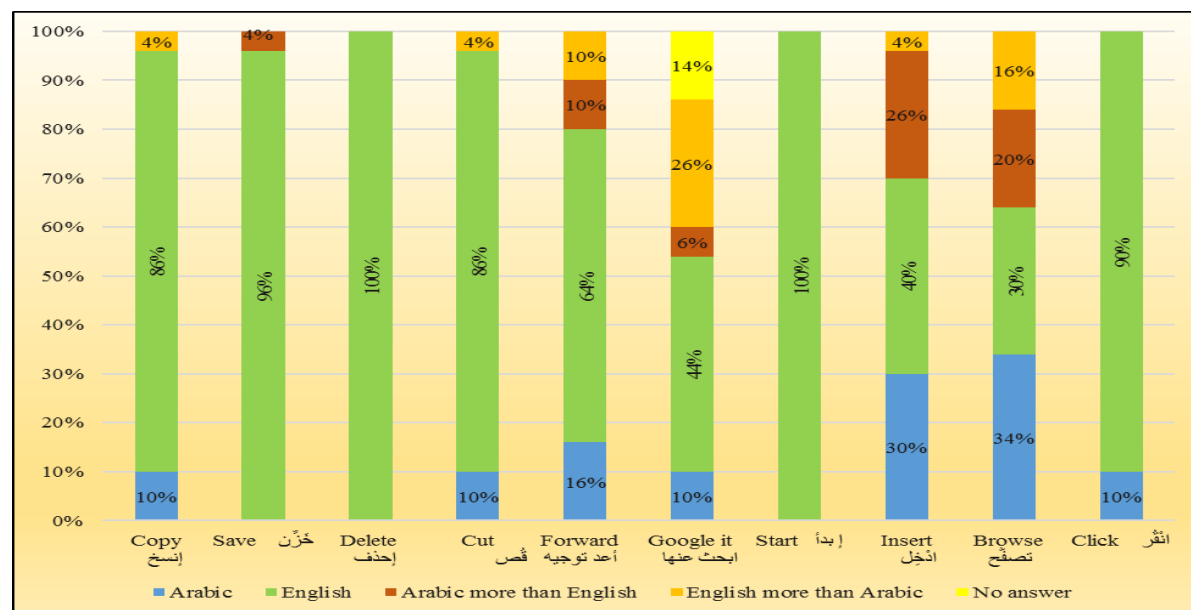**N=50**

Chart (4) shows that users do not tend to use foreign names in the command categories as heavily as is the case with the first two categories. Still, the percentage of exclusive use of the foreign term remains markedly high. The Chart shows that in some cases the subjects favour the use of the Arabic terms over the alien ones. The terms ادْخِل 'insert' and ' تصفَّح 'browse' are two clear examples here; virtually 30% of the respondents selected the Arabic equivalents of these terms as their sole choice. Using the Arabic equivalents together with the foreign ones in the case of these two terms is also indicative. Adding the number of responses in the two categories that show use of both languages (i.e., Arabic more than English or English more than Arabic) makes the Arabic equivalents the primary choice. In other words, the use of the Arabic alternatives here overrides the use of the foreign counterparts. Some respondents made no choice in the case of 'google it'. In scrutinizing this item, we find that it is the only one that uses the English term with an Arabic pronoun, i.e., *google-ha* 'goggle it,' with the clitic pronoun 'ha' standing for 'it (see Appendix).' The use of the English term with an Arabic pronoun annexed to it sounds rather strange to some users, though many of them use it.

Responses to the term 'forward' أعد توجيه, demonstrate that more than one sixth of the respondents showed a tendency to select the Arabic term. The term ranks third in the use of Arabic in this category, yet it was expected that the percentage of Arabic use will be higher. A plausible account of the students' resort to the English term might have to do with the nature of the Arabic equivalent; the two-word translation of the verb might have contributed to the tendency of the respondents to decide on the English term, i.e., seeking brevity.

Using the term 'start' by all respondents with zero use of its Arabic equivalent was not expected because the word ابدأ is heard quite often in daily discourse. The Arabic term خَزِّن, the equivalent for 'save', sounds a little strange, which explains why virtually all respondents chose the English term. The frequent use of the English terms here implies that the use of English in the area of communication has become a norm.

Although the use of Arabic equivalents in the category of 'Command Terms' was a little high, it is even higher in the case of 'Process Terms.' Chart (5) below shows that the category of Processes is the only one that shows a remarkable use of Arabic, with more than one fourth of the responses being exclusively in Arabic.

**Chart (5)**
Subjects' responses in the category of 'Process Terms'
**N=50**
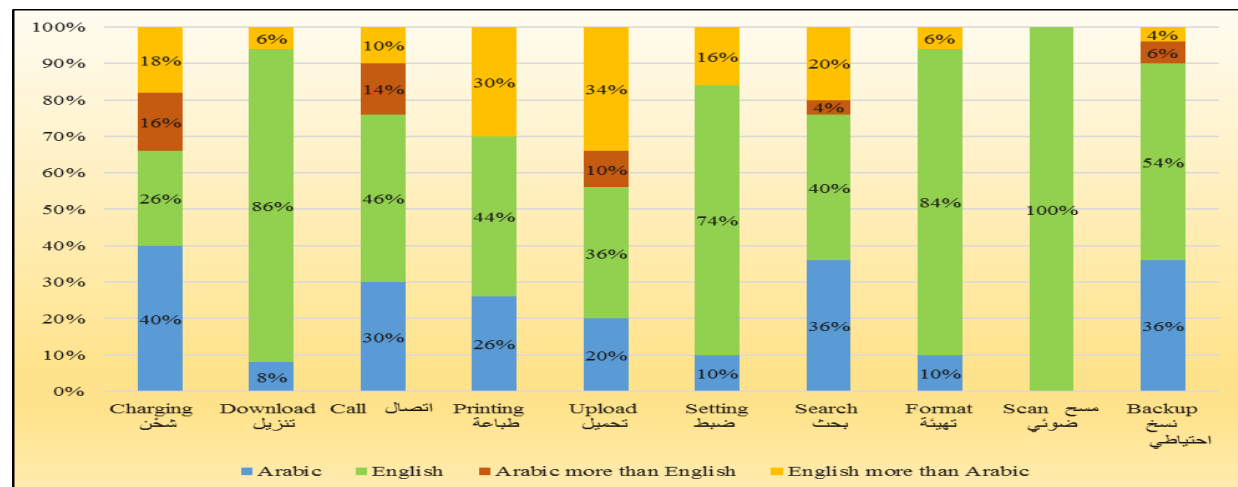


As the Chart shows, although preference remains on the use of English, the percentage of Arabic use is noticeable here. The word 'charging' exhibits the least use of English here and the second in the whole survey after the term 'clipart'. This might be ascribed to the fact that people charge many items, including phones, PCs, car batteries, etc. and the fact that people used the term شحْن, even before the introduction of computers and mobiles. Family members at home, educated and non-educated, use the Arabic terms شحْن 'charging' and شاحن 'charger' when charging their electronic devices, which means that the use of this Arabic term becomes the norm.

The word 'call' started to be used with the advent of mobiles where screens show the word CALL when one's phone rings. This gave rise to the use of the word; otherwise, people had been using the Arabic equivalent, i.e., اتصال, which, indeed, is still the case here. More than 50% of the respondents in the study used the Arabic word as their choice. Observe that the processes whose English terms appear a little exotic did not show heavy use here; respondents used the word تحميل more than 'upload', its English counterpart. This also might be ascribed to the infrequent tendency to upload items on the part of the students as opposed to 'downloading,' which is used very often, and which explains the heavy use of the English term 'download.' The word 'printing' received fairly high Arabic use. Since the respondents are students who need to print quite often and since most printing shops outside educational institutions use the Arabic term طباعة, the Arabic counterpart of 'printing' is gaining ground. Observe that the long Arabic equivalent for the word 'scan' (مسح ضوئي) as well as its oddity contributed to the respondents' tendency to shy away from the Arabic rendition and prefer the English term, 'scan' instead.

The category labeled 'Miscellaneous' shows a noticeable use of Arabic, though not as much as the previous category, i.e., 'Process Terms', as Chart (6) displays.

**Chart (6)**

Subjects' responses in the category of 'Miscellaneous Terms'

**N=50**
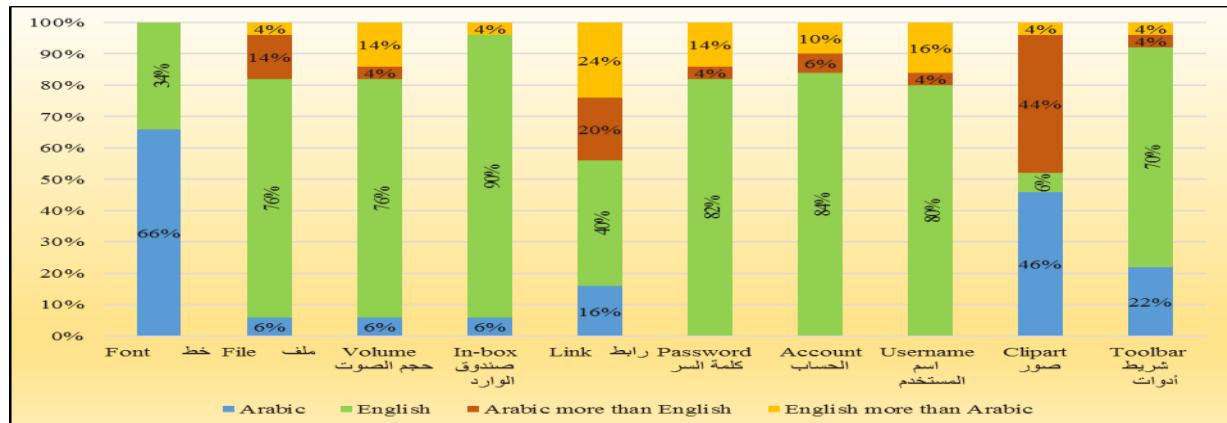


This category exhibits, as Chart (6) shows, a noticeable use of the Arabic terms compared with the other groups. It ranked second in terms of Arabic preference with 181 responses out of the 500 in this group being either solely in Arabic or in both Arabic and English. As the Chart shows, none of the terms in this category show as heavy a use of the foreign words as is the case with terms in the other categories. Indeed, certain terms here are used in Arabic far more than English. For example, the Arabic term صور 'clipart' received the least English use in this group and in the survey. Only 3 respondents selected the English term as a sole response, while 23 selected the Arabic term as their only choice and 22 chose it together with English, but Arabic as the primary choice. It is worth noting that the term 'clipart' is a compound noun, whereas the Arabic counterpart is a single-word noun, which makes it easier for users. Similarly, more than two thirds of the respondents showed a sole use of the Arabic term for 'font'. Only 36% of the respondents opted for the English term, whereas 66% used the Arabic counterpart exclusively. The word خط is fairly frequent in students' printed assignments; they have to use expressions such as make the fonts bold, bigger, smaller, etc., mostly using Arabic. The word 'link' shows a similar tendency toward Arabic preference; only 40% of the respondents used the foreign word solely.

**Conclusions**

This study has endeavoured to investigate the use of foreign terms in daily Arabic conversations. The results show that foreign terms dominate in University students' Arabic daily exchanges. These findings are startling; such heavy reliance on the foreign language was not expected. Using the foreign terms in the case of program names is fairly defensible, for the labels of such programs can

be trademarks. In some cases, these program labels are names of brands coined by the originators such as Facebook, Skype, etc. Therefore, names of programs tend to hold on to their originally given tags in virtually all languages. However, using the foreign terms even in the straightforward cases of program applications is not as justifiable. What would influence users to opt for the foreign terms even in cases such as 'start', 'save', 'delete', 'copy' etc.? Arabic equivalent words for such terms are effortlessly obtainable. Have people not been using the words ينسخ ، يمسح ، يحفظ ، يبدأ in Arabic since the early days of Arabic? Why would subjects whose English is quite shallow utilize the foreign terms rather than these absolutely familiar Arabic ones? To answer these legitimate queries, we have to consider not just the nature of the renditions proposed by the Arabic Language Academies, but also the time when they were proposed. In these cases, and in the case of less familiar ones, users' tendency to prefer the alien labels may stem from the Arabic Language Academies' lack of promptness when proposing renditions for the newly arrived terms. Allowing an alien product to cling to its original name for some time, even if it is a simple one, can stimulate people to use it. Usually, Arabic Language Academies accumulate new words, render them, and approve of the renditions in their annual meetings. This means that by the time a rendition is officially endorsed, the foreign term would have gained ground.

Another equally important account for such startling reliance on the foreign terms has to do with the nature of the proposed renditions. As seen above, some of the translations provided by Arabic Language Academies are rather unsuitable; they can be odd, funny or complicated. Renditions such as شبكة عنكبوتية ، الماسح الضوئي and عتاد الصلب for 'fax', 'Internet' and 'hardware' are lengthy, complicated and rather funny. Semantically, such renditions are less transparent than the foreign terms. For instance, the expression عتاد الصلب comprises two words, عتاد , an obsolete word meaning 'material' or 'equipment' and الصلب, which means 'stiff', 'steel-like' or 'hard'. Since the material here stands for parts of computer, and since the word computer has an Arabic rendition, حاسوب, though not used by all Arabs, an easier alternative can be قطع حاسوب أجزاء حاسوب ، or معدات حاسوب, where the first word in each alternative denotes the meaning of 'parts'. In the context where computer hardware is discussed, one component of the two-word rendition (i.e., قطع 'parts') would be enough to convey the meaning felicitously. This is definitely not to say that this rendition is the most ideal, for this is not our goal here, but it definitely sounds better than the awkward عتاد الصلب.

Long renditions are not usually appreciated by users, as the findings of the analysis show. Again, people tend to prefer the linguistic choice that will be short and to the point. Now, it is not hard at all to coin shorter, more straightforward Arabic renditions for multi-word terms; it is possible to render 'Internet' شبكة عنكبوتية and 'scan' الماسح الضوئي as شابكة and ماسح i.e., one component of the name. This should be enough, and in the context of use, interlocutors will comprehend what شابكة and ماسح refer to. People use the word 'mobile' to refer to 'a mobile phone' and the word is understood fully in its context. Similarly, expressions such as DVD that is rendered literally, as قرص فيديو رقمي can be shortened into- قرص فيديو, 'video disc', since the feature of digital is

completely understood here. Observe that the word video has been part of the daily Arabic lexicon, oral and written. Since no plausible rendition was offered the moment it was heard in the Arab world, it has become an established borrowed word.

Other examples of improperly rendered terms, which stimulate users to shy away from Arabic, include 'click', 'mouse' and 'server' which are rendered as انْقُر، فأرة and خادم respectively. Such translations are perceived as odd by Arab users, and indeed they are, as argued above. Straightforward renditions for these and similar terms are not far-fetched.  For instance, المس'touch' sounds better than the awkward انْقُر and conveys more or less the same sense carried out by انْقُر. The word فأرة, 'literally a small female mouse' is not liked by users which is shown clearly in (Chart 2) above; only two respondents out of 50 used it as their single choice and two used it together with English. Such conspicuous results imply that this rendition is not apt. The word مؤشر 'cursor' should be appropriate to tag the device. After all, it is used to specify a spot, and we do call the shadow of the device on the screen a 'cursor.' There is no harm that both the device and its shadow on the screen have the same term.

Arabic is a rich language and if Arabic Language Academies spend time and effort, they will certainly offer appropriate renditions that are precise, short and functional. This is absolutely essential if the intensity of the current problem is to be alleviated. Renditions such as جهاز التحكم عن بعد for a TV 'remote control' is too long and is never used. Again, such a lengthy translation and similar ones make Arabic users resort to the foreign terms. In this particular case, users ignored the suggested Arabic equivalent and used part of the English expression, viz. 'remote' instead.  Some residents of rural areas in Yemen have been heard using their own Arabic term to refer to this electronic device, namely مقلب, literally 'turner'. This rendition is definitely better, neater and straighter than the official lengthy rendition جهاز التحكم عن بعد, which was suggested by the Arabic Language Academies. Judging from the way the electronic device functioned, they gave it a name. If this is what ordinary people can do, Arabic Language Academies are expected to be as intuitive and as swift when rendering alien terms that invade the Arab World on a daily basis. Delay of treatment, even for a short period of time, translations that are too long, or hurried rendition proposals can be a licence for the use of the foreign term.

**Appendix**

**عزيزي الطالب:**

هذه الاستبانة جزء من دراسة يجريها الباحث لأغراض أكاديمية. أرجو قراءة كل فقرة واختيار المصطلح الذي تستخدمه في حديثك اليومي. مثلا في المصطلح الأجنبي ومكافئه العربي ( **تلفون** – **هاتف**) ضع خطا تحت اللفظ الذي تستخدمه دائما أو معظم الأحيان. إن كنت تستخدم كليهما فضع دائرة حول اللفظ الذي تستخدمه معظم الأحيان.

**Dear Student:**

The following is a survey prepared for research purposes. You are kindly requested to read each foreign term in the survey together with its Arabic equivalent and decide which option you actually use in your daily conversations, the foreign term or its Arabic equivalent. Underline the option that you always use. If you use both words, then circle the one that you use more than the other.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. screen – **شاشة** سكرين | 15. Internet – **شبكة عنكبوتية** إنترنت | 28. mouse **ماوس** – فارة | 40. backup – **باك** نسخ احتياطي—آب |
| 2.copy **إنسخ** – كوبي | 16. Facebook **شبكة** فيسبوك – | 29. Save سيف – **خَزِّن** | 41. charging – **شحْن** تشارجنج |
| 3. flash **خازن** – فلاش | **التواصل الاجتماعي** | 30. Laptop – **محمول** لابتوب | 42. download – **تنزيل** داونلود |
| 4. memory – **ذاكرة** ميموري | 17. blog **مدونة**– بلوج | 31. Cut **قُص** – كت | 43.call كول – **اتصال** |
| 5. Printing – **طباعة** برنتنج | 18.Chat room – **غرفة دردشة** تشات روم | 32. search – **بحث** سيرتش | 44. Delete – **إحذف** دليت |
| 6. mobile **هاتف محمول** – موبايل | 19. Anti-virus **مضاد للفيروسات** – أنتي فيروس | 33.Google it **ابحث** عنها – جوجلها | 45. upload – **ابلود** تحميل |
| 7. Start **إبدأ** – ستارت | 20. Email **بريد الكتروني** – إيميل | 34.CD **قرص مضغوط** – سيدي | 46. setting – **سيتنج**. ضبط |
| 8. DVD **قرص فيديو رقمي** – دي في دي | 21. browser **متصفح** – براوزر | 35.Insert **ادْخِل** – انسرت | 47. Forward **أعد توجيه** – فوروارد |
| 9. Clipart **صور**– كِلِب ارت | 22. database – **قاعدة بيانات** داتابيس | 36.Browse – **تصفَّح** بروز | 48.format –**تهيئة** فورمات |
| 10. server – **خادم** سرفر | 23. Software – **برمجيات** سوفت وير | 37.click **انْقُر** – كليك | 49. scan – **مسح ضوئي** سكان |
| 11. font– فونت – **خط** | 24. PowerPoint **عرض تقديمي** – باوربوينت | 38. link **رابط** – لنك | 50. account –**الحساب** أكونت |
| 12. file **ملف** – فايل | 25. Hardware **المعدات \عتاد الصلب** – هارد وير | 39. password **كلمة السر – باس ورد** | |
| 13. volume **حجم** الصوت – فاليوم | 26. toolbar **شريط أدوات** – تول بار | | |
| 14. In-box **صندوق الوارد** – إن بوكس | 27. Username – **اسم المستخدم** يوزر نيم | | |

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