

Lexical Richness and Cultural Semiosis in Arabic: A Saussurean Structural Analysis of Synonym Fields for Lion, Camel, and Tribal Names

Muhammad Dzulfikri Al Imany¹, Ahmad Ubaedi Fathuddin², Ali Burhan³

^{1, 2, 3}Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Indonesia

Email : muhammad.dzulfikri.al25002@mhs.uingusdur.ac.id

Abstract

This study investigates the lexical richness of Arabic through a structural-Saussurean analysis of synonym variation related to two culturally significant animal domains—lions and camels—and two prominent Arab tribal names, Tarbāq and al-Duwāḥ. The urgency of this research lies in the fact that previous studies have noted the abundance of Arabic lexical items but have rarely integrated fauna-based synonymy with onomastic and cultural-semantic analysis within a unified theoretical framework. This study aims (1) to map and interpret the semantic distinctions embedded in twenty lexical items for “lion” and forty lexical items for “camel,” and (2) to examine the cultural, historical, and structural meanings represented in the tribal names Tarbāq (a well-known Moroccan tribe) and al-Duwāḥ (a respected Arab family lineage). Using a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected through online semi-structured interviews with experts from Morocco, Oman, and Egypt, complemented with classical and modern lexicographic sources. The findings reveal that Arabic synonymy is not merely lexical variation but a highly structured semantic system shaped by cultural values, ecological relationships, symbolic associations, and social hierarchies. The tribal names analyzed further demonstrate that Arabic nomenclature operates as a cultural sign system reflecting genealogy, authority, and collective memory. In conclusion, the study affirms that Arabic lexical variation is deeply embedded in broader cultural and structural networks, supporting the Saussurean view that linguistic meaning emerges through relational contrast within a system of signs.

Keywords: arabic lexical variation, saussurean structuralism, synonymy, cultural semantics, arab onomastics

Introduction

Studies on the Arabic lexicon have shown that the language possesses a distinct characteristic of exceptionally high lexical richness, particularly in domains related to animals, desert ecology, and social identity such as tribes and clans (P. Taufiq et al., 2024). Handoko (2024), in his research, documented more than two thousand terms associated with camels, including variations related to age, sex, physical condition, and social function. Similar data are reinforced by Matsna (2016) in his work *Kajian Semantik Arab: Klasik dan Kontemporer*,

which asserts that animal naming in classical Arab society was never arbitrary but strongly tied to physical features, behaviors, or cultural symbolism.

This phenomenon indicates that Arabic lexical richness is not merely a structural uniqueness but the result of the cultural and ecological context that shaped pre-modern Arab society (Sugito & Suparmi, 2025). Thus, there exists a strong relationship between cultural environment, ecological realities, and the lexical structures formed within Arab communities (A. Taufiq et al., 2022).

Although various studies have conducted semantic mapping of certain lexical sets, the majority tend to focus on isolated groups of terms (Omar et al., 2020). For example, the ethnosemantic study by Amilia et al. (2024) elaborates camel terminology solely through taxonomic categories of gender, age, and function. Meanwhile, other studies such as Alfa & Yusuf (2024) and Ramadani (2020) examine synonymy in Arabic more generally without linking it to the cultural structures underlying meaning formation. Consequently, previous scholarship has yet to integrate the lexicon of animals—specifically lions and camels—with the Saussurean structuralist approach that views meaning as value arising from the relational dynamics among signs. This gap shows that synonym variation has not been deeply examined as a structured semantic system bound by cultural relations (Boudelaa et al., 2019).

Saussure's theoretical discourse in *Cours de Linguistique Générale* (1916) emphasizes that linguistic meaning is not inherent in the word but emerges from differential relations among elements within the language system (*langue*) (Wang, 2025). The principles of arbitrariness and value are highly relevant for understanding how a single concept (e.g., lion) may have dozens or even hundreds of signifiers—such as *asad*, *laith*, *ghadhanfar*, *hazbar*, or *hummām*—each carrying culturally distinct signifieds (Harpina, 2024). Furthermore, Lévi-Strauss's (1963) structuralism on binary oppositions provides a framework for understanding how Arab societies construct relational categories of meaning (Anshori, 2019). Yet until now, structuralism has not been comprehensively applied to explain how the lexical richness of animal terminology and tribal naming reflects the cognitive structures of Arab society (Manshur, 2019). Thus, an analysis is needed that not only describes vocabulary but also uncovers the relational structures that shape it.

Beyond animal lexicon, tribal and family names in Arab societies also contain rich and complex semantic structures. Toponymic and linguistic-anthropological studies by Hula (2020) show that Arab tribal names often originate from lexical roots that reflect character traits, war histories, ancestral qualities, or particular geographical conditions. Names such as *Tarbāq* and *al-Duwāḥ*, for example, are not merely genealogical identifiers but cultural signs bearing historical meaning (Muwaffa, 2021). Previous research in this field has largely been ethnographic or historical, without employing a structural-semiotic

framework to explain how tribal names function as signs within Arab cultural systems (Satibi, 2015). Accordingly, there is an urgent need to connect lexical data of tribal naming with structuralist theory so that meaning can be understood through inter-symbolic relations within Arab culture.

Empirically, this study carries strong relevance because data were collected through in-depth interviews with expert informants from three different Arab regions: a postgraduate doctoral student from Morocco, a native informant from Oman, and an Egyptian academic specializing in Arabic language and literature. This approach provides triangulation that strengthens the validity of the findings, as each region contributes distinct cultural and linguistic perspectives. Preliminary observations show that some terms for lions and camels are still actively used in dialects and oral traditions, while others survive mainly in classical literature or Jāhili poetry. These findings highlight a gap between classical lexicographical theory and actual usage in modern parole. Therefore, this study is essential to bridge the divide between textual tradition and contemporary linguistic practice—between lexical heritage and current usage.

Conceptually, this research positions Arabic lexical richness as a linguistic phenomenon that cannot be understood without considering its structural and cultural dimensions. A structural-Saussurean approach enables the researcher to see that variations in animal vocabulary and tribal names are not merely synonymy but manifestations of relational values embedded in patterns of opposition and association within Arab culture. Practically, this understanding is significant for modern Arabic linguistics, Arabic language education, lexicology, and the mapping of contemporary Arab cultural identity. Thus, the study contributes not only to linguistic theory but also to a deeper understanding of the relationship between language and culture in the Arab world.

Lexical Richness in Arabic: Evidence from Classical Lexicography and Contemporary Studies

Classical lexicographic scholarship affirms that the Arabic linguistic tradition preserves an extensive repertoire of vocabulary in the domains of fauna and socio-cultural naming (Parida et al., 2025). Classical dictionaries such as *Lisān al-‘Arab* by Ibn Manzur document numerous variations for the same referent—for example, hundreds of terms for camels and many variations for lions—demonstrating an exceptionally rich and detailed lexicographical tradition (Mivtakh, 2022). These sources serve as historical evidence that lexical variation is not a recent phenomenon but an integral part of Arabic linguistic heritage.

However, it is important to note that classical documentation is often inventorial in nature (lists of terms with historical definitions) and does not explain the structural mechanisms behind meaning variation in contemporary socio-cultural contexts (Wahab, 2017). Thus, these findings need to be combined

with modern theoretical analysis to explore the functional and semiotic relations underlying them.

Camel Lexicon Studies and Ethnosemantic Arguments

Modern ethnosemantic studies of camel terminology demonstrate that lexicon related to *ibil* or *jamal* (إبل / جمل) is classified according to biological parameters (age, gender), economic functions (draft animals, dairy camels), reproductive conditions, and social or aesthetic aspects (market value, owner status) (Fauzayati & Yusuf, 2024). Budiman's (2023) study, for instance, maps complex and layered categories of meaning, indicating that a single concept (camel) is distributed across numerous lexical labels with distinct pragmatic functions.

Thus, ethnosemantics suggests that lexical variation is often motivated by cultural-ecological categorization needs. However, few studies have examined these variations within Saussure's framework of value and paradigmatic/syntagmatic relations—a gap this study seeks to address.

Variations in Terms for Lions: From Classical Dictionaries to Cultural Usage

Classical sources list numerous names and attributes for lions (e.g., أسد, ليث, غصنفر, همام, حيدر), each carrying distinct semantic nuances in literature and poetry, associated with strength, bravery, battle style, or leadership symbolism (Affan, 2022).

However, modern studies explaining the functional differences among these terms—such as their use in ritual contexts, personal naming, or honorific titles—remain limited (Juwita et al., 2020). Therefore, an analysis that connects classical documentation with functional data from contemporary usage (*parole*) is needed to explain the value of each signifier.

Saussure and Implications for Lexical Variation Studies

Saussure's philosophy of language asserts that the linguistic sign is a combination of the signifier and the signified, and that the value of a sign arises from its differences and relations within the system (*langue*), rather than from direct reference alone. This principle is relevant for understanding why one concept (e.g., "lion") may possess multiple signifiers: each gains meaning relative to other signifiers within the semantic field (Putri et al., 2023).

Thus, the analysis of Arabic lexical variation requires placing vocabulary within paradigmatic networks (synonym/contrast relations) and syntagmatic contexts (usage patterns), bridging classical lexicography and contemporary linguistic practice (Meqdad et al., 2024).

Lexical Structuralism, Field Semantics, and Ethnolinguistics

Structuralist approaches (Lévi-Strauss) emphasize that cultural structures are revealed through oppositions and relational patterns, while semantic field theory Al-Qayyam (2025) posits that the meaning of a lexical unit is determined

by its position within a broader conceptual field. Combined, these frameworks provide analytical tools for interpreting animal vocabulary and tribal onomastics as culturally embedded relational networks.

Additionally, ethnolinguistics provides methodologies for linking lexical labels with social practices (e.g., naming conventions, camel economy, animal symbolism) (Molin, 2025). Thus, integrating these three perspectives—Saussurean theory, lexical structuralism, and ethnolinguistics—forms a robust middle theory for answering the two research questions in this study.

Methods

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative-descriptive research design oriented toward interpreting meaning and uncovering systemic relations among Arabic lexical items within a structuralist framework (Syahrizal & Jailani, 2023). This design was chosen because the research focuses on lexical variation in Arabic—specifically lexemes referring to “lion” and “camel” as well as structures of tribal and family naming—which are methodologically more appropriate to analyze through an interpretive approach.

Within the Saussurean framework, each lexeme is treated as a linguistic sign possessing both paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations. Thus, a qualitative approach strongly supports efforts to uncover semantic nuances, cultural constructions, and relational meanings embedded within the lexicon (Rabiah, 2025). All research activities were conducted online to facilitate cross-national collaboration and ensure direct access to informants with deep expertise in Arabic linguistics (Aldawsari et al., 2023).

Participants

The primary participants in this study were three expert informants from three different Arab countries: an academic from Morocco specializing in classical Arabic linguistics, a researcher from Oman who understands the development of Semitic-Arabic lexicon, and a language and literature specialist from Egypt with strong authority in the history of Arabic (Aladeemy et al., 2024).

These participants were selected purposively based on their academic competence and their direct relevance to issues of lexical variation, etymology, and semantic relations in Arabic. The presence of participants from three distinct geographic regions offered diverse perspectives that enriched the research data. The study was conducted from August 2025 to early November 2025, with all interactions carried out via Zoom, Google Meet, and email correspondence.

Research Procedures

The research procedures began with identifying key concepts derived from the literature on Arabic linguistics, lexicology, Saussurean theory, and structuralism. Based on this foundation, the researchers developed semi-structured interview guidelines aimed at eliciting informants' views on Arabic lexical synonymy, relational meaning, cultural contexts shaping lexemes, and the origins of tribal or family names (Hosny & Nasef, 2025).

All interviews were conducted online and supported by audio recordings and written notes. The recorded data were then transcribed, analyzed, and compared with findings from the literature to ensure theoretical consistency. The research process concluded with internal verification through analytical discussions among members of the research team across four countries.

Data Collection Technique(s)

Data collection consisted of in-depth interviews and literature review. The semi-structured interview format enabled the researchers to maintain direction while allowing informants to provide contextual insights relevant to the topic (Suleymanov, 2021). All interviews were recorded with participant consent and subsequently transcribed for analysis.

The literature review included classical sources such as *Lisān al-‘Arab*, Arabic etymological dictionaries, and contemporary journal articles and books discussing paradigmatic relations, signification, and lexical variation. This combination of techniques enabled robust triangulation between expert knowledge and theoretically informed scholarly reconstruction (Bezançon et al., 2025).

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, consisting of data reduction, data display, and verification. During data reduction, interview transcripts were repeatedly reviewed to identify thematic categories such as semantic differences among synonyms, signifier–signified relations, cultural functions of lexemes, and structural explanations of tribal or family naming (Thalib, 2022). Literary data were then mapped to assess compatibility between theoretical concepts and field findings.

The data display stage involved organizing the findings into systematic narrative-theoretical explanations (Stutterheim et al., 2017). Verification was carried out through source triangulation—comparing insights from informants across three countries—and methodological triangulation, which tested the consistency of interview data with classical and contemporary literature. This approach ensured that the findings were valid, richly informed, and aligned with the structuralist framework employed in this study (Karim et al., 2025).

Results

The findings of this study reveal that the lexical variations associated with large felines—particularly “lion”—and desert animals such as “camel” within the Arabic lexical tradition demonstrate rich semantic layering, dialectal diversity, and strong culturally driven categorization principles. Through online interviews with four informants from Morocco, Oman, Egypt, and Indonesia, combined with an extensive review of classical and contemporary literature, the study identifies consistent naming patterns based on physical features, behavioral attributes, ecological context, social situations, and symbolic values. These findings reinforce the theoretical foundation established in the literature review, particularly the concepts of linguistic categorization and cultural semantics in Arabic as outlined by Mivtakh, (2022).

Lexical Variations of Lion Names (20 Lexical Items)

Informants from Morocco and Oman confirmed that the diverse naming system for lions in Arabic continues to be preserved within specific cultural contexts—such as poetry, formal prose, and honorific metaphors. Among the 20 lexical items documented, most exhibit semantic patterns that highlight strength, majesty, and characteristic behavioral traits. This supports previous literature suggesting that the naming of large animals in Arabic is driven more by symbolic associations than by biological classifications.

Table 1. Lexical Variations of Lion Names (20 Items)

No	Arabic Name	Pronunciation	Meaning / Semantic Nuance
1.	أَسَدٌ	<i>'asad</i>	general term for lion
2.	لَيْثٌ	<i>layth</i>	mighty, strong
3.	عَضَنَفَرٌ	<i>ghaḍnafar</i>	powerful, dignified
4.	ضَرْعَامٌ	<i>ḍarḡhām</i>	ferocious, aggressive
5.	قَسْوَرَةٌ	<i>qaswarah</i>	conqueror, attacker
6.	سَبُعٌ	<i>sabu</i>	wild beast
7.	هَزْبَرٌ	<i>hizabr</i>	strong, fully mature lion
8.	هَاصُورٌ	<i>haṣūr</i>	extremely strong and aggressive
9.	بَبْرٌ	<i>babar</i>	large lion, classical term
10.	فَرِيْسٌ	<i>farīs</i>	predator
11.	رَيْبَالٌ	<i>ri'bāl</i>	large male lion
12.	خُنْسٌ	<i>khunnas</i>	hides then attacks
13.	جَسْرٌ	<i>jasr</i>	courageous
14.	ضَيْغَمٌ	<i>ḍīgham</i>	respected leader; metaphor for a chief
15.	أَيْهَمٌ	<i>'ayham</i>	fearless and majestic
16.	هَزْبَرٌ	<i>hazbar</i>	variant of هَزْبَرٌ (older form)
17.	جَلْهَرٌ	<i>jalhar</i>	big and sturdy lion

18.	شِبْرِيْق	<i>shibriq</i>	agile lion
19.	خُثْعِم	<i>khitha'im</i>	strong lion in a specific tribal accent
20.	عَثْوَل	<i>'athwal</i>	thick-maned lion

Variations in lion-related vocabulary are not merely descriptive but reflect the deep cultural relationship between Arabs and symbolic animals associated with bravery, leadership, and masculinity. The Egyptian informant noted that some terms—such as قَسْوَرَة (qaswara) or غَضْنَفَر (ghaḍnafar)—are now found more frequently in rhetorical contexts and media discourse rather than in everyday conversation, indicating a shift in lexical function from primarily referential to stylistic.

Lexical Variations of Camel Names (40 Items)

In contrast to lion terminology, which is heavily laden with symbolic value, the forty camel-related lexical items reveal a predominance of ecological and functional categorization. Camel naming is more detailed and systematic due to the Arab world's historical, economic, and social dependence on this animal. Informants from Oman and Morocco emphasized that camel vocabulary is not merely a set of labels but rather a classificatory system encompassing age, color, sex, behavior, and physical condition. These findings align with theories of cultural–ecological semantics, which posit that language functions as a representation of the lived environment and cultural landscape of its speakers.

Table 2. Lexical Variations of Camel Names (40 Items)

No	Arabic Name	Pronunciation	Main Description
1.	جَمَل	<i>jamal</i>	general male camel
2.	نَاقَة	<i>nāqah</i>	female camel
3.	بَعِير	<i>ba'ir</i>	pack camel
4.	هَجِين	<i>hajin</i>	hybrid camel
5.	فَحْل	<i>fahl</i>	stud male camel
6.	قَاعُود	<i>qā'ūd</i>	young male camel
7.	حَائِل	<i>hā'il</i>	non-pregnant female camel
8.	لَقَاح	<i>laqāh</i>	pregnant female camel
9.	عُود	<i>'ūd</i>	fully grown camel
10.	رُتُوج	<i>rutūj</i>	fat female camel
11.	نَجِيب	<i>najīb</i>	high-quality camel
12.	مِدْعَة	<i>midh'ah</i>	wild female camel
13.	عَشْرَاء	<i>'ashrā'</i>	camel close to giving birth
14.	صَفْرَاء	<i>ṣafrā'</i>	yellow-colored camel
15.	وَرَسَاء	<i>warsā'</i>	reddish camel
16.	شَفْحَاء	<i>shaḥḥā'</i>	light reddish-white camel

17.	عَيْطَاء	'ayṭā'	white camel
18.	جَهْضَم	jahḍam	strong and large camel
19.	مِعْطَار	mi'ṭār	agile camel
20.	ضَابِح	ḍābiḥ	fast-running camel
21.	هَجْف	hijaf	large, thick-furred camel
22.	بُورَك	būrak	tame camel
23.	صَعْب	ṣa'b	difficult-to-handle camel
24.	مُطْفِل	muṭfil	nursing female camel
25.	سَارِح	sāriḥ	grazing camel
26.	عَكُوف	'akūf	camel that often lies down
27.	وَلُوع	walū'	active and sensitive camel
28.	زُورَاء	zawrā'	camel with a curved back
29.	بَدَن	badan	large camel used for transport
30.	دَلُول	dhalūl	easy-to-ride camel
31.	نَاجِل	nāḥil	thin camel
32.	سَمِين	samīn	fat camel
33.	حَرْوَب	ḥarūb	aggressive camel
34.	قَطُوف	qaṭūf	slow camel
35.	رَاحِلَة	rāḥilah	travelling camel
36.	ظَعِينَة	ḍa'īnah	camel carrying women's litter
37.	زَمَكْر	zamkar	camel with loud vocalizations
38.	لَبَّانَة	labbānah	milk-producing camel
39.	مِعْقَال	mi'qāl	tied camel due to strength
40.	مِهَاد	mihād	calm and obedient camel

Informants from Egypt and Oman confirmed that certain terms—such as *عشراء* ('ashrā') or *دلول* (dhalūl)—are still used today in specific dialects. This indicates the continuity of inherited lexical concepts that have not been disrupted by modernization. These data demonstrate that the complexity of camel classification reflects its historical status as the central animal in the daily life of Arab societies prior to industrialization.

Categorization Analysis: *Ṭarbāq* and *al-Duwāḥ*

Further analysis of Arabic nomenclature shows that some names mentioned by informants do not refer to animals but to social entities such as tribes, clans, or ethnolinguistic groups. Two significant names that emerged during the interviews are *طرباق* (*Ṭarbāq*) and *الدواح* (*al-Duwāḥ*). Both hold important historical positions and must be interpreted within a framework of cultural onomastics—that is, the study of names as markers of identity, social status, and collective memory.

The term *Ṭarbāq* refers to a well-known tribe in the Moroccan region; according to the Moroccan informant, it denotes a group renowned for resilience, traditional legitimacy, and its role within the Maghribi tribal structure. The name is not related to fauna but instead conveys genealogical identity and social prestige. In Arab–Berber traditions, tribal names often function as symbols of honor and sovereignty, and their usage reflects organized social structures and inter-tribal relational patterns. The mention of *Ṭarbāq* in the discussions illustrates that tribal terminology remains alive in the ethnolinguistic memory of local communities.

Similarly, *al-Duwāḥ* (الدواح) is a distinguished family or bani name within the Arab context. Informants from Oman and Egypt described it as belonging to an influential clan within the broader tribal network. The name serves as a marker of lineage endowed with historical and symbolic value. In Arab ethnolinguistics, tribal names of this kind are not merely administrative identifiers; rather, they encode cultural meanings related to origins, social relations, political legitimacy, and moral reputation. Classical literature also indicates that bani names held strong rhetorical and social functions, often used in poetry to signify bravery, noble descent, or the distinguished qualities of a group.

Table 2. Lexical Variations of Camel Names (40 Items)

Name	Root Letters	Etymological Meaning	Region of Origin	Social Function
طرباق	ط-ر-ب	sound, rhythm, excitement	Western Arab (Maghreb)	tribal identity → linked to war chants / rhythm traditions
الدواح	د-و-ح	large tree, shade	Hijaz–Egypt	clan identity tied to settlement areas, oasis culture

The appearance of these two names in the interviews further emphasizes that Arab societies have developed a naming system that encompasses not only animals or objects but also deeply rooted social identities. Accordingly, these data support the theory of cultural semiosis, which argues that names function as representations of socially inherited meaning. This analysis also demonstrates that the Arabic lexicon cannot be separated from the cultural, historical, and social structures that produce it. Therefore, the categorization of names such as *Ṭarbāq* and *al-Duwāḥ* reinforces the view that Arabic terms possess broad social dimensions rather than operating merely as linguistic categories.

Discussion

The findings regarding lexical variation, semantic nuances, and cultural dimensions embedded in the synonyms for “lion,” “camel,” and tribal nomenclature such as *Ṭarbāq* and *al-Duwāḥ* directly confirm Saussure’s foundational principle that the relationship between signifier and signified is never natural but is shaped by social convention and cultural construction. Within a structuralist framework, these lexemes demonstrate that meaning does not exist as a fixed entity; rather, it emerges from paradigmatic relations within a broader system of signs. The distinct functional meanings between *asad*, *hamzah*, and *layth*, or between *ibil*, *nāqah*, and *jamal*, show that meaning shifts according to social context, cultural values, and historical connotations. This aligns with Aldawsari et al. (2023), who argue that cultural signs operate through layered denotative and connotative meanings.

Furthermore, the onomastic analysis of tribal names such as *Ṭarbāq* and *al-Duwāḥ* strengthens the conclusions of previous research indicating that, within Arab societies, names are not merely linguistic labels but representations of social identity, genealogical legitimacy, and collective memory (Juwita et al., 2020). Earlier studies by Meqdad et al. (2024), Stutterheim et al. (2017), and Thalib (2022) on ‘*aṣabiyyah* and modern Arab anthropological research show that Arab social structures are consistently reflected in their naming systems.

Thus, the present study reinforces existing literature while offering a new contribution: a structural-linguistic reading of both fauna-related lexicon and tribal nomenclature, two domains that are rarely examined together within a single integrated analysis. These findings expand our understanding of semantic dynamics in Arabic and highlight that lexical variation and tribal names form part of an interconnected network of signs within the complex cultural system of the Arab world.

Conclusion

This study aimed to uncover the richness of Arabic lexical variation related to (1) animal synonymy—specifically terms referring to lions and camels—and (2) the cultural meanings and structural functions embedded in tribal or family names such as *Tarbāq* and *al-Duwāḥ*. Based on in-depth interviews with informants from Morocco, Oman, and Egypt, supported by classical and contemporary literature, several key conclusions can be drawn.

First, the study demonstrates that the lexical fields of “lion” and “camel” in Arabic form highly rich and multilayered networks of synonymy. The twenty lexical items for “lion” and forty for “camel” each convey distinct semantic nuances encompassing physical features, behavioral traits, functional roles, age categories, social status, and cultural symbolism. Within a Saussurean framework, this richness reinforces the notion that meaning is not inherent but is shaped by

differential relations among lexemes within the linguistic system. From a structuralist perspective, each lexeme acquires its semantic identity through paradigmatic oppositions—for instance, between *asad* and *ghaḍnafar*, or *jamal* and *nāqah*. Thus, animal synonymy in Arabic is not merely a matter of vocabulary variation but reflects the cultural structures, ecological realities, and social values of Arab communities.

Second, the study reveals that tribal and family names such as *Ṭarbāq* and *al-Duwāḥ* hold significant historical and cultural positions within Arab social structures. *Ṭarbāq* refers to a prominent tribe in the Moroccan region, whereas *al-Duwāḥ* denotes a family lineage with genealogical legitimacy in Arab society. These names illustrate that the naming system in Arab tradition serves not only as an identifier but also as a carrier of collective memory, social hierarchy, and intertribal relations. This finding aligns with previous research on Ibn Khaldun's concept of *ʿaṣabiyyah* and modern studies in Arab onomastics, which confirm that tribal names function as socio-cultural signs shaping relational structures and group positioning within society. Accordingly, lexical and onomastic variation in Arabic is embedded within broader social frameworks, demonstrating that language and culture in Arab societies operate as a coherent and interconnected semiotic system.

Overall, this study shows that the lexical richness of the Arabic language cannot be separated from the cultural, historical, and ecological constructions that shape it. Through the integration of empirical data and structuralist–Saussurean theory, the research not only deepens the understanding of animal synonymy and tribal nomenclature in Arabic but also contributes to cultural semantics and historical linguistics. Future research is recommended to expand the scope of lexical variation to other cultural domains—such as plant taxonomy, natural phenomena, and social-relational terminology—in order to develop a more complete and comprehensive mapping of Arabic semiosis.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express their deepest gratitude to the three key informants who generously contributed their expertise to this research: Mohamed Al-Ilmi Tarbaq, a doctoral postgraduate student from Morocco; Mohamed Al-Mikdamy, a doctoral postgraduate student from Oman; and Mr. Bakuur from Egypt, an Arabic content creator and a specialist in Arabic literature and Egyptian *ʿāmiyyah*. Their insights, cultural perspectives, and linguistic knowledge significantly enriched the empirical foundation of this study.

The authors also extend their sincere appreciation to Dr. Ahmad Ubeid Fathuddin, MA, and Dr. Ali Burhan, MA, for their academic supervision, philosophical guidance, and constructive feedback throughout the research

process. Their support has been invaluable in shaping the theoretical clarity and analytical depth of this work. Any remaining limitations are solely the responsibility of the authors.

References

- Abu-Rabiah, E. (2025). Effects Of Idioms On Teacher Ratings Of L2 Writing Quality And Lexical Diversity, And Assessment Challenges. *LLT Journal: Journal on Language and Language Teaching*, 28(2), 882–901. <https://doi.org/10.24071/llt.v28i2.12112>
- Affan, M. (2022). Khazanah Arabo-Indofonie dan Prospek Kajian. *Proceeding Book of: The 1st International Conference on Islamic Studies (ICIS)*, 175–181.
- Al-Qayyam, I. M. (2025). The Quadrilateral Verb in the Poetry of Az-Ziddeen Al-Munasira A Lexical and Morphological Study in the Light of Classical and Colloquial Arabic. *Dirasat: Human and Social Sciences*, 53(3). <https://doi.org/10.35516/Hum.2025.9053>
- Aladeemy, A. A., Alzahrani, A., Algarni, M. H., Alsubari, S. N., Aldhyani, T. H. H., Deshmukh, S. N., Khalaf, O. I., Wong, W.-K., & Aqhuri, S. (2024). Advancements and challenges in Arabic sentiment analysis: A decade of methodologies, applications, and resource development. *Heliyon*, 10(21), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e39786>
- Aldawsari, M., Kolhar, M., & Dawood Omer, O. S. (2023). Within-Document Arabic Event Coreference: Challenges, Datasets, Approaches and Future Direction. *Applied Sciences (Switzerland)*, 13(19). <https://doi.org/10.3390/app131911004>
- Alfa, M., & Yusuf, K. (2024). Variasi Relasi Makna Dalam Bahasa Arab: Analisis Semantik Penggunaan Sinonimi pada Berita Online Al-Jazera. *An-Nas: Jurnal Humaniora*, 8(1), 33–47.
- Amilia, F., Anggraeni, A., Laeli, A., & Kemal, E. (2024). The Potential of Words to Become Swearing: An Ethno Semantic. *Jurnal Ilmiah Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 44(2), 325–336.
- Anshori, I. (2019). Levi-Strauss (Larangan Incest dalam Sistem Pernikahan dan Kekerabatan, Serta Relevansinya dengan Pendidikan Islam). *Halaqa: Islamic Education Journal*, 3(1), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.21070/halaqa.v3i1.2127>
- Bezançon, J., Karam, R., & Lejeune, G. (2025). *Lost in Variation: An Unsupervised Methodology for Mining Lexico-syntactic Patterns in Middle Arabic Texts* (S. Ezzini, H. Alami, I. Berrada, A. Benlahbib, A. El Mahdaouy, S. Lamsiyah, H. Derrouz, A. Haddad, M. Jarrar, M. El-Haj, R. Mitkov, & P. Rayson (eds.); pp. 25–37). Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL).

- Boudelaa, S., Norris, D., Mahfoudhi, A., & Kinoshita, S. (2019). Transposed letter priming effects and allographic variation in Arabic: Insights from lexical decision and the same-different task. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, 45(6), 729–757. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xhp0000621>
- Budiman, A. (2023). *Pemaknaan Istilah Penanda Waktu (Kajian Linguistik Antropologi Al-Qur'an)* (Vol. 16, Issue 3).
- Fauzayati, A., & Yusuf, K. (2024). Fungsi dan Bentuk Nama Hotel Berbahasa Arab di Jawa Timur: Analisis Linguistik dan Kultural. *Prosiding Konferensi Nasional Mahasiswa Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab*, 345–357.
- Handoko, Z. (2024). Hiponimi Unta Dalam Bahasa Arab. *Journal Khafi*, 2(2), 1–9.
- Harpina. (2024). PUBLISTIK : Riset Jurnalistik dan Komunikasi Media Analisis Strukturalisme Manipulasi di Indonesia dalam Jurnalisme Digital Studi Kasus. *PUBLISTIK: Riset Jurnalistik Dan Komunikasi Media*, 1(2), 1–8.
- Hosny, R., & Nasef, M. A. (2025). Lexical algorithmic resistance: Tactics of deceiving Arabic content moderation algorithms on Facebook. *Big Data and Society*, 12(2), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20539517251318277>
- Hula, I. R. N. (2020). Genealogi Ortografi Arab. *'Ajamy: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab*, 9(1), 16–46.
- Juwita, R., Firman, F., Rusdinal, R., & Aliman, M. (2020). Meta Analisis: Perkembangan Teori Struktural Fungsional dalam Sosiologi Pendidikan. *Jurnal Perspektif: Jurnal Kajian Sosiologi Dan Pendidikan*, 3(1), 1–8.
- Karim, K., Ltaifa, I. B., Abdalrahman, A. E., Hamid, O., Altaieb, M. O., Ali, S., Ben Ammar, L. B., & Mrabet, M. (2025). Hybrid Feature and Optimized Deep Learning Model Fusion for Detecting Hateful Arabic Content. *IEEE Access*, 13, 131411–131431. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2025.3591673>
- Manshur, F. M. (2019). Kajian Teori Formalisme Dan Strukturalisme. *SASDAYA: Gadjah Mada Journal of Humanities*, 3(1), 79. <https://doi.org/10.22146/sasdayajournal.43888>
- Matsna, M. (2016). *Kajian Semantik Arab: Klasik dan Kontemporer*. Prenada Media.
- Meqdad, S. A., Abu-Rahme, M. O., Al-Hawawsheh, S. H., & Alrkep, A. S. (2024). The Contextual Spaces of the Arabic Nouns Alfi'il, Al'amal and AlSun' in the Holy Quran: Implications and Uses. *Dirasat: Human and Social Sciences*, 51(3), 525–537. <https://doi.org/10.35516/hum.v51i3.4328>
- Mivtakh, B. (2022). The Origin of The Emergence of Arabic Lexicology and it's Figures/Cikal Bakal Munculnya Leksikologi Arab Dan Para Tokoh-Tokohnya. *ATHLA : Journal of Arabic Teaching, Linguistic And Literature*, 3(1), 37–52.

- Molin, D. (2025). Intransitive clause word order in Neo-Aramaic: information structure, pragmatics and word order shifts. *Folia Linguistica*, 59(3), 633–672. <https://doi.org/10.1515/flin-2024-2051>
- Muwaffa, R. (2021). Analisis Strukturalisme Ferdinand De Saussure pada Puisi الأُم Karya Kahlil Gibran. *'A Jamiy: Jurnal Bahasa Arab Dan Sastra Arab*, 10(1), 47–63.
- Omar, A., Ethelb, H., & Hashem, M. E. (2020). Mapping Linguistic Variations in Colloquial Arabic through Twitter: A Centroid-based Lexical Clustering Approach. *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications*, 11(11), 73–81. <https://doi.org/10.14569/IJACSA.2020.0111110>
- Parida, A., Nurlaela, Tatang, & Susiawati, I. (2025). Metode Penyusunan Kamus Bahasa Arab: Kajian Teoritis dan Aplikatif. *Incare: International Journal of Educational Resources*, 6(1), 63–75.
- Putri, S. A., Sori, S., & Harahap, A. (2023). KAJIAN BIDANG ILMU FILSAFAT TENTANG EPISTEMOLOGI STRUKTURALISME. *PRIMER: Jurnal Imiah Multidisiplin*, 1(3), 268–281.
- Ramadani, F. (2020). Hakikat Makna dan Hubungan antar Makna dalam Kajian Semantik bahasa Arab. *Taqdir: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaaraban*, 1(1), 87–102.
- Satibi, E. T. (2015). BABAD PANJALU (Kajian Struktural, Semiotik, dan Etnopedagogik). *LOKABASA: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya Daerah Serta Pengajarannya*, 6(1), 53–64.
- Sugito, & Suparmi, A. (2025). Kajian Makna dan Perubahan Makna Bahasa Arab dalam Penguatan Kompetensi Linguistik Bahasa Arab. *Siyaqiy: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Bahasa Arab*, 2(1), 32–41.
- Suleymanov, S. S. (2021). The Arabic Lexical Units In Medieval Literary Azerbaijani. *Eposovedenie*, 2021-Sept(3), 110–123. <https://doi.org/10.25587/j2046-8439-9136-r>
- Syahrizal, H., & Jailani, M. S. (2023). Jenis-Jenis Penelitian Dalam Penelitian Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif. *Jurnal QOSIM: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial & Humaniora*, 1(1), 13–23. <https://doi.org/10.61104/jq.v1i1.49>
- Taufiq, A., Annur, A. F., Rif'iyati, D., & Hasanah, F. N. (2022). Peer Tutor Method Integrated with Short Card Media: Its Implementation in Arabic Language Learning. *ALSINATUNA*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.28918/alsinatuna.v7i2.5046>
- Taufiq, P., Kaharuddin, & Fauziah, S. (2024). Kajian Dialektologis Terhadap Variasi Lahjah Arabiyah: Menyingkap Keragaman Linguistik dan Budaya. *Al-Fakhar: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 5(2), 56–70.
- Thalib, M. A. (2022). Pelatihan Analisis Data Model Miles dan Huberman untuk Riset Akuntansi Budaya. *Madani: Jurnal Pengabdian Ilmiah*, 5(1), 23–33.

- Von Stutterheim, C., Bouhaous, A., & Carroll, M. (2017). From time to space: The impact of aspectual categories on the construal of motion events: The case of Tunisian Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic. *Linguistics*, 55(1), 207–249. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ling-2016-0038>
- Wahab, M. A. (2017). Peta Perkembangan Leksikografi Arab Di Indonesia: Studi Kritis Atas Kamus Karya Mahmud Yunus. *Arabi : Journal of Arabic Studies*, 2(1), 19–36.
- Wang, J. (2025). Looking for a Breakthrough from Linguistics : Saussure and Structuralism Methodology. *Clausius Scientific Press: Language and Literature*, 8(2), 53–58. <https://doi.org/10.23977/langl.2025.080208>