

Borrowed Words In Qatari Dialect: A Case Study

[10.5339/qfarc.2014.SSPP0022](https://doi.org/10.5339/qfarc.2014.SSPP0022)

Haifa Al-buainain, Ph.d; Haifa Al-buainain, Ph.d

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR :

haifaalbuainain@gmail.com

Qatar University, Doha, Qatar

Abstract

According to Graddol (2004) "The world's language system is undergoing rapid change because of demographic trends, new technology, and international communication. These changes will affect both written and spoken communication." The previous quotation reflects a linguistic reality. It is impossible to deny the influence of technology and international communication, not only on language, but also on our daily lives. The process of borrowing is one of the many ways in which technology and international communication affect language.

Some of the borrowed words have Arabic equivalents, while others do not. Nevertheless, most of these borrowed words are subject to phonological and morphological changes. The main cause of the borrowing phenomenon may be that, as Baker stated, "translation activity in the Arab World is still too slow when compared to the speed with which new terms are coined for new concepts in the West and the frequency of their usage once coined" (1987, 88).

Many of the loanwords, some of which are Arabized, are widely used today in Qatari Arabic. Arabization involves the rendering of foreign terms into Arabic in its original linguistic form, after introducing minor phonetic and/or morphological changes where necessary. This method has received much opposition from language purists, who fear that the assimilation of foreign terms may change the identity of Arabic and, if applied to excess, would even result in some form of a hybrid language. However, faced with the massive influx of new terms which need to be rendered into Arabic, even the purists have had to accept Arabized terms which have found their way into the language and increasingly gained acceptance, with or without academies' approval. (Ibrahim, 2006).

Although linguistic borrowing is a universal phenomenon that has been noted historically and studied a lot, it is of interest to investigate this practice and its patterns in Qatari Arabic and to know to what extent the Qatari informants are able to know the meaning and the origin of some of the borrowed words in Qatari Arabic. Thus, the researcher collected one hundred of exotic foreign words which are Arabized and used in Qatari dialect and will ask Qataris to identify the meaning and the origin of the borrowed words. The focus in this study will be on the ability of the Qatari informants to identify the meaning and the origin of the borrowed words in question.

Objectives:

- Identify some borrowed words used in the Qatari dialect.
- Identify the origin of the borrowed words.
- Identify the types of borrowed words.
- measure the knowledge of the sample to know the meaning of the borrowed words.
- measure the ability of the sample to determine the origin of the borrowed words.