

**IMPERFECT VERBS IN VARIOUS ARABIC DIALECTS IN  
COMPARISON OF STANDARD ARABIC:  
1. HABITUAL TENSE\***

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**Abstract**

As the first part of the series of articles to survey and describe the imperfect verb that is used in Spoken Arabic Dialects to produce tenses are present simple, present continuous and future tenses. This paper is the first study of the chain which focuses on the present simple (habitual events). Furthermore, this study compares the habitual tense used in Standard Arabic with habitual tense used in various Arabic dialects that were previously studied by linguists. In other words, this research tries to describe the rules that determine using imperfect verbs to produce habitual actions in Arabic dialects and Standard Arabic to show similarities and differences between them. In Arabic dialects, to produce habitual tense, prefixes and aspectual marker system are used and each dialect has its own prefixes and tense structure. There are numerous studies that studied the prefixes in many Arabic dialects, but no study is devoted yet to compare between these prefixes. The prefixes of habitual tense are chosen to be studied because of their essential role to determine the tense. In other words, they are the indicators for the listener to recognize the present simple tense. Therefore, this study is devoted to cover this field particularly because the teaching of Arabic dialects to non-native speakers of Arabic is spreading nowadays.

**Keywords:** Arabic Dialects, Morphology, Prefixes, Habitual Tense, Socio Linguistic.

**Farklı Arap Lehçelerinde Muzari Fiil: Fasih Arapça İle Karşılaştırmalı  
Bir Çalışma: 1. Geniş Zaman**

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\* This study is based on “*The Prefixes in Urban Arabic Dialect in Gaza: A Morphological Study*” of Nedal ElShorbagy” (2009)

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### Öz

Günümüz konuşulan Arapça lehçelerdeki (diyalektler) muzari fiilin zaman olarak değerini belirlemek için yapacağımız çalışmalar, geniş zaman, şimdiki zaman ve gelecek zaman konularını ele alacaktır. Bu makale, zincirin ilk halkası olarak, geniş zamanı (alışkanlık kullanımı) incelemektedir. Çalışmada geniş zaman fasih Arapçadaki haliyle karşılaştırmalı olarak konuşulan diğer Arapça lehçeler açısından daha önce dilbilimcilerin teker teker yapılan çalışmalarını bir bütün halinde ele alıp inceleyecektir. Bir başka ifadeyle bu çalışma muzari fiillerin kullanımlarını belirleyen kuralları tespit etmeye çalışarak, Arapça lehçelerdeki günlük eylemler için üretilen muzari fiilleri fasih Arapça ile kıyaslayacak, aralarında tespit edilen benzerlik ve farklılıklara işaret edecektir. Arapça lehçelerde günlük alışkanlıkları ifade etmek için kullanılan geniş zamanı üretmek için ön ekler (prefixes) ve Muzâraat harfleri (aspectual marker) sistemi kullanılır ve her bir lehçe kendi ön ekleri ve zaman yapısına sahiptir. Bu konu hakkında farklı Arapça diyalektlerde pek çok ön ek çalışmaları yapılmışsa da, henüz bu farklı ön ekleri karşılaştıran bir çalışma yapılmamıştır. Geniş zamanın ön ekleri zamanı belirlemedeki hayati rolünden dolayı ele alınmaktadır. Bir başka ifadeyle ön ekler, dinleyicinin geniş zamanı fark edebilmesi için kullanılan işaretlerdir. Ayrıca anadili Arapça olmayanlara Arapça lehçelerin öğretiminin oldukça hızlı bir şekilde artmasından dolayı ortaya çıkan ihtiyaca cevap vermek adına bu konu ele alınıp incelenmeye çalışılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Arap Dili Lehçeleri, Biçimbilim, Önek, Geniş Zaman, Toplumdilbilim.

This paper surveys the literature that studied prefixes in various Arabic dialects. First the prefixes used in different Arabic dialects are presented to show which dialect uses which prefixes. Then a comparison among these prefixes in different dialects is made. This comparison shows how frequent each prefix is used in different Arabic dialects.

### Definitions

In 1959, Ferguson has introduced his classic article “*Diglossia*”; he defined the term **diglossia** as “a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.”<sup>1</sup> In the situation of Arabic, “Arabic largely

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<sup>1</sup> Charles A. Ferguson, “*Diglossia*”, *Word*, 15, 2, p. 336

exists in a diglossic situation.”<sup>2</sup> Literary Arabic (Classical/Standard Arabic, H variety) coexists with Dialectal Arabic (L variety); “two varieties of a language exist side by side throughout the community, with each having a definite role to play.”<sup>3</sup> For example, Standard Arabic (H) is more likely to be used in Mosques, personal letters, political speech, broadcast, newspaper, and poets; on the other hand, Arabic dialects are more likely to be used in instructions to servants, waiters and so on, conversations with families, and friends, and folk literature<sup>4</sup>. **Aspectual marker:** “All aspectual marker systems are composed of a number of aspectual markers with different functions and usages,”<sup>5</sup> which means that an aspectual marker system consists of systematic strings each of them has a specific grammatical function; furthermore, each aspectual marker work with other aspectual markers in an organized and accurate system. **Affix** is, a grammatical element that is combined with a word, stem, or phrase to produce derived and inflected forms<sup>6</sup>. For example, the word unacceptable is a morphologically composed of three morphemes: the prefix (un), the base accept and the suffix (able)<sup>7</sup>. There are three categories of affixes that are prefixes, infixes, and suffixes<sup>8</sup>. **Prefixes** are attached to the start of a word; for example, (sub-mit, pre-determine, un-willing), and “the meaning of the prefix is added to the meaning of the base verb”<sup>9</sup>. **Suffixes** are added to the last part of a word, such as, (wonderful, depend-ent, act-ion)<sup>10</sup>. **Infixes** arise in the middle; it is a derivational or inflectional affix appearing in the body of a word<sup>11</sup> (as Sanskrit -n- in vindami, I know’ as contrasted with vid (to know), and the infix usually is empty of semantic content<sup>12</sup>. Modern Standard Arabic uses only one tense prefix, /sa-/ /سـ/ to indicate future<sup>13</sup>, as well as having a separate tense particle (سوف). On the other hand, the Arabic dialects have many prefixes such as (b-, h-, etc.) that are used for various purposes. The Arabic dialect prefixes are added to the imperfective verbs to show

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<sup>2</sup> Morad Alshafiq, “Diglossia: an Overview of the Arabic Situation”, *International Journal of English Language and Linguistics Research*, vol. 4, no. 4, p. 1

<sup>3</sup> Ferguson, “Diglossia”, p. 325-327

<sup>4</sup> Ferguson, “Diglossia”, p. 329

<sup>5</sup> W Yunji, *A synchronic and Diachronic Study of the Grammar of the Chinese Xiang Dialect*, Berlin, Walter De Gruyter, 2005, p. 207

<sup>6</sup> Peter O. Müller, *Word-Formation: An International Handbook of the Languages of Europe*, vol. 2, edited by Müller et.al., Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 2015 p. 961

<sup>7</sup> Fanny Reader, et. al., “Second-language learners’ advantage in metalinguistic awareness: A question of languages’ characteristics”, 2013, vol. 83, pp. 686-702

<sup>8</sup> David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 128

<sup>9</sup> Müller, *Word-Formation*, p. 1492

<sup>10</sup> Müller, *Word-Formation*, p. 964

<sup>11</sup> Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia*, p. 128

<sup>12</sup> Müller, *Word-Formation*, p. 955

<sup>13</sup> M. L. Souag, *Explorations in the Syntactic Cartography of Algerian Arabic*, (Unpublished MA), University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, 2006, p. 19

the tense; for example, in some dialects, (b- → ) is used to indicate the present simple, present continuous and future, and (h- ) is used to indicate future tense.

### **Importance of the study**

For teaching the Arabic dialects, there should be studies that describe these dialects. Therefore, this study standardizes the morphological rules -the prefixes specifically- and verbs of Arabic dialects. This study focuses on some Arabic dialects such as Hawran and Damascus in Syria, Tripoli in Lebanon, Baghdad and Mosul in Iraq, some dialects in Arabic Gulf, Yemeni, Cairien and Northern Sinai in Egypt, Khartoum, Algerian, Moroccan, and Cyprus (Maronite Arabic speakers). A comparison between these dialects and Standard Arabic is presented in this study showing the similarities and differences.

This study tries to answer the following questions:

How is the present tense produced in the Standard Arabic?

How is the present tense produced in different Arabic dialects?

What are the similarities and differences between these dialects and Standard Arabic in present simple?

### **Methodology and Data**

A literature review on the Arabic dialects in Egypt, Levant region and Iraq is presented in this study to survey how the present simple is produced in spoken Arabic dialects; prefixes from about 20 Arabic dialects were collected. It is noticed that there are some prefixes used for habitual tense (present simple المضارع البسيط). The habitual tense contains: (1) how it is used in Standard Arabic followed by (2) how it is used in various Arabic dialects as it is mentioned in the surveyed literature. Next, a comparison between the usage of habitual tense in imperfect verbs in various Arabic dialects and Standard Arabic is presented. At the end, I am presenting analysis of using the varieties of /b-/ prefix, and how the variants of /b-/ is determine by the pronoun added to the verb, and by the verb pattern.

The data is collected from the literature that studied the morphology in Arabic dialects, particularly the prefixes that is used in imperfect verbs in different Arabic dialects. These prefixes is studied in this study.

### **Transliteration list**

A standardized transliteration list is given below, (see table 1-2). It is noticed that each one of the surveyed resources that discusses the Arabic prefixes has its own Romanization system which is different from the other resources; therefore, I used only one transliteration system to present the data in all resources.

**Habitual tense:**

**First: Standard Arabic**

Habitual action in the Standard Arabic is produced by the imperfect verb. The imperfect verb is used to bring up incidents that arise frequently or continually<sup>14</sup>. There are many examples for this habitual action, such as

يأتي بها السائق كل صباح إلى الكلية ثم يعود بها

“Every morning the driver brings her to the college in a magnificent car, and then takes her back”<sup>15</sup>

**Second: Arabic dialects**

Arabic dialects also use imperfect verb to express habitual actions, but there is a prefix added to the imperfect verb to give the implication of habitual tense. In the surveyed literature, I found that the prefix /b-/ is used for habitual purposes in many Arabic dialects, and there are some dialects that use other prefixes, such as /k-/ /ك/ as is used in Morocco. How Arabic speakers in some Arabic-speaking areas express habitual actions is presented. (See table 1-1).

**Greater Syria**

Dialects in the Greater Syria use the /b-/ prefix to determine the habitual actions; the prefix /b-/ may be attached to the imperfect verb alone without any vowel, and sometimes there is a vowel inserted after the prefix. According to these two cases, so studies classified the verbs attached to the prefix /b-/ in Levantine countries into two categories: (1) single consonant, and (2) consonant cluster<sup>16</sup>. (See tables 1-1 and 1-2)

| 1. Single consonant |         |         |
|---------------------|---------|---------|
| Arabic              | English | pronoun |
| baruuH              | I go    | 1.s.    |
| binruuH             | we go   | 1.p.    |
| bitruuH             | you go  | 2.m.s.  |
| bitruuHii           | you go  | 2.f.s.  |
| bitruuHuu           | you go  | 2.p.    |

Table (1-1)

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<sup>14</sup> Fuaad Ni'mah, *Mulakhkhas Qawa'id alLughah al-'Arabiyah*, al-Qahira, Al-Maktab al-'Ilmi lil-Ta'lif wa-al-Tarjamah, [1973], 19<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 22, 138, see also, R. Buckley, *Modern Literary Arabic: a Reference Grammar*, Beirut: Librairie du Liban Publishers, 2004, p. 542

<sup>15</sup> Buckley, *Modern Literary Arabic*, p. 542

<sup>16</sup> F. A. Rice, & M. F. Said, *Eastern Arabic: an Introduction to the Spoken Arabic of Palestine, Syria and Lebanon*, Beirut, Khayat's, 1960, p. 47

| <b>2. Consonant cluster</b> |          |         |
|-----------------------------|----------|---------|
| Arabic                      | English  | pronoun |
| baftaH                      | I open   | 1.s.    |
| bniftaH                     | we open  | 1.p.    |
| btiftaH                     | you open | 2.m.s.  |
| btiftaHii                   | you open | 2.f.s.  |
| btiftaHuu                   | you open | 2.p.    |

Table (1-2)

Some studies also found the same feature in their study on Levantine countries<sup>17</sup>; furthermore, they found that some Levantine dialects change the prefix /b-/ into /m-/ with 1st pronoun plural. They mentioned the same example in their studies,

mnuktub                      we write 1.p.

While, these are some studies that focus on the dialects of the Greater Syria as general, there are other studies that concentrate on particular dialects in the Greater Syria, such as Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Negev.

### Syria

There is a study that gives attention to the Syrian dialect (particularly Damascus)<sup>18</sup>, which found that the Syrian speakers change the prefix /b-/ into /m-/, but it added that there is an optional assimilation for the prefix /-n-/ with the first person plural when the verb starts with (m-, b-, l-, and r- before single consonant r). The following examples were presented (See table 1-3)

| <b>Syria</b>          |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Arabic                | English  |
| mə-m-buus (mə-n-buus) | we kiss  |
| mə-m-muut (mə-n-muut) | we die   |
| mə-l-luum (mə-n-luum) | we blame |
| mə-r-ruuH (mə-n-ruuH) | we go    |

(Table 1-3)

<sup>17</sup> L. J. McLoughlin, *Colloquial Arabic: Levantine*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982, p. 33, see also, Crow, F. E., *Arabic Manual: a Colloquial Handbook in the Syrian Dialect for the Use of Visitors to Syria and Palestine*, London, Luzac, 1901, 23

<sup>18</sup> M. W. Cowell, *A Reference Grammar of Syrian Arabic With Audio CD: Based on the Dialect of Damascus*, Washington, DC, Georgetown University Press, 2005, p. 179

### Lebanon

Lebanese dialect uses /b-/ and its varieties to perform the present simple<sup>19</sup>; for example, (See table 1-4)

| b. Lebanon            |                   |         |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Arabic                | English           | pronoun |
| ?ana bnaam bifraashii | I sleep in my bed | 1.s.    |
| baakul                | I eat             | 1.s.    |
| mnidrus               | we study          | 1.p.    |
| bitnaam               | you sleep         | 2.m.s.  |
| btaakul               | you eat           | 2.m.s.  |
| bitsuu?ii             | you drive         | 2.f.s.  |
| bitnaamuu             | you sleep         | 2.p.    |
| biyudrus              | he studies        | 3.m.s.  |
| bitsuu?               | She drives        | 3.f.s.  |
| byishrabuu            | they drink        | 3.p.    |

(Table 1-4)

### Jordan

There is a study recording one example of using /b-/ as a prefix in the present simple purposes by “Trans-Jordanian and Palestinian speakers in Irbid (Jordan)<sup>20</sup>;

bashrab بَشْرَب (I drink)

### Negev

The Bedouin dialect in Negev in the south of Palestine uses /ba-/ for the same feature<sup>21</sup>. There is another form of present simple that is with the 1st person singular in Kerak; that is /?a-/ /?a-shrab/ (I drink). The same feature was found “in the North and South of the Syrian aria”<sup>22</sup> ?aktub أكتب (I write)

### Arabic Gulf

Some studies on the dialects of Arabic Gulf States considered all dialects of this area as one dialect<sup>23</sup>, while other studies focused on the dialect of the

<sup>19</sup> R. T. Nasr, *Colloquial Arabic: an Oral Approach*, Beirut, Librairie du Liban, 1966, p. 51

<sup>20</sup> M. Sawaie, *Linguistic Variation and Speakers' Attitudes: a Sociolinguistic Study of Some Arabic Dialects*. Damascus: al-Jaffan & al-Jabi Publishers in co-operation with Institut français d'études Arabes de Damas, 1994, p. 48

<sup>21</sup> Sawaie, *Linguistic Variation*, p. 48

<sup>22</sup> Cowell, *A Reference Grammar of Syrian Arabic*, p. 179

<sup>23</sup> H. A. Qafisheh, *a Basic Course in Gulf Arabic*, Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 1975, p. 215, see also, C. Holes, *Gulf Arabic*, London, Routledge, 1990, p. 274-275

United Arab Emirates<sup>24</sup>. They found the same feature that exists in the Greater Syria: /b-/ is used for habitual purposes. For example,

|                                |                              |                 |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| basiir                         | بأسير                        | I walk          |
| hiya btis <sup>rab</sup> biira | هي بتشرب بييرة <sup>25</sup> | she drinks beer |

### Yemen

Yemeni dialect in Sana'a has a subtle different feature from the other Arabic dialects that it uses /bi-/ as a prefix for all pronouns except for the 1st person which uses the prefix /bayn-/<sup>26</sup>

### Egyptian

There are two Egyptian dialects that are found in the surveyed literature: Arabic dialect in Cairo and in the Northern Sinai.

### Cairo

Cairene dialect also uses /bi-/ for the habitual purposes, but Behnstedt in his study titled "Sprachatlas von Syrien" mentioned that the Egyptian dialect also uses /b-/ but with a vowel /b (i)/, cited in Encyclopedia of Arabic language and linguistics<sup>27</sup>. For example, there is a study presenting some examples, such as /biynaam/ بينام (he sleeps)<sup>28</sup> and some other studies present examples to confirm the existing of this feature; for instance,

e.g. il walad bi-yaakul kul yuum الولد بياكل كل يوم  
The boy eats every day<sup>29</sup>

### Bedouin dialects in the Northern Sinai

The Arabic dialects of five tribes in Northern Sinai were surveyed<sup>30</sup>; it was found that some Arabic speakers in Northern Sinai uses both the prefix /b-/ and its varieties for habitual purposes. Examples from Rmeelaat Tribe:

|             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| /bimsikkiy/ | he takes her |
|-------------|--------------|

<sup>24</sup> A. A. Hammād, *al-Khasṣā'is al-Sawṭiyah fī Lahjat al-Imārāt al-'Arabīyah: Dirāsah Lughawīyah maydānīyah*, Alexandria: Dār al-Ma, rifah al-Jāmi'īyah, 1986, p. 19

<sup>25</sup> Hamma>d, *al-Khasṣā'is al-Sawṭiyah*, p. 19

<sup>26</sup> J. C. E Watson, *the Phonology and Morphology of Arabic*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 177

<sup>27</sup> Peter Behnstedt, "Sprachatlas von Syrien", *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, I-V, Brill, Leiden, 2006, vol. 1, p. 605

<sup>28</sup> H. M. Aboul-Fetouh, 1969, *A Morphological Study of Egyptian Colloquial Arabic*, The Hague, Mouton, 1969, p. 37

<sup>29</sup> Z. N. Abdel-Malek, *the Closed List Classes of Colloquial Egyptian Arabic*. The Hague, Mouton, 1973, p. 216, see also, Hassanein, A. T., & Kamel, M, *Let's Chat in Arabic: a Practical Introduction to the Spoken Arabic of Cairo [Yalla-ndardish bi-larabi]*. S.l.: s.n., 1998, p. 135

<sup>30</sup> Rudolf De Jong, E, *A Grammar of the Bedouin Dialects of Central and Southern Sinai*, Leiden, 1999, p. 231



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|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| burbuThiy  | he ties her |
| That study found that the there is a diphthong reduction with some verbs <sup>31</sup> ; i.e. /iy/ may be reduced to /i/; e.g. |             |
| biyHuTT, biHuTT  | he puts     |
| And there is another way that is adding the vowel /i/ before the prefix  |             |
| biktib, ibyiktib   | he writes   |
| buDurbuw, ibyuDurbuw   | They hit    |

**Khartoum, Sudan**

Sudanese speakers in Khartoum also uses /b-/ and its varieties to express the habitual purposes Miller (1992: 171); for instance,

|          |                   |
|----------|-------------------|
| bigattis | he sinks (3.m.s.) |
| binaakul | we eat (1.p.)     |

**Cyprus**

In Maronite Arabic, speakers use another variety of the prefix /b-/; they use the voiceless (p-) with chain of prefixes with different pronouns. The verb /frus^/ is presented as an example<sup>32</sup>. (See table 1-5)

| <b>Cyprus</b> |              |                       |         |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------|
| Affixes       | Arabic       | English               | pronoun |
| p-i-          | [pifrus^]    | I make the bed        | 1.s.    |
| m-anni-       | [mannifrus^] | we make the bed       | 1.p.    |
| p-iti-        | [pitifrus^]  | you make the bed      | 2.m.s.  |
| p-iti—i       | [pitifrus^i] | You make the bed      | 2.f.s.  |
| p-iti—u       | [pitifrus^u] | you (p.) make the bed | 2.p.    |
| pk-yi-        | pkyifrus^    | he makes the bed      | 3.m.s.  |
| p-iti-        | [pitifrus^]  | she makes the bed     | 3.f.s.  |
| pk-yi—u       | [pkyifrus^u] | they make the bed     | 3.p.    |

Table (1-5)

**Moroccan**

In Moroccan dialect, it is found that /k-/ and /t-/ are equal to the /bi-/ in the Egyptian dialect and /b-/ in the Syrian dialect that are used for habitual purposes<sup>33</sup>. Moreover, the Moroccan speakers in Rabat use the prefix /k-/ for

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<sup>31</sup> De Jong, *A Grammar of the Bedouin Dialects*, p. 232

<sup>32</sup> M. Tsiapera, *A Descriptive Analysis of Cypriot Maronite Arabic*, The Hague, Mouton, 1969, p. 35

<sup>33</sup> K. Brustad, 2000, *the Syntax of Spoken Arabic: A Comparative Study of Moroccan, Egyptian, Syrian, and Kuwaiti Dialects*, Washington, DC, Georgetown University Press, 2000, p. 246

imperfective form; they used it more frequently than the other prefix /b-/<sup>34</sup>. Many examples for this were mentioned in the study, such as

e.g. maa tatxɾəʒ[s^] mn d-daar ماتتخرجش من الدار  
she doesn't go out of the house<sup>35</sup>

b-Haal matalan l-'insaana kays^rab l-xmər kayibqa yuqul kilma qabiHah  
بحال مثلا الإنسان كيشرب الخمر كيبقى يقول كلمة قبيحة<sup>36</sup>

“Like, for instance, [a] person drinks wine and keeps saying some nasty word.”

Some studies said that the Arabic speakers in Northern Morocco (Tetuan) use some prefixes equally (ka-, da-, ta-, la-) for the present simple and for future when it is preceded by two temporal verbs (yaad and maas^) used for future; they are equal to /sa-/ (س) and /sawfa/ (سوف) in standard Arabic that are used for future. It was noticed that the Southern Morocco speakers use (ta- and la-) more than other prefixes<sup>37</sup>.

e.g. ka-yuxruʒ = da- yuxruʒ = ta-yuxruʒ = la-yuxruʒ (he goes out)  
كَيُخْرَج = دَيُخْرَج = تَيُخْرَج = لَيُخْرَج

knqruu (I read) كُنْقُرُو. this feature exists in the Alexandrian dialect<sup>38</sup>.

knuxruʒ (we go out) كُنْخُرُج

kyquul (he says) كَيَقُول

kymshyuu (they walk) كَيْمَشْيُو

shHaal ktsaawii had siyyaar? شحال كتساوي هَد سَيَّارَة?<sup>39</sup>

How much does this car cost?

### Habitual in urban dialect in Gaza Strip:

It is noticed that the prefix (b-) and its variables are used to produce the habitual actions (present simple). Ten sentences are presented below<sup>40</sup>.

أنا بفتخر إن ربنا أكرمه بالشهادة

?ana baftxir innu rabnaa ?akramuh bišs^ahaada

I am proud that Allah granted him martyrdom

إنه يعني بحب المسجد وبحب الأطفال

?innu yaʔnii buHubb ilmaszid wibiHubb ?il?aTfaal

That he loves the mosque and loves children

<sup>34</sup> F. Talmoudi, 1984, *the Diglossic Situation in North Africa: a Study of Classical Arabic/Dialectical Arabic Diglossia with Sample Text in Mixed Arabic*, Göteborg, Sweden, Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1984, p. 133

<sup>35</sup> Brustad, *the Syntax of Spoken Arabic*, p. 246

<sup>36</sup> Brustad, *the Syntax of Spoken Arabic*, p. 216, 252

<sup>37</sup> ‘Abd al-Mun’im Sayyid ‘Abd al-‘Al, *Lahjat Shamāl al-Maghrib: Tat wān wa-Mā H{awlahā*, Cairo: Dār al-Kātib al-., Arabī, 1968. p. 127

<sup>38</sup> ‘Abd al-‘Aal, *Lahjat Shamāl al-Maghrib*, p. 128

<sup>39</sup> ‘Abd al-Aal, *Lahjat Shamāl al-Maghrib*, p. 135

<sup>40</sup> Nedal Elshorbaji, *the Prefixes in Urban Arabic Dialect in Gaza: Morphological Study*, Saarbrücken, Germany, LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, 2011, p. 37

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1. Habitual Tense

نعم هادا بقودنا إلى إن نتحدث مع إم أحمد عن دور استشهاد أحمد داخ المنزل وكيف انعكس يعني تربيته الدعوية في المسجد على سلوكه داخل البيت معي في البيت، مع إخوته، مع الأهل والأحباب داخل العائلة

na'am hada biquudna ?ila an nataHaddath ma'a ?um ?aHmad ?an dawr istis^haad aHmad daaxil ?il manzil. wi kayf in?akas ya'nii tarbiyatu ?idda?awiiyah fil masjid ?ala suluukuh daaxil ?il beet ma?kii daakhil ?il bayt, ma'a ?ixwatuh, ma'a ?il ?ahl wil ?aHbaab daaxil ?il ?aa?ilah

Yes, that leads us to talk to Umm Ahmed about the impact that Ahmed's martyrdom had inside home, and how his religious upbringing at the mosque reflected on his behavior inside the house, with you at home, with his brothers and sisters, and with family and loved ones in the family?

ودائماً يعني يخب بضحك مع إخوته

wdaayman ya'nii biHub yDHak ma'a ?ikhiwtu

He always loves to laugh with his brothers and sisters.

سموح وخلق يعني نفسه طيبة بيخب الناس ويحب الخير للكل ويحب الخير لإخوته وللجيران

samuuH wxaluuq ya'nii nifsuh Tayba biHub innaas wyHub ilxeer lilkul wyHub il xeer li?xwetu wi lil ziiraan

He is a forgiving, polite and a kind soul who loves people, loves the good for everyone, loves the good for his brothers and sisters and the neighbors.

الحمد لله بيروحوا على الجوامع ويحفظوا القرآن ويعرفوا الله الحمد لله رب العالمين

?alHamdu lillaah biyruuHuu ?al zawaami? wi biHfaZul qur?aan wi bi?rafuu ?allah al Hamdu lillaah rabbil ?aalamiin.

Thanks to God, they go to the mosques, memorize the Qur'an, know Allah. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

أنا برضى عليه بصراحة، كنت أنا ميسوط من أعماله

?ana barDa ?aliih, biSaraaHa ?ana mabsuuT min a?maaluh

I am satisfied with him, honestly, I was happy with his deeds.

والإنسان المسلم أبوه يكون ميسوط منه مش من إنسان مثلاً شاذ أو حاجة والحمد لله

wil insaan il mislim abuuH bikuun mabsuuT minnuh mis^ ?insaan maθala s^aaz ?aw Haaza wil Hamdu lillaah

A Muslim is someone whose father is satisfied with them. He or she is not a deviant person for example, or something like that, thanks to God.

فكان الحمد لله من هذا المنطلق إنه عنده حاجات كثيرة في الدعوة يعملها وبطبيعة الحال هادي

الحاجات هو يعرفها بينه وبين نفسه

fakaan ilHamdu lillaah min haaθaa almunTalaq ?innu ?indu Haazaat ktiirah fidda?wah yi?malha<. wi biTabii?at il Haal haadii ?il Haazaat huwwa bi?rafhaa beenuh wbeen nafsuh.

He was, praise be to God, from this standpoint that he has many things to do in Da`wa, and naturally, he knows these things at heart.

يعني إيش أكثر شي يتتذكره داخل المنزل عن شخصية أحمد؟

ya'nii ?ees^ akθar s^ee? btiθakkariih daaxil il manzil ?an s^axSiiyat aHmad

What do you remember most about Ahmed's character inside the house?

It is noticed that /b-/ is used for habitual functions in Gaza dialect. In the surveyed Arabic dialects, it is found that /b-/ is also used for the habitual purposes in most Arabic dialects, such as Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Arabian Peninsula, North Africa, Sudan and Cyprus. On the other hand /k-/ prefix is found in the present simple in some dialects, such as Moroccan dialect. (See table 1-6).

Present simple Prefixes in various Arabic dialects

(Table 1-6)

| Region                           | Prefixes   | Example   | Translation                |
|----------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------|
| Levant Region<br>(Greater Syria) | ba-<br>b-<br>bi-   | baruuH<br>btiftah<br>bitruuH  | I go<br>you open<br>you go |
| Syria                            | m-   | mniktub   | we write                   |
| Lebanon                          | m-   | Mnidrus   | we study                   |
| Irbid (Northern<br>Jordan)       | ba-  | ba-shrab  | I drink                    |
| Urban dialect in<br>Gaza         | b-   | ya <sup>ʕ</sup> nii iis <sup>^</sup> btiḏakkarii inti ba <sup>ʕ</sup> D<br>Sfaat xaaSSah mas <sup>^</sup> uftihaas <sup>^</sup><br>illaa fii aHmad  | You (f)                    |
|                                  | b-<br>bi-  | l <sup>?</sup> innh xalaS daxal fiih<br>bni <sup>?</sup> daris <sup>^</sup> n <sup>?</sup> ulluh la <sup>?</sup> . l <sup>?</sup> innuh<br>law bin <sup>?</sup> ulluh la <sup>?</sup> mis <sup>^</sup> mis <sup>^</sup><br>raaH ysma <sup>ʕ</sup><br>minnaa; raaH yi <sup>ʕ</sup> mal <sup>?</sup> il <sup>?</sup> is <sup>^</sup> ii<br>min waraanaa ya <sup>ʕ</sup> nii | We                         |
|                                  | bi-  | wala im illaa bitxaaf <sup>ʕ</sup> ala ibinha   | She                        |
|                                  | bi-  | <sup>?</sup> alHamdu lillaah biyruuHuu<br><sup>ʕ</sup> alal <sup>ʒ</sup> awaami <sup>ʕ</sup> wbi <sup>ʕ</sup> rafuu <sup>?</sup> Allah  | They                       |
|                                  | bi-  | <sup>?</sup> innu ya <sup>ʕ</sup> nii biHubb ilmas <sup>ʒ</sup> id wi<br>biHub il aTfaal  | He                         |
| Bedouin Negev                    | ba-<br><sup>?</sup> a-                                   | ba-shrab<br><sup>?</sup> as <sup>^</sup> rab  | I drink<br>I drink         |
| Arabic Gulf                      | b-   | btis <sup>^</sup> rab   | she drinks                 |
| Yemen                            | b-<br>(for all<br>except<br>the 1st<br>person<br>/bayn/) | -   | -                          |
| Cairo (Egypt)                    | bi-  | biynaam   | he sleeps                  |

Imperfect Verbs in Various Arabic Dialects in Comparison of Standard Arabic:  
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| Region                    | Prefixes   | Example   | Translation  |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|
| Northern Sinai<br>(Egypt) | bi-<br>bu-<br>biy-<br>ib-  | bimsikkiy<br>burbuThiy<br>biyHuTT<br>ibyiktib   | he takes her<br>he ties her<br>he puts<br>he writes  |
| Khartoum<br>(Sudan)       | bi-  | bigattis  | he sinks   |
| Cyprus                    | p-i-<br>m-anni-<br>p-iti-<br>p-iti—i<br>p-iti—u<br>pk-yi-<br>p-iti-<br>pk-yi—u | p-i-fros^<br>m-anni-fros^<br>p-iti-fros^<br>p-iti-fros^i<br>p-iti- fros^u<br>pkyifros^<br>p-iti-fros^<br>pk-yi-fros^u | I make the bed<br>we make the bed<br>you make the bed (2.m.s.)<br>you make the bed (2.f.s.)<br>you make the bed (2.p.)<br>he makes the bed<br>she makes the bed<br>they make the bed |
| Morocco                   | k-   | knuxruʒ   | we drink   |
|                           | ka-<br>ta-   | kays^rab<br>maa tatxrəz   | he drinks<br>she doesn't go out  |
|                           | da-  | da- yuxruʒ  | he goes out  |
|                           | la-  | la-yuxruʒ   | he goes out  |

**Conclusion**

It is noticed that the /b-/ prefix is the most common prefix used to produce the present simple in the Arabic dialects, while the /sa-/ prefix which is used in Standard Arabic is not used at all in any dialect. (see chart 1-1)

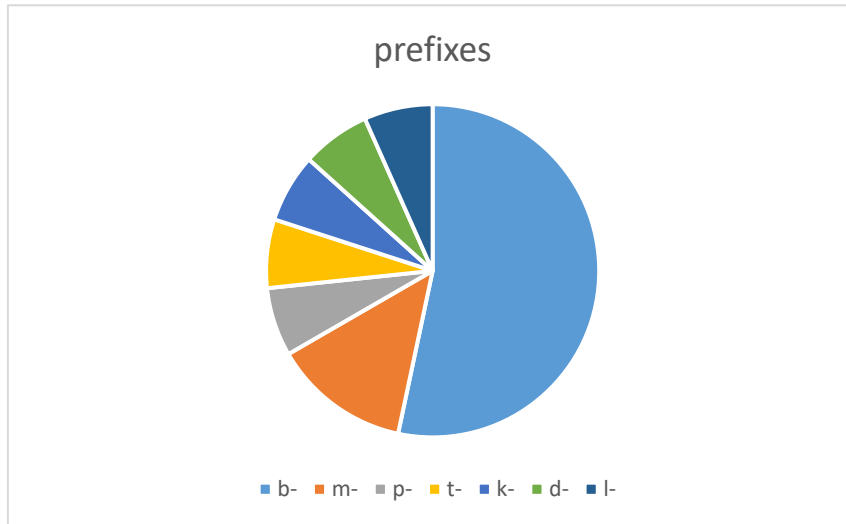


Chart (1-1)

#### Frequency of prefixes used to produce habitual tense

It is observed that the urban dialect in Gaza and the Egyptian dialect are similar in case that they do not change the /b-/ prefix in 1st pronoun plural (we (إحنا)) into /m-/ as Syrian and Lebanese dialects do. On the other hand, the urban dialect of Gaza belongs to the dialects of Levantine countries in case that it may use /b-/ prefix without vowel, such as bni?daris^ (we cannot); the rules that controls using the varieties of the prefix /b-/ are discussed in the next study.

Moreover, it is noticed that in the collected data, all Arabic dialects do not accept three consonants cluster (CCC), so the insertion of the vowel occur to prevent the three consecutive consonants. Therefore, the /b-/ prefix varies according to the pronoun that is attached to the verb and to the verb pattern; /b-/ prefix may be /b-/, /ba-/ and /bi-/. For that reason, the verbs that are preceded by the /b-/ prefix were collected.

Throughout the comparison between the Arabic dialects, I found that the Arabic dialects are not different languages as some linguists suppose. Because each Arabic dialect has its own distinctive linguistic features, many linguists believe that there are considerable differences among various Arabic dialects, and also among the standard Arabic and the Arabic dialects<sup>41</sup>; the dialectical situation

<sup>41</sup> A. Farris, "Diglossia in Arabic Speech Communities: The Classical Language Compared With the Syrian Vernacular". (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED117975 ) Retrieved September 20, 2016, from ERIC database, 1975

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is described as “a linguistic dichotomy”, but I believe otherwise. During my study I found that the morphological differences among Arabic dialects are not significant, and sometimes are very slight, and many linguists, believe that most Arab people do not worry about the state of diglossia<sup>42</sup>. AFL teachers (Arabic as a Foreign Language) should believe in this concept to be able to convince their students that the Arabic dialects are only different varieties of the standard Arabic; therefore, it is easy for the student who learns standard Arabic, as an example, to learn any dialect. Some studies attest to this belief<sup>43</sup>. They suggest an integrated approach through which teachers can combine between the Standard Arabic and an Arabic dialect to teach Arabic as a foreign language, and to face the Arabic “complex sociolinguistic situation”. This expression “complex sociolinguistic situation” reflects the idea that even Arab teachers believe in difficulty of teaching Arabic, which makes teaching Arabic as a foreign language more difficult. Moreover, some studies prove that teacher must show their students how to recognize affixes in order to enhance their language proficiency<sup>44</sup>. Therefore, Arabic teachers themselves should get rid of this concept at first to be able to convince their student of the idea that Standard Arabic and Arabic dialects are not different languages, and that learning any variety of Arabic makes the student able to communicate in any other variety.

Transliteration list

(Table 1-2)

| Arabic form       | Transliteration symbol |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Consonants</b> |                        |
| ء                 | ʔ                      |
| ب                 | b                      |
| پ                 | p                      |
| ت                 | t                      |
| ث                 | θ                      |
| ج                 | ǰ                      |
| ح                 | H                      |

<sup>42</sup> A. G. Chejne, *the Arabic Language: its Role in History*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1969, p. 162

<sup>43</sup> M. A. Younes, “An Integrated Approach to Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language”, *Al-Arabiyya*, 1990, no., 23, pp. 105-22

<sup>44</sup> Lee Mountain, “Recurrent Prefixes, Roots, and Suffixes: a Morphemic Approach to Disciplinary Literacy”, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, vol. 58, no. 7, 2015, pp. 561-567, see also, Jennifer D. Green, “Language Detectives: Teaching and Learning About Suffixes”, *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 68, issue 7, 2015, pp. 539-547, see also, Annie Lee On-lai, “The Effectiveness of Strategies Employed in Vocabulary Explanations in EFL Classrooms in Hong Kong”, *Annual International Language in Education Conference*, 1993, pp. 237-252

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| Arabic form                   | Transliteration symbol |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| خ                             | x                      |
| د                             | d                      |
| ذ                             | ð                      |
| ر                             | R                      |
| ز                             | z                      |
| س                             | s                      |
| ش                             | s^                     |
| ص                             | S                      |
| ض                             | D                      |
| ط                             | T                      |
| ظ                             | Z                      |
| ع                             | ʔ                      |
| غ                             | y                      |
| ف                             | f                      |
| ق                             | q                      |
| ك                             | k                      |
| ل                             | l                      |
| م                             | m                      |
| ن                             | n                      |
| هـ                            | h                      |
| و                             | w                      |
| ي                             | y                      |
| <b>Vowels</b>                 |                        |
| FatHah (short vowel) َ        | a                      |
| a (long vowel)                | aa                     |
| Damah (short vowel) ُ         | u                      |
| u (long vowel)                | uu                     |
| Kasrah (short vowel) ِ        | i                      |
| i (long vowel)                | ii                     |
| Close-mid front vowel (short) | e                      |
| Close-mid front vowel (long)  | ee                     |
| Close-mid back vowel (short)  | o                      |
| Close-mid back vowel (long)   | oo                     |



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