Investigating Calquing In Arabic How Translation Can Shape The Future Of Arabic

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Abstract
This paper investigates the influx of Anglicism and Frenchism into the Arabic lexicon. The focus will be on authentic borrowed English and French phrases that have entered the Arabic lexicon. While social media has introduced a considerable amount of Anglicism and Frenchism into the Arabic language during the 21st century, film translation, TV programs, and translated books have also contributed to this phenomenon, making these calques an integral part of the modern lexicon used by Arab speakers. The study employs a qualitative method to trace these structures across a wide range of texts, as data are retrieved from various online resources and specialized dictionaries to gauge the extent to which Anglicism and Frenchism calquing have impacted modern standard Arabic. Through this approach, the study seeks to uncover the patterns, frequency, and domains of calque integration, thereby offering insight into the linguistic consequences of sustained contact with dominant global languages. Ultimately, the research highlights how Arabic continues to evolve through lexical borrowing and structural adaptation, reflecting broader processes of linguistic convergence in a globalized era.
Keywords: Anglicism; Arabic; Calquing; Corpora; Frenchism; Modern Standard Arabic

INTRODUCTION
        Throughout history, linguistic exchange has occurred as a result of contact between languages. In such interactions, languages associated with socio-political and economic dominance typically play a more influential role in the lending process. These dominant languages often possess elevated status due to their speakers' industrial and economic power, thereby exerting greater influence in shaping the linguistic landscape of other communities. According to Hoffer (2003: 1) borrowing "is the process of importing linguistic items from one linguistic system into another, a process that occurs any time two cultures are in contact over a period of time." Borrowing can occur at the word level especially when concepts are transferred from one language to another. Nonetheless, it can occur above word level when phrases are transferred to the TL but still modelled on the SL structure. Sources of the latter phenomenon can be attributed to film translation, book translation, advertisements, and other sources.
        Historically, the French language has played a pivotal role in expanding the English lexicon. The introduction of thousands of French loanwords can be traced back to the Norman Conquest of 1066, following the Battle of Hastings and the ascension of William the Conqueror. The subsequent dominance of French-speaking monarchs in England from the 11th century onwards facilitated a significant influx of French vocabulary. This extensive lexical borrowing not only enriched English but also had a

profound impact on its phonological system (Fournier, 2013). Additionally, Desloux et al. (2011) emphasize the role of geopolitical factors in shaping borrowing trends in the United Kingdom. Their corpus-based analysis of English revealed 210 French-derived words ending in *-eur* and *-euse*, as well as 87 ending in *-aire*. The suffix *-eur* frequently appears in business-related terminology (e.g., *entrepreneur*, *technopreneur*), whereas *-aire* is often associated with terms connoting wealth (e.g., *squillionaire*, *zillionaire*). Conversely, English has also contributed to the vocabularies of other European languages, such as Croatian. Bojčić and Plavša (2012) argue that Croatian has not adopted foreign lexical models passively; instead, it has actively adapted English loanwords through phonological, morphological, and semantic modifications, thereby generating new terms consistent with the structural norms of the Croatian language.

The Arabic corpus of calques has expanded over time due to a range of historical factors, including colonization, educational systems, and cultural exchanges. This linguistic influence is particularly evident in countries that were formerly part of the French colonial empire, such as Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, and Syria. Among these, the nations commonly referred to as "Al-Maghreb Al-'Arabi"—specifically Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia—have experienced considerable lexical impact on their modern Arabic varieties.

In these regions, numerous direct loanwords from French have been incorporated into everyday usage. For instance, the Arabic term *(shufayr)* is derived from the French *chauffeur* (driver), while *(televisiyawn)* stems from the French *télévision*. In addition to single-word borrowings, more complex lexical structures have been calqued into Arabic. Notable examples include *(al-ḥarb al-'ālamīyah)*, a direct calque of the French *la guerre mondiale* ("world war"), and *(jisr jawwī)*, reflecting the French *pont aérien* ("air bridge"), a term frequently used in military and humanitarian contexts. These instances highlight the depth and variety of French influence on the Arabic lexicon in post-colonial settings.

In recent years, the integration of Anglicisms—loanwords from the English language—into the Arabic lexicon has emerged as a prominent linguistic phenomenon. This development is largely driven by globalization, rapid technological progress, and the pervasive role of English in international domains such as commerce, science, and media. A significant number of English terms associated with technology and information systems, including *hard disk*, *hardware*, *software*, and *smartphone*, have been adopted into Arabic. This is primarily due to the global dominance of English within the technology sector.

Furthermore, the influence of English in the field of business has facilitated the incorporation of terms such as *marketing*, *management*, *investor*, and *startup* into Arabic usage. Similarly, sports terminology has also been affected, with expressions like *football*, *basketball*, *handball*, and *team spirit* being translated literally and widely used in Arabic. This trend reflects the extensive international reach and cultural influence of English-language sports and media.

Arabic has traditionally been regarded as a linguistically conservative language, particularly in comparison to English and other European languages. It has maintained a relatively stable structural form over centuries, with much of its vocabulary and idiomatic expressions exhibiting minimal change. This linguistic conservatism is closely tied to the preservation of deeply rooted cultural, religious, and social values, which continue to shape both the language and its speakers. As Farghal (2003, p. 141) aptly observes,

"While English opens up freely to colloquial varieties as well as other languages of the world, Arabic retreats to itself in search of purity of expression."

Nonetheless, Arabic has been both a donor and recipient in the process of linguistic borrowing. Since the advent of Islam, Arabic has contributed lexical items to numerous languages, including Chinese, Persian, Hindi, Urdu, Hebrew, Turkish, and, more recently, English and various European languages. This influence extends to African languages, where Arabic has contributed not only vocabulary but also grammatical structures (Zappa, 2011). Simultaneously, Arabic has also reaped substantial benefits from borrowing. During the Umayyad and Abbasid eras, extensive translation efforts led to the incorporation of a vast body of scientific, philosophical, and literary knowledge from languages such as Greek, Latin, Syriac, Persian, and Sanskrit (Ghazala, 2012).

Beyond scientific literature, literary and other non-technical genres have also enriched the Arabic lexicon through translation. Translated novels and narratives offer fertile ground for the introduction of calques, particularly those originating from English. Translators who employ overt translation strategies often render culturally specific terms and expressions using literal and syntactic parallels in Arabic. As a result, these practices contribute to the growing presence of calques within Modern Standard Arabic (Newman, 2013).

Translation plays a significant role in shaping the long-term trajectory of language use and development. By facilitating exposure to new concepts and forms of expression from foreign linguistic systems, translation contributes to the integration and normalization of novel elements within the target language. Over time, the cumulative influence of translation can lead to substantive linguistic change, promoting innovation and expansion in modes of expression.

In this context, when foreign lexical items are introduced, there is often a conscious effort to assimilate them into the linguistic norms of Arabic. This adaptation process, referred to as "Arabization," involves modifying borrowed terms to align with the phonological and grammatical conventions of the Arabic language. Furthermore, language purists frequently advocate against the adoption of Anglicisms, favoring the preservation and promotion of native Arabic equivalents. Nevertheless, the integration of English vocabulary into contemporary Arabic is increasingly evident, particularly among younger generations. This trend is largely driven by heightened exposure to English through digital communication and social media platforms, which continue to accelerate the diffusion of Anglicized expressions in everyday discourse.

In light of the historical and ongoing socio-political, technological, and cultural influences exerted by French and English, the present study aims to examine how these dynamics have contributed to the expansion of calquing structures in Modern Standard Arabic. By employing a qualitative methodology, this paper systematically traces and analyzes Frenchism and Anglicism calques across a diverse corpus of materials, including online media, translated texts, and specialized dictionaries.

Through this approach, this study aims to illuminate the evolving dynamics of the Arabic lexicon through the lens of translation and language contact. By addressing the first research question—how translation contributes to the Arabic phrasal lexicon through calquing—the study explores the mechanisms by which syntactic and idiomatic structures are transferred from English and French into Arabic, often retaining the source language's form while adapting to its grammatical framework. Simultaneously, the second

question—how contemporary Arabic speakers respond to the growing presence of Anglicism and Frenchism—sheds light on the sociolinguistic dimensions of borrowing, including attitudes toward linguistic purity, identity, and the perceived prestige of foreign terms. Together, these inquiries offer a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between translation, lexical innovation, and speaker perception in shaping modern Arabic.

Translation is commonly understood as the transmission of meaning between languages. While this definition may appear to adopt a primarily linguistic perspective, the process of semantic transfer inherently involves the transmission of ideas, often fostering innovation across various domains. Like many world languages, Arabic has historically incorporated lexical items and expressions from other languages, a phenomenon shaped by cultural exchange, trade, and historical contact. This linguistic interaction can be traced back to the pre-Islamic period through commercial exchanges, but it reached its zenith during the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates (7th–9th centuries), when extensive translation movements led to the rendering of thousands of scientific, medical, and literary texts into Arabic. This era significantly expanded the Arabic lexicon, introducing numerous neologisms and enriching the language's expressive capacity (Ghazala, 2012). Over the centuries, multiple languages have contributed to the development of Arabic vocabulary. Notably, Persian (Farsi) has exerted a profound influence, particularly in fields such as poetry, science, mathematics, and administration. Numerous Arabic terms associated with the arts, literature, and philosophical discourse—such as *takht* (تخت, "bed") and *daftar* (دفتر, "record")—originate from Persian.

During the Islamic Golden Age, spanning approximately from the 8th to the 13th century, Arabic scholars played a pivotal role in the translation movement by rendering a vast corpus of Greek scientific, philosophical, and medical texts into Arabic. This intellectual endeavor facilitated the integration of numerous Greek terms into the Arabic lexicon, including *mūsīqā* (موسيقى, "music") and *jughrāfiyā* (جغرافيا, "geography"). Subsequently, the Ottoman Empire, which encompassed various Arabic-speaking regions, further influenced Arabic through the introduction of Turkish loanwords, particularly in the domains of governance, military affairs, and everyday life. Examples include *brawfa* (بروفة, "rehearsal") and *bāshā* (باشا, "chief person" or "pasha").

The period of French colonial rule in North Africa and other Arab regions also contributed substantially to the Arabic lexicon. French loanwords related to politics, education, and culture were incorporated into Arabic, as illustrated by terms such as *satrja* (سطرجة, "audiovisual translation"). Additionally, the prolonged Arab presence in the Iberian Peninsula (Al-Andalus) established a historical connection with the Spanish language, resulting in Spanish lexical influence, particularly in the areas of agriculture, architecture, and culinary vocabulary.

Italian has also contributed to Arabic vocabulary, primarily through trade and cultural exchange, notably in the fields of commerce, fashion, and music. Lastly, the forces of globalization and the pervasive global use of English have led to the widespread adoption of English loanwords in Arabic, especially in contemporary domains such as technology, business, and popular culture.

The phenomenon of Anglicism—the incorporation of English words and expressions—has exerted a significant influence on numerous languages globally, including Modern Arabic. This influence is multifaceted, encompassing both advantageous and potentially problematic dimensions. In contemporary Arabic, English

lexical items are frequently adopted, particularly in technical, scientific, and academic contexts. This lexical integration facilitates the development of a shared terminology in fields such as technology, medicine, and higher education, thereby enabling Arabic speakers to engage more effectively with global advancements and innovations.

Furthermore, English expressions, especially those associated with youth culture, fashion, and popular media, have gained widespread acceptance among Arabic speakers. These expressions are often employed in advertising, on social media platforms, and in everyday discourse, mirroring the globalized nature of modern communication. In commercial and business domains, English terminology is commonly used in branding, marketing, and international trade. The association of English with modernity, prestige, and professionalism contributes to its prevalence in these settings.

In academic and educational spheres, particularly within institutions of higher learning and research, the use of English terminology is increasingly observed. This trend is often motivated by the desire to align with international academic standards and to facilitate engagement with English-language scholarly publications. Additionally, the phenomenon of code-switching—alternating between Arabic and English within discourse—is prevalent among Arabic speakers. This practice has led to the emergence of hybrid linguistic forms that reflect the multicultural and multilingual dimensions of contemporary Arab societies.

Despite the widespread integration of English loanwords into Modern Arabic, concerns have been raised by language purists regarding the growing influence of Anglicisms. These purists argue that such linguistic borrowing may compromise the structural integrity and cultural authenticity of the Arabic language. As a result, deliberate efforts are undertaken to promote Arabic equivalents and to discourage an overreliance on English terminology.

Language purists play a pivotal role in influencing the reception and adaptation of calques and Anglicisms in Arabic. Their central objective is to safeguard the purity of the language by advocating for the use of indigenous Arabic terms and minimizing foreign linguistic intrusion. From their perspective, excessive borrowing, particularly from English, poses a threat to the unique lexical and syntactic identity of Arabic.

Farghal (2003) highlights a fundamental contrast between the linguistic attitudes of Arabic and English, characterizing Arabic as conservative and inward-looking, in opposition to the openness and adaptability of English. While English readily incorporates colloquial forms and borrows from a wide array of global languages, Arabic tends to prioritize linguistic purity, often turning inward in its search for authentic expression. Farghal argues that this divergence is rooted less in the actual linguistic behavior of speakers and more in the differing linguistic traditions that inform each language's development.

A critical distinction lies in the descriptive orientation of English linguistic practice versus the prescriptive nature traditionally associated with Arabic. This methodological difference has had profound implications for the evolution of each language. Furthermore, Farghal emphasizes that socio-political contexts within Arabic- and English-speaking societies significantly influence linguistic ideologies. These cultural realities shape how arguments about language use and change are framed and contested, thereby reinforcing either openness or conservatism in language policy and practice.

One of the key strategies employed by purists is the process of Arabization—modifying foreign terms to conform to Arabic phonological and grammatical norms. This approach allows borrowed concepts to be assimilated into the language without undermining its internal coherence or distinctiveness (Ghazala, 2012). In addition to Arabization, purists advocate for the creation of neologisms derived from native Arabic roots to describe novel concepts, particularly in areas where no Arabic equivalents currently exist. This practice is regarded as a preferable alternative to direct borrowing.

Language purists are also actively involved in efforts to standardize Arabic, especially in technical and scientific contexts. Standardization is seen as essential for ensuring terminological clarity, consistency, and mutual intelligibility across the Arabic-speaking world. Arabic language academies (Majāmiʿ), which are often state-sponsored institutions, play a central role in these endeavors. These academies are responsible for the regulation, development, and modernization of Arabic, including the formulation of standardized terminology for emerging disciplines. By coining new Arabic terms and updating lexical resources, these institutions aim to reduce dependence on foreign vocabulary and to support the continued vitality and relevance of the Arabic language in the modern era.

Language purists have played a significant role in shaping language policies and guidelines in many Arabic-speaking countries, often resulting in regulatory measures aimed at limiting the use of foreign lexical items—particularly in official documents and media discourse. Abdelhay et al. (2016) highlight the political underpinnings of language policy in Sudan, tracing the institutionalization of Arabic language promotion to the early 1980s. During a national conference on the Arabic language held in December 1982, President Jaafar Numeiri underscored the importance of Arabic in societal and educational domains. He introduced a series of initiatives to advance the status and use of Arabic, which included: (1) the establishment of a national council for language planning, (2) the foundation of an Arabic language academy in Sudan, and (3) the implementation of Arabicisation policies in higher education and scientific research.

In 1983, the National Council for Higher Education issued recommendations to operationalize these Arabicisation measures within universities, while allowing institutions a degree of autonomy in tailoring their implementation. The University of Khartoum adopted the policy for select faculties during the 1983–1984 academic year, with intentions to expand it further in 1984–1985. Nevertheless, the policy aiming to make Arabic the sole medium of instruction at the tertiary level was not comprehensively enacted (for a more detailed evaluation, see Taha, 1990). The full institutional realization of this linguistic agenda came in 1993, when the National Salvation government established a formal Arabic language academy and launched the Higher Commission for Arabicisation—a governmental body charged with promoting Arabic as the principal language of instruction in higher education.

By contrast, Tunisia presents a more complex linguistic landscape. Shaped by its colonial history and influenced by a range of political, educational, economic, social, and cultural factors, Tunisia's language situation reflects a form of institutionalized diglossia and multilingualism. Despite Arabic's status as the official national language, its functional dominance has been challenged by ongoing ideological and sociolinguistic tensions. These tensions are marked by a symbolic and practical rivalry between Arabic and French, an increasing functional competition between French and English, and a perceived decline in overall linguistic proficiency among younger generations. Daoud

(2011) analyzes these dynamics as manifestations of deeper conflicts in language policy and planning, driven by power struggles, ideological contestations over language and cultural identity, and the lack of a coherent national framework for managing multilingualism.

METHOD

This study investigates the extent to which English and French have contributed to the contemporary Arabic lexicon, as well as the degree of awareness among Arabic speakers regarding the presence and influence of Anglicisms and Frenchisms. The research specifically aims to address two primary questions: (1) To what extent are Arabic speakers aware of lexical changes in their language resulting from borrowing? and (2) What are their attitudes toward the use of Anglicisms and Frenchism in Arabic? To address the first research question, a structured questionnaire was developed containing commonly used lexical calques derived from English and French. A list of 50 calque expressions was presented to a sample of university graduates, who were asked to evaluate each expression using a three-point scale. Specifically, participants were instructed to assign: (1) if the calque was perceived as resembling an authentic Arabic structure; (2) if the expression was not inherently Arabic but considered acceptable within the language; and (3) if the expression was perceived as awkward or unnatural in Arabic. The purpose was to evaluate how deeply these calques have been assimilated into their everyday linguistic repertoire. The second research question was explored through a qualitative approach. A single open-ended question was posed to a group of bilingual Arabic speakers, inviting them to express their opinions on lexical borrowing. Specifically, participants were asked: *Do you think borrowing is a beneficial or detrimental practice for the Arabic lexicon?* Their responses were systematically coded and analyzed to identify prevailing attitudes and discern common patterns or trends regarding lexical borrowing and calquing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents a comparative analysis of two sets of calques drawn from Arabic translations: one set originating from English (Table 1), and the other from French (Table 2). The analysis aims to examine the structural patterns, assess the extent of lexical borrowing from English and French into Arabic, as well as speakers' awareness and attitudes toward these phenomena.

To address the first research question, the responses to the -questionnaire—which included 50 commonly used calques—were subjected to quantitative analysis. Frequencies and percentages were calculated to assess the extent to which each calque was recognized by university graduates, providing insight into their familiarity and integration within contemporary Arabic usage. Calques identified by a high percentage of participants were considered to be fully integrated into contemporary Arabic, indicating a significant level of lexical assimilation. Table 1 presents a selection of English-origin calque expressions that were perceived as authentic Arabic structures by at least 50% of the respondents, reflecting their widespread acceptance and naturalization within current language use.

Table 1. English-Origin Calques

Code	Calque	English Origin
E1	أثناء خضوعها للعلاج	While she was undergoing treatment
E2	حقق حلم حياته	He fulfilled the dream of his life
E3	يظهر الوجه الحقيقي للإرهاب	It reveals the true face of terrorism
E4	حققت نجاحًا منقطع النظير	An unparalleled success was achieved
E5	السكان المحليين	The local residents
E6	عنق الزجاجة	Bottleneck
E7	فقد السيطرة	Lost control
E8	فقد البصر	Lose one's sight
E9	فقد الشغف	Lose passion
E10	صنعت يومي	Made my day
E11	أشعر بأني بحال جيدة بمافيه الكفاية	I feel good enough
E12	عاشت أيامًا جيدة	She had good days

These calques were perceived by respondents as authentic Arabic structures, likely due to external factors such as sustained media exposure. The widespread presence of these expressions in broadcast and written discourse appears to have contributed to the assumption that they are native to Arabic. However, it is worth noting that these calques do not significantly deviate from established Arabic linguistic norms, which facilitates their seamless integration into the Arabic lexical system. For instance, the meaning conveyed by calque E1 could be more idiomatically rendered using a native expression such as تتعالج (tataʿālij – "to receive treatment"), thereby avoiding unnecessary wordiness while preserving the semantic intent. Calque E2 represents a recently introduced concept in the Arabic lexicon; however, it closely echoes the older Arabic calque أمنية حياته (umniyat ḥayātih – "the wish of his life"), which may explain its acceptance among speakers. Calques E4 and E8, by contrast, could have been rendered using more authentic and concise Arabic verbs—نجح (najaḥ – "to succeed") and عمي (ʿamī – "to go blind"), respectively. The original two-word verb-object constructions, فقد البصر and حقق نجاحًا, could have been replaced with simpler, monolexemic alternatives without loss of clarity or meaning. Calque E6 describes a universal human experience, which likely facilitated its assimilation into Arabic due to its cross-cultural and emotional resonance. Meanwhile, calque E7 is closely associated with the discourse of modern technologies—a domain characterized by frequent neologisms and innovation—making calquing both common and contextually appropriate in that linguistic environment.

In contrast, calques identified as unnatural by respondents suggest limited integration into the Arabic lexicon and may reflect a continued perception of these expressions as foreign intrusions. This was particularly evident in reactions to calques such as فقد الشغف ("lost passion") and صنعت يومي ("you made my day"), which, despite their increased visibility on social media platforms like X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook, have not yet achieved full naturalization. Moreover, participants demonstrated a heightened sensitivity to structurally awkward calques, such as أشعر بأني بحال جيدة بما فيه الكفاية—a literal rendering of "I feel good enough"—which was deemed unnatural by nearly 70% of the respondents. Similarly, عاشت أيامًا جيدة, originating from "She had good days," was also perceived as linguistically incongruent with authentic Arabic usage,

reinforcing the notion that not all calques are equally absorbed or accepted within the target linguistic and cultural system.

Table 2. French-Origin Calques

Code	Calque	French Origin
F1	شخصيات وازنة	des personnalités de poids
F2	برامج تكوين	Programme de formation
F3	أرض الواقع	la réalité de terrain
F4	تقوية التنافسية	le renforcement de la compétitivité
F5	الإدماج الاجتماعي	l'inclusion sociale
F6	الإكراهات التقنية	les contraintes techniques
F7	مناخ الأعمال	le climat des affaires
F8	تقوية قدرات الفاعلين المحليين	le renforcement des capacités des acteurs locaux
F9	الحكامة الجيدة	la bonne gouvernance
F10	برمجة لقاءات	la programmation des réunions
F11	قابلية التشغيل	l'employabilité

Table 2 presents 11 French-origin calques that are commonly used in Francophone Arab countries. Calque (F1), des personnalités de poids, translates literally as "personalities of weight." In context, however, it functions idiomatically to mean "influential figures" or "prominent personalities," with the word poids (weight) serving as a metaphor for significance or authority. This calque has been rendered literally into Arabic as شخصيات وازنة (shakhṣiyyāt wāzinah), which also translates back as "persons of weight." While the noun wazn (weight) can indeed convey a sense of importance or influence, its usage in this adjectival form is uncommon in both Classical and Modern Standard Arabic, except in Maghrebi dialects or media discourse influenced by French. More natural and widely accepted equivalents in Arabic include شخصيات بارزة (shakhṣiyyāt bārizah – "prominent figures"), شخصيات مؤثرة (shakhṣiyyāt muʾathirah – "influential figures"), or شخصيات رفيعة المستوى (shakhṣiyyāt rafīʿat al-mustawā – "high-ranking figures").

Calque (F2), تكوين (takwīn), literally means "forming" or "shaping," but has been borrowed directly from the French formation to convey the meaning of "training." This usage is uncommon in Modern Standard Arabic across most Arab countries, with the exception of the Maghrebi region, where French linguistic influence is more pronounced. A more widely accepted and semantically transparent expression in Arabic is برامج تدريب (barāmij tadrīb – "training programs"), which mirrors the structure of its English equivalent.

Similarly, calque (F3) is modeled on the French phrase la réalité de terrain, which literally translates "on-the-ground reality" to simply mean "in reality." However, the attempt to translate this phrase literally into Arabic by pairing the nouns أرض (land) and الواقع (reality) results in a non-collocational structure, as these terms do not naturally co-occur in Arabic. The resulting expression fails to align with Arabic collocational and semantic norms, illustrating the limitations of direct calquing in such contexts.

Calque (F4), تقوية التنافسية (taqwiyat al-tanāfusiyyah – "strengthening competitiveness"), mirrors French syntactic patterns by combining two abstract nouns in a structure that feels unnatural in Arabic. While grammatically correct, this construction

deviates from classical and idiomatic Arabic norms, which typically favor more concise and fluid verbal expressions. In Arabic, such concepts are more naturally conveyed using verbs like تعزيز (taʿzīz – "enhancing") or رفع (rafʿ – "increasing"), yielding expressions such as رفع التنافسية or تعزيز التنافسية. These alternatives are both semantically appropriate and stylistically more in line with conventional Arabic usage, avoiding the stiffness and foreignness introduced by direct calquing of abstract constructs.

Calque (F5) exhibits structural and lexical features that are strongly influenced by French discourse, particularly in contexts related to development, human rights, and public policy. The phrasing typically mirrors French institutional language, which often employs abstract, nominalized constructions. In Arabic, however, a more idiomatic and widely accepted expression would be الاندماج في المجتمع (al-indimāj fī al-mujtamaʿ – "integration into society"). This alternative aligns more closely with native Arabic syntactic and semantic patterns, offering greater clarity and resonance within Arabic-speaking contexts.

Calque (F6) is frequently used in administrative, technical, and planning contexts, particularly in North African countries where French influence is prominent. The term إكراهات (ikrāhāt – literally "coercions" or "constraints") is grammatically correct in Arabic, but its usage remains largely confined to formal, bureaucratic registers. Outside of such contexts—especially in regions less affected by French linguistic patterns—the term may sound overly formal, unnatural, or even obscure to many Arabic readers. More accessible and idiomatic alternatives include الصعوبات التقنية (al-ṣuʿūbāt al-tiqniyyah – "technical difficulties"), التحديات التقنية (al-taḥaddiyyāt al-tiqniyyah – "technical challenges"), المشاكل التقنية (al-mashākil al-tiqniyyah – "technical problems"), or العقبات الفنية (al-ʿaqabāt al-fanniyyah – "technical obstacles"). These expressions are more widely understood and better aligned with Arabic stylistic and semantic conventions.

Calque (F7) reflects a direct structural transfer from French, particularly evident in the phrase مناخ الأعمال (munākh al-aʿmāl – "business climate"). While this expression is widely understood among Arabic speakers—especially in economic and policy-related discourse—it still carries a distinctly foreign undertone, indicative of its origin in French and English terminology. The term has gained currency primarily through translation and media channels. Notably, the field of economics is one in which neologisms are more readily accepted and assimilated, which may account for the phrase's growing usage despite its non-native structure.

Calque (F8) represents a literal translation from the French phrase le renforcement des capacités des acteurs locaux ("strengthening the capacities of local actors"). The Arabic equivalent—تعزيز قدرات الفاعلين المحليين—mimics the syntactic structure of the source language by relying on a compound noun phrase, which is uncommon in natural Arabic usage. This type of double-noun construction often reflects foreign influence rather than indigenous linguistic patterns. Arabic, by contrast, offers more concise and idiomatic alternatives that rely on well-rooted verbal structures. A clearer and more natural rendering would be تمكين(tamkīn al-fāʿilīn al-maḥalliyyīn – "empowering local actors"), which is based on the verb مَكَّنَ (makkana – "to empower") and avoids the complexity and abstraction introduced by borrowed syntax. Such a choice not only enhances clarity but also maintains fidelity to the expressive economy of Arabic.

Calque (F9), الحكامة (al-ḥakāmah), is a term borrowed from the French gouvernance and is commonly used in administrative and political discourse, particularly in Francophone Arab contexts. While the term is semantically transparent and

increasingly recognized in official documents and policy discussions, it remains unfamiliar to many Arabic speakers, especially in regions less influenced by French. As a result, it may be perceived as formal, foreign, or overly technical. More common alternative in Arabic is حوكمة which is a more widely accepted Arabization that is more likely to resonate with broader Arabic audiences.

Calque (F10) is commonly used in North African official or administrative contexts to refer to the scheduling or organization of meetings. The term برمجة (barmajah – "programming" or "scheduling") is a direct borrowing from the French programmation. While the expression برمجة اللقاءات (barmajat al-liqāʾāt – "scheduling meetings") is intelligible and grammatically correct, it may sound overly technical or formal, particularly in non-specialized or informal settings. The noun لقاءات (liqāʾāt – "meetings"), being the plural of لقاء (liqāʾ), is natural and widely used in Arabic. However, to achieve a more idiomatic tone, alternatives such as تنظيم اللقاءات (tanẓīm al-liqāʾāt – "organizing meetings") or جدولة اللقاءات(jadwalah al-liqāʾāt – "scheduling meetings") are stylistically smoother and more commonly used in everyday Arabic, especially in contexts that do not require specialized administrative language.

Calque (F11) is an expression commonly used in official, governmental, and academic discourse, particularly in Maghrebi Arabic. However, to the average Arabic speaker—especially outside Francophone regions—the phrase may sound awkward, overly formal, or foreign. Its structure and lexical choices reflect a close alignment with French syntactic patterns rather than natural Arabic idiom. More idiomatic and accessible alternatives include القدرة على الحصول على وظيفة (al-qudrah ʿalā al-ḥuṣūl ʿalā waẓīfah – "the ability to get a job") or فرص التوظيف (furaṣ al-tawẓīf – "employment opportunities"), both of which are clearer, more concise, and better integrated into standard Arabic usage.

To address the second research question, qualitative data from the open-ended responses were coded thematically using an inductive approach. Participants' responses to the question, "Do you think borrowing is a beneficial or detrimental practice for the Arabic lexicon?", were categorized based on recurring themes and sentiment. Three primary attitudinal categories emerged: positive, neutral/conditional, and negative. Positive responses emphasized the role of borrowing in enriching Arabic, modernizing the lexicon, and facilitating communication in specialized fields such as technology and science using words. Some opinions consider borrowing to be part of the natural development and enrichment of language. Some supporters cite historical examples from Persian and other foreign words from Greek and Latin that have become naturalized in Arabic over generations, considering this process to be natural in any living language. Proponents argue that borrowing enriches the linguistic structure and helps broaden the scope of knowledge, especially in technical and scientific fields where suitable Arabic terms may be lacking.

Neutral or conditional responses highlighted the need for balance, accepting borrowing when necessary but advocating for Arabization and lexical innovation. Some respondents maintain that lexical borrowing is acceptable when there is no existing Arabic equivalent. Nonetheless, they emphasize the importance of avoiding excessive or unwarranted borrowing. According to this view, it is possible—and indeed preferable—to adapt foreign terms to align with Arabic phonological and morphological conventions, thereby integrating them into the linguistic system without compromising its integrity considering borrowing as a potentially useful linguistic tool, provided that its use is measured. However, if borrowing becomes excessive, it may pose a threat to linguistic

identity and cultural heritage. Advocates of this position call for greater efforts among linguists and language institutions to coin and disseminate Arabic alternatives, particularly in scientific and technical fields, in order to safeguard the authenticity of the language.

Negative responses reflected concerns over linguistic purity, identity erosion, and the marginalization of native Arabic terminology. Some respondents have considered lexical borrowing to be harmful, particularly due to the fear of the extinction of original Arabic terminology. This concern underscores the need for society to root Arabic more deeply in its active vocabulary and to prioritize the use of native terms over borrowed ones. Linguists, in turn, must strive to develop suitable Arabic alternatives and disseminate them effectively. According to them, borrowing also negatively impacts classical vocabulary, diminishing its perceived value and further contributes to a stagnation of the Arabic language, rendering it less dynamic and less responsive to contemporary demands. In the long term, this may weaken the language's richness and lexical power, leading ultimately to its erosion. They add that as borrowing increases, the identity of the recipient language begins to fade. Even if speakers initially understand that a word is borrowed, over time, this distinction is lost. Future generations may no longer recognize the word as foreign, but instead assume it is originally Arabic.

Trends were further analyzed based on demographic information such as educational background and degree of bilingualism. It was observed that bilingual participants with higher exposure to English and French were generally more accepting of lexical borrowing, whereas monolingual or less bilingual individuals were more likely to express resistance. Additionally, awareness levels of calques did not always correlate with attitudes toward borrowing; in some cases, participants who were highly familiar with borrowed terms still expressed concern over their perceived impact on the Arabic language. Overall, the analysis reveals a nuanced and dynamic relationship between Arabic speakers and lexical borrowing. While English and French continue to exert significant influence on Arabic vocabulary, the attitudes of speakers range widely—from acceptance and adaptation to resistance and advocacy for linguistic preservation.

Language is constantly evolving, and new phrases are created in response to changing circumstances and the integration of foreign concepts or technologies. Academic studies, books and research papers are excellent sources for calques as scholars often adopt foreign terms and adapt them into Arabic creating scientific calques which could either be terms that have not gone through proper Arabization procedures or unnatural sounding phrases. Terms of this type are results of what is termed by Newmark (1988: 90) as 'label translation' where a new term is provisionally and literally translated. These terms are left to the impact of users' collective decisions to keep the label or find another alternative translation.

It is important to recognize that while language purists play a significant role in safeguarding linguistic heritage, language itself is inherently dynamic and constantly evolving. Arabic, like all living languages, has undergone continuous transformation influenced by cultural exchange, technological progress, and globalization. The acceptance of calques and Anglicisms remains a subject of ongoing debate, with varying levels of tolerance and adoption across the Arabic-speaking world. The impact of purist movements, while influential, is just one of many factors shaping the current trajectory of the Arabic language. Notably, Arabic is evolving both geographically and thematically. The lexical influence of French is particularly evident in North African countries, where

historical and sociolinguistic factors have shaped local usage. Moreover, different disciplines display distinct calquing tendencies, with fields such as science, economics, and politics exhibiting the highest degree of lexical assimilation through calquing practices.

News and media play a significant role in the dissemination of calqued lexical items within contemporary Arabic. Given the time-sensitive nature of news production, reporters often rely on rapid, literal translations—especially in fields such as technology, finance, and popular culture—resulting in the widespread circulation of structurally foreign expressions. In parallel, social media platforms, online gaming, and digital forums have further accelerated this linguistic phenomenon, particularly among younger generations. These domains frequently introduce Anglicized slang and calques into everyday Arabic usage. For example, the gaming abbreviation GG (short for "good game") is now commonly used by Arabic-speaking gamers with the same intended meaning, reflecting a direct borrowing not only of form but also of function and context.

The debate over lexical borrowing in Arabic reveals a broad spectrum of attitudes within linguistic and cultural circles. On one end, proponents view borrowing as a practical and necessary mechanism for linguistic enrichment, particularly in fields requiring rapid terminological innovation such as science and technology. On the other hand, critics raise concerns about the potential erosion of Arabic's unique identity, expressive richness, and historical depth. A more balanced perspective advocates for a selective and context-sensitive integration of foreign terms—only when equivalent Arabic expressions are absent or insufficient—while maintaining a conscious effort to preserve the language's authenticity, structural integrity, and cultural heritage. Although the influence of calquing on Modern Arabic is both visible and expanding, the Arabic language continues to navigate this influence through a dynamic process of linguistic negotiation. English lexical items are selectively incorporated, particularly in specialized domains, while parallel efforts are made to preserve the linguistic integrity of Arabic and promote indigenous alternatives. This balancing act between globalization and language preservation remains a central concern for language planners and Arabic-speaking communities.

Our study builds on Almahdi (2016) who in a survey-based study conducted in the Arab world, identifies a marked discrepancy between the stated objectives of language policies and their actual implementation. His study highlights a range of internal challenges that threaten linguistic and cultural identity. While Almahdi (2016) underscores the urgent need to raise public awareness regarding the symbolic and practical importance of the Arabic language as a core component of identity, particularly in spoken communication, our study advocates for proactive involvement of language experts in the formulation of language policies, the formal recognition of Arabic as a foundational element of identity construction, and the enactment of legislative measures aimed at protecting the Arabic language. In addition, it emphasizes the necessity of advancing Arabicisation within the education system. The study also calls for increased engagement by scholars and specialists in conducting comprehensive research and critical inquiry, which could help counteract the gradual erosion of Standard Arabic under contemporary pressures.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that Arabic is undergoing continual transformation through lexical borrowing and structural adaptation, processes that reflect broader patterns of linguistic convergence in a globalized era. The prevalence of calques, provisional translations, and Anglicisms underscores the dynamic interplay between foreign influence and indigenous linguistic practice. While purist movements and language policies seek to safeguard Arabic's authenticity, the lived reality of media, technology, and everyday usage illustrates a more fluid negotiation between preservation and innovation. The findings highlight a persistent gap between policy objectives and actual linguistic practices, echoing Almahdi's (2016) observation of internal challenges to maintaining linguistic and cultural identity. By situating Arabic within the wider context of global language contact, the study contributes to understanding how languages adapt under contemporary pressures. Future efforts should therefore prioritize research-driven planning, selective integration of foreign elements, and the reinforcement of Arabicisation initiatives in education and policy. In doing so, Arabic can sustain its cultural heritage while continuing to evolve as a responsive and globally relevant language.

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