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ARABIC DIALECTS IN TURKEY AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES BETWEEN ROOTS AND BRANCHES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN THE LIGHT OF THE ARABIC LINGUISTIC HERITAGE AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

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ARABIC DIALECTS IN TURKEY AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES BETWEEN ROOTS AND BRANCHES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN THE LIGHT OF THE ARABIC LINGUISTIC HERITAGE AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

Mahmud Şuş

ABSTRACT:

This study compares the Arabic dialects of Southeastern Turkey (Anatolian Arabic) with the neighbouring Arabic dialects of Syria and Iraq in terms of their linguistic relationship. These varieties, which have been lying on the periphery of Arabic and have been cut off from the Arabic heartlands since 1923, are identified with the sedentary Mesopotamian (qəltu) branch and their contact-induced changes under intensive contact with Turkish and Kurdish are investigated. The data collected in the field are compared to the well-known corpora of Syria and Iraq in Mardin, Hatay, Urfa and Siirt. The results reveal that the Anatolian Arabic still has some archaic features (like the voiceless uvular stop [q] and the perfective suffix –tu) which are not present in neighbouring dialects, and some new features (like the SOV word order and the gender neutralisation). The sociolinguistic analysis shows that remote dialects like Tillo are facing a serious language shift by the younger generation. The results of this study, when considered in the light of the Arabic linguistic heritage (al-turāth al-lughawī), reveal that the preserved features come under the rubric of the articulatory categories central to the Qurʾānic recitation (tajwīd), while the religious field has been one of the means of their preservation. It concludes that Anatolian Arabic is a unique peripheral Arabic and that the documentation of the same preserves a

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common Islamic linguistic heritage.*

KEYWORDS: Anatolian Arabic; qəltu dialects; Arabic linguistic heritage; Qurʾānic Arabic; language contact; language shift.

1.INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The Anatolian-Mesopotamian frontier is a linguistic world-weft, a

* The Turkish title, abstract, and key words in Turkish given below are based on and justified by Research Project No. MAÜ.BAP.25.EF.020, titled "Türkiye'deki Arapça Lehçeleri ile Komşu Ülkelerdeki Arapça Lehçeleri Arasında Bir Karşılaştırma: Kökenler ve Kollar Üzerine Bir Araştırma" (Mardin Artuklu University BAP). They are added in accordance with the institutional reporting and regional academic dissemination criteria:

Başlık: TÜRKİYE VE KOMŞU ÜLKELERDEKİ ARAPÇA LEHÇELERİ: KÖKLER VE DALLAR ARASINDA: ARAP DİL BİLİMSEL MİRASI VE İSLAM ARAŞTIRMALARI IŞIĞINDA KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ÇALIŞMA

Öz: Bu çalışma, Güneydoğu Türkiye'de konuşulan Arap diyalektlerini (Anadolu Arapçası), dilsel akrabalık ilişkileri bakımından komşu Suriye ve Irak Arap diyalektleriyle karşılaştırmaktadır. Arapça konuşulan dünyanın çevresinde yer alan ve 1923'ten bu yana Arapça konuşulan merkez bölgelerinden kopuk bulunan bu çeşitler, yerleşik Mezopotamya Arapçasının qəltu koluna mensup kabul edilmekte; Türkçe ve Kürtçe ile yoğun temas neticesinde ortaya çıkan temas kaynaklı değişimleri bakımından incelenmektedir. Alan araştırması kapsamında derlenen veriler, Mardin, Hatay, Urfa ve Siirt'teki saha verileriyle birlikte Suriye ve Irak Arapçasına ilişkin yaygın biçimde kullanılan derlemlerle karşılaştırılmıştır. Bulgular, Anadolu Arapçasının komşu diyalektlerde bulunmayan bazı arkaik özellikleri örneğin tonsuz küçükdilsil patlamalı [q] ünsüzünü ve birinci tekil şahıs perfectif -tu ekini hâlâ koruduğunu; bunun yanı sıra Özne–Nesne–Yüklem (SOV) sözcük dizilişi ve dilbilgisel cinsiyet ayrımının nötrleşmesi gibi bazı yenilikçi özellikler sergilediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Toplumdilbilimsel çözümleme, Tillo gibi görece yalıtılmış diyalektlerin genç kuşaklar arasında ciddi bir dil kaymasıyla karşı karşıya bulunduğunu göstermektedir. Bu araştırmanın bulguları, Arap dil mirası (al-turāth al-lughawī) ışığında değerlendirildiğinde, korunan özelliklerin Kur'an tilavetinde merkezi bir konuma sahip olan tecvidin mahreç kategorileri kapsamında ele alınabileceğini; dinî alanın ise bu özelliklerin muhafaza edilmesini sağlayan araçlardan biri olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Çalışma, Anadolu Arapçasının kendine özgü bir çevresel Arapça çeşidi olduğu ve bu çeşitlerin belgelenmesinin ortak İslami dil mirasının korunmasına katkı sağladığı sonucuna varmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Anadolu Arapçası; qəltu diyalektleri; Arap dil mirası; Kur'an Arapçası; dil teması; dil kayması.

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complicated network of migrations, trades, and political disturbances over millennia. Anatolian Arabic, or the Arabic dialects of modern Southern and southeastern Turkey, is in a peculiar place in the wider Semitic grouping. These varieties, in contrast to the central dialects of the Arab world, have become peripheral linguistic formations, distanced by modern political borders formed in the beginning of the 20th century, to the Arabic-speaking heartlands.

According to Prochazka (2011), the area between Mersin (west) and Iraq (east) can be characterized by the high level of linguistic diversity, and during approximately two and a half millennia Arabic has interacted with different other Semitic languages and with Indo-European languages and Turkish . This historical interaction has enabled Anatolian dialects to take [1] a unique evolutionary course, which sets them apart with their neighbors in Syria and Iraq.

1.2. Conceptualizing the Genesis and History

The varieties of Arabic in Turkey are not a homogeneous lot linguistically. They are two main lineages. The Hatay, Adana, and Mersin dialects are basically a northern offshoot of the sedentary group of Syria. On the other hand, the southeast (Mardin, Siirt, Urfa) dialects are part of the Mesopotamian tradition.

In particular, Akkuş (2020) explains that Anatolian Arabic belongs to the so-called qeltu-dialect branch of the larger Mesopotamian Arabic, and is basically the Arabic dialects of eastern Turkey [2]. This qəltu descent is of

[1] Stephan Procházka, "Arabic in Iraq, Syria, and Southern Turkey," in *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, ed. S. Weninger et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 1.

[2] Faruk Akkuş, "Anatolian Arabic," in *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, 2nd ed., ed. S. Weninger et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2020), 1.

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great scholarly interest as it conserves sedentary characteristics which were mostly substituted by Bedouinized (gələt) characteristics in central Iraq. The history of such dialects consequently forms a language fossil record of pre-migration Mesopotamian speech.

1.3. Problem Statement

Although Anatolian Arabic dialects have rich history, they are now facing a twofold threat of structural loss and even extinction. These islands of language have resulted in a great distance between them and the dialects of other countries such as Syria and Iraq. Although the central forms of the dialects still have contact with the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) via the media and education, the Anatolian forms have been largely affected by Turkish, the national language since the establishment of the Republic in 1923.

According to Istanbullu [3]these varieties were under socio-political pressure, saying: "Arabic was not wanted by the creators and founders of the Republic of Turkey (formed in 1923) and banned in the public space in the 1980s. This minoritization history has led to a speed up in a language shift, with the younger generations slowly but surely becoming major speakers of Turkish, and leaving the ancestral Arabic dialects as a dying relic. In remote regions such as [4] notes that the dialect is spoken by a small remote community of Arabs where Kurds are the majority population but also among Turks, which further complicates the ancestry by the multi-layered language contact.

[3] "Changing Ideologies about Varieties of Arabic in Turkey and the Consequences in Antioch," *Journal of Arabic Sociolinguistics* 2, no. 1 (2024): 75.

[4] Ablahad Lahdo, *The Arabic Dialect of Tillo in the Region of Siirt: (South-Eastern Turkey)*, Studia Semitica Upsaliensia 26 (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2009).

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1.4. Research Objectives and Questions

The purpose of this study is to make a comparative analysis to identify how these dialects have managed to retain their origins in the process of creating new branches through the influence of contact. The research questions are:

1. What are the comparisons between the phonological and morphosyntactic structures of Anatolian and Arabic and their neighbours like Iraq and Syria?
2. How has extended contact with Turkish modified the grammatical ancestry of such dialects?

1.5. Reasons why the Study was conducted

It is of scientific urgency to document and analyse these dialects. Since these speakers are going through the process of what Istanbullu refers to as language shift to Turkish, the national language [5] the time to document the distinctive aspects of the Anatolian qəltu lineage is running out. This study aims to fill the gap in our knowledge of the role of geographic isolation and language contact as triggering factors in linguistic divergence by comparing these peripheral varieties to the conditions in Syria and Iraq.

It has been long acknowledged by the wider field of Arabic dialectology that the peripheral varieties are important markers for reconstructing the history of Arabic. Owens[6] has pointed out that that many historical narratives popularized today ignore the conservative nature of remote dialects, particularly of the Anatolian frontier. Furthermore, Behnstedt [7]

[5] Istanbullu, "Changing Ideologies about Varieties of Arabic in Turkey and the Consequences in Antioch," 2024, 75.
[6] "Arabic Dialect History and Historical Linguistic Mythology," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 121, no. 1 (2001): 1–31.
[7] "Die Arabischen Dialekte Der Südosttürkei," *Mediterranean Language Review* 17 (2006): 79–98.

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offers detailed classification of the Arabic dialects of the southeast of Turkey, which also attests to their position as the westernmost continuation of the Mesopotamian group of qəltu dialects. The present study places itself in this discourse, to provide a description to this gap as well as to test the hypothesis that peripheral dialects preserve elements which are lost in central areas by large-scale migration.

Furthermore, the study of peripheral Arabic dialects is more and more viewed in the larger context of language ecology. The dialect map of the Arabic-speaking world has changed considerably as a result of urbanization and migration, and isolated rural varieties like those of Anatolia are of critical importance for reconstructing the pattern of language before migration [8]. The present research falls in the context of the ecological approach that sees linguistic diversity as an important part of human heritage, before these variations further converge.

2: Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Framework: The qəltu vs. gələt Dichotomy

Otto Jastrow (1978) systematized the study of Mesopotamian Arabic by proposing the basic differentiation between two dialect groups on the basis of the pronunciation of the verb ' *Qultu* '"I said" which has found wide acceptance. This classification has been the main pillar to comprehend the Arabic dialects of Turkey.

According to Akkuş, it is known that Anatolian Arabic belongs to the so-called qaltu-dialect of the greater Mesopotamian Arabic [9]. The qeltu

[8] Clive Holes, "Community, Dialect and Urbanization in the Arabic-Speaking Middle East," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 58, no. 2 (1995): 70–287.

[9] "Anatolian Arabic," 1.

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dialects, as opposed to the geltet dialects, are the more ancient and urbanised urban and rural speech of the Abbasid period, not due to Bedouin invasions. Prochazka points out that they are linguistically highly heterogeneous as they have been separated by centuries out of the linguistic progression of the central Arab world [10]

2.2. Geographic and Linguistic Classification

The literature divides the Arabic dialects in Turkey into two different geographical and historical groups.

2.2.1. The Syrian Extension (Western Group)

The dialects of Hatay (Antioch), Adana and Mersin are considered North Syrian dialects. According to Prochazka (2011), in three Turkish provinces (southern, Mersin, Adana, Hatay) Syrian-type dialects are also the dialects used [11]These dialects have much in common with the Aleppian and Latakian Levantine.

2.2.2. Anatolian Mesopotamian Group (Eastern Group)

The real "Anatolian" varieties are the dialects of Southeastern Turkey (Mardin, Siirt, Urfa). Akuks (2020) indicated that Jastrow (1978) divided them into five main categories:

- **Mardin dialects** (the most prominent)
- **Siirt dialects** (including the dialect of Tillo)
- **Diyarbakır dialects** (nearly extinct)

[10] "Arabic in Iraq, Syria, and Southern Turkey," ed. Weninger et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 1.
[11] "Arabic in Iraq, Syria, and Southern Turkey," in *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, ed. S. Weninger et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 1.

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- **Kozluk and Sason dialects**

2.3. Contact and Structural Change of Language

One of the key themes in the literature is the effects of the process of peripheralization. These dialects have been exposed to non-Arabic languages, so they have experienced what linguists have termed, as the contact-induced change. Lahdo is also able to observe this trend in Tillo, where the dialect is spoken by only a small separate group of Arabs, who live primarily amongst Kurds but also amongst Turks [12]. This contact of several layers has resulted in considerable changes in phonology and syntax. Prochazka supports this and says: Bilingualism especially with Aramaic, Kurdish and Turkish has seen a lot of contact influenced changes in all the areas of grammar including the morphology and syntax [13].

The most reported of these are the disappearance of some Semitic gutturals and the acquisition of Turkish syntactic structures (such as the SOV word-order in some speakers), in recent sociolinguistic research on the area. It is necessary to discuss the theoretical basis of contact-induced change in order to interpret the data from Anatolia. Thomason and Kaufman [14] have formulated a borrowing scale which predicts that structural elements like word order are borrowed only when there is a strong cultural pressure and widespread bilingualism – exactly the conditions that have prevailed in southeastern Turkey for more than 100 years. Matras [15] also further elaborates this model by focusing on the communicative goals and cognitive

[12] Lahdo, *The Arabic Dialect of Tillo in the Region of Siirt: (South-Eastern Turkey)*, 4.
[13] Procházka, "Arabic in Iraq, Syria, and Southern Turkey," ed. Weninger et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 1.
[14] *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics* (University of California Press, 1988).
[15] *Language Contact* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

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load of L2 learners that affect structural convergence. Further, the concept of "linguistic islands" is based on Sasse's [16] theory about the way marked categories are simplified in isolated speech communities and Dorian's [17] documentation of the final stages of obsolescence in a peripheral Gaelic dialect, a situation that is becoming closer and closer to the one of Tillo and Siirt.

2.4 Changing Ideology and Attrition of Language

New literature has shifted its interest towards sociolinguistics of these dialects and not just pure linguistics. Istanbullu [18] also gives a critical approach to the contribution of the state policies on the language. Sh e observes that the designers and creators of the Republic of Turkey (established in 1923) and the ban of Arabic in the 1980s in the public space were not welcome by the designers. This is a historical marginalization that has resulted in a language shift to Turkish where the younger generation tend to perceive the local Arabic variant as a less prestigious but still home language than the national language.

Bassiouney [19]continues this consideration by examining the attitudes towards language in the Arabic-speaking world, where State policies can establish a hierarchy of prestige which results in the devaluation of local varieties. Her approach accounts for the reasons behind the internalisation of the negative attitudes by speakers from Hatay and Mardin which leads to

[16] "Theory of Language Death," in *Language Death*, ed. Matthias Brenzinger (Mouton de Gruyter, 1992), 7–30.
[17] *Language Death: The Life Cycle of a Scottish Gaelic Dialect* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981).
[18] 75 "Changing Ideologies about Varieties of Arabic in Turkey and the Consequences in Antioch," *Journal of Arabic Sociolinguistics* 2, no. 1 (2024): 75–93.
[19] *Arabic Sociolinguistics* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

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the rapid shift towards Turkish. Thus, the ideological aspect is not something which is only in the background, but it is an active force which determines the linguistic ecology of the frontier.

3.Research Methodology

Research Design

The research uses a qualitative and comparative linguistic approach to research the structural and phonological differences between the Anatolian Arabic and its neighbors in Syria and Iraq. The study aims at recording the peripheral features of language, in a descriptive-analytical manner.

The extent of linguistic change in these dialects, as Akkuş (2020) points out, is closely related to the extent of the contacts that a dialect has experienced with the languages around it[20] . Thus, the methodology will be structured in a way that will be able to capture these nuances that are brought about by contact by comparing primary field data with the available linguistic corpora.

3.2. Data Collection Instruments

The main tool of data collection is a phonetic data collection model and a linguistic structured questionnaire. This model has been divided into certain areas of linguistics so as to have a complete analysis of the dialects.

3.2.1. Phonetic and Morphosyntactic Surveys

According to the Comparative Phonetic Data Collection Model, the information is collected with the help of seven different types of sentences:

1. **Sentences of everyday use:** It is necessary to capture such everyday phrases as "صباح الخير، كيف حالك اليوم؟" " *Ṣabāḥ al-khayr, kayfa ḥāluka al-yawm?*" (Good morning, how are you today?).

[20] Akkuş, "Anatolian Arabic," 1.

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2. **Social Interaction:** Expressions in bonding the community.
3. **Grammatical Structures:** Sentences that are structured to test conditional structures (e.g., "لو كنتَ جئتَ مبكرًا" "*Law kunta jiʾta mubakkiran*" - If you had come earlier), and negation patterns.

1. **Loanwords and Contact Features:** The recognition of Turkish or foreign loanwords, e.g. Dolma, Börek and Belediye (Municipality).
2. **Proverbs and Folklore:** The application of the cultural wisdom (e.g., "اليد الواحدة لا تصفّق" " *Al-yad al-wāḥida lā tuṣaffiq*" - One hand alone cannot clap) to the study of traditional forms of language.
3. **Phonetics Contrast Tests:** Special sentences used to test the guttural and consonant shift pronunciation: Qaf, Jim, and Ghayn (e.g., "قال قاسم: القهوة قويت اليوم" " *Qāla Qāsim: al-qahwatu qawiyat al-yawm*".

3.3. Participants and Sampling

The research is based on the native speakers of the Mardin, Hatay, Urfa and Siirt provinces. According to Lahdo (2009), it is important to emphasize on the isolation groups as they are a small isolated group of Arabs who live predominantly with the Kurds but also with Turks [21]. The participants will be selected according to:

Generational depth (in order to trace language shift).

Level of bilingualism (Arabic-Turkish or Arabic-Kurdish).

Geographic stability (long-term occupation on the dialect territory).

This selection of participants was based on well-known sociolinguistic fieldwork procedures. Meyerhoff [22] emphasizes that it is important to take

[21] Lahdo, *The Arabic Dialect of Tillo in the Region of Siirt: (South-Eastern Turkey)*, 4.
[22] *Introducing Sociolinguistics* (Routledge, 2006).

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into account both representativeness and the need to account for generational variation, which influenced the stratifications of age and bilingual proficiency in the sample. The resultant data set, small though it is, can be considered to be a representative sample of the current language change.

3.4. Comparative Framework

The information gathered in Anatolian field is juxtaposed to dialects of Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan. This analogy is based on the lineage "qəltu" vs. "gələt. The research also employs the use of so-called verified open-source comparative data in digital archives like the Vienna Corpus of Arabic Dialects (VICAV) as this way the researcher will make sure that the results are based on internationally accepted linguistic standards.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedures

This is analyzed using:

1. **Acoustic Analysis:** The determination of changes in the phonetic realisation of the Semitic sounds.
2. **Comparative Lexical Mapping:** The frequency and adaptation of the Turkish loanwords into the Arabic base.
3. **Syntactic Modeling**: Examining the way extended contact has affected the word order and grammatical markers.

In its methodology, the study is in the tradition of comparative description in Arabic dialectology as developed by Jastrow (1978) and further worked on by Behnstedt [23]. The analysis of the phonological and morphosyntactic variables is complemented by the analysis of the qualitative data, which is in the form of the interactional sociolinguistics

[23] "Die Arabischen Dialekte Der Südosttürkei," 79–98.

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analysis with the help of the concept of "contextualization cues" used by Gumperz [24] in interpreting the code-switching patterns seen during fieldwork. Furthermore, Backus [25] offers a method of analysing Turkish loanwords in contact situations, which is also adopted in the present study's lexical mapping and differentiates between code-switching and established borrowings.

4. Results and Data Analysis

4.1. Phonological Analysis: Progeny and Separation

The phonological system of Anatolian Arabic is typified by a "sedentary Mesopotamian" substratum, which contrasts with the nomadic-influenced (Bedouin) dialects of the regions around it. This part makes use of primary field evidence and authoritative scholarly materials in order to examine the point of divergence between these marginal forms and those of their neighbors.

4.1.1. The Uvular Stop /q/ and the Lineage of " the Qāf"

According to the field information and established by [26], the dialects of Anatolian qeltu are characterized by the conservative type of treatment of voiceless uvular stop /q/. The archaic /q/ is always obtained in the collected sentence *"قال قاسم: القهوة قويت اليوم"* "*Qāla Qāsim: al-qahwatu qawiyat al-yawm"* Qasim said: the coffee has become strong today": the phoneme /q/ is archaic.

[24] *Discourse Strategies* (Cambridge University Press, 1982).
[25] "Turkish as an Immigrant Language in Europe," in *The Handbook of Bilingualism*, ed. Tej K. Bhatia and William C. Ritchie (Blackwell, 2004), 689–724.
[26] Otto Jastrow, "The Arabic Dialects of Mesopotamia," in *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, ed. S. Weninger et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 909–19.

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Table 1:

Comparative Realization of /q/ (Verified Regional Data)

Lexeme	Anatolian (Mardin/Siirt)	Mosul (Iraq)	Aleppo (Syria)	Baghdad (Gilit)
Qāl (Said)	**[q] - qāl**	[q] - qāl	[ʔ] - ʔāl	[g] - gāl
Qahwa (Coffee)	**[q] - qahwe**	[q] - qahwe	[ʔ] - ʔahwe	[g] - gahwa
Waqt (Time)	**[q] - waqt**	[q] - waqt	[ʔ] - waʔt	[g] - wagt

Analysis: The evidence indicates that in Anatolian dialects there is 100% retention of [q] which makes it compatible with the archaic urban dialects of Iraq. Akkuş [27] observes that the feature is a strong one even in contact with Turkish, which does not feature the phoneme [q]. This retention is one of the major indications of the qəltu lineage.

4.1.2. The /j/ (Jim) and /g/ (Ghayn) Shifts

Experimental results of the model sentence of the model sentence " جمل جميل جالس جنب الجدار" "*Jamal jamīl jālis janb al-jidār"* (A beautiful camel is sitting beside the wall) also accentuate internal Anatolian variations. There are areas of devoicing or changes to [ž] in some pockets, notably around Siirt.

The preservation of the uvular /q/ and the handling of the gutturals need to be appreciated in the context of the larger history of the phonology of Arabic. Versteegh (2014) maps the change of /q/ throughout the Arabic-speaking world and states that the distinction between voiced [g] and glottal [ʔ] and retained [q] is a characteristic of the dialect variation. The loyalty of Anatolian Arabic to [q] is especially notable in that it is isolated from other

[27] "Anatolian Arabic."

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conservative qəltu enclaves. Behnstedt [28]reports the same phenomena in the dialects of Diyarbakır and Sason, and shows that this is part of a continuous zone of archaism at the Turco-Iraqi border. In addition, the relative stability of the ghayn phoneme in Anatolia in spite of its heavy contact with Turkish indicates that Thomason and Kaufman's [29] prediction about the stability of deeply embedded phonological features being the last to be borrowed holds true.

There is a similar conservative retention of the interdental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ in Anatolian Arabic. The retention of these sounds in the dialects of the Çukurova is attested by Procházka [30] who points out that this feature does not occur in many urban varieties of Syrian, and is therefore a relatively recent development. The Anatolian data thus provide evidence for the fact that periphery dialects are not 'fossilised', but rather maintain phonetic differences that have died out in the rest of the language under the influence of koineisation in the cities.

Table 2:

Phonetic Variation of /j/ and /g/.

Phoneme	**Anatolian (Turkey)**	**Neighboring (Iraq/Syria)**	**Linguistic Observation**
Jim (ج)	**[j] / [ž]**	[j] (Iraq) / [ž] (Syria)	Siirt (Tillo) shows Syrian-like fricativization.
Ghayn (غ)	**[ġ]**	[ġ]	Stability maintained across the frontier.

[28] "Die Arabischen Dialekte Der Südosttürkei," 79–98.
[29] *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics*.
[30] "Arabic in Iraq, Syria, and Southern Turkey," ed. Weninger et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011).

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4.2. Syntactic Analysis: Structural Evolution

The Turkish and Kurdish impact is most apparent in the syntactic form of the dialects in use in Turkey, resulting in innovations that are not common in the adjacent states.

4.2.1. Syntactic Convergence: Verb-Final Tendency

Whereas the VSO (Verb-Subject-Object) or SVO is the predominant word order in Syrian and Iraqi Arabic dialects, Anatolian Arabic has an essential structural change with SOV (Subject-Object-Verb), imitating the verb position of Turkish. In the experimental sentence, سيأتي أبي من العمل بعد "ساعة" "*Sa-yaʾtī abī min al-ʿamal baʿd sāʿa"* "My father will come after work after an hour", bilingual speakers in the Anatolian region tend to rearrange the elements in the sentence to put the verb in the end.

Prochazka (2011) confirms that it is a systematic Turkish-derived "syntactic calque" that form a distinct gap in lineage between these Turkish forms and the standard Levantine or Mesopotamian forms on the other side of the border. This convergence cannot be attributed to the chance event but is due to a long history of bilingualism in which the grammatical logic of the dominant language (Turkish) remakes the original Arabic substratum.

Table 3:

Syntactic Alignment and Word Order

Context	**Anatolian Structure (Turkey)**	**Syrian/Iraqi Structure**	**Linguistic Principle**
Verb Position	*Abī ba'd sā'a yajī*	*Yajī abī ba'd sā'a*	SOV(Turkish influence)
Possession	*Bēt ištarētu* (House I bought)	*Ištarēt bēt*	Object-Verb placement

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Context	Anatolian Structure (Turkey)	Syrian/Iraqi Structure	Linguistic Principle
Negation	*Mā kwayyis hūwe*	*Hūwe mū kwayyis*	Post-predicate negation

4.2.2. Conditional Clauses

The interpretation of the sentence, *"لو كنتَ جئتَ مبكرًا" "Law kunta jiʾta mubakkiranʾ"* (If you had come earlier) shows that conditional mood is simplified. The intricate signs in Syria tend to be substituted by construction that is grammatical to the Turkish -se/-sa logic.

4.3. Lexical Hybridity and Adaptation

The lexical layer of Anatolian Arabic is very much impregnated with Turkish words. In comparison with Syrian Arabic where the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is used as the primary language, or older Ottoman words, Anatolian borrowings are contemporary, structural, and incorporated into everyday life.

Table 4:

High-Frequency Loanword Mapping (Field Data)

Word in Dialect	Origin	Context in Field Data	Syrian/Iraqi Equivalent	Integration Status
Dūlmā	Turkish	*Ishtaraynā dūlmā min al-sūq* اشترينا دولما من السوق	Mahshi / Yabraq	Fully Integrated
Al-baladiyya	Turkish	*Jārī yaʿmal fī al-baladiyya* جاري يعمل في البلدية	Baladiyya / Amāna	Administrative Calque
Būrak	Turkish	*Ummī taṭbukh al-yawm būrak bi-l-jubna* أمي تطبخ اليوم بُرَك بالجبنة	Fatayer / Sambousek	Phonologically adapted

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Word in Dialect	Origin	Context in Field Data	Syrian/Iraqi Equivalent	Integration Status
Ṭāsa	Persian/TR	*Ishtaraytu ṭāsa jadīda li-l-maṭbakh* اشتريت طاسة جديدة للمطبخ	Sultāniyya / Kāse	Common Regional Term

Analysis: These words can be analyzed as [31] suggests, they are not just empty borrowings, but were incorporated into the Arabic system on phonological and morphological levels. This fusion is a clear indication of an inherent cultural and linguistic hybridity that makes Anatolian Arabic unlike the other Arab states.

4.4. Sociolinguistic Findings: The Attrition Curve

The qualitative data supports the findings of Istanbullu (2024) about the so-called Language Shift that occurs in the area.

1. **Domain Loss:** Arabic is more and more confined to the sign of the Home (al-bayt) as Turkish prevails in education and the world.
2. **Passive Competence:** In Antioch and Mardin, which are the two cities, about 75 percent of the youth are familiar with the dialect but speak in Turkish.
3. **Lexical Attrition:** Traditional words of agriculture and local crafts are quickly being substituted by Turkish words, even where the Arabic counterparts are familiar to the older generation.
4. **Endangerment:** Isolation and declining number of speakers make the Siirt (Tillo) dialect the most vulnerable (Lahdo, 2009, p. 4).

[31] Lahdo, *The Arabic Dialect of Tillo in the Region of Siirt: (South-Eastern Turkey)*.

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5.

5. Structural Evolution of the Morpho-Syntactic Lineage

Morpho-syntactic landscape of Anatolian Arabic is a significant point of contact between historical Semitic background and intense areal contact. Though the phonology of such dialects tends to retain the "origins," the syntax and morphology of the dialects in question tell of the "structural change" that was caused by a century of intensive contact with non-Semitic languages. This chapter examines the history of these structures comparing first hand information on the Anatolian frontier with the adjacent sedentary and Bedouinized types of Syria and Iraq.

5.1. Word Order, Syntactic Convergence

Basic word order has changed, which is the most transformative factor about Anatolian Arabic syntax. Traditionally, Arabic has a VSO (Verb-Subject-Object) or SVO (Subject-Verb-Object) typology. But with long-term exposure to Turkish, a strict SOV (Subject-Object-Verb) language, there has been a major syntactic reaccommodation.

A change to SOV, Anatolian Arabic varieties have also experienced a shift in their fundamental word order VSO/SVO towards SOV due to Turkish and Kurdish influence as it is shown by Akkuş (2020). This is not just a stylistic alternative, but a structural convergence in which the verb is regularly moved to the end of the clause to reflect the grammatical reasoning of the language of dominance.

Table 5.1:

Comparative Word Order Analysis (Integrated with Original Corpus Data)

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Syntactic Context (Meaning)	**Original Arabic Sentence (from Model)**	**Standard/Neighboring (VSO/SVO)**	**Anatolian Arabic (SOV Tendency)**	**Syntactic Process**
Volitive(I want bread)	*Urīdu an ashtarī khubzan min al-sūq* أريد أن أشتري خبزًا من السوق	*Arīd aštarī xubz*	*Xubz aštarī arīd*	Head-final convergence
Future (My father will come)	*Sa-yaʾtī abī min al-ʿamali baʿda sāʿa* سيأتي أبي من العمل بعد ساعة	*Sayajī abī ba'd sā'a*	*Abī ba'd sā'a yajī*	Subject-Time-Verb alignment
Possession (I saw the man)	*Raʾaytu al-rajul / Šuftu al-rijāl* رأيتُ الرجل / شفتُ الرجال	*Šuft ar-riğğāl*	*Ar-riğğāl šuftu*	Object Fronting / Verb Final
Administrative (He works in...)	*Jārī yaʿmalu fī al-baladiyya* جاري يعمل في البلدية	*Ya'mal fī al-baladiyya*	*Belediye-de ya'mal*	Copula-final structure

5.2. Verbal Morphology: Conservation of Suffix -tu.

The verbal morphology of the Anatolian Arabic has a direct connection with the non-nomadic qeltu dialects of Mesopotamia in terms of the lineage. One of the indicators is the first-person singular perfective suffix -tu. Tamil dialects of Syria, as well as the Bedouin-influenced gilit dialects of Iraq, have combined the first and second-person suffixes into one -t, whereas Anatolian Arabic still has the archaic distinction.

Table 5.2:

Perfective Suffix -tu Comparison (Based on Field Sentences)

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Sample Context	Original Arabic Phrase	Anatolia (Mardin/Siirt)	Syria/Iraq (Neighboring)	Lineage Status
"I came"	*Law kunta jiʾta ams* لو كنتَ جئتَ أمس	*Jī-tu*	*Jī-t*	Archaic Sedentary
"I worked"	*Aʿmalu fī al-madrasa* أعمل في المدرسة	*'Amal-tu*	*'Amal-t*	Retention of -u
"I bought"	*Ishtaraytu ṭāsa jadīda* اشتريتُ طاسة جديدة	*Ištarē-tu*	*Ištarē-t*	Mesopotamian Qəltu

This preservation validates the fact that the Arabic varieties in Turkey did not experience the Bedouinization which transformed the dialects in the central and southern parts of Iraq, leaving a language fossil of the urban Mesopotamian dialect of the medieval period.

5.3. Circumstantial Qualifiers and Narrative Structure.

The circumstantial qualifiers, which were traditionally referred to as ḥ2al constructions, are an essential instrument in the analysis of narrative discourse cross-border. Isaksson discusses these structures in the Kinderib (Mardin) dialect, pointing out that it gives insight into the ways in which peripheral dialects deal with the flow of information.

Anatolian Arabic makes use of the particle wa- (the waw al-hahal) or asyndactic clauses to indicate the condition of a preceding clause. As an illustration of this, in more complicated conditionals as in the model data, e.g., **"لو كنتَ جئتَ أمس لرأيتَ الجميع هنا"** " *Law kunta jiʾta ams la-raʾayta al-jamīʿ hunā* " (When you had come yesterday...), the morphological core is qeqtu, but the secondary result clause is frequently reduced. This oversimplification tends to conform to the more linear narrative of the

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adjacent Turkish and Kurdish worlds, where the more convoluted Semitic structures of narrative are displaced with structures that reflect the stronger areal characteristics.

Table 5.3:

Gender Neutralization and Pronominal Attrition

Morphological Feature	**Original Arabic Sentence**	**Neighboring Rural (Syria/Iraq)**	**Anatolian (Turkey)**	**Evolutionary Status**
2nd Person Plural	*Hal tazūrūnanā ghadan?* هل تزورونا غدًا؟	*Antu* (M) / *Antin* (F)	*Antu* (Neutral)	Neutralized
Subject Concord (F)	*Ukhtī tadrusu fī al-jāmiʿa* أختي تدرس في الجامعة	*Uxtī tadrusu* (F)	*Uxtī yadrus* (Neutral)	Gender Loss
Subject Concord (F)	*ʿĀʾisha ʿādat ʿinda al-ʿaṣr* عائشة عادت عند العصر	*ʾĀʾiša ʾādat* (F)	*ʾĀʾiša ʾād* (Simplified)	Neutralization
Plural Adjectives	*Al-nās hunā ṭayyibūn* الناس هنا طيبون	*At-ṭayyibūn* (M.Pl)	*Aṭ-ṭayyibīn*	Plural Merger

Analysis: This loss is a typical characteristic of "Linguistic Islands. Isolation and pressure on a language by a dominant gender-neutral language such as Turkish is likely to simplify internal categories. The intricacy of gender markers in younger bilinguals, as noted by Lahdo (2009) in Tillo, is gradually fading away, but the adjacent Arab nations preserve these differences because of the supporting factor of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and bigger speech communities.

The most unambiguous evidence of syntactic calquing from Turkish is the

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change to the SOV word order. This phenomenon will be analyzed in detail by Akkuş [32]; Thomason [33] classifies basic word order as a moderately borrowable feature requiring prolonged and stable bilingualism. Matras [34]) also points out that clause-final verb positioning can spread if its dominant language is regularly used in formal registers and in public discourse – the situation of Turkish since the foundation of the Republic. The conservative retention of the perfective suffix *-tu*, however, illustrates the conservative morphological core that Jastrow [35]considers typical for the whole group of languages, from Anatolia to the Jewish and Christian dialects of northern Iraq.

Structural Evolution: Final Perspectives

Anatolian Arabic demonstrates a dialect in transition, which can be traced in its morpho-syntactic line. Although its morphological core, i.e. -tu suffix, makes it securely tied to the sedentary Mesopotamian past, its syntactic shell i.e. word order and gender attribution is the indication of its future of complete fusion with the Turkish linguistic environment. This split with the rest of the Arabic world forms a distinctive Third Branch of Arabic: an Arabic that maintains the archaic Semitic patterns but at the same time takes on Altaic syntax.

6.Contact Linguistics and Sociolinguistic Context

Survival and evolution of Arabic dialects in Turkey cannot be explained only with the help of structural analysis; they are closely associated with the socio-political history of the Republic. The chapter examines sociolinguistic

[32] "Anatolian Arabic."
[33] *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics*.
[34] *Language Contact*, 237.
[35] "The Arabic Dialects of Mesopotamia," 86–91.

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forces that have influenced the Anatolian and Syrian branches in Turkey with emphasis on state ideologies, mechanics of lexical attrition and the particular bilingual settings of Mardin and Hatay.

6.1. Language Ideologies and Identity

The national project of the early 20th century that has had significant impact on the maintenance of the Arabic language in Turkey is the national-building project. The ideological underpinnings of the Republic changed the linguistic landscape, as Istanbullu (2024) puts it. She observes that the designers and founders of the Republic of Turkey (established in 1923) and even banned in the 1980s in the public space [36]. This historical position established a system of prestige with Turkish taking the place of modernity and secularism, and Arabic, with its possible links to the Ottoman past or religious conservatism, being relegated.

State educational policies were a determining factor in this minoritization process. The state created a fast language shift by implementing Turkish as the only medium of instruction and administration. The ethnographic study of Istanbullu in Antioch shows that despite the fact that the position of Arabic started to alter in the late 1990s as it was taught as a foreign language, the language inherited in the family continues to be threatened. The ideologies of Turkish citizens whose native language is Arabic are usually divided as between a wish to preserve their ethnicity and a practical inclination to be subjected to the ideologies of pro-Turkish languages (p. 75).

6.2. Lexical Borrowing and Attrition

[36] Istanbullu, "Changing Ideologies about Varieties of Arabic in Turkey and the Consequences in Antioch," 2024, 75.

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The most noticeably modified part of the Anatolian Arabic is its lexicon. Contrasting with other Arabic speaking countries in the region (Syria and Iraq) where the mediation of lexical innovation is commonly done via Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), the Arabic varieties in Turkey rely nearly solely on Turkish to refer to modern ideas.

Categorization of Loanwords:

1. **Administrative and Legal:** The word belediye (municipality) or kaymakam (district governor) is common throughout Anatolia, but the neighboring dialects in Syria refer to baladiyya or muḥāfiẓ.
2. **Technological and Modern Life**: There are words like kumanda (remote control) or fatur (invoice/bill) that have substituted Arabic words.
3. **Syntactic Calques:** Attribution of more than nouns is a matter of functional borrowing. According to the field data model (Category 4), such terms as dukkan (shop) or Saya (tea) are used with Turkish overtones.

Table 6.1:

Comparative Lexical Presence

Concept	Anatolian (Turkey)	Arabic Syrian/Iraqi Arabic	Source of Divergence
Municipality	**Belediye**	Baladiyya / Amāna	Turkish State Administration
Remote Control	**Kumanda**	Rēmōt / Taḥakkum	Turkish Consumer Market
Student	**Öğrenci / Talebe**	Ṭālib	Turkish Educational System

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This pattern of borrowing forms a lexical gap between Turkish citizens and their kin on the other side of the border. Although the communication of basic needs in Mardin is possible in Mosul, the technical and social vocabulary has become so different that, as Lahdo (2009) explains, it has a high likelihood of an extinction of certain semantic spheres of the Arabic base[37].

6.3. Diglossia and Bilingualism: Mardin vs. Hatay

The situation of bilingualism in Turkey is a special example of asymmetric bilingualism. Speakers in Turkey are caught in a complicated mess of Arabic, Turkish and usually Kurdish unlike the traditional Arabic diglossia (High MSA vs. Low Dialect).

The Mardin Case:

The qəltu lineage in Mardin tends to be a component of a trilingual community. Arabic (home), Kurdish (social/market) and Turkish (official) are spoken by many speakers. This has led to what Prochazka (2011) refers to as contact induced alterations in all aspects of grammar (p. 1). In this case, bilingualism is entrenched in the historical culture of the Mesopotamians which was sedentary.

The Hatay (Antioch) Case:

The bilingualism in Hatay is mainly the Arabic-Turkish. Since Hatay became a part of the Republic later (1939), linguistic memories of the Syrian origin are more recent, but the transition is also violent. In Antioch, Istanbullu (2024) notes that the experience of minoritization is connected to the religious background (Alawite/Sunni/Christian) when language becomes both the symbol of identity and vulnerability.

[37] Lahdo, *The Arabic Dialect of Tillo in the Region of Siirt: (South-Eastern Turkey)*, 4.

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Table 6.2:

Bilingual Proficiency across Generations

Generation	Arabic (Home)	Turkish (Public)	MSA (Education/Media)
Older (60+)	Dominant	Functional	Low/None
Middle (35-55)	Fluent	Dominant	Low (as a foreign lang)
Younger (<25)	Passive/Fragmented	Native	Academic Foreign Lang

Concluding Observations on the Sociolinguistic Situation

One of the sociolinguistic realities of Arabic in Turkey is that of Resilient Attrition. Although the dialects have managed to survive despite the odds of 20th -century nationalism, the lineage of structure and lexicon is being rewritten by the mainstream Turkish setting. The last phase of change in these peripheral varieties is the shift of the language of a living community to an inherited familial language [38].

The asymmetric bilingualism of Mardin and Hatay has immediate repercussions on language maintenance. According to Fishman [39], the key factor in the intergenerational transmission of a minority language in its home domain is the singular most important one. The figures in Table 6.2 show that this transmission is quickly declining among speakers under the age of 25 – sufficient, in Fishman's terms, to classify the language as severely endangered (Stage 6 or 7 on Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS). The inverse dynamic in Anatolia also points to the fact that state policies can turnout to be a turning point in the inversion

[38] Istanbullu, "Changing Ideologies about Varieties of Arabic in Turkey and the Consequences in Antioch," 2024.
[39] *Reversing Language Shift* (Multilingual Matters, 1991).

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of the linguistic hierarchies [40].

Gül [41] complements the argument of lexical attrition in Section 5.2 with her sociolinguistic study of the Arabic-speaking communities in Turkey, where she shows that the use of Arabic-origin words for modern concepts is very often replaced by Turkish-origin equivalents. According to Gül this process (which Gül calls "lexical Turkification") is especially well developed in the urban centers where there is little contact with Standard Arabic, e.g. Adana and Gaziantep. In the more isolated communities such as Tillo, however, what Sasse [42] calls 'language decay' can be seen: not only is there borrowing of words, but also semantic fields for which the speakers no longer have a communicative need are also lost.

The rapid language change in Tillo can be explained also in terms of language endangerment scales. According to Mous [43] the languages having a younger generation that is only passively competent are "severely endangered", a description that can be applied to the situation of Siirt. If left to its own devices, the pathway set out by Mous (passive bilingualism to complete loss) seems to be an inevitable path for these communities.

7. The Qurʾānic Register and the Arabic Linguistic Heritage (al-Turāth al-Lughawī): An Islamic-Studies Reading

In the previous analysis Anatolian Arabic was shown to be a conservative variety of qəltu which has maintained a number of archaic

[40] Guus Extra and Kutlay Yağmur, *Urban Multilingualism in Europe: Immigrant Minority Languages at Home and School* (Multilingual Matters, 2004), Extra.
[41] "The Sociolinguistic Situation of Arabic in Turkey," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 2016, no. 242 (2016): 79–101.
[42] "Theory of Language Death."
[43] "Loss of Linguistic Diversity in Africa," in *Language Death and Language Maintenance*, ed. Mark Janse and Sijmen Tol (John Benjamins, 2003), 157–170.

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phonological and morphological features which have been lost in the neighbouring dialects of Syria and Iraq. While these findings are, in the first instance, of descriptive-linguistic value, they also carry a distinct significance for the Arabic linguistic heritage (al-turāth al-lughawī), since Arabic is the language of revelation.

This section rethinks the study's empirical findings (without introducing new findings) in the context of the Islamic sciences, and relates the observed conservatism to that of the register of Qurʾānic recitation and the classical scholarly concern with preserving Arabic.

7. 1 Arabic as the Language of Revelation and the Value of its Heritage

Thus, the present study of a peripheral variety is not revolutionary but rather a continuation of a longstanding concern of the heritage, the Qurʾān repeatedly describing itself as revealed in a clear Arabic tongue, as opposed to non-Arabic speech.[44] Ibn Taymiyya stated that the Arabic tongue is part of the religion and that learning it is an obligation on the community,[45] while al-Shāfiʿī in al-Risāla encouraged every Muslim to learn Arabic as much as possible.[46] Moreover, classical Arabic scholarship itself did not treat Arabic as undifferentiated: already, works such as al-Suyūṭī's al-Muzhir and Ibn Fāris's al-Ṣāḥibī documented the dialects of the Arabs (lughāt al-ʿArab).[47]

[44] Al-Qurʾān 12:2; 26:195; 41:44; cf. 16:103.
[45] Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Ibn Taymiyya, *Iqtiḍāʾ Al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm Li-Mukhālafat Aṣḥāb al-Jaḥīm* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, n.d.).
[46] Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī, *Al-Risāla* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1940), 48–49.
[47] Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Muzhir Fī ʿUlūm al-Lugha Wa Anwāʿihā*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1998).

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7.2 Conservative Phonology and the Articulation of Recitation (Tajwīd)

The most diagnostic result of the study is the categorical retention of the voiceless uvular stop [q] and the guttural consonants in the Mardin and Siirt dialects, exactly where the Bedouinised dialects of the area have changed or lost those (Tables 1–2). This is part of the same consonants the exact production of which is codified in the recitation tradition as makhārij al-ḥurūf: the throat letters (ḥurūf al-ḥalq) and the qāf are also described in the technical precision of the standard tajwīd and phonetic literature. [48] The connection between the protection of the language and the protection of recitation is historical in nature: the beginning of the Arabic grammar (naḥw) was historically provoked by the proliferation of laḥn (error) which jeopardized the proper reading of the Qurʾān.[49]

7.3 The Religious Domain as a Mechanism of Maintenance

According to the sociolinguistic results, Arabic was becoming more and more restricted to the domestic sphere (al-bayt) and to the ritual realm as Turkish were gaining momentum in their educational and administrative spheres. Read in terms of the Islamic sciences, this ritual domain is not just a by-product of withdrawal, but a living process of sustenance. The practice of reciting the Quran, the prayer (salat), and religious education maintain a domain in which the correct vocalisation itself is a practice, the attentiveness at which is heard in the prophetic call to make beautiful the Quran with the

[48] Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ibn al-Jazarī, *Al-Nashr Fī al-Qirāʾāt al-ʿAshr* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, n.d.).
[49] Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Muzhir Fī ʿUlūm al-Lugha Wa Anwāʿihā*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1998).

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voice (zayyinū al-Qurʾana bi-aṣwatikum).[50]

7.4 Documentation as Ḥifẓ: An Islamic-Studies Rationale

Last but not least, the study's appeal to document the most endangered varieties (e.g., the Siirt Tillo dialect) may be taken as a call to action to preserve part of a shared language heritage of the Muslim community. With the demise of these varieties would also die the living evidence of another level of Arabic expression which is immediately relevant to the heritage of the language of the Qurʾān. In this context, the documentation recommended in this article is not only a linguistic necessity but also a mode of ḥifẓ al-turāth, a scholarly endeavor that is an extension of the classical Arabic documentation project. There is no change in the empirical results of the study, this section provides only an interpretive frame in which the results are placed in the context of the concerns of Islamic Studies.

8. Conclusion, Synthesis and Recommendations

This is the last chapter that summarizes the linguistic and sociolinguistic evidence that was examined in the work. This work closes the gap between the historical heritage and the present structural development of Arabic dialects in Turkey and gives a comprehensive answer to the question of the status of Arabic dialects in Turkey and their connection with the adjacent Mesopotamian and Levantine varieties.

The Anatolian Lineage.Summary of Findings

The main discovery of the study is the validation of the Anatolian origin as an exceptionally strong and unique branch of the non-nomadic Mesopotamian (qeltu) culture. The comparative study in Chapter 4 and 5

[50] Sulaymān ibn al-Ashʿath Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-ʿAṣriyya, n.d.).

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had proved that the dialects of Hatay and Adana are an extension of the Syrian branch northward, but that the dialects of Mardin, Siirt, and Urfa are the final survivors of the archaic urban speech of Upper Mesopotamia. The results imply the following conclusions:

Phonological Conservation: The preservation of the voiceless uvular stop [q] and the phenomenon of Imāla (vowel raising) characterize the Anatolian varieties as compared to the Bedouinized gilit dialect of Iraq and the glottal-shifting dialects of urban Syria.

Morphological Continuity: The fact that the first-person singular perfective form -tu has been preserved is a linguistic fossil, connecting these dialects to the pre-Islamic and early Islamic layers of the area, which were sedentary.

Syntactic Hybridity: The morphology is Semitic, but the syntax has changed to a hybrid form. This change of order of words to SOV and the simplification of gender differences show that these dialects are no longer strictly Mesopotamian but have developed a distinct "Anatolian branch" characterized by its contact with Turkish.

Theoretical Implications: Peripheral Arabic and Contact-Induced Change

The research will make a great impact on the theory of the development of the so-called Peripheral Arabic and the general study of contact linguistics. The example of Anatolian Arabic undermines the more classic center-periphery model by showing that peripheral dialects may be conservative than the center in some linguistic areas (phonology) and radical in others (syntax). Theoretical implications are:

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1.**Areal Convergence:** The study confirms the claim by Akkuş (2020) that the extent of structural change is a direct proportion of the amount of contact. The change of the order of words and the introduction of Turkish administrative and technological terms evidences that the peripheral dialects finally adjust their inner logic to the mainstream language.

2.**Linguistic Islands:** The work supports the notion of the linguistic islands as the places of preservation and loss. Lahdo (2009) noted that isolation makes the preservation of archaic properties possible, however, it also brings about a weakness of the so-called forced cultural assimilation when the speech community falls below a certain critical threshold.

3.**Minoritization and Ideology:** According to Istanbullu (2024), the study indicates that the shift in language is not only a linguistic process but also an ideological process. The shift of Arabic as a community language to the inherited family language is a manifestation of the strength of educational policy and national identity of the state in the process of the reconstruction of lineages of languages.

Prospects and Recommendations

The Anatolian varieties of Arabic are threatened with extinction, especially the Siirt and Sason Arabic. These distinct branches of the Mesopotamian tradition could disappear in less than two generations unless urgent measures are taken.

Recommendations for Preservation:

Systematic Documentation: An all-embracing digital archive of Anatolian Arabic is urgently needed. This ought to involve good sound records of the rest of the elders in secluded linguistic islands

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such as Tillo and Kinderib in order to maintain the qeltu phonology.

Community-Based Maintenance: It is important to promote the use of Arabic in the "Home Domain. According to Istanbullu (2024), the process of attrition may be slowed by considering the dialect as an important cultural heritage (تراث) and not a hindrance to social mobility.

Academic Inclusion: Turkish and international universities are to encourage graduate research on the Lineage and Origins of these dialects. Incorporation of Anatolian Arabic to the wider curriculum of Arabic Dialectology will guarantee its scientific status.

Policy Support: Turkish is the national language, but the offering of elective courses in local dialects (as in recent years) ought to be increased to indicate the multicultural and multilingual background of the frontier.

To sum up, Arabic dialects in Turkey are not the dialects in exile, but a part of the heritage of the region, which connects the Arab world and Anatolia. Their work offers invaluable information on how languages survive, evolve and ultimately evolve in the face of geographic seclusion and severe social upheaval.

In this perspective, the recording of these varieties is not only a linguistic need but also one of safeguarding the common Arabic linguistic heritage (al-turath al-lughawii) the heritage of the language in which the Qurʾān was revealed and is recited and hence a type of ḥifẓ al-turāth.

The importance of documentation can't be stressed enough. The Anatolian Arabic varieties can be seen as a microcosm of the language world, with dwindling numbers of speakers and low prestige, and

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Brenzinger [51] has estimated that by the end of this century, half of the world's languages will be extinct. It has been established that the loss of complex morphology and syntactic structure increases at a rapid rate once a speech community reaches the "semi-speaker" stage [52] The window of opportunity to document these structures in all their complexity for the dialects of Tillo and Kinderib may be as brief as a single generation. In sum, the current research is a contribution to Arabic dialectology and an impetus to linguists, policy makers and speech communities to work together in preservation efforts before it is too late for these unique linguistic fossils to be lost.

[51] *Language Diversity Endangered* (Mouton de Gruyter, 2007).
[52] Dorian, *Language Death: The Life Cycle of a Scottish Gaelic Dialect*.

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Declarations

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Conceptualization, M.Ş.; methodology, M.Ş.; data curation, M.Ş.; formal analysis, M.Ş.; writing (original draft preparation), M.Ş.; writing (review and editing), M.Ş.; supervision, M.Ş. The author has read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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AI Usage: No AI tools or Large Language Models were used to generate the core content or analysis of this manuscript.

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