

## Kinship Semantics; English & Arabic Language

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### **ABSTRACT:**

This research examines the semantics and function of kinship terminology in a comparative analysis between modern Arabic and American English. It evaluates the differences in language between common roles found within families and extrapolates this information to make relevant conclusions about kinship roles and cultural differences. The research successfully illustrates how each language identifies members of the family in a different manner. Arabic identifies the difference between maternal and paternal lineage in kinship terminology, while American English does not. Further differences are found in root words and other functional aspects of language construction.

**Keywords:** kinship, American-English, Arabic, semantics, kinship-terminology.

## اللغة الإنجليزية والعربية بين دلالات القرابة

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المصطلحات الرئيسية : القرابة ، اللغة الإنجليزية الأمريكية ، اللغة العربية ، دلالات الألفاظ ، مصطلحات القرابة

الملخص:

يدرس في هذا البحث دلالات ووظيفة مصطلحات القرابة في تحليل مقارن بين اللغة العربية الحديثة والإنجليزية الأمريكية. وإنه يقيم الاختلافات في اللغة بين الأدوار الشائعة الموجودة داخل العائلات ويستنتج هذه المعلومات لتقديم استنتاجات ذات صلة حول أدوار القرابة والاختلافات الثقافية. يوضح البحث بنجاح كيف تحدد كل لغة أفراد الأسرة بطريقة مختلفة. تحدد اللغة العربية الفرق بين نسب الأم والأب في مصطلحات القرابة ، في حين أن اللغة الإنجليزية الأمريكية لا تفعل ذلك. تم العثور على مزيد من الاختلافات في الكلمات الأساسية والجوانب الوظيفية الأخرى لبناء اللغة .

### ● Introduction

Language in any society plays an important role in communication and understanding the roles placed upon us. Much of how we see ourselves in the context of our family or kinship units depends upon language and the words we associate with them. This research aims to identify the language that different cultures use to describe kinship units. This research evaluate language usage and semantics into different cultures. Specifically, this research addresses the English and Arabic languages and how these languages identify kinship roles. By understanding how these two very distinct and separate languages communicate the same types of interpersonal and familial relationships, the research can uncover differences in how these languages influence these types of relationships.

### ● Kinship Roles

This research evaluate kinship roles in terms of language structure and semantics. Kinship roles in the words that describe them are prevalent in any language, as humans need ways to relate to one another. By utilizing these types of words, a research can adequately compare language usage between two different languages. Doing so provides an opportunity to better understand the communication style and preferences found in other cultures, perhaps closing the gap prevalent when communicating between different languages.

Kinship roles play an important part in any language. These are the words or phrases are used to describe the relationship to others about our family, whether these individuals joined our family and marriage or by birth. Every language expresses these relationships in a different way. It is possible that how these relationships are expressed will play an impact on how we think about these individuals and their roles within our lives.

Conversely, some languages made similar sentence or semantic structure to describe the same kinship role. Whether or not these similar semantic structure may have little to no impact on the role. It is possible that one language could use the same word to mean something else entirely. This research will evaluate similar usage to identify any instances where a word means one thing in one language and another thing entirely in another.

For the purpose of this report, kinship roles include familial relationships that originated at birth or by marriage. There will be no differentiation between these two different modes of family structure and will examine each. It is the researcher's intention that utilizing a wide net of applicable kinship roles, the research will encompass a larger set of words for comparison in this report .

The purpose of this research is to compare and evaluate the kinship terminology and semantics found in both American English and Modern Arabic. It is the intention of the researcher to uncover differences that may impact culture and understanding through these words. While a number of other reports have explored kinship

terminology at large and how kinship terminology exists within specific languages, this research aims to provide additional understanding of the differences between these two languages.

Furthermore, this research acknowledges the importance placed on kinship terminology as the foundation of identity, language and self-awareness. By focusing on how linguistically these two languages differentiate between different kinship roles, this research will provide insight into how language and kinship terminology shapes cultural awareness and importance. Hopefully, this research will be able to illustrate the differences in kinship terminology impacts family relationships and self-identity.

- **Hypothesis:**

The researcher hypothesizes that there will be significant differences between kinship terminology and semantics found in Arabic and English. Specifically, the differences found between the languages will identify some opportunities to better understand cultural differences and shifts. By identifying language differences, it is possible that the research will be able to highlight opportunities for improvement in communication between vastly different cultures and people.

- **Literature Review:**

This literature review covers the basics for semantics research and delves deeper into what academic research has been conducted in this area already. Using this information, the research will continue based on the specifics of American English and Modern Arabic .

Researchers have identified that “semantics is generally defined as the study of meaning.”(Lyons, 1977, p.1.) While many research studies have drawn “a distinction to be drawn between the meaning of a word and the meaning of a (non-idiomatic) phrase or sentence is obvious enough, as also is the fact that the meaning of a phrase or sentence is a product of the meaning of the words of which it is composed.” (

Lyons,1977,p.4.) This substitution allows researchers to understand how two synonyms really mean something slightly different.

Kinship semantics represents a unique challenge for researchers. This is because “kinship vocabulary in many languages also manifests the principle of antipodal opposition in various ways.”(Lynos,1977,p.284.) In many language, there is a “two-dimensional space structured in terms of the symmetrical relations being-married-to (being-the-spouse-of) and being-born-of-the-same-parents as (being-the-sibling-of)...cannot know in advance...that they will be lexicalized in any given language”(Lyons,1977,p.284.)This is complicated by the fact that “even though the language operates in a society which institutionalizes monogamous marriage and structures its kinship system in terms of it.”(Lyons,1977,p.284.) As family structures become diverse, this two-dimensional set of kinship term may no longer become effective. For instance, same-sex couples defy this duality .

Kinship research has been around within different disciplines for years. It is interesting to note that kinship semantics “was first proposed, not by linguists, as a general theory of semantic structure, but by anthropologists as a technique for describing and comparing the vocabulary of kinship in various languages.”(Lyons,1977,p.318.) This is largely because language evolves as the people themselves do.

There have been research studies that examine semantics in Arabic specifically. For example, one project “examined the function within lexical access of the main morphemic units from which most Arabic words are assembled, namely roots and word patterns.”(Cohen,2001,p.25.) This study revealed a bit about the etymology, as well, to determine and predict future word usage. To complete the analysis of the comparison between the English language and Arabic language, it is important to understand how the Arabic language functions. By setting the morphology of the two languages, we can develop a better understanding of how we can apply various methods to analyze kinship terms. The morphology of the Arabic language differs from

the English language. Therefore, it is important that we provide a detailed analysis of how the Arabic light which functions. The “morphology of Arabic language constitutes two main systems: inflectional morphology and derivational morphology. Inflectional morphology is used to express grammatical relations and derivational morphology deals with the formation of new words in language; it contains two types of word patterns: verbal and nominal.”(Abu-Rabia,2004,p.321.)

Another key factor in understanding how the Arabic language functions is understanding how the words in the Arabic language are represented. According to Abu-Rabia, the results from the “study on the morphology of Arabic is that roots and word patterns have no essential role in word organization in the mental lexicon. In addition, words in nominal pattern in derivational morphology are represented in their whole shape in the mental lexicon and each word has an independent representation.”(Abu-Rabia,2004,p.321.) This shows that each word has its own representation within the language. Therefore, it is important to note the differences between the words describing similar relationships. This will usually manifest in different representations for relationship such as cousins, differentiated by gender and which side of the family they come from.

While it is important to consider a wide sampling set of language when doing a linguistic analysis, it is often a standard procedure to disqualify numerals. Numerals must be to cook disqualified because they are generally not unique to a language. According to Ahlers, “numerals are rarely analyzed as indices of the kinds of cultural information seen in such semantic fields as, e.g., kinship terminology.”(Ahlers,2012,pp.533.) Using numerals as part of a kinship terminology can drastically distort the outcome of the analysis based on the fact that numerals can show as similarities between languages making them look more similar than they actually are.

When analyzing a language, it can be helpful to consider samples that are varying situations that are consistent to all societies and loves languages. For example,

“conflict resolution is a basic activity articulated and conducted in forms that significantly vary across cultures.”(Cohen,2001,p.25.) Although various cultures will have different methods of resolving issues, it is a consistent process across all cultures. Therefore, researchers can use the language used in various languages to resolve conflicts as a common base to start analysis from various lounges.

Further study of which used for similar processes in different cultures can also reveal differences the mindset of various cultures. A “pilot study comparing Arabic, English, and Hebrew indicates that the model of conflict resolution implicit in English terminology is merely one possible way to depict reality. To non-English speakers it may even appear idiosyncratic.” (Cohen,2001,p.25.) As the research shows, various cultures will have different methods of resolving conflict which may lead to the development of an alternative way of thinking not only about resolving conflict, but how they perceive the world around .

This background reviewed the available published research conducted by previous researchers into the semantics of morphology of various language. Studies similar to this one I have Artie been conducted regarding the English and Arabic languages. By reviewing the results, we can develop more in-depth research methods and potentially avoid issues found in conducting previous research. While it is important to conduct analysis on a wide sampling of language terms, there are certain parts of language that must really be disqualified. This is generally done for parts or language that are not specific to the language can be found as common parts of many languages. Numerals are the best example of this. This background also shows that it is important to have a detailed understanding of how language functions so it is possible to develop specific comparison methods to compare similar parts of various languages.

#### ● **Methodology :**

The methodology behind any research work plays a critical role in the ultimate outcome of the research. The research methodology for this project will consist of

detailed research regarding a literature review of the works of several leading linguistic researchers, as well as an organized comparison of a set of words describing family relationships from multiple languages. To complete the project, analyst will first conduct research and complete the literature review to set starting point for the project as well as define the testing requirements for the analysis. Then, the analyst will define a set of words to be analyzed based on standard family relationships. The set will include the most common relationship descriptors, specifically those used for close in direct relatives, and will include several of the words used to describe more indirect relationships. Where applicable, the set will also include variations of relationship descriptors used to describe the same family relationship (father and dad can both be analyzed).

The analysis will focus on the English and Arabic languages as on the surface, the two languages share few common traits. The analysis will look deeper into the languages to determine if there are any similarities, and will seek to classify them. The office will also seek to classify specific differences in the languages.

The literature review will use previous research conducted into this field to establish guidelines for the analysis. It will also help the analyst avoid common issues in linguistics research. Dallas will use the literature review to familiarize himself/herself with methods generally used to conduct linguistic research, as well as generally accepted terminology used to describe the results of linguistic research.

- **Use of a Literature Review:**

The importance of the literature reviewed cannot be understated as it establishes the chain of research previously conducted over a long period of time. Languages have existed for thousands of years and in that time languages have lived, died, and undergone extensive changes. There've been many research studies into the development and use of language overall, many more studies focusing on the



comparison of languages. For this study to present relevant information, you must first show where previous research has gone and where this new research fits in .

English, though thousands of years old, is relatively young compared to other languages. Arabic is one of the older still living languages spoken on the planet today. History shows that many of the English-speaking countries have historical ties and influences from areas known to be predominantly Arabic – speaking regions at the time those connections were established. Therefore, it is possible to say that the development of the English language may have been affected by the influence of the Arabic language.

Though the two languages they share common influences or have had one influence the other, there are still clear differences between the two. Most notable of which is the alphabet structure of each language. English is based on the Latin now for about while Arabic is based on the Arabic abjad. The two languages use completely separate methods to represent themselves. Therefore, it is crucial to the completion of an analysis of the languages that an examination of research into both languages be conducted.

The literature review aims to present research into the separate languages as well as examine the research comparing the two languages. The literature review also establishes the reasons why the two languages appear to be so dissimilar including the fact that they developed at different times and in different regions. By examining past research we can immediately rule out certain hypotheses derived from previous comparisons of the languages, as well as avoid previous dead ends in reports. Conducting a literature review will also provide us with a more thorough understanding of what tools and resources are needed to conduct comparisons and evaluations.

The literature review also provide a more thorough understanding of how languages are analyzed and how researchers classify the differences and languages. One of the key details that the literature review covers is the identification and

classification of semantics which are key to completing the analysis of the two languages.

Conducting a detailed review of previous research also provide analysts with a better understanding of how each language functions. More specifically, how words are structured and how they are restructured to modify the words meaning for specific uses. Such modifications include the use of pronouns as well as modifications based on subject matter, gender, and tenses.

In reviewing previous research, analysts may also find key information to this study that could drastically change the outcome of the study. This can include details such as differences in the way each language refers to specific common societal structures. As of two languages develop function differently, there may be differences in how the languages used to refer to the same object in each language. This project will analyze how each language refers to different units within the family structure. The literature review to provide information on how each culture that uses different languages refers to different people within the family hierarchy. If a fundamental difference between the languages exists, it may make comparing similar words in both languages more difficult as they may not be used to refer to the same object in a similar manner. A review of previous research should show how the languages used and help analysts avoid complex language usage barriers.

- **Componential Analysis:**

The componential analysis will focus on identifying a set of semantic features, and use them to analyze the structure and meaning of words. These semantic features will be comprised of basic features of real-world objects used to divide words into subsections. Generally, semantic features will be considered as a *present* or *not present* binary feature. This means that the semantic features applied to the word that is being analyzed. For example, iPhones are generally referred to as “smart phones”. We can use the semantic features that comprised of the following phone features: +/-

call, +/–text, +/–internet, and +/–apps, to determine the meaning of the word “smart phone.

”To complete the analysis, we examine the iPhone to see which of these semantic features applies. In this analysis, we would ask, “Is the phone able to make phone calls?” If the answer is yes, then the first semantic feature applies. We repeat this process for each of the semantic features, in this case resulting in all of the semantic features being present. So, we can infer that the meaning of the word “smart phone” refers to the device that has the ability to make phone calls, send text messages, connect to the Internet, and install apps .

In this project, we will use this method to evaluate Arabic and English words to determine the differences in family relationship identifiers between the two languages. This will include words such as father, brother, mother, and sister as well as many others. The semantic features that will include features such as gender identifiers (male/female), age/maturity identifiers (child/adult), and relationship hierarchy identifiers (parent/child).

For this analysis to be successful, analysts will need a thorough knowledge of both Arabic and English to identify semantic characteristics of words in both languages including traditional prefixes and suffixes unique to each language. It is important to identify the correlation between semantic features in both languages, specifically finding like pair of identifying features. For example, the word “man” is the common connection between the words “man” and “woman” that signifies that both words refer to adult people. Adult and People are the semantic features of the word man and woman. To compare this evenly, we would need to identify the word/part of a word that refers to adult people in Arabic.

One of the hardest aspects of completing the analysis will be the translation of Arabic into a comparable form with English. This means that Arabic texts will need to be translated into English to complete the analysis, as Arabic and English are based on separate alphabets. We will use tools such as Google Translate to convert the

Arabic abjad (alphabet) into the Latin alphabet to examine the structure of words and see if there are commonalities.

- **Ethical Considerations:**

Ethical considerations for the study should include defining a representative set of information relating to kinship terms. While it is easy to assume that kinship terms are consistent across multiple languages or that they can be translated across multiple languages, effort must be put into confirming that this is the case. Otherwise, this could create a series of flawed results due to inaccurate set of kinship terms.

Effort must also be put into defining the differences between past research and present research, as parts of the research could overlap. When defining the goals of the research itself, it is important to not only focus on the quality of the representative sample, but effort must be put into expanding the quantity of terms analyzed. This will ensure that a large enough representative sample is taken from each language allowing a more comprehensive and representative analysis.

By following these method of analyses, we're hopeful that research will show a definitive path of language evolution. We are able to identify the differences between languages, we may also be able to identify the causes for these differences. They may also be able to identify similarities that show common history between the two languages and could reveal more detailed information about the connection between societies. Implementing various methods of analysis also helps ensure that collected data is more representative and can compensate for unseen flaws and other research methods.

- **The Analysis:**

This part details the analysis performed on the kinship terms from identifying which terms are to be utilized to the analysis itself. Kinship terms are especially important within a culture. There is a tremendous amount of "linguistic derivations,

meanings, and social significance of kinship terms.”(Al-Qudrah, & Abdelaziz,2008,p.193.) For each of the roles, there are many different variations. For this reason, the first part of the analysis simply determines the including kinship roles for use within this research study.

#### • Componential Analysis

To begin the componential analysis, we must first define the set of kinship terms to be analyzed. This analysis will focus on terms describing the primary family relationships, as well as several secondary and extended relationships. Primary relationships include the nuclear family, specifically the parents, and their direct children. This will also include the relationship of each parent to each child and each child to the other children. For the set of primary relationships we will use the words: father and dad, mother and mom, son, daughter, brother, and sister. We also consider variations of these relationships that include in-laws. This will consist of the words: father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, and sister-in-law.

**Table 4.1: Kinship Terminology**

Common Kinship Roles
Self or Child
Mother-of-Child
Mother-of-Mother
Father-of-Mother
Father-of-Child
Father-of-Father
Mother-of-Father

Brother-of-Mother  
Sister-of-Mother  
Daughter-of-Mother's-Sister  
Son-of-Mother's-Sister  
Daughter-of-Mother's-Sister's-Daughter  
Son-of-Mother's-Sister's-Daughter  
Daughter-of-Mother's-Sister's-Son  
Son-of-Mother's-Sister's-Son  
Son-of-Mother's-Brother  
Daughter-of-Mother's-Brother  
Daughter-of-Mother's-Brother's-Daughter  
Son-of-Mother's-Brother's-Daughter  
Daughter-of-Mother's-Brother's-Son  
Son-of-Mother's-Brother's-Son  
Daughter-of-Father's-Sister  
Son-of-Father's-Sister  
Daughter-of-Father's-Sister's-Daughter  
Son-of-Father's-Sister's-Daughter  
Daughter-of-Father's-Sister's-Son  
Son-of-Father's-Sister's-Son  
Son-of-Father's-Brother  
Daughter-of-Father's-Brother  
Daughter-of-Father's-Brother's-Daughter  
Son-of-Father's-Brother's-Daughter  
Daughter-of-Father's-Brother's-Son  
Son-of-Father's-Brother's-Son  
Daughter-of-Mother  
Son-of-Mother

Daughter-of-Mother

For secondary relationships, we will consider relationships with family extended one level past the nuclear family this will include the parents of the parents, the siblings of the parents, and the children of the children. So for the set of secondary relationships, we will include: grandmother, grandfather, aunt, uncle, grandson, and granddaughter.

Beyond secondary relationships, we will consider various tertiary and extended family relationships. This will include siblings of grandparents, parents of grandparents (grandparents to three extended generations), children of the parent's siblings, children of grandchildren (up to three extended generations), and removed relatives. The set of tertiary/extended family relationships will include: great-aunt/uncle, great-grandfather/grandmother, great-great-grandfather/grandmother, great-grandson/granddaughter, great-great-grandson/granddaughter, cousin (first cousin, same grandparents), second cousin (same great grandparents), third cousin (same great-great-grandparents), and cousin [once removed] (cousins of different generations that are one generation apart), niece, and nephew .

The set of kinship terms will be analyzed with a set of semantic features focusing on various common descriptors of the people in these relationships. Semantic features will cover attributes such as maturity level, gender, and descent to analyze how these words are constructed. The componential analysis will seek to identify and classify similarities/differences between kinship terms in Arabic and English. It will achieve this by using the semantic features previously described to analyze the affirmations kinship terms for similarities and word structure used to develop kinship terms.

Several methods of semantic analysis will be used to analyze the kinship terms. The first of which will include analysis of the uses for each word. In other words, we will look at what the accepted use of the word is to determine its definition,

and analyze parts of the word that differentiated it from opposite or other kinship terms. For example, the word “father” is generally used to describe the male parent in the nuclear family, while the word “mother” is generally used to describe the female parent of the nuclear family. When analyzing these two words, we see that the differentiating factor between the two is that the former describes a male and the latter describes a female. By using the definition of both words we give highlight the difference between them based on the difference in their meeting.

The second method will focus on analyzing the attributes of what the word describes to differentiate it from various other kinship terms. When analyzing the attributes of these terms, we will be looking at the object that the word describes. For example, the word “son” can be defined with the attributes related to maturity and gender. The subject’s gender is male, while the subject is also immature. Therefore, the word “son” identifies the immature male in the nuclear family.

The key difference between these two methods is the emphasis on which key feature of the word needs to be analyzed. The former method relies on the known definition of the word, while the latter method focuses on identifying the presence or absence of key attributes .

It is helpful in understanding how these methods of analysis work by looking at an example under the two methods. For this example, we will use the term “mother-in-law” and try to analyze its meeting and construction under both methods. For the purposes of this example, we will review the term from the perspective of a son in the nuclear family.

Utilizing the first method of analysis, we analyze the definition of the word. The word “mother-in-law” is known to refer to the female parent in the nuclear family related to the other members of the family by law (in most cases, by marriage). Based on this accepted definition of the word, we can analyze the parts of the definition to identify the parts that differentiated from other kinship terms. As the subject is both female and a parent, we can infer that the key difference between this term and



comparable kinship terms (specifically “father-in-law”) is that the word includes the term mother to differentiate itself based on gender. The word also includes “in-law” to signify that it is different from the similar kinship terms (specifically “mother”) by identifying the relationship was established by marriage.

Alternatively, we could use the second method which compares semantic features rather than definition to analyze kinship terms. To begin the analysis under the second method, we will start by analyzing the presence or absence of semantic features from the most general to the most specific. In this case, the order of semantic features will be gender, maturity, descent, and method of connection. The subject of the word “mother-in-law” has an identified gender of female. From the point of view of the son, the subject is mature.

However, the subject and the son do not share descent, meaning the son is not a descendent of the subject, nor is the subject a descendent of the son. Finally, the method of connection is identified as by law (rather than the usual by descent method). The results of the analysis are as follows: +female, +mature, -descent, +by law. Therefore, “mother-in-law” refers to a female parent related by law.

In other terms, the subject is a mother (female parent) + in-law (related by law). We can use these methods to analyze various kinship terms of gross model languages, which will allow us to identify how each of the languages functions and identify key differences in the way that they function. For the analysis to be comprehensive, we must cover a large selection kinship terms from each language.

When analyzing a language, kinship terms hold a special significance as kinship terms described the most basic and essential relationships in society. While many societal relationships are developed based on an extrapolated hierarchy in society, kinship terms refer to the inherent relationships developed by any species through natural occurring means. In other words, kinship terms described the most naturally occurring relationships within society. Therefore, these relationships will appear across multiple languages and cultures.

**Table 4.2: American English Kinship Terminology**

<b>Gender Difference</b>	<b>Generational Difference</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Title</b>
Yes – Female	Yes	Mother-of-Child	Mother
Yes – Female	Yes	Mother-of-Mother	Grandmother
Yes – Male	Yes	Father-of-Mother	Grandfather
Yes – Male	Yes	Father-of-Child	Father
Yes – Male	Yes	Father-of-Father	Grandfather
Yes – Female	Yes	Mother-of-Father	Grandmother
Yes – Male	Yes	Brother-of-Mother	Uncle
Yes – Female	Yes	Sister-of-Mother	Aunt
No	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Sister	Cousin
No	No	Son-of-Mother's-Sister	Cousin
No	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Sister's-Daughter	Cousin
No	No	Son-of-Mother's-Sister's-Daughter	Cousin
No	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Sister's-Son	Cousin
No	No	Son-of-Mother's-Sister's-Son	Cousin

No	No	Son-of-Mother's-Brother	Cousin
No	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Brother	Cousin
No	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Brother's-Daughter	Cousin
No	No	Son-of-Mother's-Brother's-Daughter	Cousin
No	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Brother's-Son	Cousin
No	No	Son-of-Mother's-Brother's-Son	Cousin
No	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Sister	Cousin
No	No	Son-of-Father's-Sister	Cousin
No	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Sister's-Daughter	Cousin
No	No	Son-of-Father's-Sister's-Daughter	Cousin
No	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Sister's-Son	Cousin
No	No	Son-of-Father's-Sister's-Son	Cousin
No	No	Son-of-Father's-Brother	Cousin
No	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Brother	Cousin
No	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Brother's-Daughter	Cousin
No	No	Son-of-Father's-Brother's-Daughter	Cousin
No	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Brother's-Son	Cousin
No	No	Son-of-Father's-Brother's-Son	Cousin
Yes – Female	Yes	Daughter-of-Mother	Sister
Yes – Male	Yes	Son-of-Mother	Brother

It is somewhat possible to predict the various kinship terms will appear in both languages during the analysis. For instance certain kinship terms that represent familial relationships with direct relatives should prove consistent across multiple languages even if the terms used are radically different. As many relationships are based on patriarchal inheritance, kinship terms relating to male descent, specifically the relationships of fathers and grandfathers and sons should all be present. However, there are many cultures based on matriarchal descent. So in comparing languages it is important to analyze the inheritance structure of the language in the cultures to speak it. In this case, both languages are utilized primarily by societies the focus on patriarchal descent. Therefore, the chances of predicting common kinship terms is greater.

By analyzing the morphological composition of the languages is important to relate it to the semantic analysis of the languages. When analyzing the morphological composition, we are looking for variations in the compositional structure of words. More specifically, we're looking at the various parts of a word to determine its meaning. A semantic analysis will focus on how words are used in relation to larger structures (i.e. phrases, sentences, and paragraphs).

The semantics of words are directly related to the morphology depending on the language, as many languages including English adjust the morphology of the word based on the semantics of its use. For example, the word "lead" changes its morphology based on its semantics. When the use of the word changes from present to the past tense, the structure of the word changes by removing a letter to adjust its pronunciation. In this way the morphology is directly related to the semantics of the word.

In the analysis of kinship terms, we would need to look for morphology changes based on semantics. In this case, much of the semantic changes will be based on the point of view of the subjects. When viewing a relationship from the point of view of an

adult parent, there will be a specific sets of semantics dependent on the gender of the parent subject. When changing from the male parent to the female parent there will be slight changes in the semantics which will results in slight changes in morphologies as well. This is also dependent on which language is being analyzed as this may not always be the case in every language.

**Table 4.3: Modern Arabic Kinship Terminology**

Paternal or Maternal	Gender Difference	Gen. Diff.	Role	Title
Maternal	Yes	Yes	Mother-of-Child	'um
Maternal	Yes	Yes	Mother-of-Mother	jiddah
Maternal	Yes	Yes	Father-of-Mother	Jad
Paternal	Yes	Yes	Father-of-Child	Ab
Paternal	Yes	Yes	Father-of-Father	Jad
Paternal	Yes	Yes	Mother-of-Father	Jaddah
Maternal	Yes	Yes	Brother-of-Mother	Khaal
Maternal	Yes	Yes	Sister-of-Mother	Khaalah
Maternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Sister	Bintu Al-Khaal
Maternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Mother's-Sister	Ibnu Al-Khaal
Maternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Sister's-Daughter	Bintu Al-Khaal
Maternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Mother's-Sister's-Daughter	Ibnu Al-Khaal
Maternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Sister's-Son	Bintu Al-Khaal

Maternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Mother's-Sister's-Son	Ibnu Al-Khaal
Maternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Mother's-Brother	Ibnu Al-Khaal
Maternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Brother	Bintu Al-Khaal
Maternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Brother's-Daughter	Bintu Al-Khaal
Maternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Mother's-Brother's-Daughter	Ibnu Al-Khaal
Maternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Mother's-Brother's-Son	Bintu Al-Khaal
Maternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Mother's-Brother's-Son	Ibnu Al-Khaal
Paternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Sister	Bintu Al-3m
Paternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Father's-Sister	Ibnu Al-3m
Paternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Sister's-Daughter	Bintu Al-3m
Paternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Father's-Sister's-Daughter	Ibnu Al-3m
Paternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Sister's-Son	Bintu Al-3m
Paternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Father's-Sister's-Son	Ibnu Al-3m
Paternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Father's-Brother	Ibnu Al-3m
Paternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Brother	Bintu Al-3m
Paternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Brother's-Daughter	Bintu Al-3m
Paternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Father's-Brother's-Daughter	Ibnu Al-3m
Paternal	Yes	No	Daughter-of-Father's-Brother's-Son	Bintu Al-3m

Paternal	Yes	No	Son-of-Father's-Brother's-Son	Ibnu Al-3m
Maternal	Yes	Yes	Daughter-of-Mother	Ukht
Maternal	Yes	Yes	Son-of-Mother	Akh

Existing theories about kinship systems are limited in many ways. The “grand theories of the evolution of human kinship systems usually take as their starting-point a Dravidian-like system based on cross-cousin marriage as in the transition from elementary to complex.”(Hage,2001,p.487.) However, this hardly takes into account language differences that exist and how those languages affect the nature of roles.

For example, Arabic is a language that differentiates between paternal and maternal lineage. This creates almost twice as many different kinship roles in a language that does not differentiate between these origins, as English times. This explains some of the complexities found when trying to compare these different languages together. In some ways, they cannot be compared.

In many ways, this is found in other languages and relevant words as well even outside of kinship terminology. When novels are translated into a different language from the language that it was written, often the authorial voice doesn't translate well. Sometimes humorous loss and other times words have no direct translation. This can have an impact on the experience that readers have.

## ● Discussion

Any discussion about kinship semantics and terminology is inherently limited. This is because “the ethnographic record reveals a wide variety of acts other than procreation by which ties of kinship are established.”(Shapiro,2012,p.191.) While this research focused on birth relationships and family structures, arguably there are many other variations that could be constructed and utilized within the framework of this report. In this way, there are a number of roles that could be added.

However, based on the analysis that was conducted, Arabic is inherently more complex and specific when compared to English. For instance, Arabic recognizes the difference between gender, generations, and maternal or paternal lineage in a way that English does not. This allows for more specific communication. When someone discusses their aunt and Arabic, they instantly disclose which side of their family, their mother's or their father's, the aunt is related to. This provides more information than found in English semantics.

In English, "being older or younger than ego plays a role only where explicitly stated...whether older or younger."(Kay,2012,pp.388.) Someone may refer to their brother as their younger or older brother. Without this clarifier, it would be unclear based on the word "brother" to determine the age relatively of the individual being discussed.

Some research studies evaluated whether or not kinship terms were the same across different languages. For instance, in one research study, some of the features that work for English basic kinship terms will also work for basic Seneca kinship terms. (Kay.2012,pp.389.)This is also true in terms of American English when compared to Modern Arabic. Terms like "mother" and "father" provides the same level of clarity and information.

However, American English is more dependent on overall communication and semantics than Modern Arabic is. In American English, "the sentence context provides priming to help the reader retrieve the exact semantics that fit the context."( Abu-Rabia, 2002,p.308.) Without the context, much of the English kinship terms become unclear.

In some regards, there are "social determinants of kinship terminologies."(Hage,2001,p.487.) New terms may stem from the fact that the culture needs them. As new roles within family life become prevalent in American English, the language itself will have to adjust to accommodate. These cultural shifts include same-



sex families and plural marriages, where there may be more than one individual of the same gender serving in a similar role.

Other cultures and languages have already had the need to create more complex kinship terminology, as in Arabic. For instance, "Savosavo kinship terminology is remarkable in that it covers fifteen generations, a feature unique in its immediate geographical context, the Solomon Islands, and rare cross-linguistically." (Wegener, 2013, p. 318.) This may become more common as languages morph and evolve into the future. One research found that "some obvious predicate systems are inconsistent, and possible-worlds semantics for predicates of sentences has not been developed very far." (Halbach, 2003, p. 179.) The same seems to be true with kinship semantics. This research focused on formal words, such as grandmother and father. However, other variations are common, including nana, grandma, and dad.

## CONCLUSION

This research addresses the kinship Semantics Model of Analysis made prevalent by researchers such as John Lyons, Paul Kay and Floyd Lounsbury, all respected linguists within the field around the twentieth century. Their pivotal research changed how we understand semantics and linguistics between different languages and cultures. This research built upon that understanding and explore the semantics of kinship terminology as utilized in American English and Modern Arabic.

Although linguistic studies surrounding kinship terminology in different cultures and languages have become increasingly prevalent, there still remains tremendous opportunity to further study the relationships and terminology found in different cultures around the world. The world itself consists of so many languages that it would be exponentially difficult to compare them all.

This research found striking differences between how the languages differentiate between different family roles, both by birth and by marriage. In English, family

members entering the family through the marriage of a close relative may be called an in-law. This is different in modern Arabic as other factors influence the word itself.

Despite other inherent similarities between American English and Modern Arabic, such as the usage of the same numeral system, categorization of family members is quite different. Both languages have ways to identify family members from each other. However, Arabic, unlike English, has ways to differentiate between whether or not the family member comes from the mother's or the father's side of the family.

Some other differences between the two languages can come from differences in cultural language and expectations. For instance, American English is used in the United States of America, where nuclear families are common. This is not to say that nuclear families are the only type of family found in America, it is just where historically nuclear families were prioritized over much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Family units consisted of a mother, father and children living in a single home. This standard was prioritized over much of the time that has been relevant culturally to the United States, strongly taking a foothold in the post-World War II 1940s and 1950s.

As families have evolved in the United States to include different familial make ups such as gay and lesbian couples raising children, as well as the elderly living longer and consequentially playing a larger role in the lives of increasingly younger generations, kinship terminology has been required in some ways to adapt. Hints of these larger cultural shifts within American English can be found routinely shifting even on common documents, such as with marriage licenses and health insurance forms for families. Instead of husband and wife, many of these forms are changing to simply say spouse and spouse to more accurately capture the differences between language and how culture has shifted. These types of language shifts will ultimately continue over the next few years.

Conversely, many of the countries where Arabic is spoken prioritize families differently. In some of the countries, especially where Muslim people live, family serves as a centralized important figure. This includes extended family, such as uncles and

aunts and grandparents. For this reason, it is not surprising that there are more words associated with kinship terminology and Arabic than there is in the United States. This may be largely stemmed from the fact that more priorities placed upon family and Arabic speaking countries than in the United States. Differentiation may be more important and larger family structures that keep more in touch with each other.

Culturally differences may also be to blames. Household structures, as multi-family homes, may be more common in Arabic-speaking countries. This may mean that these families see more of their extended family members more often and require a different and more comprehensive way to differentiate between them.

For example, in the United States a family man may not be close to cousins. Due to family size and household structure, it is unlikely that one particular family would be close to cousins and second cousins from both sides of the family in their daily activities. For this reason, it can be hypothesized that American English has not yet found a need to differentiate between whether or not a cousin comes from maternal lineage or paternal lineage. Part of this is also due to the fact that American English utilize a sentence structure and other words to derive meaning. Individuals can just provide more information about the origin of this family member into their family.

While more research would need to be conducted to determine other types of languages, such as the Romance languages, in terms of the relationship to this research study, the simple comparison between Arabic and American English kinship terminology provides an interesting look into how language plays a pivotal role in how families interact and communicate with each other. Understanding how language evolves due to need also provides an interesting outlook into kinship terminology. This is not to say that one family structures better than the other. However it does provide more insight and to some of the language differences.

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