

The Status of Standard Arabic and the Impact of Dialect Dominance on Language Skills

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Abstract

Modern Standard Arabic constitutes a fundamental pillar in shaping the cultural and civilizational identity of Arab societies and serves as a unifying medium for intellectual and cognitive communication among their members. However, the contemporary linguistic reality reveals a noticeable rise in the use of local dialects at the expense of Standard Arabic, particularly in the fields of education, media, and social networking platforms. This shift has generated increasing linguistic and pedagogical challenges, directly affecting learners' mastery of core Arabic language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This study aims to analyse the impact of the predominance of local dialects on Modern Standard Arabic language skills through a theoretical analytical approach grounded in recent literature in sociolinguistics and educational linguistics. It seeks to explain the relationship between diglossia and linguistic weakness among learners. The study adopts a descriptive-analytical methodology by reviewing and analysing contemporary relevant studies, examining manifestations of dialect use in educational and media environments, and linking these practices to the decline in proficiency in Standard Arabic. The study concludes that the extensive use of local dialects particularly within classrooms and media content directed at young audiences contributes to weakening learners' formal linguistic repertoire and negatively affects the development of their communicative and academic competence. This situation calls for a reconsideration of educational and media language policies and for strengthening the presence of Modern Standard Arabic as a language of instruction, culture, and identity.

Keywords: Modern Standard Arabic, Local Dialects, Diglossia, Language Skills, Education and Media

Introduction

The Status of Standard Arabic and the Impact of Dialect Dominance on Language Skills

Modern Standard Arabic occupies a central position in the Arab collective consciousness. It is the language of the Qur'an, the repository of intellectual and literary heritage, and the primary medium for scientific and cultural communication across Arab societies throughout history. Historically, Standard Arabic has played a crucial role in unifying Arab communities

despite regional and dialectal differences, thereby constituting a fundamental element in shaping a shared linguistic and civilizational identity. Its significance extends beyond religious and cultural dimensions to encompass its epistemological role as the language of education, scientific research, and systematic intellectual production (Bassiouney, 2020).

However, the rapid social and cultural transformations witnessed in Arab societies in recent decades, coupled with the expansion of modern media and digital platforms, have contributed to a noticeable rise in the use of local dialects at the expense of Standard Arabic. This shift has extended beyond informal spoken communication to include education, media, advertising, and digital content directed at children and youth. Consequently, a form of linguistic duality has emerged in which the status of Standard Arabic as a language of learning and thinking is declining in favor of less regulated colloquial forms that lack the grammatical and semantic precision of the standard variety (Bassiouney, 2020).

This reality raises critical academic and pedagogical questions regarding the impact of privileging local dialects on the acquisition of Standard Arabic language skills, particularly the four core skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Contemporary educational literature emphasizes that language skills are shaped by the linguistic input to which learners are exposed. The use of a clear and standardized language in education and media contributes to the development of linguistic and academic competence, whereas reliance on non-standard forms weakens comprehension and precision in expression (Cummins, 2017).

Recent studies indicate that the growing **weakness** in reading and writing skills among Arab students is closely linked to the declining use of Standard Arabic in educational environments. Teachers and students increasingly rely on local dialects in classroom interaction, even during Arabic language lessons (Saiegh-Haddad, 2018; Badadah & Madour, 2021). In addition, visual and digital media reinforce this trend by presenting content predominantly in local dialects, thereby reducing learners' exposure to Standard Arabic outside the school context (Bashiri, 2021).

In light of these developments, the present study aims to provide an in-depth analytical examination of the impact of dialect dominance on Standard Arabic language skills within contemporary educational and media contexts. It draws on recent literature in sociolinguistics and educational linguistics and seeks to contribute to the scholarly debate on the future of Standard Arabic and its role in developing learners' linguistic and cognitive competence.

Research Problem

Standard Arabic faces increasing challenges in contemporary Arab societies as a result of social, technological, and media transformations that have expanded the use of local dialects in domains traditionally reserved for the standard language, particularly education and media. The use of dialects has moved beyond informal daily communication to become prevalent in classroom interaction, media programs, and digital content aimed at younger audiences. This has led to a linguistic reality characterized by an unstructured overlap between the standard language and local dialects.

Within this context, educational and linguistic indicators point to a decline in learners' proficiency in Standard Arabic, particularly in reading, writing, and oral expression, which are

foundational to linguistic and academic competence. Studies in educational linguistics suggest that limited exposure to standardized language in educational and media environments weakens learners' ability to comprehend and produce academic texts and widens the gap between the language of schooling and that of everyday life.

Although previous research has addressed diglossia in the Arab context, many studies have focused on a single dimension, such as education or media, or have examined specific language skills in isolation. There remains a need for a comprehensive analysis of the impact of dialect dominance on all four language skills collectively. Accordingly, the current study seeks to analyze the effects of privileging local dialects in Arab education and media on Standard Arabic language skills, in light of contemporary linguistic realities and recent scholarly literature.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to achieve several key objectives:

- To analyse the impact of the dominance of local dialects and diglossia on learners' Standard Arabic language skills and academic linguistic competence.
- To examine the role of educational practices and media (traditional and digital) in promoting or weakening the use of Standard Arabic.
- To propose educational and linguistic strategies to strengthen the presence of Standard Arabic in education and media.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant from several academic, educational, and cultural perspectives. It contributes to enriching the literature in sociolinguistics and educational linguistics within the Arab context by offering an analytical framework that links diglossia to the acquisition of fundamental language skills. It highlights the impact of linguistic practices in educational settings on the development of students' linguistic competence, thereby informing language policy and teaching methodologies.

Furthermore, the study sheds light on the role of traditional and digital media in shaping the linguistic preferences of younger generations and underscores the importance of employing Standard Arabic in public discourse. Its importance also stems from the strong connection between Standard Arabic and the cultural and civilizational identity of Arab societies, making the preservation of its status in education and media both a cultural and epistemological concern.

The Concept of Standard Arabic and Its Function in Arabic Linguistic Thought

Standard Arabic is the formal variety used in writing, education, and official media across the Arab world. It has occupied a central position in Arabic linguistic thought since the earliest stages of linguistic codification. Classical Arab scholars did not regard language merely as a tool for communication but as a vessel of thought, a means of preserving identity, and an instrument for understanding religious and literary texts. Ibn Jinni defined language as "sounds through which people express their purposes," a definition that reflects both the social and functional dimensions of language (Ibn Jinni, 1952).

Tammam Hassan, in his work *Al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah Ma'naha wa Mabnaha*, views language as an integrated system of relationships in which no element can be understood in isolation.

He emphasizes that language is not limited to conveying explicit meaning but also involves constructing meaning and organizing thought. He argues that Standard Arabic possesses structural and semantic features that enable it to express highly abstract meanings, distinguishing it from many local dialects that lack such functional breadth (Hassan, 1994). From a philological perspective, Ali Abd al-Wahid Wafi asserts that language is inseparable from the society that uses it and that the **weakness** of the standard language reflects deeper cultural and cognitive issues. He maintains that the decline of Standard Arabic in education and culture inevitably leads to disordered thinking and expression.

as the standard language serves as the primary tool for constructing precise scientific and intellectual concepts (Wafi, 2004).

Similarly, Mahmoud Muhammad al-Tanahi argues that uncontrolled mixing between Standard Arabic and colloquial varieties does not represent natural linguistic development but poses a threat to the integrity and educational function of the language. While he acknowledges the natural existence of colloquial varieties, he warns against their dominance in education and media, which he يری as a direct cause of weakened linguistic competence among learners, particularly in reading and writing skills (al-Tanahi, 1999).

Ibrahim Anis also emphasizes that Standard Arabic is not an artificial or obsolete language but rather the result of a long historical development. Its adaptability to modern contexts depends on its continued presence in education and media. Marginalizing it in structured daily use negatively affects the linguistic sensibilities of younger generations (Anis, 1994).

These classical perspectives align with modern linguistic theories, which emphasize that mastery of a standardized academic language is essential for developing systematic thinking. Contemporary studies in educational linguistics confirm that insufficient exposure to standard language input leads to weakness in cognitive and academic output (Halliday, 2014; Snow & Uccelli, 2009).

Language and Its Social Function

In modern linguistics, language is defined as a symbolic social system used for communication, meaning-making, and organizing social relationships. Halliday (2014) argues that language is not merely a tool for expressing ideas but a means of constructing social reality, where communicative, cognitive, and cultural functions interact to shape both individual and collective consciousness. From this perspective, language is closely tied to identity, belonging, and patterns of thought.

In educational contexts, academic language is a central tool for knowledge construction and the development of higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, critique, and inference. Research indicates that mastery of the standard language is a prerequisite for academic success, particularly in advanced educational stages that require deep comprehension of written texts and precise, structured expression (Snow & Uccelli, 2009).

Standard Arabic: Features and Importance

Standard Arabic is characterized by structural and semantic features that make it highly capable of precise and complex expression. Its rich morphological system, flexible syntactic structure, and extensive lexicon enable nuanced variation in meaning and style (Ryding,

2014). It also serves as a unifying language that facilitates communication among speakers of diverse dialects.

Contemporary linguistic literature emphasizes that maintaining Standard Arabic in education is not merely a cultural or identity-based concern but a cognitive necessity. It enables learners to access written sources of knowledge, develop analytical reading skills, construct academic texts, and acquire the linguistic competence required for scientific research (Saiegh-Haddad & Henkin-Roitfarb, 2014).

Local Dialects and Diglossia

Local dialects are spoken linguistic varieties that differ from the standard language in phonology, structure, and semantics and are used in everyday communication within specific social or geographical contexts. The coexistence of Standard Arabic and local dialects in Arab societies is described as diglossia, a concept introduced by Ferguson (1959), in which a “high” formal variety is used in education and writing, while a “low” informal variety is used in daily communication.

Although diglossia is a natural phenomenon in many societies, problems arise when local dialects extend beyond their functional domains and compete with the standard language in education and media. This shift can weaken learners’ linguistic competence, particularly in academic skills that require mastery of Standard Arabic (Bassiouney, 2020; Kaid, 2002; Marini, 2024).

The Impact of Dialect Dominance on the Four Language Skills

Recent research in psycholinguistics and educational linguistics indicates that extensive exposure to local dialects, without systematic reinforcement of Standard Arabic, leads to noticeable difficulties in acquiring reading and writing skills, reduced reading comprehension, and weakness in written expression (Saiegh-Haddad, 2018). Moreover, teachers’ use of dialects in classroom instruction limits students’ exposure to standard language models and weakens their ability to produce Standard Arabic in formal contexts (Badadah & Madour, 2021; Marini, 2024).

Albirini (2016) confirms that students educated in environments that maintain Standard Arabic as the primary medium of instruction achieve higher levels of linguistic competence compared to those exposed to unstructured mixing between standard and colloquial forms, with positive effects on their academic performance.

The four language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, form the foundation of linguistic competence and are interdependent. The type and quality of linguistic input play a decisive role in shaping these skills. Therefore, the dominance of local dialects in education and media affects not only isolated aspects of language use but the entire linguistic and cognitive development of learners.

First: The Impact on Listening Skills

Listening is the primary gateway to language acquisition, through which learners develop their phonological and lexical repertoire that later supports comprehension and expression. Linguists emphasize that children acquire patterns of pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation

through continuous exposure to language in their environment, forming the basis for understanding both spoken and written texts.

Tammam Hassan (1994) argues that Standard Arabic possesses a well-regulated phonological system that differs significantly from those of local dialects. Limited exposure to this system in early stages leads to weakness in auditory discrimination of standard sounds, which later affects accurate comprehension of spoken texts. He stresses that regular exposure to Standard Arabic is not a luxury but an educational necessity.

Al-Tanahi (1999) notes that the prevalence of dialects in educational and media discourse directed at children reduces their familiarity with the phonological patterns of Standard Arabic, making it appear unfamiliar or artificial in formal contexts such as lectures, speeches, and news broadcasts. This results in difficulty in following standard spoken discourse, particularly when it involves dense academic content.

This perspective is supported by findings in psycholinguistics, which show that limited exposure to spoken Standard Arabic in early stages leads to deficiencies in phonological processing necessary for later academic comprehension (Saiegh-Haddad, 2018). Furthermore, reliance on dialects in classroom interaction reduces opportunities for meaningful exposure to Standard Arabic, negatively affecting students' listening skills.

Second: The Impact of Dialect Dominance on Speaking Skills

Speaking is a direct manifestation of acquired linguistic competence and is strongly influenced by the linguistic models to which learners are exposed. The literature indicates that learners do not develop oral fluency in the standard language unless they are consistently provided with accurate and sustained models within the educational environment.

Wafi (2004) argues that speaking in Standard Arabic requires conscious training and regular practice. Reliance on colloquial dialects in classrooms reinforces an implicit belief among learners that Standard Arabic is impractical or unsuitable for communication, leading them to avoid using it even in contexts where it is required. He emphasizes that this avoidance is not due to the inherent difficulty of Standard Arabic, but rather to a lack of linguistic confidence resulting from limited practice.

Ibrahim Anis (1994) adds that colloquial varieties, due to their limited contextual scope, do not enable learners to develop expressive competence in scientific and intellectual domains. Their use in classroom interaction deprives learners of the opportunity to acquire the standard linguistic forms necessary for discussion, argumentation, and oral presentation. Contemporary sociolinguistic studies further suggest that the dominance of local dialects in classroom interaction leads learners to perceive Standard Arabic as merely a "language of examinations" rather than a language of thought and expression, which in turn weakens their oral fluency (Bassiouney, 2020). Studies on Arabic language teaching in bilingual contexts also confirm that the absence of sustained exposure to Standard Arabic within the classroom reduces students' ability to use it effectively in academic discussions and presentations (Al-Batal, 2020).

Third: The Impact of Dialect Dominance on Reading Skills

Reading represents a central link between listening and writing and is a complex cognitive skill that requires linguistic, lexical, and grammatical competence. Educational literature suggests that learners' success in reading depends largely on the degree of alignment between the written language and their internal linguistic system.

Ramadan Abd al-Tawwab (1997) argues that the gap between spoken and written language in the Arab context constitutes one of the most significant challenges in reading instruction. This gap widens when learners are not adequately trained in Standard Arabic during early educational stages. Overreliance on colloquial varieties reinforces this divide, making reading a cognitively demanding process that often requires "mental translation" from Standard Arabic into dialect.

Modern studies support this view, indicating that the gap between home language and school language is a major factor contributing to reading difficulties among Arab children (Saiegh-Haddad & Henkin-Roitfarb, 2019). Furthermore, the widespread use of dialect in digital content reduces learners' exposure to Standard Arabic texts, negatively affecting their reading proficiency (Bashiri, 2021).

Fourth: The Impact of Dialect Dominance on Writing Skills

Writing is the language skill most affected by the dominance of local dialects, as it requires the highest levels of linguistic, lexical, and grammatical control. The literature indicates that weakness in writing is often a direct result of weakness in reading and listening in Standard Arabic.

Al-Tanahi (1999) argues that the prevalence of spelling and grammatical errors in students' writing reflects a weakness in Standard Arabic linguistic competence. This weakness cannot be addressed through mechanical correction or rote memorization, but rather requires gradual linguistic development grounded in consistent exposure to Standard Arabic. He further notes that daily reliance on colloquial language in oral and digital communication reinforces non-standard linguistic patterns that later appear in writing.

In addition, weakness in reading in Standard Arabic contributes directly to weakness in writing, given the strong reciprocal relationship between the two skills.

Standard Arabic, Colloquial Varieties, and Diglossia in Classical and Contemporary Contexts

Arabic linguistic thought has long demonstrated awareness of linguistic variation within the same society, even if not framed in modern linguistic terminology. Early scholars recognized the distinction between the language of writing and scholarship and the language of everyday communication, while maintaining Standard Arabic as the highest standard for correct usage. Ramadan Abd al-Tawwab (1997) notes that what is now referred to as diglossia is not a new phenomenon in Arab societies but a natural outcome of language development across different social contexts. However, the problem arises when functional boundaries between the two varieties collapse, allowing non-standard forms to enter domains such as education and knowledge production, thereby weakening the standard language and confusing learners.

Similarly, Tammam Hassan (1994) argues that Standard Arabic and colloquial varieties are not inherently in conflict but represent two functional levels within a single linguistic system. The problem emerges when their relationship is managed randomly, without conscious language planning. He emphasizes that Standard Arabic serves a cognitive and intellectual function, while colloquial varieties serve immediate communicative needs, and that these roles should not be conflated in educational contexts.

Al-Tanahi adopts a more critical stance, arguing that privileging colloquial varieties in education and media cannot be justified on the grounds of simplification or accessibility. In his view, such practices lead to negative outcomes, including weakness in linguistic competence, disordered expression, and reduced ability to comprehend Standard Arabic texts. He stresses that learners who are not systematically trained in Standard Arabic from an early stage will face cumulative difficulties in reading and writing (Al-Tanahi, 1999).

Bassiouney (2020) further highlights a concerning trend in contemporary Arab societies, namely the expansion of dialect use into domains traditionally reserved for Standard Arabic, particularly education and media.

Thus, diglossia in the Arab context is not merely a linguistic issue but also an educational, cultural, and cognitive one, requiring comprehensive approaches grounded in a deep understanding of the role of language in shaping thought and identity.

Standard Arabic as a Language of Education and Thought

Standard Arabic plays a central role in the educational process, not only as a medium for transmitting information but also as a tool for shaping thought and constructing abstract concepts. Educational literature emphasizes that academic language is essential for developing higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and critical evaluation.

Ali Abd al-Wahid Wafi argues that Standard Arabic, with its precise grammatical system and rich semantic structure, enables learners to organize their thoughts and express them clearly and systematically. He asserts that reliance on colloquial varieties in education limits learners' ability to move from concrete, simple thinking to more abstract forms of reasoning, as colloquial language is inherently less capable of conveying precise scientific concepts (Wafi, 2004).

Ibrahim Anis likewise emphasizes the intrinsic relationship between language and thought, arguing that weakness in language inevitably leads to weakness in thinking. Accordingly, the decline in the use of Standard Arabic in education affects not only linguistic performance but also learners' overall cognitive abilities, including comprehension, analysis, and inference (Anis, 1994).

Modern educational linguistics supports this perspective. Halliday (2014) demonstrates that academic language differs fundamentally from everyday language and that a structured transition from spoken varieties to standardized forms is essential for academic success. Similarly, Snow and Uccelli (2009) show that students who lack exposure to rich academic language in school face persistent difficulties in reading, comprehension, and writing.

In the Arab context, recent studies indicate that the use of local dialects in classrooms, even in non-language subjects, weakens learners' ability to engage with Standard Arabic texts and

reinforces the gap between the language of schooling and the language of written knowledge (Marini, 2024; Qusayr, 2019).

The Role of Traditional and Digital Media in Reinforcing Local Dialects

Media, in both its traditional and digital forms, has become one of the most influential factors shaping individuals' linguistic preferences, particularly among children and adolescents. Its role extends beyond information dissemination and entertainment to include the restructuring of communication patterns and the determination of socially acceptable language in public discourse. In the Arab context, media has played a significant role in reinforcing the use of local dialects at the expense of Standard Arabic, thereby widening the gap between the language of education and that of everyday life.

First: Traditional Media and Its Linguistic Impact

Traditional media includes television, radio, and print journalism. In earlier periods, these media were strong supporters of Standard Arabic, particularly in news broadcasts, cultural programs, and educational content. However, recent transformations in the Arab media landscape have led to a decline in this role, with increasing reliance on local dialects in many programs.

Al-Tanahi (1999) argues that the language used in media not only reflects linguistic reality but also shapes and directs it. The widespread use of colloquial language in media discourse weakens the status of Standard Arabic in collective awareness, especially when dialects are presented as more accessible and expressive of "reality." This trend implicitly conveys the idea that Standard Arabic is rigid and unsuitable for everyday communication.

Recent studies support this argument, indicating that changes in the Arab media landscape have expanded the use of dialects as the primary language of public discourse, contributing to the declining presence of Standard Arabic in widely consumed media (Bassiouney, 2020).

Second: Digital Media and Social Networks

With the rise of digital media and social networking platforms, the influence of non-standard language has significantly increased, with local dialects becoming dominant in online communication. The interactive and rapid nature of digital platforms encourages the use of simplified and abbreviated language, which often deviates from Standard Arabic in both structure and style.

Ibrahim Anis (1994) notes that language is influenced by the medium through which it is used, and fast-paced media tend to simplify and compress linguistic forms, explaining the spread of colloquial usage in digital communication. However, in the Arab context, the challenge lies in maintaining a balance between this natural use of dialects and the need to preserve Standard Arabic in educational and knowledge-based domains.

Recent studies indicate that patterns of diglossia in social media reinforce widespread colloquial usage and influence linguistic preferences, thereby affecting the presence of Standard Arabic in everyday writing practices (Bashiri, 2021). UNESCO (2025) has also warned that the absence of clear language policies in multilingual education may further marginalize standard languages in evolving learning environments.

Third: Media Directed at Children and Adolescents

Media targeting children represents one of the most critical areas of linguistic influence, as this age group is in a formative stage of linguistic and cognitive development. Research indicates that children acquire language through continuous interaction with their environment and that the linguistic models they are exposed to during this stage have long-term effects.

Wafi (2004) argues that children exposed to Standard Arabic at an early age develop stronger abilities to engage with written texts later on, whereas those exposed primarily to colloquial varieties face difficulties transitioning to the language of schooling. He emphasizes that children's media should complement, rather than hinder, the role of formal education. Recent studies confirm that the gap between home language and school language, when reinforced by a predominantly dialectal media environment, increases the likelihood of early reading difficulties and related language processing challenges (Saiegh-Haddad, 2018).

Fourth: Media as a Complementary or Obstructive Factor in Education

It becomes clear that media can serve as a supportive factor in language education when Standard Arabic is used consciously and systematically. Conversely, it can act as an obstacle when local dialects dominate without regulation. Therefore, addressing the impact of dialect dominance on Standard Arabic language skills cannot be confined to the educational system alone but must also include media as a key partner in linguistic socialization.

Methodology

The literature was analyzed along three main dimensions: linguistic studies on diglossia, educational studies related to Arabic language teaching, and media studies addressing the impact of modern communication platforms on linguistic practices. These studies were systematically classified and their findings examined in order to identify common patterns and recurring themes.

This study adopts the descriptive–analytical approach, which is considered most appropriate for examining linguistic phenomena within their social and educational contexts. This approach was employed to describe the manifestations of the dominance of local dialects in Arab educational and media environments, followed by an analysis of these manifestations in light of the theoretical framework and previous research, without direct experimental intervention in the variables (Creswell, 2018).

The study draws on a wide range of scholarly sources, including classical Arabic linguistic works, recent peer-reviewed journal articles, and international reports issued by educational and cultural organizations, thereby ensuring a comprehensive and balanced analysis.

Results, Analysis, and Discussion

Result 1: Impact of Dialect Dominance and Diglossia on Linguistic Competence

In line with the first objective, the findings reveal that the dominance of local dialects, combined with the phenomenon of diglossia, has a significant negative impact on learners' Standard Arabic language skills and their overall academic linguistic competence.

This impact is evident across the four core language skills:

Listening: Weak comprehension of formal spoken discourse

Speaking: Limited fluency in using Standard Arabic in oral communication

Reading: Decline in reading comprehension

Writing: Frequent grammatical and linguistic errors in written expression

Moreover, the blurred functional boundaries between dialect and Standard Arabic reduce exposure to structured linguistic input, leading to weakness in comprehension and language production in educational contexts.

Result 2: The Role of Educational Practices and Media

Addressing the second objective, the study shows that both educational practices and media play a critical role in shaping language use.

In educational settings, the use of local dialects in instruction limits students' exposure to Standard Arabic and weakens their academic language proficiency.

Similarly, traditional and digital media reinforce dialect use, particularly through content directed at children and youth, thereby reducing opportunities for exposure to Standard Arabic outside the classroom.

This dual influence contributes to widening the gap between the language of education and everyday communication.

Result 3: Strategies for Strengthening Standard Arabic

In response to the third objective, the study proposes several key strategies to enhance the presence of Standard Arabic:

Strengthening its use as the primary language of instruction

Training teachers to use it effectively

Enhancing its presence in media, especially in children's content

Developing clear and coherent language education policies

These strategies emphasize the importance of a comprehensive and integrated approach involving educational institutions, media, and policymakers.

Conclusion

This analytical study concludes that the dominance of local dialects in Arab education and media represents a significant challenge to the development of Standard Arabic language skills among learners. The analysis demonstrates that this dominance directly affects all four language skills, from listening and speaking to reading and writing, leading to a decline in linguistic and communicative competence, particularly in academic and knowledge-based contexts.

The study also shows that, although diglossia is a natural phenomenon in Arab societies, it becomes problematic when managed without conscious educational and linguistic planning. In such cases, the status of Standard Arabic as a language of education and thought is weakened, and the gap between the language of schooling and that of everyday life is widened.

Importantly, the issue does not lie in the existence of local dialects as an authentic cultural and social component, but rather in their unregulated dominance within educational and media contexts, alongside the absence of policies that ensure the effective and sustained presence of Standard Arabic in learners' lives. Accordingly, the study emphasizes that promoting Standard Arabic is a collective responsibility shared by educational institutions,

media organizations, and policymakers, given its central role in shaping cultural and intellectual identity and ensuring the quality of education in Arab societies.

Recommendations

Strengthening the use of Standard Arabic as the primary language of instruction at all educational levels.

Providing linguistic and professional training for teachers to ensure effective use of Standard Arabic in the classroom.

Incorporating curricular activities that develop listening and speaking skills in Standard Arabic. Enhancing the presence of Standard Arabic in media content directed at children and adolescents.

Establishing clear educational and media language policies based on informed language planning.

Encouraging extensive reading in Standard Arabic both داخل and outside educational institutions.

Promoting further in-depth analytical studies on the impact of local dialects.

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