



## THE EFFORTS OF THE ARAB LINGUISTS IN THE AUTHORSHIP OF DICTIONARIES: “LISAN AL-ARAB” (THE TONGUE OF THE ARABS) DICTIONARY AS A MODEL

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This study will address the efforts of linguists in the authorship of specialized dictionaries with words in the Arabic language, which passed through different stages, and came to different ways as well. The dictionary of “Lisan Al-arab” by “Ibn Manzoor”, which was classified in the fourteenth century of the most important of these dictionaries in terms of coverage, and its dependence on a special curriculum in the order of words.

**Keywords:** Arab, Linguist, Dictionary.

### Meaning of (Al-Moujam) the Language Dictionary in the Language

“Ajmatan”, “Ojomatan”, (Ajuma Al-lisan): means it was not eloquent, but “Ajama” (the letter and the book Ajmn): make it clear by dotting and “Tashkeel”. The meaning of “Ajama” with “kasrah” on the “Ain” of the verb or “Dhamah” means none-statement, and none-disclosure, but with “Fathah” on the “Ain” of the verb it means the statement and illustration.<sup>1</sup>

And the single word of “Qamoos” or dictionary is synonym to the single word of the “Mujam” or lexicon, two within the meaning of one, a designation later attributed to the name “Al-fairooz Abadi” dictionary named as “Al-qamoos Al-muheet”, it means great sea, and the name “Qamoos” or dictionary a note indicative of that dictionary, and then best known for the use of “Qamoos” or dictionary until it became a synonym for the word dictionary, because of the large circulation of “Al-fairooz Abadi” dictionary within the recent users and their dependence upon it, then every dictionary either linguistic or otherwise, a dictionary for expansion, but the basic principle is “Al-fairooz Abadi” dictionary<sup>2</sup>.

### Meaning of the Language Dictionary Idiomatically

A reference including the words of a language arranged in a certain order, with the interpretation of each of them, and provides information about them, from pronunciation, formulas, derivation and meanings<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>See: Qasim Riadh Zaki, Arabic dictionary, research in the article, approach, and application, “Dar Al-Maarefah” publishing, Beirut, 1987, page 11-12.

<sup>2</sup>See same reference as above, page 18.

<sup>3</sup>See same reference as above, page 19.

### Reasons of the Emergence of Arabic Language Dictionaries

The Arabs in their first geographic environment – the Arabian Peninsula – were not in need for dictionaries in the beginning, they know the meanings of vocabulary of their language, but they needed it later for the following reasons:

1. Help learners to understand texts, especially the Holy Quran, was the need to know the language of the Quran and strange words, and interpretation, and track his words through a special language dictionaries<sup>4</sup>.
2. Many of the people who do not know the Arabic language enter to Islam which has all the texts written in Arabic language, so they needed to know the meanings of Arabic vocabulary to understand Islam which they entered in.
3. Corruption of the tongues of the Arabs because of mixing with other nations whom they speak other languages, which made them, need help to correct their tongues.
4. Care to write the meanings of words of the language, and to collect the scattered words, in order to preserve them from being lost with passage of time. And deliver them to subsequent generations<sup>5</sup>.
5. Help creators also to express their ideas, through special dictionaries named meanings dictionaries in addition to the linguistics dictionaries.

### Ways to Arrange Arabic Dictionaries Vocabulary

#### 1. Phonics Method

Created by “Khalil Bin Ahmad Al-Faraaheedi”, which is based on the order of the letters as its pronunciation, and how its built, he made it between (binary and quintet) depending on the root of the (abstract), used the word and its inversion in one place, the word (Bade`e) for example we abstract it and becomes (Bada`a) then we arrange it according to pronunciation, becomes (`Abada), then we get the inversions as follows: (`Abada, `Adaba, Da`aba, Daba`a, Ba`ada, Bada`a), then what was still being used “Al-Khalil” gave its meaning, and what was not used he pointed that it’s not being used.

#### 2. Rhyme Method (Section and Chapter):

Created by “Al-Jouhary”, which is based on abstracting the word, and search for it by the last letter and it’s called a section, then the first letter and it’s called a chapter, then the middle letter in the three letters words, or the middle letters as mentioned in the over three letters words. And includes some of the dictionaries we mentioned some of them in the attached table.

#### 3. Alphabetic Method

Created by “Al-Zamakhshari” (died 538 AH / 1143 AD), in his dictionary “Asas Al-Balagha” on the alphabet, drawing the first letter in the abstract words, where he noticed the difficulty of phonics, and how non- smooth is the way of section and chapter, but remained dependent upon abstraction which may be difficult for some people.

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<sup>4</sup>Yaqoob, Emile, Arabic language dictionaries, beginnings and development, “Dar El-ILM Lil-Malayeen” publishing, Beirut, 1981, page 26.

<sup>5</sup>“Ibn Manzoor” in his introduction of “Lisan AL-Arab” pointed out to this goal, page 13.

#### 4. Modern Pronunciation Method

To find the vocabularies in the dictionaries depends on the order of letters without abstraction, which is affected by the order found in modern foreign dictionaries. It's an arrangement known by the Arabs in their early dictionaries, but they turned it away because it separates the items one from another<sup>6</sup> and scatter it. Many new dictionaries were classified this way, like what was written by "Mohammad Al-Bukhari Al-Masri" who arranged "Lisan Al-Arab" dictionary and "Al-Qamoos Al-Moheet" dictionary, in the alphabetical order, and "Al-Marje'a" dictionary by "Abdullah Al-Alayli" in 1963, and "Al-Rae'd" dictionary by "Jubran Massoud" in 1964, and "Al-Munjed Al-Abjadi" dictionary by "Fouad Afram Boustany", and "Laros" dictionary by "khalil Al-Habr" in 1973.

#### "Lisan Al-Arab" Dictionary

By "Jamal El-Din Mohammad Bin Mukarram Bin Manzoor" (630 AH/1232 AD-711 AH/1311 AD), he classified it in (681 AH/1282 AD), in which he compiled between prescription order in which he followed in his dictionary along with good combination feature<sup>7</sup> and the survey by taking articles from mothers of dictionaries, which follows, which proceeds him without using any other dictionaries:

1. "Tahtheeb Al-Lughah" by "Al-Azhari" (died 370 AH/981 AD).
2. "Al-Muhkam" by "Ibn Sayedah" (died 458 AH/1066 AD).
3. "Al-Sahah" by "Al-Jawhari" (died 392 AH/1003 AD).
4. "Hawashi Ibn Barri ala Al-Sahah" by "Ibn Barri" (died 582 AH/1186 AD).
5. "Al-Nehayah Fee Ghareeb Al-Hadeeth" by "Ezz El-Din Bin Al-Atheer" (Died 606 AH/1209 AD).

The "Lisan Al-Arab" dictionary did not take all the articles of these dictionaries, but did not take from others, therefore wasted a lot of facts contained therein, in the field of meanings, formulas, and evidences.

And he called the letters sections, and divided each section to 28 chapters, a huge encyclopedic dictionary interested in poems, languages, readings, evidences, and language grammar, the image of the sections and chapters in "Lisan Al-Arab" does not differ from the one in "Al-Sahah"- the first dictionary created by its author in this way- except in size, and in the provision of "Ibn Manzoor" of each section with an introduction to the letter its features (pronunciation, types, disagreements of grammarians about it, and all what is concerned with it).

The total items reach up to (80,000) items<sup>9</sup>, and this big material had an impact in the disorder of the single item within.

#### Arrangement of Vocabulary of "Lisan Al-Arab" Dictionary

Based on the adoption of the last letter is mainly in the order of abstract vocabulary, the words which ends with one letter to be in one section, arranged in dictionary order on the basis of letters of the alphabet (Alef, Ba, Ta, Tha, jeem, Ha, Kha, Dal, Thal, .... etc). A succession at the section, depending on the precedence of the first letter in the alphabet, then the middle letter or letters, in the order exist in the word, and it seems to me that such a method in the order that emerged at the end of the fourth century AH by

<sup>6</sup>Followed this way "Al-Kafawi", in his book "Al-kullyat", and "Al-Jarjani" (1340 AD – 1413 AD) in his book "Al-Ta'areefat".

<sup>7</sup>"Ibn Manzoor", "Lisan Al-Arab", the introduction, part 1, pages 11–12.

<sup>8</sup>Same reference as the above no (7) the introduction, part 1, page 12.

<sup>9</sup>which is twice "Al-Sahah", and more by (20,000) items from "Al-Qamoos Al-Muheet" dictionary, which was classified thereafter.

the hands of “Al-Jawhari” (died 392 AH/1003 AD) has appeared affected by the rhyme style, which began in this period, its pioneer tried to provide service for the creators to limit the vocabulary ending in one letter in one book space help creators to benefit in their rhyme composition, which was the feature of that age.

If we want to find a specific word so:

We deprive the word of the extra characters, then look for the last letter which is called section, then the first letter in the word which is called a chapter, then the middle letter or letters, according to its presence in the word.

Example: (Al-Kalam). After abstraction becomes (kalama).

We look for the abstract word in: section of the letter “Meem”, chapter of the letter “Kaf”, then middle letter “Lam”.

Other example: (Mutadahrej). After abstraction becomes (Dahraja).

We look for the abstract word in: section of the letter “Jeem”, chapter of the letter “Dal”, then the middle letters “Ha” and “Ra”.

### **Arabic Dictionaries Disadvantages**

Most Arabic dictionaries have disadvantages which reduced the possibility of benefit from them, including:

1. Dependence of subsequent dictionaries on previous ones, which became a phenomenon in all Arabic dictionaries<sup>10</sup>, which reduced the subsequent renewal in the dictionaries.
2. Chaos Ranking within linguistic article one, it has no internal approach, it appears frequently in heritage dictionaries in particular, while we find modern Arabic dictionaries –temporal- have tended to regulate the approach reflected the substance of language, useful from the mistakes of the ancients dictionaries authors, and the experiences of other nations in their dictionaries, for example, “Al-Mu`jam Al-Waseet”.
3. The diversity of the linguistic material in one word, and not restricted to linguistic meaning of the vocabulary, we maybe find great deal of knowledge best to be mentioned in containers of knowledge other than linguistic dictionaries.
4. Capacity of the material in one word, and the collateral of repetition, digression, or excessive detail than the required limit.
5. Repetition of the article, or mentioning it in many places in the dictionaries, and the lack of a referral.
6. The lack of verbal control, or lack of its provisions in the vocabulary.
7. Lack of meaning sometimes and ambiguity at other times, because of different age in which most Arabic dictionaries were collected, most of our dictionaries are ancient and being using in our time, different culture and concepts. See, for example the word (Al-Jame`ah) means university or gathering : its “Al-Sura Al-Jame`ah” the gathering Sura of the Holy Quran, and also means “Al-Qaid”, or chains, also compare it to the “Islamic University”, “Arabic University”, and the “University of Jordan”.
8. The lack of new vocabulary, and rigidity of Arabic dictionaries in general, except for a few of them as “Al-Mu`jam Al-Waseet” by the “Arabic Language Academy”, and “Al-Marje`e” by “Abdullah Al-Alayli”.
9. The lack of punctuation in most dictionaries, which makes it hard to know the meaning of the vocabulary accurately.
10. The Arabic linguistic dictionaries are not served by indexes and supplements which are necessary.

<sup>10</sup>Abu Al-Futouh, Mohammed Ahmed, linguistic dictionaries studies in the light of modern linguistics, “Dar Al-Nahdha Al-Arabiah” publishing, Beirut, 1966, pages 27–31.

**(Supplement)**  
**List of most important Arabic linguistic dictionaries showing their authors and methods to use them and some of their characteristics**

	Dictionary name	Author -his time- Place of birth	How to use	Some characteristics of dictionaries listed in the table
1.	Al-Ain	Al-Khalil Bin Ahmad Al-Farahidi (718 AD-786 AD)	Vocal On	The first Arabic dictionary we got, he made it as the number of Arabic alphabet 28 –and called each letter section-.
2.	Al-Bare'e	Al-Qali Al-Bagdadi Al-Andalusi (893 AD-967 AD)	Letters Exits With	Different a bit in order of the words exits than Al-Khalils order, adjust the vocabulary by “tashkeel” verbally (jadda with fatha on the jeem), and weight (Al-Jezaz like fea`al) devided it into six buildings, one building called (footnotes and Al-Awshab), mentioned the names of the sounds of birds and animals.
3.	Tahtheeb Al-lughah	Al-Azhari (895 AD-981 AD)	Order	Devided his dictionary into sections (letters), and sections into books, went on to the neglected and the reason of neglect. He used the Holy Qur'an and Hadith, divided it as a quantified division into six buildings.
4.	Al-Muhkam wa Al-Muheet Al-A`azam	Ibn Saidah (1007 AD-1066 AD)	And Flipping	Assigned the “Hamza” a separate section, convert the soft “Alef” to its origin”waw” or “Ya’a”. devided his dictionary quantitatively into six building adding building VI.
5.	Al-Jamharah	Ibn Duraid (837 AD-933 AD)	Special  Alphabetic	He created a way that tends to benefit from “Takleebat” the phonics, he rely on alphabetical order after abstraction, the former in the order that is to be arranged upon, for example: “Al-Amtar” rain, its abstract is “Matara”, the first letter alphabetically is “Ra’a”, it proceeds “Meem” and “Ta’a”, in his dictionary he used a lot of articles from “Al-Khalil” dictionary “Al-Ain”.
6.	Al-Maqayees	Ibn Faris (941 AD-1004 AD)	order	Made his dictionary books beginning with “Hamza”, and ends with “Ya’a”, divided its sections of buildings, in binary for example, mention in “Jeem” section (Jah Jakh Jada Jatha ... Jaya ) then returns (Ja’a Jaba Jata Jatha). In the “Jeem” with “Ra”: (Jaraza Jarasa Jaras’a ... Jaraba ... Jaratha).
7.	Al-Mujmal	Ibn Faris (941 AD-1004 AD)	Special Alphabetic order	Used the same way as he did in the “Maqayees” with some differences. He ranked it to three sections: bilateral, trilateral, and anything more than three letters.
8.	Al-Sahah	Al-Jawhari (... - 1003 AD)		He classified it according to the method of last letter section, first letter chapter, after abstracting the word from all appendages.
9.	Lisan Al-Arab	Ibn Manzoor (died 1323 AD)		Detailed in the research.
10.	Al-Qamoos Al-Muheet	Al-Fairooz Abadi (1332 AD-1415 AD) Fairooz Abad		Criticized the mistakes of “Al-Sahah”, and put a line above each article he added, he used “Tashkeel”, he was criticized by “Al-Shediaq” in the book “Al-Jasoos Ala Al-Qamoos”.
11.	Taj Al-Aroos	Al-Zubaidi (1732 AD-1790 AD) Yemen		Made “Al-Qamoos Al-Muheet” a base to his dictionary, then the annotations explaining the system used by the authors of his time, useful works of his

				predecessors in the dictionaries, mentioning the materials and evidences which was overlooked by the dictionary.
12.	Asas Al-Balaghah	Al-Zamakhshari (1075 AD-1144 AD) Zamakhshar	Regular Alphabetic Order	To distinguish between the real and metaphorical meanings of words. Infringement of the protest ages in corroborating, and he quote from literary books to illustrate the use of vocabulary in context.
13.	Muheet Al-Muheet	Butros Al-Bustani (1819 AD-1883 AD) Al-Dibieh-lebanon		He has written as “Al-Zamakhshari” for the later poets, kept the words of “Al-Qamoos Al-Muheet”.
14.	Aqrab Al-Mawared	Al-Shartooni (1849 AD-1912 AD) Shartoon-Lebanon		He used some of the icons that indicate the keys to the pronunciation of the vocabulary.
15.	Al-Bustan	Abdullah Al-Bustiani (1854 AD-1930 AD) Al-Dibieh-Lebanon		a lexicon which is the material of “Muheet Al-Muheet” dictionary by “Al-Bustani”, with some additions in vocabulary, meanings, and explanations which he took from “Taj Al-Aroos” dictionary, which he mentioned the names of many modern inventions and scientific terms.
16.	Al-Munjed	Louis Al-Ma’aloo (1867 AD-1946 AD) Zahleh-Lebanon	Regular Alphabetic Order	Relied mainly on the material of “Muheet Al-Muheet” dictionary. He used images, deleted evidences and saying, he added to the Arabic dictionary some particulars of the foreign dictionaries.
17.	Al-Mu`ajam Al-Waseet	Arabic Language Academy – Cairo		He took care of the internal order of the linguistic material in each word, where verbs proceeds nouns, and the abstract over the non-abstract, and the sensory over the mental, and the real over the metaphorical, and took only the necessary evidences, adding generating and Arabized verbals.
18.	Al-Mu`ojam	Abdullah Al-Alayli (-1914) Beirut-Lebanon		He was interested in old and new birth, the Arabized and intruder, he added some vocabulary, mentioned the foreign term which corresponds to the Latin one.

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