Egyptian Arabic in the seventeenth century: a study and edition of Yusuf al-Magribi's 'Daf al-isr an kalam ahl Misr'

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CHAPTER 3

About Daf' al-ıṣr 'an kalām ahl Miṣr

3.1 The contents of Daf' al-ıṣr

Daf' al-ıṣr is an important source of the Egyptian dialect used at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries. It is presented in the form of a list of Egyptian Arabic words, which al-Maġribī checked for consistency with Classical Arabic, referring mainly to al-Fīrūzābādī’s al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ. As the title of Daf' al-ıṣr indicates, al-Maġribī’s aim was to prove that many Egyptian dialect words, which were considered to be “incorrect” Arabic, in fact have their roots in the Classical Arabic language. This makes Daf' al-ıṣr a work of special interest because it is one of very few in this field, as will be shown in §3.3.1.

Since al-Maġribī did not have many precedents to follow, it is interesting to discover more about his motives for writing this work, the books that influenced him, and his methodology, namely what kind of words he discussed, how he examined them, and whether or not he was successful in doing so. Daf' al-ıṣr has attracted scholarly interest over the years, and the studies that have been written about it will be discussed in §3.4 and §3.5.

In this chapter, only Daf' al-ıṣr’s linguistic aspects will be considered. Another element of the book is its poetry, both by al-Maġribī and others, as well as its many (rhyming) riddles. Al-Maģribī used these as a way of proving the validity of a word (if it was found in a poem in Classical Arabic). He also utilized them to demonstrate the use of a word, or simply to enliven the text and highlight his prowess at the art. These poems will be discussed separately, in Chapter 4.

Apart from its linguistic and literary interest, Daf' al-ıṣr contains valuable information about Egyptian culture during the 16th/17th centuries, such as the types of clothing and food that were common, and the new fashion of tobacco and coffee. These aspects will be discussed in Chapter 6.

3.2 Al-Maģribī’s reasons for writing Daf' al-ıṣr

The actual word list starts at fol. 3b. Fols. 1a-3a contain an introduction in which al-Maģribī mentions his reasons for writing Daf' al-ıṣr. His aim was:

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136 See §3.2.
137 See §3.3.
138 See §3.6 and §3.7.
About Dāf al-İsrʾ an kalām ahl Miṣr

بيان الفاظ يحكم الظاهر بخطافها والحال انها صواب وليست تظهر صحبتها ولم توافق ما عليه ذوو الألباب

“Clarifying words which appear to be wrong, while the fact is that they are correct, and other words which appear to be correct, but about which the intellectuals do not agree”. ¹³⁹

So, his main aim was to prove that words which the intellectuals thought were incorrect, i.e. not the same as in Classical Arabic, or about which there were doubts, in fact were not “wrong” at all. The way in which he wanted to achieve this is explained on fol. 2a:

إن يربى هذا الكتاب على ابتهج ترتيب وهبذا ما يقع من عوام الهل مصر يرجعه للصواب

وهذا هو التعريب مغتافا من الفاموس والعباب مبنا لما حكم بخطافته انها صواب

“To arrange this book in the most splendid way, and improve what is said by the common people of Egypt, by relating it to the correct form, which is taʿrīb ("Arabization"), scooping from al-Qāmūs and al-ʿUbāb, and clarifying that what is considered to be wrong, is correct.”

To check the existence of dialectal words in Classical Arabic, al-Mağiбри wanted to use al-Qāmūs al-muhīṭ by al-Fīrūzābādī¹⁴⁰ and al-ʿUbāb al-zāḥir wa l-lubāb al-fāḥir by Raḍī al-Dīn al-Hasan b. Muḥammad al-Ṣağānī (577/1181-650/1252).¹⁴¹ Yet, contrary to this statement, al-Mağiبري did not actually use al-ʿUbāb as a source for Dāf al-İsr in the section of the manuscript that is left for us to read.

Al-Mağiبري realized that what he intended to do was quite unique, as we can read on fols. 2b-3a:

وكل من هذين اثنين نظام الاللفاظ المشترك وتطبيق الاللفاظ الذي يظهر خطاه على الصواب ما صنعه احد في علمنا وإنما الحميري في درة الغواص بين أوهام الخواص وغالبها فقبل الاجوبة

¹³⁹ Although the sentence kalīmāt al-allāb seems grammatically incorrect, the meaning is clear.
¹⁴⁰ See §1.1.1 for full biographical details.
¹⁴¹ See GAL I pp. 443-4.
About Dafʿ al-Iṣr ‘an kalām ahl Miṣr

“To the best of my knowledge, neither of these i.e. the arrangement of joint words and the application of the words which appear to be wrong in their correct form, has been done by anybody before. However, al-Hariri demonstrated the errors of the elite in his Durrat al-ġawwās,143 and the majority of these errors need a reply”.

On fol. 3a he tells about an incident which strengthened his determination to pursue this idea:

“The reason for this work is that a boaster heard one of his friends say certain expressions, so he started to make fun of him and ridicule him, although they [the expressions] conveyed the correct meaning, like ‘so and so turned out to be a sly fox (bāqi) in this or that case’; and he heard his messenger say marmād during a chess-game so he laughed at him, but marmād comes from rāmad ‘inflammation of the eye’, as if he says to him: ‘I did not see in this game,’144 so I asked God for proper guidance.”

When reading Durrat al-ġawwās, al-Maġribī realised that certain words, which were considered to be incorrect, did in fact not deviate from Classical Arabic. Furthermore, he noticed that people who used this kind of language were being laughed at. He, therefore, felt the need to correct this ignorance by investigating which colloquial words had the same meaning in Classical Arabic. However, on fol. 3a he states that he knows he would not always be able to achieve this goal:

142 muṣṭarīk: al-Maġribī meant: words which have more than one meaning. In the paragraph before this quotation, al-Maġribī discussed the different meanings of the verb a’rāb (see fol. 2a).
143 For biographical details, see §1.1. Durrat al-ġawwās is a specimen of the laḥn al-āmma-literature, see §3.3.1.
144 Apparently this is an exclamation used when somebody loses a piece or is being checkmated. See §5.4.
About *Da'f al-‘Isr ‘an kalām ahl Miṣr*


“...”

On fol. 133a, at the end of the work, al-Maġribī gives a completely different reason for writing *Da'f al-‘Isr*:

...“The incentive for this not so painful affair was that I intended to study *il-‘Qāmūs il-Mu‘īd*. The outcome of his examination even surprised him on occasions:

...“They say, and this is heard often from women, so-and-so *‘alā l-hāl mā yizīq qīq*, i.e. “he gets angry immediately”, and the amazing thing is that he [= al-Fīrūzābādī] says in *il-‘Qāmūs* that “*il-zu/qīq* with the pattern of *‘usfūr* is somebody who has a bad temper”, end of quotation, and the cause of this amazement is their [= the women’s] conformity with the meaning in the Classical language. This and other similar cases induced me to write this book, because the greater proportion of the words of the people of Egypt is in conformity with the [Classical Arabic] language.”

Unfortunately, this example is based on an error, for *il-‘Qāmūs il-Mu‘īd* mentions *zu/qīq* with the meaning described by al-Maġribī, not *‘usfūr*. However, it demonstrates that al-Maġribī was genuinely pleased when he could relate an Egyptian-Arabic word to Classical Arabic.

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145 Fol. 42a.
146 See *il-‘Qāmūs al-Mu‘īd* p. 801c.
3.3 Works that influenced al-Maġribī

3.3.1 *Lāhäuser al-ʾāmma*-literature

Criticizing the language of certain people, like al-Ḥarīrī did in *Durraṭ al-ḡawwāṣ*, was common. Works of this genre, generally known as *lāhäuser al-ʾāmma*, or “errors of language made by the common people”, already existed in the second century AH. Their design was “to correct deviations by reference to the contemporary linguistic norm, as determined by the purists”.

Al-Maġribī borrows some of the terminology used in the *lāhäuser al-ʾāmma* literature, e.g., he introduces the dialect word with *yaqūlūn* “they say”, and the correct form (if he establishes that the dialect form is not ‘correct’) by *wāʾ*... “whereas the norm is...”. This could be an indication that al-Maġribī got his inspiration for *Daṣr al-ʾisr* from the *lāhäuser al-ʾāmma* literature. We know that he was familiar with at least one specimen of the genre: al-Ḥarīrī’s *Durraṭ al-ḡawwāṣ fī ʾāwhām al-ḥawāṣ*, of which al-Maġribī produced an arrangement and appendix.

Nevertheless, al-Maġribī’s purpose was the opposite of that of the *lāhäuser al-ʾāmma* literature, i.e. defending the colloquial language, instead of attacking it. He introduces a word without prejudice, and then examines whether the word is ‘correct’ Arabic or not. However, this positive attitude does not mean that he completely refrains from pointing out ‘errors’ in the language of the Egyptians.

Maṭar (1966) p. 56 refers to some authors who have devoted part of their *lāhäuser al-ʾāmma* work to words that were considered to be incorrect, even though they were not, as well as to authors who devoted a complete work to the dialectal words that can be found in Classical Arabic. As well as *Daṣr al-ʾisr*, *Bahr al-ʾawwām fīmā ʾāṣab fīl al-ʾawwām* by Muhammad b. Yūsuf al-Ḥanbalī (d. 971/1563), and *al-Qawl al-muqtadāb fīmā wāfaq luġat ʾahl Miṣr min luğaʾt al-ʾarab* by Ibn ʿabī al-Surūr.

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147 This expression, or the similar *lāhäuser al-ʾawwām*, is often used in titles of works of this genre, although different titles can be found as well such as *Kitāb ḡalāṭat al-ʾawwām* or *Kitāb mā taqālāt fīl al-ʾawwām*, see *EF* V p. 606a (Ch. Pellat).
148 According to *EF* V p. 607a (Ch. Pellat) the *Kitāb mā taḥṣan fīlī al-ʾawwām* or *Risāla fī lāḥūn al-ʾāmm*, attributed to al-Kisāʾī (d. 189/805), is probably the first work of the genre.
149 *EF* V p. 605 (Ch. Pellat).
150 Compare *EF* V p. 605 (Ch. Pellat).
151 See *Daṣr al-ʾisr* fols. 3a, 8b, 9a and §1.4.
153 See *GAL* II pp. 495-6.
154 For the latter see §3.4.
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also belong in this category. However, the latter is an abbreviated version of Daf' al-Isr.

Al-Mağribī does not include the word 'āmma or 'awāmm (“the common people”) in the title of his book. He speaks of kalām ahl Misr, “the language of the people of Egypt”, without specifying any particular group. As mentioned in §2.3, al-Mağribī changed the title during the writing process: The original title of the work was al-Fadl al-āmm wa qāmūs al-awāmm, “The general benefit and the dictionary of the common people”. The word ‘awāmm was often used in the genre of the “language errors” literature, e.g. al-Zubaydī’s Laḥn al-‘awāmm, and the Kitāb mā talḥan fīhi al-‘awāmm, which is attributed to al-KisāT.155 However, the ‘awāmm were not always the target, but rather the ḥawāss, whose feelings were spared by the reference in the title to the ‘awāmm. Al-Mağribī does not give a clear indication of whose speech he is describing. Usually, when he discusses a word, he does not specify which group uses it. However, he does sometimes mention this explicitly: “This can be heard from the ḥawāss”, “this occurs from the ‘awāmm”, “this is heard from the peasants”, “that can be heard mostly from the women”, etc. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the words which do not have such a specification were those used by all classes of society. This might also be one of the reasons why al-Mağribī decided to change the title of the book.

Moreover, Daf' al-Isr differs from the Laḥn al-‘āmma literature in that al-Mağribī not only mentions mistakes and deviations made in attempts to write Classical Arabic, but also pure dialect words whose meaning cannot be found in any Arabic source, as well as words that have a foreign origin.

3.3.2 Al-Qāmūs al-Muhīṭ

Al-Mağribī admired al-Fīruzabādī’s al-Qāmūs al-muhīṭ. It is almost the only dictionary he refers to in his quest for an explanation of colloquial words.156 It is safe to say that at least half of Daf' al-Isr consists of quotations from al-Qāmūs al-Muhīṭ. Al-Fīruzabādī was an outstanding and innovative lexicographer, and his dictionary is original in some respects. In order to include as many entries as possible in a limited space, al-Fīruzabādī left out examples (šawāhid), and used a system of abbreviations of his own invention, for instance ĕ for mawdī “place” to indicate a place-name in general, ژ for balad “town”, و for qarya “village”, ī for

155 See Eif V p. 605b (Ch. Pellat).
156 Sometimes, notably more towards the end, al-Mağribī also quotes from Muḥtasar al-Šāhī, an abbreviation of Tāğa al-liğa wa šāhī al-ārabīya by Ismā’īl b. Hammād al-Gawharī (d. ca. 398/1008). See GAL S I p. 196 and Eif II p. 495b ff. (L. Kopf).
"plural", for "known" for entries which need not be explained (for instance the word ra'jul). In this way, he succeeded in cramming 60,000 entries into two volumes. In al-Qāmūs al-muḥiṣ, al-Fīrūzābādī criticizes al-Ǧawharī’s al-Šīhāh, and states in his introduction that: “half the language or more escaped him [al-Ǧawhari]” and adds that it contains “clear delusions and shameful mistakes”. Al-Mağribī copied these criticisms without any research, and even added some of his own, for instance:

“They say to a small boat zwraq, and this is correct. He said in al-Qāmūs: ‘a zwraq is a small boat’, which is clearer than the words of al-Muḥtaṣar: ‘a zwraq is a kind of boat’.”

Nonetheless, al-Mağribī does not criticize al-Fīrūzābādī when the latter includes in his dictionary words which are obviously not of Arabic origin. A good example is the word mūm “wax; candles”, which is Persian. Knowing this language, al-Mağribī must obviously have realized this. Nevertheless, he quoted the following without criticism:

“They say mūm for “wax; candles”, and this is often heard from the Turks. It is erroneously believed that this is not Arabic, although it is. He said in al-Qāmūs: “mūm with ḍamm means “wax; candles” and an instrument for the weaver into which he puts the yarn and with which he weaves, and an instrument of the shoemaker; [it also means] the pleurisy”.”

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157 See al-Fīrūzābādī’s introduction to al-Qāmūs al-Muḥiṣ p. 32d.
158 See al-Qāmūs al-muḥiṣ p. 903b.
159 See Haywood (1965) p. 87. The edition I used (published by Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, in 1999) even succeeded in comprising the whole work in one volume.
160 Al-Qāmūs al-muḥiṣ p. 32c.
161 Ibid. p. 32h.
162 Fol. 42a.
163 Al-Mağribī used an abbreviated version of al-Šīhāh.
165 Dafʿ al-ʾiṣr fol. 106a.
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Al-Maġribī’s friend and colleague, al-Ḥafṣī, was more realistic when he wrote in Šifāʿ al-qašīl ṣīnā fī kalām al-ʿarab min al-daḥīl p. 202:

“mūm meaning “wax, candles” is Persian (...) and the words of al-Qāmūs wrongly suggest the contrary, but this is a delusion”.

Another sign of the appreciation al-Maġribī felt for al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ is the fact that he followed the same arrangement for entries in his own work, the so-called rhyme arrangement, which arranges roots according to their last radical. The roots are presented in the normal alphabetical order, with the exception of the wāw, which is given before the hā. Each new chapter, based on the last radical of a root, is introduced with the word ḥarf or bāb. Each first radical is introduced with the word faṣl, e.g. the word ǧāšīm “unjust, tyrant” can be found in ḥarf al-mūm, faṣl al-ṣāyyn. This was the common order in the dictionaries of the time.\(^\text{166}\) Although other dictionaries used this system, we can assume that had al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ used a different one, al-Maġribī would have followed suit.

Finally, we can detect the significant influence of al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ in the choice of entries in Dafʿ al-ʿIṣr. Sometimes, al-Maġribī mentions a word which he found in al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ but has a different meaning in the Egyptian dialect, i.e. the word ǧūbūq (fol. 50a) which meant “cloudy” in Egyptian Arabic while ǧībūq means “evening draught” in Classical Arabic. One often gets the impression that al-Maġribī was leafing through al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ, and choosing the entries he found interesting even though he had nothing to add to what al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ had written, other than confirming that the Egyptians used the word in the same way. There are many consecutive pages in which al-Maġribī does not introduce any words that cannot be found in al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ. This could be the reason why many of those included in Dafʿ al-ʿIṣr are of no interest, or are not even worth mentioning in a dictionary of the spoken Arabic of Cairo. Examples are expressions such as ǧāʾir muḥliq “an outstanding poet”\(^\text{167}\) or al-ʾawwol wa l-ʾāḥīr “the first and the last”\(^\text{168}\).

\(^{166}\) See Haywood (1965) p. 48. This order can be found also in Lisān al-ʿarab.

\(^{167}\) fol. 53b.

\(^{168}\) fol. 93b.
3.4 Daf al-āsr and al-Qawl al-muqtadab

As explained in §2.2, the Daf al-āsr manuscript has lost some quires over the course of time. To a certain extent, what was written in the missing section can be reconstructed with the help of another work, known as al-Qawl al-muqtadab fīmā wāfaqā luğat ahl Miṣr min luğāt al-‘Arab (“The abbreviated speech concerning what corresponds in the language of the people of Egypt with the languages of the Arabs”, hereafter referred to as al-Qawl al-muqtadab) by Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Surūr al-Bakrī. Al-Qawl al-muqtadab is a dictionary of the Egyptian Arabic colloquial, and is based on Daf al-āsr, but in an abbreviated form. It was written in 1057/1647, and its author, who at the end of the work states his name as Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Surūr al-Ṣādīqī al-Ṣībī ‘Āl al-Ḥasan,169 was a member of a famous Egyptian family, affiliated to the Baktīya ṣūfī order. Ibn Abī al-Surūr was probably born in 998/1589-90.170 There is disagreement about the exact date of his death. Opinions vary from anywhere between 1060/1650 and 1087/1676, but Rafeq (1975) pp. 25-27 offers 1653 as being the most likely. Ibn Abī al-Surūr is one of the most important historians from the first half of the 17th century.171

Fortunately, Ibn Abī al-Surūr’s abbreviation of Daf al-āsr is based on the complete manuscript. This helps us to reconstruct some of the entries that were lost. However, he left out all of the words which do not have an Arabic root, depriving linguists of the most interesting aspect of the work. He abbreviated the quotations from al-Qāmūs al-Muhīṭ, and left out the anecdotes and poetry etc. because he believed that al-Maġribī had a habit of elaborating and digressing from the main purpose of the book.172 Al-Qawl al-muqtadab is, therefore, a better arranged and more structured document than Daf al-āsr. However, it lacks much of the charm of its predecessor. We should give Ibn Abī al-Surūr credit for checking the entries in Daf al-āsr against other dictionaries that were not consulted by al-Maġribī, such as Ibn Manṣūr’s Lisān al-ārab, Ibn al-‘Anbārī’s al-Zāhir,173 and Karā’ al-Naml’s al-Muǧīrīd.174 After Ibn Abī al-Surūr, both manuscripts (Daf al-āsr and al-

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169 See Rafeq (1975) p. 25 for his full name.
170 Ibid. p. 27.
171 Detailed information can be found in Rafeq (1975). He does not, however, mention al-Qawl al-muqtadab.
173 Full title al-Zāhir fī muʿāni kalām al-nās by Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim al-Anbārī (231/885-328/940), see GAL S I p. 182.
174 Full title al-Muǧīrīd fī jārīb kalām al-‘Arab wa luğāthihā by ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Hunāṣī al-Rūʿāṣī, known as Karā’ al-Naml (d. 922/1516), see GAL S I p. 201. See e.g. the entry ژی’ which
Qawl al-muqtadab fell into the hands of Yusuf al-Mallawi, known as Ibn al-Wakil. He copied Ibn Abī al-Surūr’s al-Qawl al-muqtadab, while keeping Daf’ al-îṣr open next to it, and added some of the entries that Ibn Abī al-Surūr had left out. The version of al-Qawl al-muqtadab referred to hereafter is the version published in 1962 by al-Sayyid Ibrāhīm Sālim, and introduced by Ibrāhīm al-Ibyārī. This version contains Ibn Abī al-Surūr’s text, including that added by Ibn al-Wakil.

Al-Qawl al-muqtadab contains 863 entries. As calculated previously, Daf’ al-îṣr must, originally, have contained around .560 entries. This means that al-Qawl al-muqtadab includes only one third of the entries of Daf’ al-îṣr, since Ibn Abī al-Surūr and Ibn al-Wakil did not believe that the rest fit the purpose of al-Qawl al-muqtadab, and discarded them.

Not only did Ibn Abī al-Surūr choose which entries to include, but he also often reworded them and made considerable changes to the text. Set out below are four examples which demonstrate how he changed the wording and the effect this has on the meaning of the text:

1. In Daf’ al-îṣr fol. 6a: “they say: so-and-so is mıšġūf and in the [Classical Arabic] language mıšġūf means ‘crazy’”. Al-Qawl al-muqtadab p. 111 rewords this as follows: بقولون: فلا (شغقه) الحب: أي أزال عقله: وهو صحيح لغوى “they say: so-and-so, love šıġıfıhu, i.e. made him go out of his mind, and it is correct in the Classical Arabic language”.


3. Daf’ al-îṣr fol. 107a: “they say: so-and-so sleeps much (kı/ı̇nām), and it is correct as well, just

al-Maṣrībī could not find in al-Qāmūs al-muhī (see fol. 13b), while Ibn Abī al-Surūr found it in al-Muğarrad (see p. 14 of al-Qawl al-muqtadab).

For more information about this person, see §2.1.

See the introduction to the edition of al-Qawl al-muqtadab, p. 7, where the introduction which the copist Ibn al-Wakil added to the work is published. These additions to the text led Ibrāhīm al-Ibyārī, who wrote the introduction to the edition of al-Qawl al-muqtadab, to believe that he held in his hands a work which contained the complete contents of Daf’ al-îṣr. This is understandable, because he had not seen Daf’ al-îṣr so could not compare the two, but he was incorrect.

See §2.2.
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In the first example, Ibn Abī al-Surūr simply changed the way in which the word is represented, from the passive participle to active perfect. In the second example, he totally missed the point of mentioning the specific use of the word ġamīl as an insult, and left us with the less interesting, well-known, meaning of “beautiful”. In the third example, he ignored the information that in the Egyptian dialect, two mıdārs of the verb nām are used: niyām and niwm. He only mentioned the second, more common one, while al-Maġribī’s point was that the more striking niyām should be referred to. In the fourth example, Ibn Abī al-Surūr turned the interesting form V with prefix it- into an ordinary form I. Unfortunately, these kind of changes happen a lot, and therefore it must be concluded that as a linguistic document, al-Qawl al-muqtaṣāb is far less interesting than Daf al-Isr.

3.5 Earlier studies of Daf al-Isr

Undoubtedly, Ibn Abī al-Surūr and Ibn al-Wakīl were the first to study Daf al-Isr. After these two efforts, it remained unnoticed for almost two centuries, even when it came into the hands of Muhammad ‘Ayyād al-Ṭanṭāwī, who took it with him to Russia, along with the rest of his manuscript collection, but did not, apparently, publish anything about it. This is remarkable, since al-Ṭanṭāwī was interested in the Egyptian dialect, as can be seen in his Traité de la langue arabe vulgaire.

After Daf al-Isr was added to the collection of the university library in St. Petersburg, the first to note the importance of the work was Victor Romanovič Rosen (1849-1908). In 1875, he wrote a letter to the German orientalist Heinrich Thorbecke (1837-1890), in which he described the manuscript and quoted some interesting passages from it, with the aim of encouraging Thorbecke to study the text. This seemed to work, and Thorbecke copied the manuscript, albeit excluding the quotations from al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ. After his death, along with Thorbecke’s
other scholarly papers, this copy was bequeathed to the library of the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft. It is now kept in the University of Halle’s library.\footnote{See Müller-Socin (1891) p. 480, nr. 124. Ms. Th. A93. I gratefully thank the library of the Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg for providing me with a digital image on CD Rom of Thorbecke’s copy of Daf al-\textit{iṣr}.}

The next person to take an interest in the manuscript was Ignatij Julianovič Kratchkovsky (1883-1951), who wrote an excellent article about Daf al-\textit{iṣr} and its author in 1926. Subsequently, it seems that the existence of Daf al-\textit{iṣr} escaped the notice of many scholars outside Russia. Ibrāhīm al-Ibyārī, who wrote the introduction to the printed edition of al-Qawl al-muqtadāb, mentions that Daf al-\textit{iṣr} had been lost.\footnote{See §3.4.} This was because it had initially been in private hands, and had apparently never been copied and circulated; it was then taken to Russia. If al-Ibyārī had checked Brockelmann’s \textit{Geschichte der arabischen Literatur}, he would have discovered that the manuscript is still in existence.

In 1968, Daf al-\textit{iṣr} was published as a facsimile by the Publishing House Nauk (“Science”), in Moscow. The text was introduced by ‘Abd al-Salām Awwād in Russian and Arabic. He also produced extensive indices of the entries, Qur’ān-verses, \textit{ḥadīṯ}, proverbs, poetry by al-Maġribī and others, songs, riddles, famous people, sects and tribes, places, and books by al-Maġribī and other authors. Awwād worked as a teacher of Arabic at the University in St. Petersburg (Leningrad at that time) between 1961 and 1965. In 1964, he received a Doctorate for his introduction to and indices of Daf al-\textit{iṣr}.\footnote{See Ḥiḡāzī (1968) p. 117.} In his nine page Arabic introduction, Awwād provides some information about al-Maġribī’s life, and a description of the manuscript. It was only after the publication of the facsimile edition that the work attracted the attention of scholars. According to some witnesses, it was distributed in a bookshop in Cairo, and a number of reviews and articles were thus published about it. A few are mentioned below:

- In 1969, Sharbatov presented Daf al-\textit{iṣr} in a colloque, and an abbreviation of his lecture was published in French, while in 1970 the full text was published in Arabic. In the Arabic article, he discusses several of the linguistic characteristics of the Egyptian dialect which can be found in Daf al-\textit{iṣr}, such as placing the interrogatives at the end of the sentence, the frequent use of certain word patterns, such as \textit{fa’āl}, changes in vowels, proverbs and expressions.
About Dāf al-ʾisr ‘an kalām ahl Miṣr

- Ramaḍān ‘Abd al-Tawwāb published an article in 1969-1970 about Dāf al-ʾisr, in which he discusses at length several of the linguistic phenomena that appear in it, such as emphasis, metathesis, loss of interdentals, change of vowels etc.

- A review of Dāf al-ʾisr was published by Maḥmūd Faḥmī Ḥiğāzī in 1969. He begins with a statement about the title of the manuscript, when it was written, and for what reason. He then proceeds to discuss a number of linguistic characteristics, such as the loss of interdentals and ḥānza, the words of foreign origin, and the words that are specific to certain classes, which al-Maḡribī discusses.

- An interesting book by Naṣīr ‘Abd Allāh ʿUtmaḥn, about the sciences in Egypt in the 17th century, was published in 2006. In it, a chapter is devoted to the work of linguists. Dāf al-ʾisr is mentioned as one of the most important linguistic documents of that time. Unfortunately, ʿUtmaḥn was unable to consult the manuscript or the ‘Awwād edition, and therefore only refers to the aforementioned article by Sharbatov.¹⁸¹

So far, the interest in Dāf al-ʾisr had been purely linguistical. The first to shed light on another aspect of the work was Olga Frolova, who wrote a number of articles about the mawāwil in Dāf al-ʾisr.¹⁸² The dialectal poetry in Dāf al-ʾisr will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. In 2003, Nelly Hanna used Dāf al-ʾisr in her study of the culture of the middle classes in Ottoman Egypt. In this work, she gives us clear insight into the reasons for the rising interest in colloquial language at that time. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the middle classes in Egypt were living very comfortably due to thriving trade and low taxes, which gave them the means to spend more time and money on matters such as education and books. In order to communicate their ideas to these ordinary people, the ‘ulama‘ started to adapt their style and subject-matters to a non-academic readership.¹⁸³ At the same time, the culture of the middle classes also started to influence scholarly work.¹⁸⁴ It therefore seems that al-Maḡribī’s Dāf al-ʾisr was part of a wider trend of incorporating non-scholarly content, i.e. the middle class culture, into a scholarly form. The fact that al-Maḡribī was from this class certainly played a part in his choice of subject.

According to Hanna, a similar interest in the dialect appears in three works that were also written during the 17th century, although somewhat later than Dāf al-ʾisr. Two of these concern the loanwords that had entered the Arabic language.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 113-114.
About Daftar al-Iṣr ‘an kalām ahl Miṣr

One is from Egypt, the aforementioned Šifā’ al-ġalīl fīmā fī kalām al-‘arab min al-daḥīl by Šihāb al-Dīn al-Ḥafāği, and the second, from Syria, is by al-Muḥibbī (d. 1111/1699), Qasd al-sabīl fīmā fi al-luḡa al-‘arabiyya min al-daḥīl. Hanna describes the last work as follows: “One of his (al-Muḥibbī’s) aims was to pinpoint colloquial words that were used by the ‘āmma. He distinguished them from imported words (daḥīl) with the aim of showing them to be distortions (tahřīf), or Arabic words that the ‘āmma distorted. He considered the use of the colloquial to be a negative development and one he disapproved of. His work nevertheless indicates that the question had by his lifetime become one of open debate, a significant phenomenon in itself.”185 Here we see the difference to the approach of al-Maġribī, who did not disapprove of the colloquial.

3.6 Al-Maġribī’s methodology

As mentioned in §2.3, the first title al-Maġribī gave to his work was al-Fadl al-‘āmm wa qāmūs al-‘awāmm. The word qāmūs “dictionary” implies an attempt at an exhaustive word list, with an explanation of the meaning of every word. Al-Maġribī does not, however, follow the principle of listing all of the words and giving their meanings. For instance, he does not mention personal pronouns in separate entries. Moreover, many simple, everyday objects are left out. For instance, he gives us the words mi’laqa “spoon” and mağrafa “ladle” but not the one for knife. Apart from using al-Qāmūs al-Muḥibbī as a source of inspiration, it remains unclear which criteria al-Maġribī used to select the words he went on to discuss. He states that it is his intention to comment on words which were believed to be incorrect, even though they do in fact conform to Classical Arabic. However, this is not always the case, because he also discusses many words which he proved did not so conform, or which are not Arabic at all. Al-Maġribī, probably, discussed words that raised doubts, whatever the result of his research might be. His love of anecdotes and poetry might also have played a role in his choice of material. I assume that if a certain word had inspired him to compose a clever muwwāl, it would then be tempting for him to include it in his work, in order to demonstrate his poetical skills.

It certain cases, al-Maģribī mentions a word, followed by his opinion on its correctness by referring to al-Qāmūs al-Muḥibbī, but without explaining its meaning. It remains unclear whether al-Maģribī considered that the meanings of these words were commonly known, or whether he believed that they had the same meaning as given in al-Qāmūs al-Muḥibbī, and therefore believed it to be unnecessary

185 Ibid. p. 131.
to explain them. As an example, we can consider the entry *kittān* “linen” (117b). In this case, al-Maġribī omitted to give a definition of it, and simply corrected its form:

“They say *kittān* with an i after the *kāf*, but it is *kıttān* with an a”.

This case presents no problem because the meaning of the word *kıttān* is known, but when the word or expression is not, as in the following example from fol. 123a, it becomes very difficult to guess its meaning:

“They say: so-and-so has no *idāw/unie1DDt nās*, and this is unknown.”

He says: ‘*idāwa* with an i is a washroom, pl. *adāwā*; like *fıtāwā*, and *adāh* is a tool, pl. *adawāt*’. So perhaps the origin of their expression *idāw/unie4Dgt nās* is *adawār*, which was subject to a change”.

Unfortunately, in most cases al-Maġribī does not vocalize the entries of his word list, which makes it difficult to determine how they should be pronounced. Another problem is the spelling, especially of the hımzı, as well as the placement of diacritical points, which is sometimes inaccurate.

Al-Maġribī considered any word to be correct Arabic if it could be retraced to an Arabic root, while its meaning has a resemblance, no matter how distant, to the meaning of it. The root should not have undergone any phonetic changes, such as a change from interdental fricative to dental stop. If a word does not have an Arabic root, al-Maġribī normally states that it is “unknown” to him, meaning that he did not find it in the Classical Arabic dictionaries. Al-Maġribī knew Persian and Turkish, as is obvious from the translations he had carried out (see §1.4). Therefore, he was able to trace back some of the dialect words in these languages. When a word was derived from a language like Turkish or Persian, al-Maġribī does not label it “incorrect”, which is a sign that he cannot be considered as a purist who wished to keep the Arabic language “clean” of foreign influences.

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186 I.e., it cannot be found in *İl-Qāmūs ıllı Muhīṣ*
187 See *İl-Qāmūs ıllı Muhīṣ* p. 1133a.
188 See §6.1.1.
189 For instance *mi/uni1E6Fl* → *mitl*, see *Dıf/unie2BF ıllı-ı/uni1E63r* fol. 91.
Al-Maģribī’s treatment of the interdentals will serve as an example of his attitude towards language changes. It is known that in al-Maģribī’s time, the interdentals had disappeared from the dialect of Cairo.\(^{190}\) Although he does not make a general statement about this matter, he gives evidence of the shift from interdentals to dentals in several entries. The only time he explicitly mentions this change is when, on fol. 11a, he wrote by mistake \(\text{fılūl} \text{bā'āl-muʃınāh}\) (“Chapter of the bā' with two diacritical points”) and then changed it into \(\text{il-muʃınād}\) (“with one diacritical point”). He then added the following comment in the margin:

> The people who say the \(\text{tā} \) with two diacritical points on top, with them I mean the \(\text{awāmm} \).”

He therefore acknowledges that the shift \(\text{tā} \rightarrow \text{tā} \) had indeed taken place. Some examples of the loss of interdentals from \(\text{Dıf̅ıl-/i̇l-Mıs̅r} \) are:

- \(\text{fılūl} \text{bā'āl-muʃınā} \) “they call the tree \(\text{ıtl} \) (“tamarisk”) with two diacritical points, while it is \(\text{al-muʃınād} \) with three points”;\(^{191}\)
- \(\text{fılūl} \text{bā'āl-muʃınā} \) “they say \(\text{twm} \) (“garlic”) with two points while it is \(\text{tüm} \) with three points”;\(^{192}\)

The following fragment is also interesting, because it is a typical example of al-Maƣribī’s methodology:

> They say \(\text{hanḍal} \) (“colocynth”) to \(\text{hanḍal} \) with a stroke, and this has no cognate [in the literary language], because \(\text{hanḍal} \) is a small brook, and \(\text{hanḍala} \) is water in a rock.”

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190 Proofs of this can be found in earlier texts than \(\text{Dıf̅ıl-/i̇l-Mıs̅r} \), see Davies (1981) p. 66. For more details see §6.2.2.
191 Fol. 63a.
192 It is not clear whether al-Maƣribī means \(\text{töm} \) or \(\text{tüm} \), since the Arabic script has no way to distinguish between the \(\text{ā} \) and \(\text{ū} \)-sounds.
193 Fol. 96a.
194 Fol. 71b.
Although al-Maġribī realised that the colloquial حنطل is derived from حنطل in *al-Qāmūs al-Muhīṭ* and, unsurprisingly, reached the conclusion that the description he found there did not fit.

There are other cases in which al-Maġribī did write interdentals, although this does not imply that they were actually pronounced as such, for instance:

- *qiṭṭa* "Armenian cucumber"\(^{195}\) (note also the kasra, while Davies (1981:437) attests ‘attāya for the late 17\(^{th}\) century), where one would have expected فا (nowadays pronounced ‘atta in Cairo);\(^{196}\)
- نظيف صليف “spotless”,\(^{197}\) instead of present-day نديف;
- رذل ككتيف “despicable”.

Due to the fact that the shift from interdental to dental had happened much earlier,\(^{199}\) we may conclude that the above are examples of historical orthography.

Sometimes, al-Maġribī’s explanation of a word is incorrect, mainly because he did not realise (or did not like to admit) that the word had been subjected to certain phonetic changes.\(^{200}\) A good example is the word *miṭaq* “spoon”, which had become *maḷaq* in the Egyptian dialect of al-Maġribī’s time (see fol. 49b), and is nowadays pronounced *maḷa*’a. Instead of immediately admitting that in the word *miḷaq* metathesis of the ‘āyn and lām has taken place, he gives an explanation that the word has something to do with the verb *miṭaq* “to hang”. He mentions only as an afterthought that it was said to be derived from *miḷaq*:

> ويقولون معلقة لالة يوكوك بها وشرب ولم ارها في القاموس والذي فيه رجل ذو معلقة كمرحلة يتعلق بكل ما اصابه ان تكون اللالة معلقة بالكسر تعلق الطعام والشراب أو يقال اتنا ملعقه بتقديم اللحم للبق

\(^{195}\) Fol. 9b.


\(^{197}\) Fol. 28a.

\(^{198}\) Fol. 75b. Sometimes al-Maġribī used a well-known word with the same vowel pattern as the explained word, instead of vocalizing the word; see the next paragraph.

\(^{200}\) See §6.2.2.

\(^{201}\) See for instance the example زحلقة and its explanation as mentioned by Ḥiǧāzī (1969) p. 119.
“They say ma’laqa to the tool with which they eat and drink. I did not find it in al-Qāmūs, but it says: ‘a man endowed with ma’laqa, like marhala, hangs on to everything he achieves’, end of the quotation. So perhaps in analogy to this the instrument mi’laqa with kasr hangs on to the food and drink; or it is said that it is mil’aqa with preceding lām from ‘licking’.

Therefore, we may conclude that al-Maġribī knew the proper explanation of the word mi’laqa, but in his eagerness to prove the correctness of the Egyptian language, he preferred to retrace the word to the root ‘lQ, and make-up a far-fetched explanation, rather than admit that the Egyptians had ‘corrupted’ the word mil’aqa. Later, he mentions the word again (fol. 54b):

وقد علمت أن قول أهل مصر معلقة لا صحيح بخلاف قول أهل مكة بلغة يكسر الهم كما سمعته منهم في مكة وعمرها

“I learnt that the word ma’laqa of the Egyptians is incorrect, contrary to the word mil’aqa with kasr of the mīm of the people of Mecca, as I heard them say in Mecca and other places”.

Al-Maġribī uses this kind of reasoning often. Another example is the following:

يقولون كنّ كذا من المعروف أن مرادهم كان كذا خفف لكنهم الاستعمال دواوينة بالفتح امرأة الأبناء أو الأخ (...)

“They say knn kadh. It is known that they mean ka’arn kadh, which has become lighter [i.e., the hamza has disappeared] because of its frequent use. And ‘al-kanna with an a is the wife of the son or of the brother’.

There was no reason for al-Maġribī to quote the entry KNN from al-Qāmūs al-muhīṭ, because he had already sufficiently explained the etymology of the word knn. It is possible that he used the quotation here to underline the fact that the word did not have an equivalent with the root KNN in Classical Arabic, or simply to enlighten the reader on the ‘real’ meaning of the root KNN.

It is clear that al-Maġribī had some understanding of the changes that had affected the language. Therefore, it is sometimes surprising that he did not

201 When al-Maġribī was a child, he went on pilgrimage to Mecca with his father, see Daf’ al-Isr’ an kalām ahl Miṣr fol. 70a and §1.1.
mention the obvious, as in the following example, where he did not realise (or did not like to mention!) that a verb *tertiae hamza* had become *tertiae yā*:

“They say, I ḥabyyt the thing, i.e. I have hidden it and concealed it. ḥabyyt is not in the language with this meaning, but with another meaning. He said: ‘ḥābā’ is the singular of *ahbiya* (...); ‘istahbaynā the tent, i.e. we pitched it and we entered it, and ḥabaytu the tent and ḥabbaytuhu (...)’.”

### 3.6.1 Entries and their context

Al-Maḡribī often presents the entries in context, in order to demonstrate the use of a word. The following entry will illustrate how useful such a context can be:

“They say: what are these ḥuzzu’balāt (‘superstitions’), which means these things which have no foundation”.

The entry here is *qabal*, and the context in dialect is *mā iḥnā min dī-l-qabal*. This sentence provides us with a great deal of information: it contains the words *iḥnā* “we” and *dī* “this, that”, both of which al-Maḡribī does not mention as separate entries in his word list. This example highlights that al-Maḡribī, sometimes, provides us with much more information than he intended to.

Unfortunately, one sometimes has to ask whether al-Maḡribī’s examples always reflect the speech of the day, since he regularly used classicisms, as in the following:

“..."
The entry here is the word ḥuzu’balāṭ, and the Egyptian Arabic element is the interrogative ‘ayš / ‘ēš “what” (nowadays ē in Cairo, but in many parts of Egypt still pronounced as ‘ēš).204 Note the use of ḥādhīḥ in this example, which is a classicism, unlike the word dī in the previous example.

3.7 Metalanguage
Yūsuf al-Maġribī uses a system of terminology for describing the phonological, orthographical, linguistic and lexicographical phenomena which are encountered in Daf’ al-Iṣr. This terminology, called the metalanguage, will be discussed in this chapter.

3.7.1 Describing the vocalization of a word
Al-Mağiṣbī uses two systems to describe the vocalization of a word:
- Vowel signs and description of the vowels
- Comparison with well-known words with the same pattern as the colloquial words that are described.
These two methods will be enlarged upon in the following two paragraphs.

3.7.1.1 Vowel signs and description of the vowels
Al-Mağiṣbī makes use, albeit infrequently, of the signs fatha, damma, kasra, šadda and sukūn to indicate the pronunciation of a vernacular word. He also uses a variety of terms to reflect the pronunciation of the colloquial words he describes. This terminology was not invented by him, but was based upon the system of vocalization used by al-Fīrūzābādī in al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ, who in turn relied heavily on the system devised by al-Ǧawharī in Tāǧ al-luḡa wa šīḥāl al-ʿarabīya.205

Al-Mağiṣbī often describes in words which vowel was added to which letter. This can be done with verbs, like kasara “to provide with the vowel i”, damma “to provide with the vowel u”; fatha “to provide with the vowel a”, or simply with the following: bi-l-kasr “with an i”, bi-l-damm “with an u”, bi-l-fath “with an a”, bi-l-ḥarakāt “with two a-s”, bi-l-sukūn “without a following vowel” etc. The word muṭallaṭ is used to indicate that a word can have an a, i or u (note that muṭallaṭ can also mean that a letter has three diacritical dots, while al-Mağiṣbī also uses it to describe a certain kind of poem, see §4.2.1). Some examples are:

204 For more details on ‘ayš/‘ēš, see §6.3.5.2.
They say ‘innāb ‘jujube’, but those who pronounce an i after the ‘ayn are wrong; he says in al-Qāmūs: ‘innāb like rummān is a well-known fruit’.

They say to ‘medicinal powder’, sufūf, with a u after the letter sīn;

They say, to him happened nisfı ‘justice’, with an ī after the first and second radical;

They say Dimišq of the Levant, pronouncing an ī after the dāl and the mīm, while in Classical Arabic an ā would be said after the mīm;

They say so-and-so is a zındīq ‘atheist’, pronouncing an ī after the zā, but it is with an ī;

They say ‘so-and-so is riṭil ‘weak’, pronouncing an ī after both [the rā’ and the ẓā]’;

They say mṣḥaf sometimes with an ā after the mīm and sometimes with a u; however, the mīm can have the three vowels.

It is said that ḥizāna cannot have a fatha [i.e., be pronounced as ḥazāna], and that maḥzan cannot have a kasra [i.e., be pronounced as miḥzan].
The last example is a pun on the words *kasr* and *fath*, and could also be translated as “it is said that the safe cannot be opened and that the warehouse cannot be broken into”. This is one of the little linguistic jokes that al-Maġribī likes to make.\(^{211}\)

The word *sahhala* means that a word should be read without a *hamza*. The verbs *šıddıđı* and *haffıfıfı* and their derivatives, indicate whether a word contains a *šadda* or not:

(8b) “They say *martıyya* ‘elegy’ with a *šadda* [of the *yā*], and correct would be without a *šadda*”;

(127b) “They say, I lamented him in a *martıyya* ‘elegy’, which they pronounce with a *šadda*, while it is *martıyya* without a *šadda*”.

### 3.7.1.2 Comparison with well-known words

The second method al-Maġribī employs in order to clarify the vocalization of a word, is to use comparison with well-known words with the same pattern as those he is discussing. When using this method with a noun or adjective, the well-known word which is used to demonstrate the pattern is introduced with *kı-* “like”. A few examples from *Daf al-İṣr*:

(14a) “They say *rıdıb* ‘saliva’ with an *i*, and correct would be *rǔdıb* like *ğurāb*”;

(75a) “They say, and this occurs often from the people of the Levant, *rağşāl* ‘man’ like *šaddād*”;

(75b) “They say, so-and-so is *rağil* ‘despicable’ like *kıtif*”\(^{212}\).

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\(^{211}\) For more jokes of this type, see §6.5.3.

\(^{212}\) Although for the word *kıtif* the vocalizations *kıtif*, *katıf* and *kıtāf* are possible (see WKAS I p. 48a), comparison with *al-Qāmūs al-Muhīṭ* learns that the vocalization *kıtif* is meant here.
Although al-Mağiřī himself uses this method only sparingly, it is frequently employed in the numerous quotations from al-Ġamūs al-Muĥī that can be found in Daf al-īṣr.

When a verb is compared to a well-known verb, the expression (wa ḥuwa min bāb... or wa bābhuh... “belonging to the category of...” is used alongside the aforementioned ka-. An example:

(105b) “They say, ‘so-and-so yiktum, holds a secret, with a u after the tā’, and it is indeed like this, belonging to the category of yanšur’.

A list of the most frequently used, well-known words from Daf al-īṣr can be found at the end of this chapter (§3.7.6).

3.7.2 Diacritical dots

To indicate either the number of dots on top of or underneath a letter, or the absence of dots, the following terms are used: muțallat “having three diacritical dots”, muțannā “having two diacritical dots”, muṣam “having one diacritical dot”, and muhmal “having no diacritical dots”. To specify the upward stroke of the zār word muṣāl is used (although only once in the whole work). Some examples:

(96a) “They say twm ‘garlic’ with two dots, but it is twm with three dots”;

(91b) “They say ‘it has no miţl ‘equivalent’ with two dots on top, but it is miţl”;

(40a) “They say zirq at-tā‘ir ‘bird droppings’; however, it is dirq with a dāl with a dot”;

(71b) “They say ḥanḍal ‘colocynth’ for ḥanţal with the zār with a stroke”.

3.7.3 Linguistic terms

Some linguistic terminology found in Daf al-īṣr includes words like muṭa‘addī “transitive” and lāzim “intransitive” (although only used in quotations from al-
Qāmūs al-muhīt, ābī: “intensification by repeating a word with its initial consonant changed, such as kašr bašr”,211 muštarak “homonym”, and addadd: “(a word) having two mutually exclusive meanings”.214 Al-Maġribī was very fond of using a “tawriya or “double-entendre” in his poems.

Al-Maġribī used the expression wa ḥakam al-Ṭālī “here rules triplication” to indicate that a word exists which can have a kiṣr, fīt, or diimm, each with its own meaning, which often inspired him to use the three words in a poem. This is the case with, for example, the words malla “hot ashes”, millā “religion” and mullā “basking stitch” (92a), which he arranged in a mawwāl.

The expression wa hiya bi-hā’i means that the regular feminine of a given word takes the tā marbūta.215

The word لُغة luğa originally meant “dialect”, “dialectal word” in the Arabic grammatical tradition,216 but Al-Maġribī uses it with the meaning of the “Classical Arabic language”. Therefore, a dialectal word that, according to him, is luğa, can be found in al-Qāmūs al-muhīt. He also uses the word Ṽugavī with the same meaning. If a word is gar luğa, this means it is not in accordance with Classical Arabic.

Al-Maġribī uses the term الgiatan al-ţīm al-ţayr al-‘arabiya “the un-Arabic āṭīm” to indicate the pronunciation /c/ or /g/ (see §6.2.1), and it can therefore be concluded that the Arabic āṭīm for al-Maġribī was /g/.

3.7.4 Classification of colloquial words

Al-Maġribī uses a set of terms to describe the conclusions he reached about the origin of colloquial words used by the Egyptians. When a certain word or expression was used by only one group of people e.g. those from a certain class or profession, he used the expressions wa yuṣmā’ min “this is heard from”, wa ḥāḏa yaqqā’ min “this occurs from” and the like. When a word had the same meaning and pronunciation in the Egyptian dialect as in Classical Arabic, he uses such expressions as wa huwa șahīh “and this is correct”, wa lahu munāsaba /nīsa “it has something that corresponds to it [in Classical Arabic]”, wa lahu ʾašl “it has an origin”. The expression wa Ṽīl luğač is used to indicate that a word has several meanings. When explaining what the Egyptians meant to say with a certain word,
he uses wa yurīdūn or wa ya’nān “they mean”. When a word diverged from Classical Arabic in meaning or pronunciation, it got the classification wa laysa lugawīyān “this is not linguistically correct”. When al-Maġribī does not find a word at all in al-Qāmūs al-muhīṭ, he describes this fact in a number of ways: wa lam yu’lam “it is not known” or wa lam yu’lam min al-luġā “it is not known from the [Classical Arabic] language”; wa lam ‘a’lam lahu munāsaba / nishā “I do not know anything that corresponds to it”, wa laysa ka-dālik “it is not like this”, wa laysa lahu wājī “it does not have a meaning”. When correcting a “deviation” from Classical Arabic, the following expressions are used: wa al-ṣawāb “and the correct [form] would be”; wa innamā huwa “however, it should be...”. For “to mispronounce / misread”, the verb sāḥha and its derivatives are used: yusāḥhīfūn “they mispronounce”, tashīf ‘an “[it is a] mispronunciation of”, muṣāḥhaf ‘an “mispronounced from”. Sometimes al-Maġribī makes use of the “telegram style”, for instance when using the word luġā to indicate that something can be found in Classical Arabic: واللي لغة الرجل الخسيس (124a) “and al-bayy in Classical Arabic means ‘the contemptible man’.”

3.7.5 Other terms and expressions used by al-Maģribī

When quoting from al-Qāmūs al-muḫīṭ, al-Maģribī often simply mentions qāl “he said”. Every now and then he instead uses a phrase like wa ‘a’lam ‘anna “I know that...” (e.g. 78b) or wa fī al-luġā “and in the Classical language [can be found...]” (e.g. 79a). The end of a quotation is marked with intahā “[the quotation] is finished”. Al-Fīrūzābādī was the first one to introduce a number of abbreviations, as mentioned in §3.3. Even though quotations from al-Qāmūs al-Muḫīṭ form a substantial part of Dāf al-Iṣr, al-Maģribī did not follow al-Fīrūzābādī’s example of using abbreviations, instead writing them in full, perhaps for the sake of readability or clarity.

When al-Maģribī wrote an afterthought or correction in the margin, this is followed by the word saḥḥ (sometimes abbreviated to صح, ص ح), which is very common in manuscripts. The word فائدة fā’ida “nota-bene” is often employed by al-Maģribī to elaborate on topics of interest that are only indirectly connected to the entry under discussion. He used انظر anzur in the margin to indicate that he is unsure of an entry, and wants to double-check it or consult other dictionaries.

217 “when used for an omission/insertion or evident correction”, EALL I p. 2 (A. Gacek).
218 See EALL I p. 2 (A. Gacek).
### 3.7.6 List of common nouns and verbs used to indicate word patterns

#### Verbs

- karuma, yakruma “to be noble”
- manā'a, yamma'u “to hinder”
- sami'a, yasna'u “to hear”
- tariqa, ya'trabu “to become affected with emotion”
- nasara, ya'suru “to render victorious”
- dahala, yadhulu “to enter”
- daraba, ya'dribu “to hit”
- galasa, ya'gilsu “to sit”
- radda, yaraddu “to bring back”
- wadda, yawaddu “to love”
- ba'a, ya'bi'u “to sell”
- 'adā, ya'dā “to pass”
- ramā, yarmī “to throw”
- šadiya, ya'sdā “to be very thirsty”

#### Nouns

- 'amīr “prince”
- katīf “shoulder”
- hamza “the letter hamza”
- tannūr “oven”
- Zubayr personal name
- rummān “pomegranate”
- kīsā “garment”
- ’inab “grapes”
- Šaddād personal name
- qirṭās “scroll of paper”
- šabār “patient”
- šurad “sparrow-hawk”
- ’utull “glutton”
- nadas “sharp-minded”