

Comparative Analysis of Linguistic Characteristics: Middle Eastern English on YouTube vis-à-vis British and American English

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Abstract—This research aims to compare the linguistic characteristics of Middle Eastern English with British and American English in the context of YouTube. For this purpose, the theoretical framework adopted is Biber's Multidimensional Analysis, in which Middle Eastern English is compared with British and American English regarding language usage features. To do so, the present study considers a purposive sample of 40 YouTube videos with speakers from the Middle East, Britain, and America. The methodology entails the use of a well-planned and structured process to assess the various aspects of the language of spoken English in the videos. In the particular concern of this study, the emphasis lies on comparing Middle Eastern English and its relation to British and American English on YouTube. Specifically, the comparative analysis identifies the differences in the linguistic features due to cultural, social, and contextual factors in Middle Eastern English. Based on the findings, Middle Eastern English differs from British and American English because it is more argumentative, less abstract, less situation-bound, and less narrative. Consequently, the results of this study help analyze the current state of change in English varieties on social media and reveal the sociolinguistic aspects of the English language in relation to the video-sharing site YouTube. The study elicits a rather complex picture of how linguistic diversity comes into play with regard to the integrated and interconnected nature of today's cyberspace communication.

Index Terms—Middle Eastern English, linguistic characteristics, YouTube, Biber's Multidimensional Analysis (MDA), lexico-grammatical patterns

I. INTRODUCTION

New technologies have played a significant role in the change of the English language in recent years regarding methods of spreading information. English is one of the most spoken and dynamic languages, and its linguistic features look different in different sociocultural backgrounds. This quantitative and qualitative research work investigates the lexico-grammatical features in Middle Eastern English in the YouTube videos of selected Middle Eastern countries vis-a-vis British and American English. Following Biber's approach to MDA, it is possible to analyze differences in the lexical and grammatical levels. Since YouTube has adaptations in almost all world languages, it is the best place to analyze language usage. Biber's MDA is an excellent tool for studying language because it can investigate different aspects of language.

Consequently, this method will facilitate the acquisition of a more profound insight into specific features of the contrasting Middle Eastern, American, and British English in an online environment. It holds that English is used differently in all countries due to many factors, including cultural and social influences. YouTube enables individuals to communicate globally, using different languages and ways of perceiving the world. This paper analyzes the YouTube videos by speakers from the Middle East, America, and the United Kingdom to determine how English is used in various ways. Thus, the patterns identified in the present study are compared with the identification of distinct patterns of sociolinguistic behavior. Therefore, the research strives to contribute to understanding English use in online communication in various sociolinguistic contexts.

It has, therefore, critical comparative undertones not only in categorizing the extent of the linguistic differences between Middle Eastern, American, and British English but also in revealing the effects of culture, society, and context on language usage. Given that in today's world, the Internet is crossing geographical barriers, it is necessary to pay more attention to the issues of the status of variation on a platform like YouTube to grasp the globalization of Internet communication. The research uses Biber's multidimensional framework to enrich our understanding of the diverse linguistic expressions of English in the digital age. As Biber's model employs a quantitative approach, it is proposed that the study will uncover objective quantitative patterns of language use that people employ in the respective contexts and eliminate any bias likely due to the selection of features to be analyzed by people. This has helped address the issues related to the variation in language and shed light on tapping the systematic nature of languages across different facets. This paper presents several benefits pertinent to the sociolinguistic features of English variety on YouTube. It makes a

helpful contribution to the topic of how linguistic diversification is evident with social media with a global connection in the context of the internet society.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Studying how language varies in the digital world is becoming increasingly important as online platforms like YouTube serve as hubs for diverse linguistic expressions. In this regard, a contrastive analysis of Saudi and British English in YouTube videos adopting Biber's MDA could extend knowledge in language dialects, socio-linguistics, and how new media use affects English.

Papers associated with the content of YouTube in Arabic have been published in different works. For instance, Mustofa (2023) employed a qualitative research strategy to proscriptionally portray the analysis of YouTube content in the information dissemination of the Arabic language. Regarding studying Arabic, the study established that the YouTube channel of Dars Arabi was influential in the process.

In another study, Ayoub (2021) conducted a cross-sectional analysis of breast cancer videos on YouTube in the Arab world. The study evaluated the 60 most viewed videos based on the global quality (GQS score), reliability (modified DISCERN score), content (content score), and misleading claims. The research found that governments and physicians should upload more informative videos and guide the population to reliable sources while supporting regulations.

Bella and Huda (2022) conducted a qualitative study investigating using YouTube media to improve students' listening and speaking skills. The study revealed that YouTube media positively impacted students' reading and listening skills.

Al-Tamimi et al. (2020) presented their work on Arabic comment classification in a separate study. They collected and manually annotated YouTube Arabic comments and found that SVM-RBF outperformed other classification methods with an f-measure of 88.8%. They employed a dataset that has been normalized with two polarities.

Abu Daabes and Kharbat (2019) sought to establish the current state of communication effectiveness with Arabic people and what the future could hold. To build knowledge, they focused on health information posted on the social platform YouTube.

Alawadh et al. published the investigation on the YouTube discussions in EFL learning in 2023. The researchers also advise that there is a need to diversify content production. The tackled topics should address the need for a broader spectrum of the population, including improvements in punctuation and meaning of certain words and a diverse audience that includes youths. Furthermore, they recommend increasing and focusing on the instructed aspects concerning the varieties of English, like British English and American English, to enhance the learning progress.

Choi (2023) conducted a study to determine the users' perceptions and interactions with English learning content on YouTube. The study outcomes showed that users consider the content as valuable as their English, which is enhanced in aspects like grammar, pronunciation, and many other facets by using the application. Also, their involvement is engaging since they contribute by asking questions and vocalizing any points of confusion in the comments section.

Moreover, a study by Alkoli and Sharada (2023) explored YouTube comments' sentiment analysis with a primary concern on Arabic comments gathered through manual data collection to support the research. The analysis process was split into four categories: preprocessing, feature extraction, optimum feature selection, and classification. The author proposed a novel optimization approach named Self-Improved Honey Badger Algorithm (SIHBA) in the research.

The study by Musleh et al. (2023) presents an NLP approach that categorizes Arabic comments as positive or negative; this tool may enable content creators to enhance viewers' engagement and video quality by monitoring their sentiments about the videos. The quality, content, and credibility of YouTube videos explaining self-administration for subcutaneous anti-TNF medicines were evaluated by Tolu et al. (2018). Healthcare practitioners should help patients identify reliable sources of information and critically assess such resources to enhance treatment effectiveness.

Following the analysis led by Alawadh (2023), the research examined YouTube discussions on EFL learning using the specific method of LSA. Although the authors provided suggestions for future enhancements of content, including the spread of topics, more instruction on punctuation and word meaning, the adaptation of courses as per age and nationality, and differentiation between British and American English, Biber and Conrad (2009) supplemented this theoretical stance stating that this method is actually.

Al-Hazmi (2009) investigated the growth of Saudi English with particular references to cultural and social factors. Moreover, in his book, *English as a Global Language*, published in 2003, Crystal gives more insights into the global use of British English as the benchmark.

Studies have been done on the impact of the said platforms on language with the increase in the use of online platforms. Many authors, including Androutsopoulos (2014) and Crystal (2006), have studied how these platforms, especially YouTube, influence language use. They have concentrated on how the platform offers the world a view of languages through YouTube. Researchers, including Tagg and Seargeant (2014), investigated YouTube as a linguistic space. They heeded the fact that the platform opened for them is capable of defining how language is used.

Hence, one needs to understand the various sociolinguistic factors that may influence language use to comprehend how English is used in the different contexts of Middle Eastern, America, and Britain. Thus, this research seeks to extend from the previous studies by following Biber's MDA to compare the lexico-grammatical features of Middle Eastern, American, and British English on YouTube. In this way, the current research investigating language variation in the context of the digital age will also increase the knowledge about the dynamic landscape of YouTube.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted Biber's analysis method to systematically evaluate the linguistic variation in the specialized corpus used in this research paper. For example, the mentioned theoretical approach, MDA, provides for the systematic study of the different aspects of language in use and lexical, grammatical, and semantic characteristics. On the one hand, with its benefits, it allows analyzing language usage through a statistical approach without relying on subjective judgments about deviant linguistic features.

Thus, it is found that Biber's conceptual framework is focused on quantitative research, as evidenced by the trends identified above, which prominently feature numbers. It involves analyzing vast collections of written material to find patterns and differences in language features. The language parts, such as vocabulary, syntax, connectors, and so on, are identified with the assistance of computers. These components form a numerical data set that goes through analysis using statistical instruments and approaches.

Therefore, the researchers selected fifteen prominent YouTube content creators from the Middle East, the United States, and the United Kingdom based on their subscriber counts and evaluations made by the YouTube algorithm. The researchers then used transcription software to convert the creators' spoken words into written text. Given this, the text was divided into smaller sections for systematic analysis. Because the texts were of variable length, normalization was carried out before tagging; this ensured equalization of the texts to reduce the differences between them and thus increase the reliability of the data to allow for fair comparisons—an identification number named every file to facilitate the recognition of the data during the analysis.

The collected data was further categorized by labeling it using the MAT software and analyzing it using the IBM SPSS tool. This allowed for understanding the pattern of the language used and to see the variation and similarity of all the aspects of language used by YouTube content creators in the Middle East, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive statistics in Table 1 present the mean, standard deviation, standard error, and confidence intervals for the data collected in three regions: the Middle East, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Unlike other multidimensional studies conducted on different genres, like a newspaper (Ali S. & Ali M., 2023), academic writing (Ali, 2024), fiction (Biber, 1998), etc., where the results indicate the presence of informational discourse, the mean scores of all the three regions indicate an involved discourse on this dimension. The mean score for the Middle East group is 19.90. The results suggest that, on average, the linguistic characteristics of Middle Eastern English on YouTube in the sample tend to have a higher value for D1 than American and British YouTube. The mean scores for the United Kingdom (UK) and United States (US) YouTube English videos are 17.54 and 15.70, respectively. The statistics for British YouTube also show positive mean scores but slightly lower values than those of Middle East YouTube. The mean scores of the US show a further decrease, exhibiting the lowest mean score for this dimension.

TABLE 1
LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF MIDDLE EASTERN ENGLISH WITH BRITISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH ON D1
Dim_1

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Upper Bound
Middle East	25	19.9060	8.67333	1.73467	16.3258	23.4862
United Kingdom	25	17.5432	7.24786	1.44957	14.5514	20.5350
United States	25	15.7092	5.73769	1.14754	13.3408	18.0776
Total	75	17.7195	7.42315	.85715	16.0116	19.4274
Model			7.31845	.84506	19.4041	19.4041
Fixed Effects						
Random Effects				1.21471	22.9460	22.9460

The data in Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of the linguistic characteristics within Middle Eastern, British, and American English on YouTube on D1. The higher mean score for Middle Eastern English suggests a greater prevalence of non-narrative discourse than British and American English. However, this finding is accompanied by significant variability within each group, indicating a wide range of linguistic variation. The standard deviation of 8.67 suggests that Middle Eastern English on YouTube exhibits considerable variability in linguistic characteristics. In contrast, American English on YouTube shows a relatively lower variability, as indicated by the standard deviation 5.73. These findings highlight the dynamic and diverse nature of English language use across different regions and cultures on YouTube.

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for the variable labeled dimension two as "narrative vs. non-narrative concerns" in the context of the study comparing Middle Eastern English, British English, and American English on YouTube. The mean score for the Middle East is -3.30, for the United Kingdom is -4.18, and for the United States is -3.17. Comparing these means, we can observe that the United Kingdom has the most negative mean score, indicating that British English on YouTube exhibits more non-narrative discourse. The Middle East and the United States have fewer negative mean

scores, suggesting that Middle Eastern and American English on YouTube demonstrate fewer non-narrative linguistic features.

TABLE 2
LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF MIDDLE EASTERN ENGLISH WITH BRITISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH ON D2
Dim_2

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Upper Bound
Middle East	25	-3.3084	2.35738	.47148	-4.2815	-2.3353
United Kingdom	25	-4.1888	.95311	.19062	-4.5822	-3.7954
United States	25	-3.1708	1.17854	.23571	-3.6573	-2.6843
Total	75	-3.5560	1.65939	.19161	-3.9378	-3.1742
Model						
Fixed Effects			1.61809	.18684	-3.1835	-3.1835
Random Effects				.31888	-2.1840	-2.1840

The standard deviation measures the spread or variability of the linguistic characteristics within each English variety. The YouTube of the Middle East has a standard deviation of 2.35, the United Kingdom has a standard deviation of 0.95, and the United States has a standard deviation of 1.17. The Middle East and the United States show higher standard deviations, suggesting more significant variability in the linguistic features.

Table 3 presents descriptive statistics for dimension 3 (D3), labeled as "Explicit vs. situation-dependent discourse." The mean scores indicate the average values for the linguistic characteristics of each English variety on YouTube. The mean score for the Middle East is -0.95, for the United Kingdom is -1.52, and for the United States is -2.25. Comparing these means, we can observe that the United States has the most negative mean score, indicating that American English on YouTube exhibits more situation-dependent discourse on this dimension. The United Kingdom has a slightly less negative mean score, while the Middle East has the least negative mean score among them.

TABLE 3
LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF MIDDLE EASTERN ENGLISH WITH BRITISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH ON D3
Dim_3

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Upper Bound
Middle East	25	-.9552	1.48534	.29707	-1.5683	-.3421
United Kingdom	25	-1.5284	1.36388	.27278	-2.0914	-.9654
United States	25	-2.2512	1.25691	.25138	-2.7700	-1.7324
Total	75	-1.5783	1.45471	.16798	-1.9130	-1.2436
Model						
Fixed Effects			1.37189	.15841	-1.2625	-1.2625
Random Effects				.37495	.0350	.0350

The standard deviation measures the spread or variability of the linguistic characteristics within each English variety. The Middle East has a standard deviation of 1.48, the United Kingdom has a standard deviation of 1.36, and the United States has a standard deviation of 1.25. The YouTube videos from all three countries show relatively similar standard deviations, indicating comparable levels of variability in the linguistic characteristics within the YouTube video of each country.

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for dimension 4 (D4), labeled as "Overt expression of argumentation/persuasion," in the context of the study comparing Middle Eastern English, British English, and American English on YouTube. The mean scores indicate the average values for the linguistic features of each English variety on YouTube. The mean score for the Middle East YouTube video is -1.35, for the United Kingdom is 0.92, and for the United States is 0.61. Comparing these means, we can observe that the United Kingdom has the highest mean score, indicating that British English on YouTube with positive linguistic features exhibits more argumentative discourse. The United States has a slightly lower mean score, indicating less argumentative discourse. In contrast, the Middle East has the lowest mean score among the three, thus having the most minor linguistic features that mark the presence of argumentative discourse.

TABLE 4
LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF MIDDLE EASTERN ENGLISH WITH BRITISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH ON D4
Dim_4

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Upper Bound
Middle East	25	-1.3596	2.36250	.47250	-2.3348	-.3844
United Kingdom	25	.9288	1.95277	.39055	.1227	1.7349
United States	25	.6156	1.61632	.32326	-.0516	1.2828
Total	75	.0616	2.22134	.25650	-.4495	.5727
Model						
Fixed Effects			2.00060	.23101	.5221	.5221
Random Effects				.71633	3.1437	3.1437

Table 4 indicates that the Middle East has a standard deviation of 2.36, the United Kingdom has a standard deviation of 1.95, and the United States has a standard deviation of 1.61. The Middle East shows the highest standard deviation, indicating more significant variability in the linguistic characteristics of Middle Eastern YouTube English. The United Kingdom and the United States have lower standard deviations, suggesting relatively less variability in their linguistic characteristics.

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics for Dimension 5 (D5), labeled as "Impersonal (Abstract) vs. Non-impersonal (non-abstract style)". It compares Middle Eastern English, British English, and American English on YouTube.

The mean scores indicate the average values for the linguistic features of each English variety on YouTube. The mean score for the Middle East is -1.94, for the United Kingdom is -0.52, and for the United States is -1.55. Comparing these means, we can observe that the United Kingdom has the lowest negative mean score, indicating that British English on YouTube exhibits a mixed-purpose discourse. Closeness to a zero-dimension score means the discourse is mixed-purpose, with positive and negative linguistic features. The Middle East has the most negative mean score, while the United States falls between the other two.

TABLE 5
LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF MIDDLE EASTERN ENGLISH WITH BRITISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH ON D5
Dim_5

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Upper Bound
Middle East	25	-1.9488	1.11017	.22203	-2.4071	-1.4905
United Kingdom	25	-.5288	1.42008	.28402	-1.1150	.0574
United States	25	-1.5552	1.10996	.22199	-2.0134	-1.0970
Total	75	-1.3443	1.34778	.15563	-1.6544	-1.0342
Model						
Fixed Effects			1.22218	.14112	-1.0629	-1.0629
Random Effects				.42327	.4769	.4769

The standard deviation measures the spread or variability of the linguistic characteristics within each English variety. The Middle East has a standard deviation of 1.11, the United Kingdom has a standard deviation of 1.42, and the United States has a standard deviation of 1.10. All three countries show relatively similar standard deviations, indicating comparable variability levels in each country's linguistic characteristics.

V. CONCLUSION

This study examines how Middle Eastern, British, and American English are used on YouTube, focusing on five dimensions: informational discourse, narrative vs. non-narrative concerns, explicit vs. situation-dependent discourse, overt expression of argumentation/persuasion, and impersonal vs. non-impersonal style. The study found that Middle Eastern English YouTube videos focus more on a specific language aspect than American and British English videos. However, each region has a wide variety of language use, as shown by the data's variations.

Regarding narrative vs. non-narrative concerns, the United Kingdom shows the most negative mean score, indicating that British English on YouTube exhibits more negative linguistic characteristics. The Middle East and the United States have fewer negative mean scores, suggesting that Middle Eastern and American English videos demonstrate fewer non-narrative linguistic features. Another factor from the study is that American English videos observed on YouTube are comparatively more concerned with the current situation than with general information. This can be seen from the negative mean score, which is the lowest compared to similar content found in other countries. At the same time, the videos in British English have persuasive and argumentative tones. This communication style is more prevalent in British English videos than in other English-speaking regions. The Middle East has the lowest negative mean value among the three areas of the world. This is evident based on the above result, where the average score for argumentative expression is higher than for other content in the case of British English content creators. Over them, the Middle Eastern countries have the lowest mean score, and the United States has a slightly lower mean score than the others.

The United Kingdom shows a relatively neutral stance regarding impersonal versus non-impersonal language, suggesting a mixed-purpose discourse. The Middle East shows the strongest preference for impersonal language. The United States comes in the middle. Such observations reveal various aspects of Middle Eastern English, British English, and American English that are present in the YouTube videos. Evaluating these deviations' peculiarities and cultural backgrounds is the only way to proceed. Future studies can explore the roots and other specific trends of such language features and their relevance in various regions.

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