Localizing for the Middle East

By Saudisoft

Localization and Translation Services

Hello!

Alia Mahmoud

Business Development Manager

Mohga Mohamed

Business Development Specialist

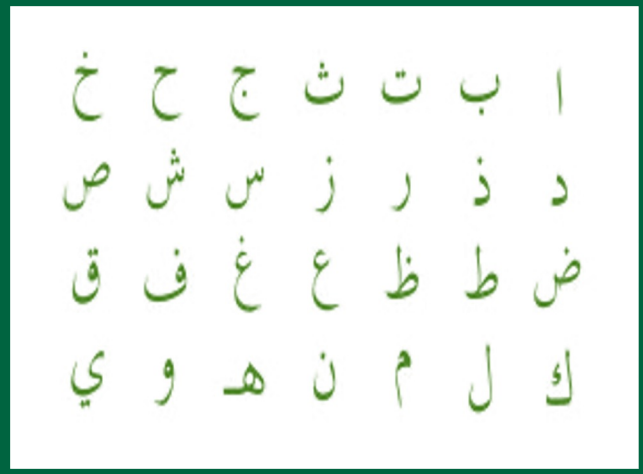
Table of contents

- Quick Introduction about the Arabic Langauge.
- How Arabic diacrticts can play a big role in your Arabic localization projects.
- Arabic Dialects and recommended dialects for your project.
- What to consider when localizing for the Middle East Market.
- How international speakers can recognize issues in Arabic localization.
- Free solution tool for Bi-directional languages.

Activity Time

How many facts from the below did you hear before?

- Arabic is a Right to left “RTL” language.
- Official language in more than 20 countries.
- More than 400 million speakers.
- There are no "capital" letters in Arabic.



Intro into Arabic Localization

Info about the Arabic language

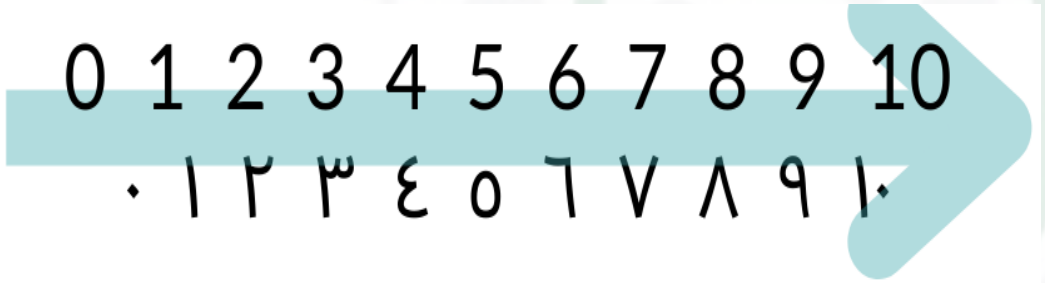
- Arabic is a right to left language and a bi-directional language: both writing scripts with different directions (left-to-right and right-to-left)
- Official language in more than 20 countries and have more than 400 million speakers.
- For Arabic script language, expect Approx. 30% text expansion when translating.
- Arabic does not support abbreviations.
- Arabic does not have upper case and lower case letters.

Figure 21: Splitting a text into 3 directional runs.

Intro into Arabic Localization

Info about Arabic Numbers

- Arabic numbers can be written in two ways either with Arabic number (Latin shape) or Arabic Indic/Hindi numbers.
- The use of Western and Eastern Arabic numerals varies among countries and regions and even among areas within the same country or region.
- When UI changes from one direction to another, numbers are not mirrored.



Arabic Number (Latin shape)	1234567890
Arabic Indic/Hindi numbers	١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠

Arabic diacritics

What are Arabic diacritics?

- Also known as ArabicText Discretization (ATD).
- Signs written below or above the letter.
- Different pronunciation.

Diacritic	Arabic	Transcription
fathatan	بً	an
dammatan	بٌ	un
kasratan	بٍ	in

Why are Arabic diacritics important to the localization community?

- It plays a critical role when it comes to Arabic MSA voice over.
- To clear ambiguity in written/translated projects.
- Text to speech service.

Arabic diacritics

- Effect of Arabic diacritics on translation

To know

Flag

Arabic diacritics

To summarize :

- Arabic diacritics plays a critical role when it comes to Arabic MSA localization.
- To clear ambiguity in written/translated projects.
- It’s important to have a language monitor for Arabic MSA dubbing projects.
- It affects text to speech services.

Arabic
Dialects

Arabic dialects

Different Arabic dialects :

MSA vs Local dialects

Arabic dialects

Local Arabic dialects :

- The spread of the Arabic language through different Middle Eastern countries.
- Colonization.
- Regional and Geography variation.

Arabic dialects

Local Arabic dialects :

- North African countries:
  - (Moroccan, Algerian & Tunisian)
- Gulf Countries:
  - (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain)
- Levantine Countries:
  - (Lebanon, Jordan, Syria & Palestine)
- Egyptian dialect

MSA Modern standard Arabic

MSA dialect introduction:

- MSA stands for Modern standard Arabic.
- It refers to eloquent speech (light Fusah)
- It is understood by all Arab countries along with their local Arabic dialect.
- Taught in schools.
- The preferred dialect to select when you consider learning Arabic.

Recommended Arabic dialects

What to consider when choosing your project Arabic dialect?

- What message you want to deliver and to whom?
- Project domain and subject.
- What are you localizing?

Recommended Arabic dialects

MSA for different domains

Legal

Contract

Legal

Paper	**Unjustified right-hand margins** An overall even texture helps reading by allowing the eye to link words together and is best achieved using unjustified text
A5 size is preferable A leaflet is more likely to be kept if it is a convenient size e.g. able to fit in a medicine bag or pocket	**Maximum line length of 50-65 characters or 8-11 words** Very short lines break up sentences too much; long lines tend to lose attention
Non-transparent paper Text showing through from the reverse side makes letters and words difficult to distinguish	**Text should not be wrapped around illustrations** This can result in unaligned left-hand margins and very short line lengths
Matt surface Glossy paper makes reading difficult by reflecting too much light	**Text should not be printed over pictures** Over printing of pictures, especially if a dark background is used, makes reading very difficult as it limits contrast and confuses the eye
Layout	**Headings**
Consistent use of layout Consistent organisation within the leaflet gives visual clues to the proximity and grouping of textual elements and headings	**Consistent use of headings** This aids readability and location of information by clearly differentiating between groups of related items
Plenty of white space A page of close-set type easily daunts readers and there is a long tradition in design that the 4 margins are never equal in width	**Table of contents desirable** This helps to locate specific instructions or explanations and can be a very important aid in a long leaflet
Clear separation of columns When space is limited clearly separating columns of text, including using vertical rules, can help reading	**Numbered headings recommended** These help cross-referencing and avoid repetition
Typography	**Bullet points recommended** This format is clearer for sequential information
12-point minimum type size Twelve-point text produces documents intended for general readers	**Bold or boxed in type for emphasis** This is preferable to all upper case and multiple cueing systems can be confusing
Conventional typefaces The general public is familiar with such typefaces, that are clear and legible when printed and copied	**Colour**
Not more than 2 typefaces One face for the text and one for the captions is less confusing for the reader	**Black print on a white background** This gives the best contrast and greatly enhances readability especially for people with visual impairment
Interline spacing of 125% of 12-point type (5mm) Strips of white space between lines help the eye to separate one line from another; 125% of the type size as the line space avoids the text looking cramped and crowded but any wider than this makes the lines appear to float apart	**One extra colour, if used, for headings** This can be helpful, if used consistently and the contrast with the background maintained, to emphasise headings
Avoid unnecessary capitals Lower case letters give shape to words and so are easier to recognise and read than all upper case	**Yellow should not be used** The appearance of yellow printing ink is as good as invisible to visually impaired people

Marketing and Media ads

TV Ads

Recommended Arabic dialects

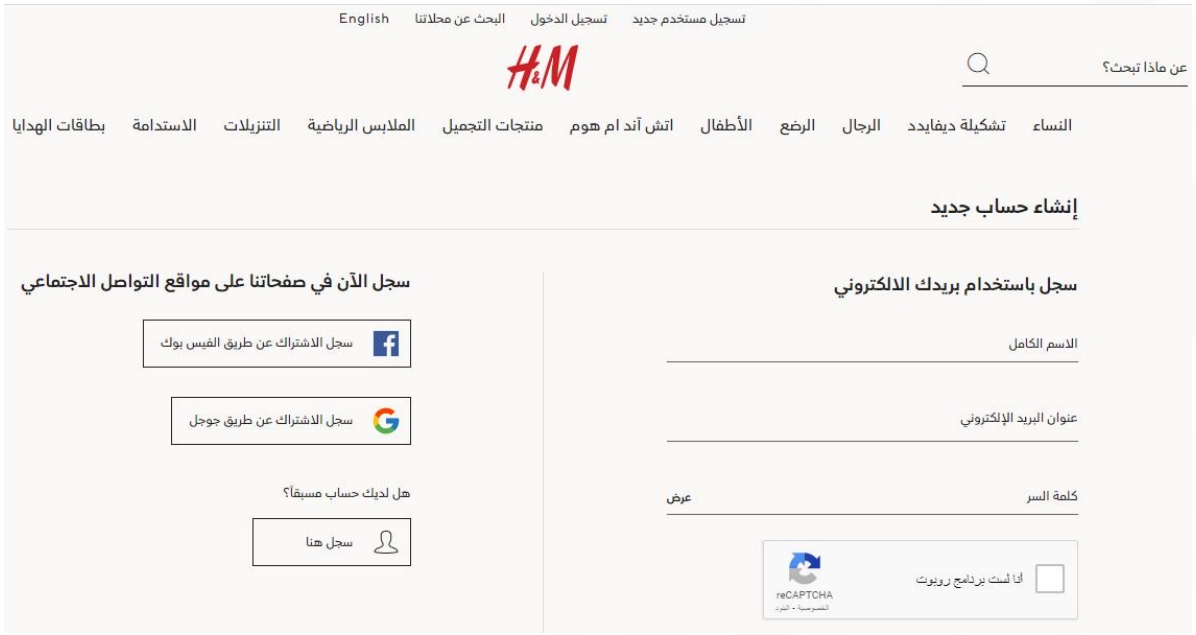
Pepsi ad with Gulf dialect

Pepsi ad in Egyptian dialect

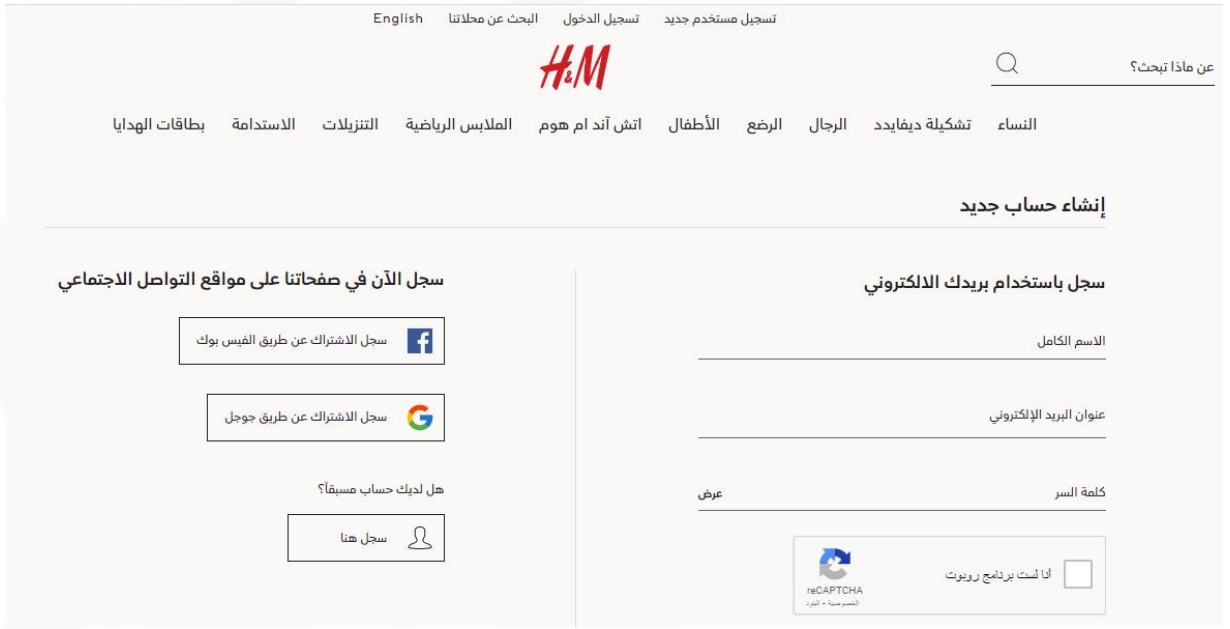
Recommended Arabic dialects

Website Arabic dialect localization

H&M-UAE



H&M- Egypt



Recommended Arabic dialects

Media Arabic dialect localization

Movie Name	Type	Voiceover Dialect	Platform
Red Notice	Movie	Syrian	Netflix
Coco	Animation	MSA &Egyptian	Disney +
Turning Red	Animation	MSA &Egyptian	Disney +
The Adam Project	Movie	Syrian	Netflix
Kung Fu Panda	Animation	MSA	Netflix

Subtitles are always in **MSA!**

Recommended Arabic dialects

To summarize

Country's local dialect	Modern Standard Arabic dialect
▪ Social media Marketing and advertisements. ▪ TV Ads. ▪ Can be used in Movies or series.	▪ Newspapers and broadcasting news. ▪ Localizing official speeches. ▪ Official Education material. ▪ Medical documents, reports, Medicine leaflet. ▪ Legal documents, formal speeches. ▪ Books. ▪ Website. ▪ Official documents. ▪ Video Games.

What to consider when localizing for the Middle East?

What to consider when localizing for the Middle East?

Background information

- Weekends are different:
  - Fridays and Saturdays in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordon, Qatar, Etc.
  - Saturdays and Sundays in UAE, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia
- Major languages include: Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Hebrew, Kurdish
- Major holidays include Ramadan, Eid Al Fitr, Eid Al Adha and Christmas.
  - Ramadan significance and its effect on human behavior.
- Culture, family, heritage and religion are really important.

What to consider when localizing for the Middle East?

Censorship

- Censorship plays a huge role in the Middle East.
  - Cultural sensitivities include:
  - Inappropriate clothing
  - Sexual content/LGBT
  - Encouraging violence
  - Depictions of alcohol or drug use
  - Sensitive content: political, moral, and religious

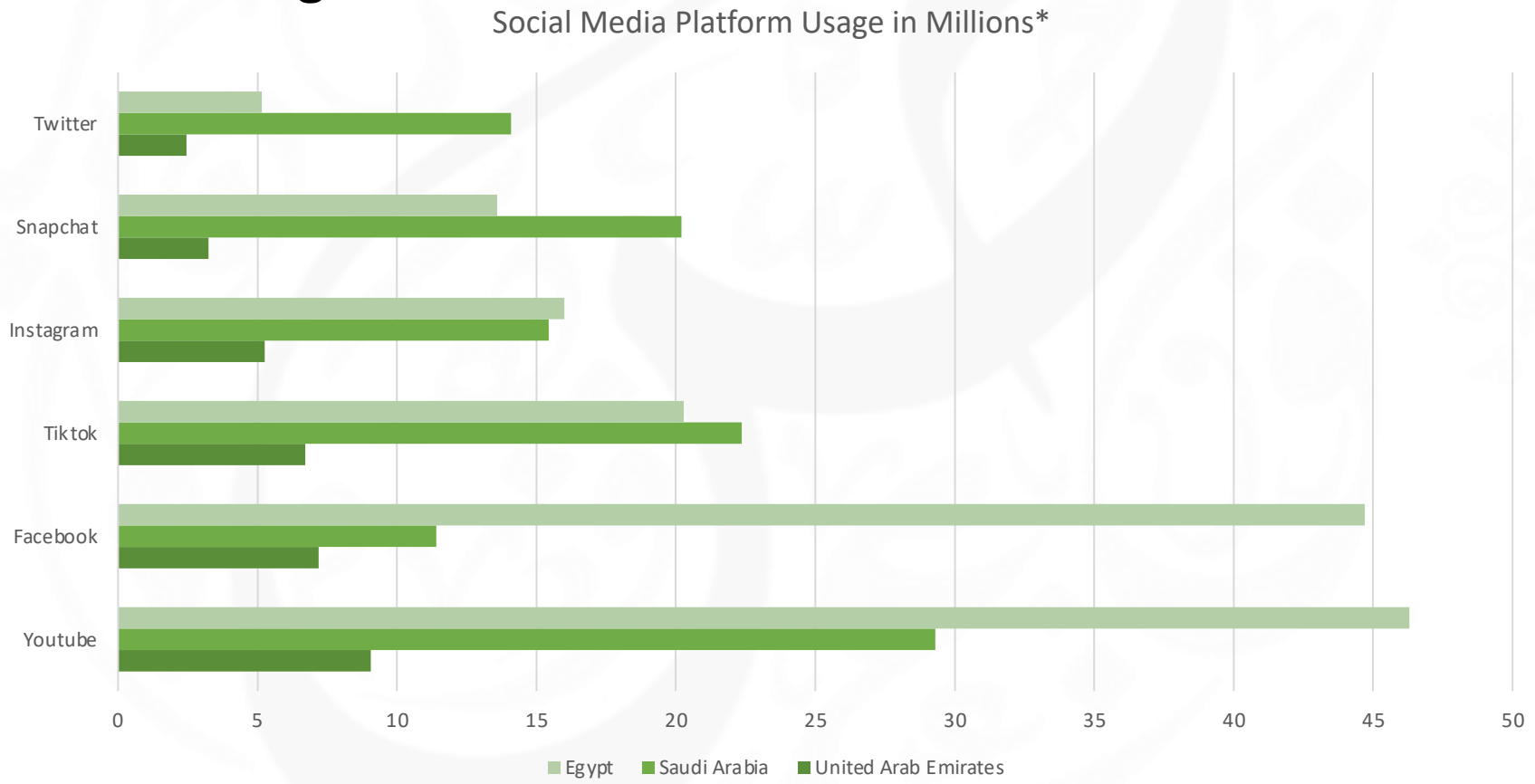
What to consider when localizing for the Middle East?

Technology Usage

- Increasing use of technology & social media over the years.
- The number of mobile internet users in MENA exceeded 300 million in 2021.
- Smartphone adoption is growing and expected to increase from 77% in 2021 to 84% in 2025.
- Social media usage- with UAE and Saudi Arabia being among the top 20 countries with social media users around the world.
- Social media preferred platforms differ from country to country.

What to consider when localizing for the Middle East?

Social media usage



* Numbers obtained from “We Are Social” reports

What to consider when localizing for the Middle East?

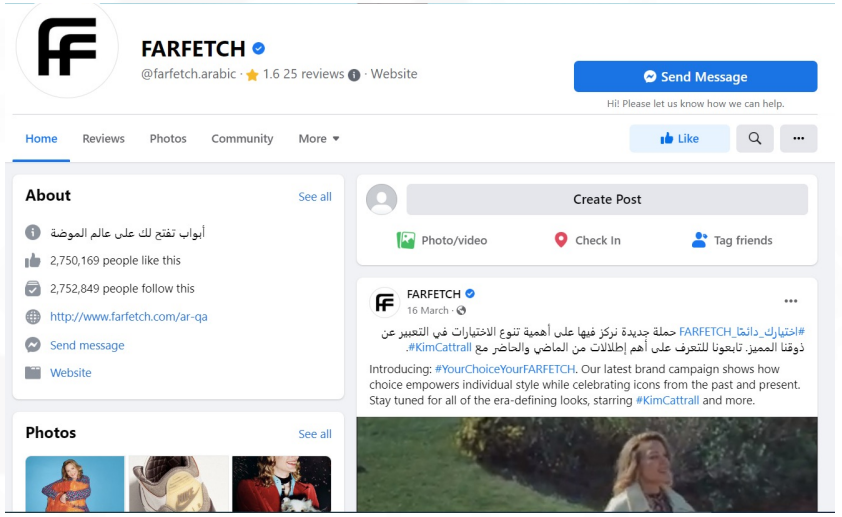
Booming industries

- Ecommerce
  - UAE & Saudi Arabia fastest growing.
  - Retail & fashion.
- Gaming
  - The Middle East and Africa’s Y-O-Y Growth rate is 10.1%.
  - Esports consumption estimated to reach $6.8 billion by 2030.
- Media
  - Introduction of Disney+.
  - Spotify and its localization strategy.

Local Aspects in Localization

Local Aspects in Localization

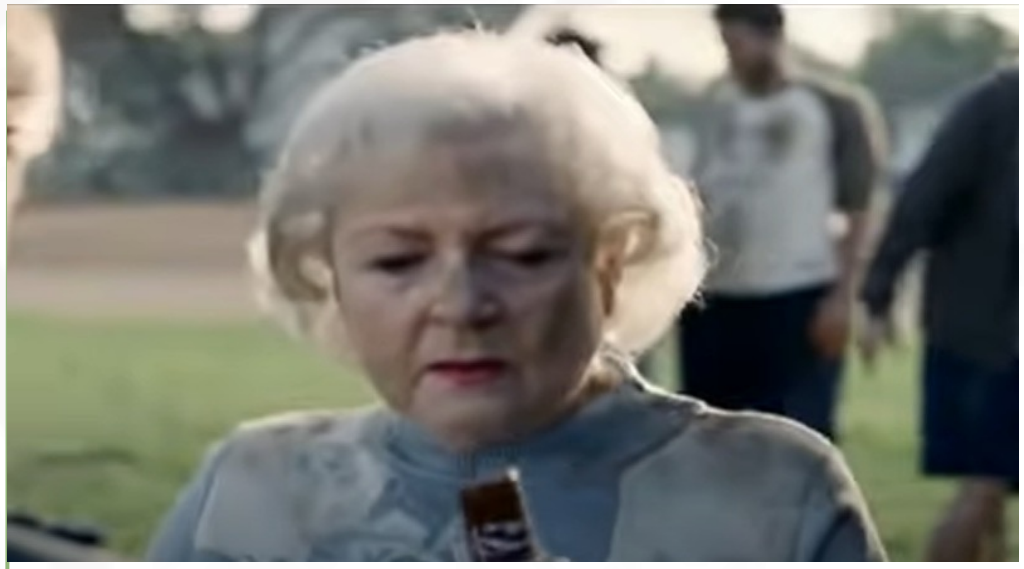
Localizing Social Media Platforms



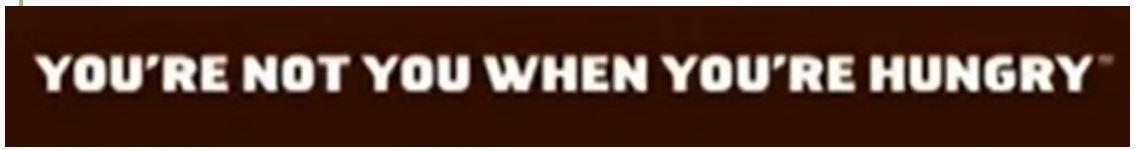
Local Aspects in Localization

Celebrities in commercials

Snickers Egypt



Snickers USA



Local Aspects in Localization

Localizing for different countries in Middle East

- You’re not you when you are hungry- the slogan was localized in Egyptian & Saudi Arabian dialect.
- Egypt/USA wide use of celebrities vs slogan in Saudi Arabia is the selling point.

Snickers Egypt

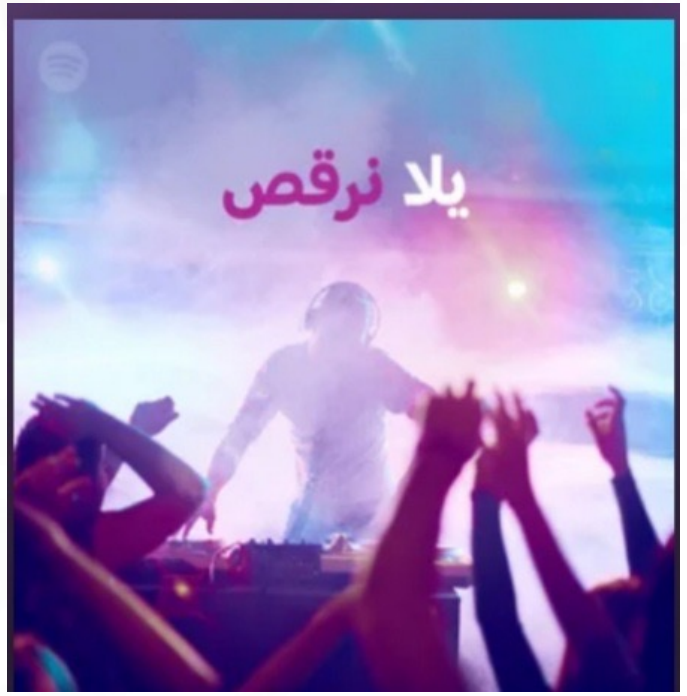
Snickers Saudi Arabia

Local Aspects in Localization

Localizing for different countries in Middle East

Spotify- Kuwait

Spotify- Egypt



Local Aspects in Localization

Celebrities in Games

Local Aspects in Localization

Incorporating Holidays

Local Aspects in Localization

Use of Models in localized websites

Asia and the Pacific

Africa

Middle East

South America

Identifying issues in Arabic Localization

Identifying Issues in Arabic Localization

How Arabic should look

مقالة اليوم المختارة

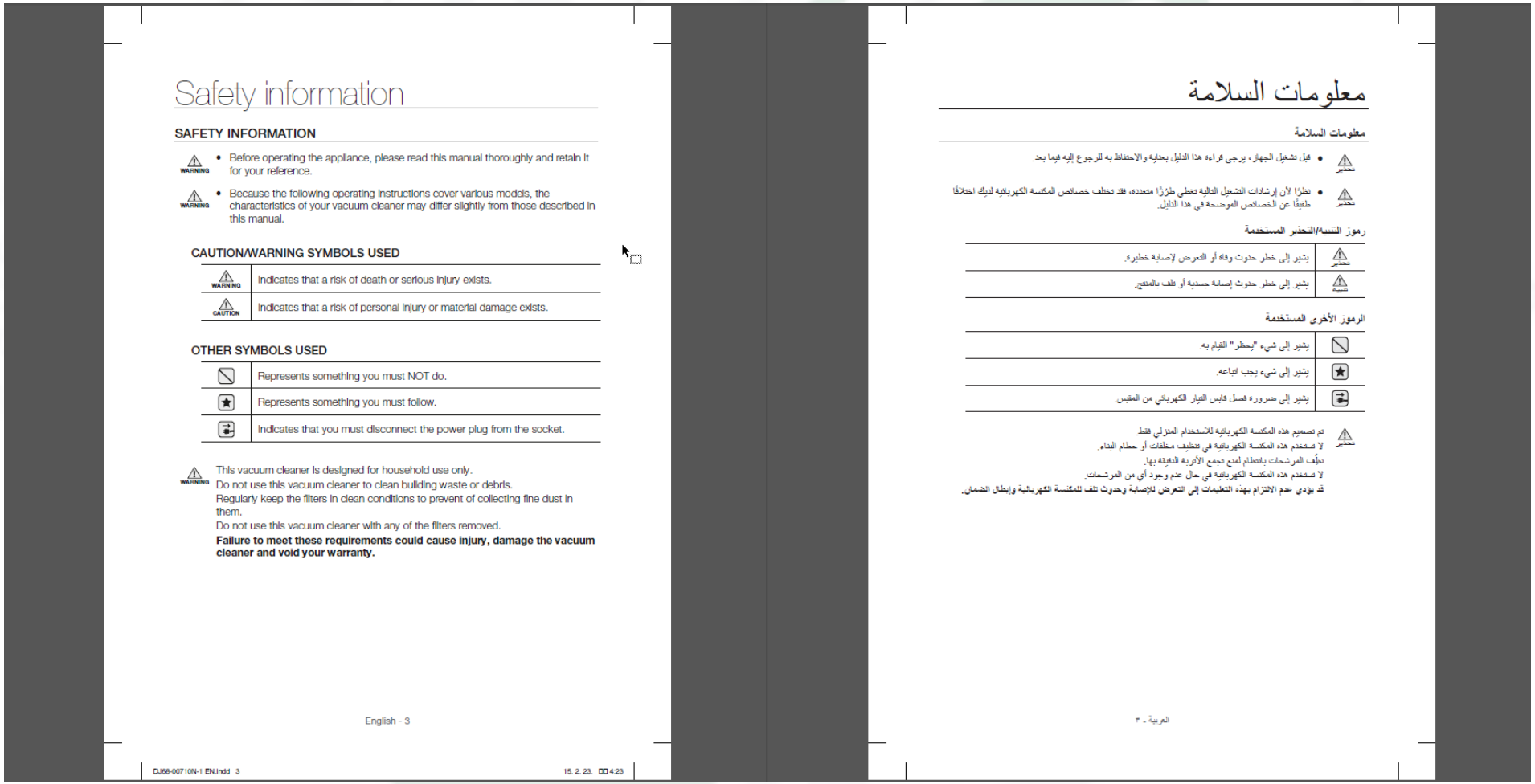
طائفة الحشاشين أو **الحشاشون** أو **الحشيشية**، هي طائفة إسماعيلية نزارية، انفصلت عن الفاطميين في القرن الحادي عشر الميلادي لتدعو إلى إمامة نزار المصطفى لدين الله ومن جاء مِن نسله، واشتهرت ما بين القرن الحادي عشر والقرن الثالث عشر الميلادي، وكانت معاقلهم الأساسية في بلاد فارس وأيضاً في الشام بعد أن هاجر إليها بعضهم من إيران. إن أقدم تطبيق كتابي لمصطلح "حشيشية" على النزاريين نجده في الرسالة التي كتبها الخليفة الفاطمي الآمر بأحكام الله سنة 1123م والمرسلة إلى الإسماعيليين في الشام (إيقاع الصواعق الإرغام) وكان الهدف من هذه الرسالة نقض مزاعم نزار المصطفى لدين الله بالإمامة والتأكيد على شرعية الخط المستعلي وقد استُخدم فيها مصطلح الحشيشية مرتين. أسّس الطائفة الحسن بن الصباح الذي اتخذ من قلعة آلموت في فارس مركزاً لنشر دعوته؛ وترسيخ أركان دولته. اتخذت دولة الحشاشين من القلاع الحصينة في قمم الجبال معقلاً لنشر الدعوة الإسماعيلية النزارية في إيران والشام. مما أكسبها عداءً شديدًا مع الخلافة العباسية والفاطمية والدول والسلطنات الكبرى التابعة لهما كالسلاجقة والخوارزميين والزنكيين والأيوبيين بالإضافة إلى الصليبيين، إلا أن جميع تلك الدول فشلت في استئصالهم طوال عشرات السنين من الحروب. كانت الاستراتيجية العسكرية للحشاشين تعتمد على الاغتيالات التي يقوم بها "فدائيون" لا يأبهون بالموت في سبيل تحقيق هدفهم. حيث كان هؤلاء الفدائيون يُلقون الرعب في قلوب الحكّام والأمراء المعادين لهم، وتمكنوا من اغتيال العديد من الشخصيات المهمة جداً في ذلك الوقت؛ مثل الوزير السلجوقي نظام الملك والخليفة العباسي المسترشد والخليفة العباسي الآخر الراشد وملك بيت المقدس كونراد المونفيراتويّ. وقد جاءت نهاية هذه الدولة في إيران عند الغزو المغولي الثاني بقيادة هولاكو عام 1256م بعد مذبحة كبيرة وإحراق القلاع والمكاتب الإسماعيلية وسرعان ما تهاوت الحركة في الشام أيضاً بعد أن فقدت استقلالها السياسي على يد الظاهر بيبرس سنة 1273م.

تابع القراءة

مقالات مختارة أخرى: خلية دم حمراء – إدوارد سعيد – اضطراب ثنائي القطب
ما هي المقالات المختارة؟ – بوابة التاريخ الإسلامي – بوابة تاريخ الشرق الأوسط

Identifying Issues in Arabic Localization

How Arabic localization should look



Safety information

SAFETY INFORMATION

WARNING • Before operating the appliance, please read this manual thoroughly and retain it for your reference.

WARNING • Because the following operating instructions cover various models, the characteristics of your vacuum cleaner may differ slightly from those described in this manual.

CAUTION/WARNING SYMBOLS USED

WARNING	Indicates that a risk of death or serious injury exists.
CAUTION	Indicates that a risk of personal injury or material damage exists.

OTHER SYMBOLS USED

	Represents something you must NOT do.
	Represents something you must follow.
	Indicates that you must disconnect the power plug from the socket.

WARNING This vacuum cleaner is designed for household use only.
Do not use this vacuum cleaner to clean building waste or debris.
Regularly keep the filters in clean conditions to prevent of collecting fine dust in them.
Do not use this vacuum cleaner with any of the filters removed.
Failure to meet these requirements could cause injury, damage the vacuum cleaner and void your warranty.

English - 3

DJ68-00710N-1 EN.indd 3 15. 2. 23. 4:23

معلومات السلامة

معلومات السلامة

تحذير • قبل تشغيل الجهاز، يرجى قراءة هذا الدليل بعناية والاحتفاظ به للرجوع إليه فيما بعد.

تحذير • نظرًا لأن إرشادات التشغيل التالية تغطي طرزًا متعددة، فقد تختلف خصائص المكنسة الكهربائية لديك اختلافًا طفيفًا عن الخصائص الموضحة في هذا الدليل.

رموز التنبيه/التحذير المستخدمة

تحذير	يشير إلى خطر حدوث وفاة أو التعرض لإصابة خطيرة.
تنبيه	يشير إلى خطر حدوث إصابة جسدية أو تلف بالمنتج.

الرموز الأخرى المستخدمة

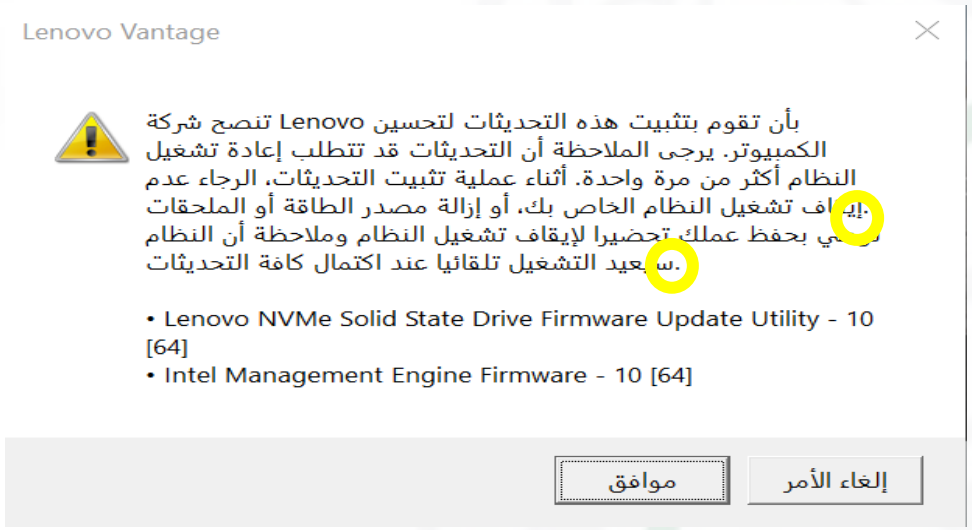
	يشير إلى شيء "يحظر" القيام به.
	يشير إلى شيء يجب اتباعه.
	يشير إلى ضرورة فصل قابس التيار الكهربائي من المقبس.

تحذير
تم تصميم هذه المكنسة الكهربائية للاستخدام المنزلي فقط.
لا تستخدم هذه المكنسة الكهربائية في تنظيف مخلفات أو حطام البناء.
نظّف المرشحات بانتظام لمنع تجمع الأتربة الدقيقة بها.
لا تستخدم هذه المكنسة الكهربائية في حال عدم وجود أي من المرشحات.
قد يؤدي عدم الالتزام بهذه التعليمات إلى التعرض للإصابة وحدوث تلف للمكنسة الكهربائية وإبطال الضمان.

العربية - ٣

Identifying Issues in Arabic Localization

How to easily identify mistakes



نحن *ملتزمون* بتصميم منتجات أكثر استدامة، مع المزيد من الألياف والعمليات الصديقة للبيئة.

نحن *ملتزمون* بالاقتصاد الدائري وإعادة التدوير وتقليل النفايات النسيجية.

نحن *ملتزمون* بالمناخ والتنوع الحيوي، ونعمل على تحقيق تغليف مستدام بنسبة 100% وتقليل انبعاثاتنا من ثاني أكسيد الكربون.

لأننا *ملتزمون* فهو السبيل الوحيد لمستقبل أفضل للجميع.

Identifying Issues in Arabic Localization

Errors in symbols

✓Question mark is mirrored

English	Arabic
who?	؟من

✓ Percentage is after the number

English	Arabic
12%	٪١٢

Identifying Issues in Arabic Localization

Errors in Symbols

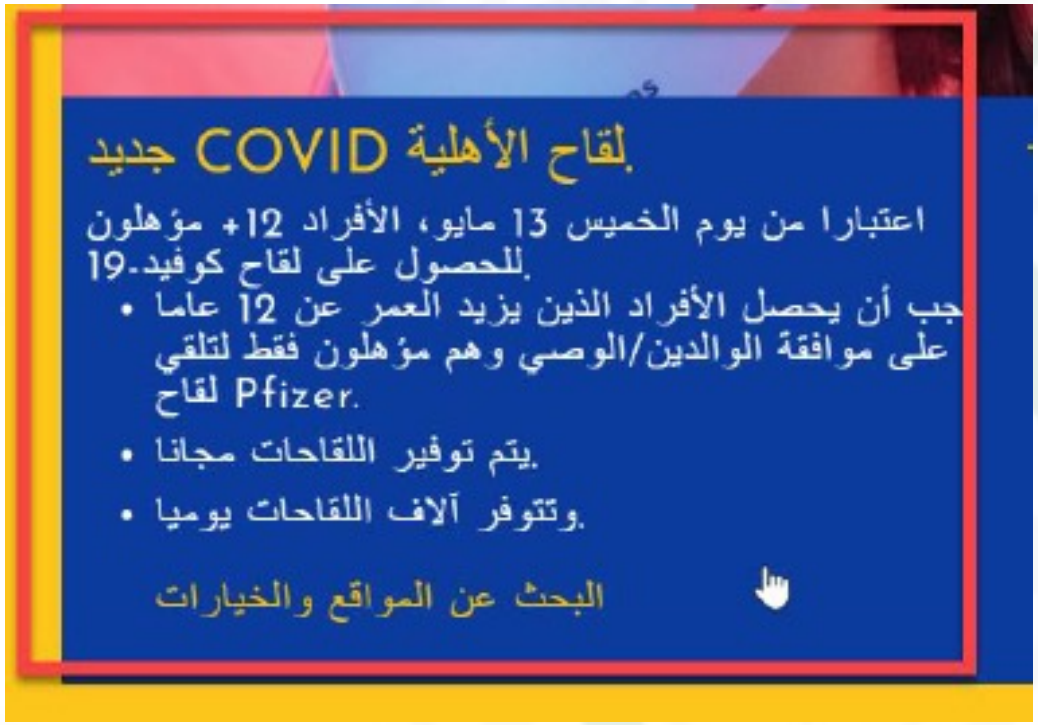
Identifying Issues in Arabic Localization

Broken text

- Arabic text is joined- considered cursive, where letters are connected.
- Main issues arise from copy/pasting.
- Tool/Font does not support Arabic.

Identifying Issues in Arabic Localization

Which of the below images is correct?



A

OR

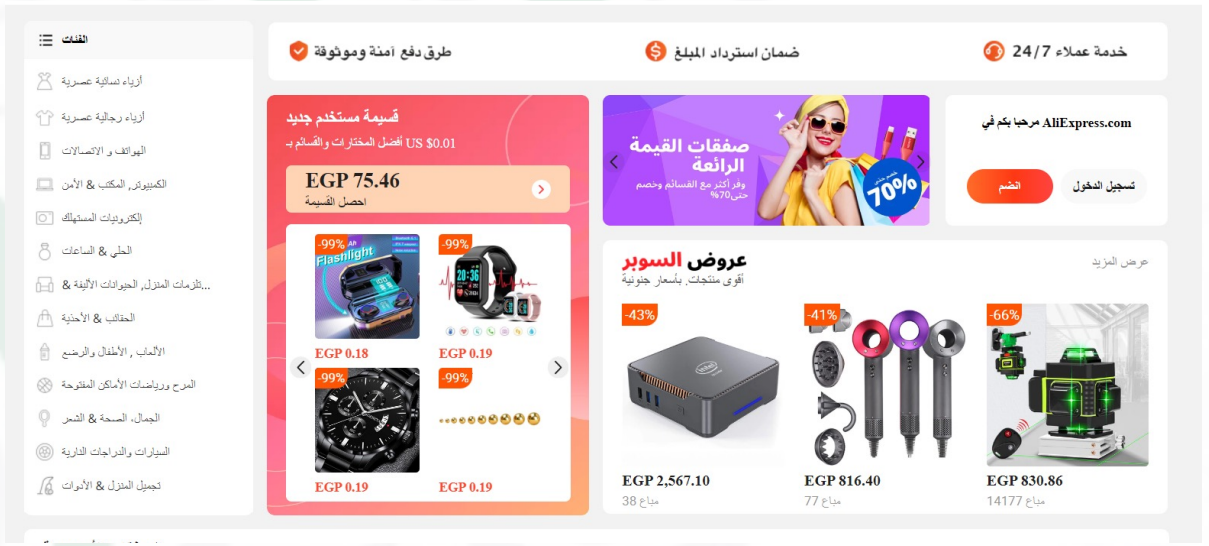
B

Identifying Issues in Arabic Localization

Which of the below images is correct?

A

OR



B

Identifying Issues in Arabic Localization

Which of the below images is correct?

A

OR

B

Identifying Issues in Arabic Localization

The Quality Studio (TQS)

- Free tool that can detect bi-di issues in text
- Access the tool by signing up on **tqs.saudisoft.com**

FileName	ID ^	Source	Target	Description	Category ^	Action
Fieldglass_UI#629#Fieldglass_UI#label.v_add_message_data.xml_ZXLF_1_555555.XLF.sdlxliff	b95f986e-93eb-4d97-98ae-ff9e9d43df7c sem number 2	City, State/Province, Country Combination valid?	مجموعة المدينة والولاية/المقاطعة والدولة صالحة؟	The target segment has question mark bidi error. in index:46	Bidi	FP

Localizing for the Middle East

Conclusion

- Diacritics can affect your localized project.
- Middle East countries are usually grouped depending on geography and similar dialects.
- We recommend certain dialects or use of MSA for different domains.
- There are key holidays celebrated in the region.
- Censorship in the region is something you should always consider.
- There has been an increasing use of technology & social media over the years.
- Incorporating celebrities, holidays and cultural aspects in localization.
- Right to left issues-reading order, broken text and errors in symbols that you can easily pinpoint.
- Introduction of TQS tool and how it can assist you detect bi-di issues in the text.

Thank You

Contact us on:

Saudisoft-Translation & Localization Services

www.saudisoft.com

bdm@saudisoft.com

+02 01061718712