

Texts for Reading Instruction and the Most Common Words in Egyptian Arabic

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Sabah al-khair

صباح الخير

Texts for Reading Instruction and the Most Common Words in Egyptian Arabic

- Diglossia
- Cognitive Load
- Encounters with Words in Print
- Zipf's Law

Texts for Reading Instruction and the Most Common Words in Egyptian Arabic

What is a word, anyway?

You say *Misr* and I say *Masr*

Final

ع

Medial

ء

'ayn

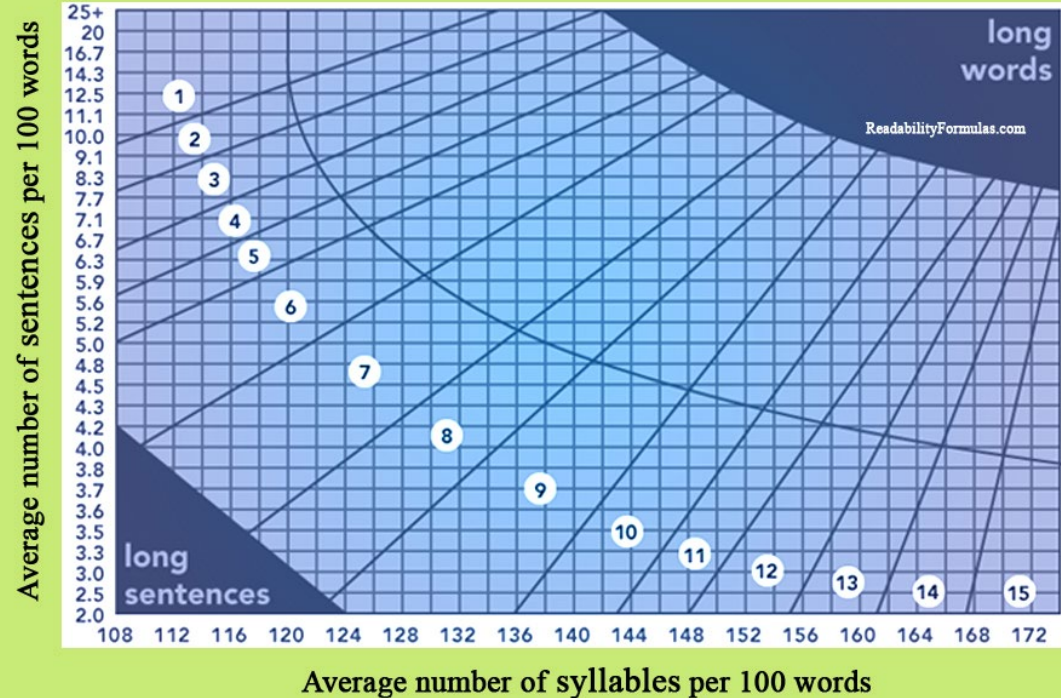
Initial

ع

Texts for Reading Instruction and the Most Common Words in Egyptian Arabic

Word Length & Sentence Length

Fry Graph for estimating Reading Ages (grade level)



1. What are the most common words in MSA as represented in Arabic newspapers?
2. How many of the most common words in MSA are used in the core texts?
3. How dense is the use of common words?
4. How many rare words are used in the core texts?

Reference Corpus and CCWA

1,391 most common
words in the reference
corpus or
50% of the almost
300,000 words in
corpus



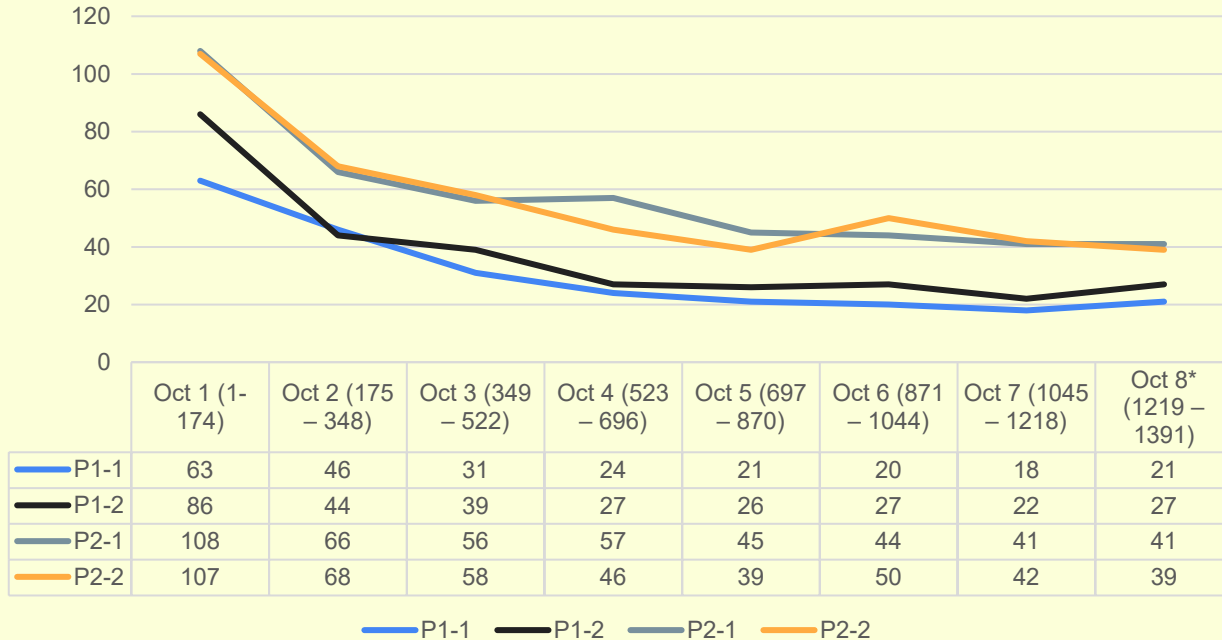
Student Texts

5,307 Unique Words

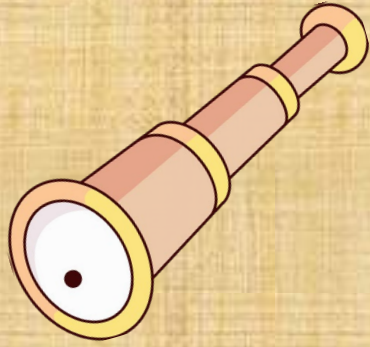
	Count (# of types)		Count (# of types)	Joint (# of joint types)
CCWA	1394	Study Combined Texts	6085	687
		Primary 1, Term 1	1,344	244
		Primary 1, Term 2	1,684	298
		Primary 2, Term 1	2,731	458
		Primary 2, Term 2	2,847	449

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Joint Words by Octile



Results



There were **no** rare words

But...

762 words went missing

Not in the CCWA and Not in
the textbooks

الأم the mother.

أمي my mother

أمك your mother (your=singular)

أمه his mother

أمها her mother

أمهات mothers

Implications

- Not enough attention to most common words as shown by the octile analysis in the study texts
- More attention should be given to introducing letters and words that share sounds and morphemes in colloquial Egyptian Arabic and MSA
- Attention to the words dispersed through the text ought to progress from the most common to the least common in a systematic manner with sufficient repetition that the written form of the word becomes familiar and automatic.
- Develop a corpus specifically planning texts for teaching Arabic words in elementary schools

Shokran

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