

Sleep Expression Category in Arabic: A Morphosemantic Approach

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ABSTRACT

The Arabic language is renowned for its immense richness and depth. It is widely recognized as one of the world's most intricate and expressive languages. This richness stems from several factors, including its extensive vocabulary, complex grammar, and diverse linguistic features. Despite Arabic's reputation for linguistic depth, there is limited morphosemantic analysis focusing on the variety of Arabic nouns derived from verb-root patterns that express sleep. This study aims to investigate these sleep-related nouns to uncover the diverse roots, meanings, and classifications that demonstrate the richness of Arabic vocabulary in this semantic field. This article presents a morphosemantic investigation to determine the verb-root pattern of sleep nouns from which the noun construction originates. The study comprises three main stages. Firstly, each sleep expression is extracted by consulting an online and a classical Arabic dictionary to identify their basic root. Secondly, the meanings of all aforementioned sleep-noun expressions are determined based on the same dictionary. Lastly, the categorization of Arabic sleep nouns is established. This study's findings reveal at least twenty distinct basic roots that convey the concept of sleep in Arabic, each with its unique and distinguishable meaning. These expressions can then be classified into three categories: Durations, Stages, and Time.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Arabic emerged as a Central Semitic language through an oral and literary tradition that flourished in the Arabian Peninsula before the development of Islam and a codified Arabic script (McCarter, 2008; Edzard, 2021). One of its defining characteristics is that Arabic has a complicated and uncommon way of creating words from a fundamental base (Mendenhall, 2006). Apart from disputes among grammarian schools on the origin of the Arabic word, whether verb or noun, they have agreed that it is constructed from three-root

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letters (Almujaiwel & Al-Thubaity, 2016; Setiyadi, 2024). This fact can be further beneficial, as it is a beautiful trait that conveys a depth of meaning and emotion unmatched by many languages (Setiyadi, Anhar, & Anwar, 2022). In addition, this language variety has many words that express similar meanings but convey different contextual significance (Setiyadi & Sa'adah, 2019). It directly shapes the Arabic language's important role in identifying similarities and differences in how everything is expressed in its culture. Sapir (1949) stated that language is defined as "a symbolic guide to culture" (Gladkova & Larina, 2018).

This linguistic characteristic enables Arabic to generate a large number of lexical items from a single trilateral root, making the language exceptionally rich in vocabulary. Classical Arabic literature often illustrates this lexical abundance; for instance, scholars have documented hundreds of names for certain entities, such as more than 500 terms referring to the lion, around 70 for stone, and nearly 200 for snake (Sahar Faiq, 2007; Zemánek, 2021). Such lexical multiplicity is frequently associated with the phenomenon of synonymy, which many linguists define as the presence of multiple lexical forms expressing closely related or similar meanings (Issawi, 2021; Sahar Faiq, 2007).

The emergence of these synonymous expressions is often linked to several linguistic and cultural factors. In classical Arabic literary tradition, lexical variation was frequently employed to maintain metrical structure and rhyme in poetry and prose. Additionally, the use of alternative lexical items allowed speakers to replace unfamiliar or less common words with expressions more widely understood within a given community. This lexical diversity also provides speakers with a repertoire of alternative terms that convey similar meanings while offering stylistic, contextual, or rhetorical flexibility (Zuhdi, 2010; Al-Omari & Abu-Melhim, 2014).

Although all words have a similar meaning, they have a particular origin word with a specific letter foundation and semantic reliance (Setiyadi, 2011). By this means, every word expressing the specific meaning for something it refers to is based on its original three-rooted letter. For instance, every word for love conveys a different stage in the process of falling in love. For example, the word '*hawā*' indicates the first attraction or inclination of the spirit or intellect towards another. The word is derived from its basic letter root, '*h-w-a*,' a fleeting breeze that rises and falls. '*Alāqa*' is derived from the root word ('*a-l-q*) meaning 'to cling to,' explaining the following stage of the heart when it begins to attach itself to the whom he/she beloved, before blossoming into blind longing, and so on (Sayed, 2015).

A particularly revealing lexical domain for examining morphosemantic relations in Arabic is the semantic field of sleep. The concept of sleep constitutes a universal human experience characterized by gradable stages, temporal distinctions, and varying degrees of intensity. In Arabic, this multidimensional phenomenon is expressed through a remarkable diversity of lexemes derived from distinct trilateral roots and morphological patterns. This structural plurality makes the field of sleep especially suitable for morphosemantic investigation, as it allows the interaction between root semantics and morphological form to be systematically observed.

Classical Arab philologists had already recognized this lexical richness. Al-Tha'ālibī, in his work *Fiḡhu al-Lughah*, arranged several sleep-related terms according to subtle gradations of physiological and experiential states. He listed expressions such as *al-nu'ās*, *al-wasan*, *al-tarnīq*, *al-karā*, *al-ghumdhu*, *al-taghfīq*, *al-'ighfā'*, *al-tahwīm*, *al-ghirār*, *al-tahjā'*, *al-ruqād*, *al-hujūd*, *al-hujū'*, *al-hubūgh*, and *al-tasbīkh*, demonstrating early awareness of semantic differentiation within a single conceptual field. Further examination of classical and modern sources reveals additional terms such as *al-naum*, *al-subāt*, *al-ruqūd*, *al-*

'indhijā', and *al-qailūlah*, each derived from different verbal roots yet converging semantically on the notion of sleep. The coexistence of multiple roots encoding related experiential states renders this domain particularly appropriate for exploring how morphological structures interact with and nuance semantic meaning in Arabic (Hakim, 2016a; Maisyah, 2021; Tumiran et al., 2010).

From a linguistic perspective, the contribution of Al-Tha'ālibī lies in his hierarchical arrangement of sleep-related vocabularies and his attention to subtle semantic gradations. Subsequent studies have primarily examined sleep expressions within the framework of Qur'anic exegesis, focusing on terms explicitly mentioned in the religious texts. While these works illuminate theological and interpretive dimensions, they do not provide a systematic morphosemantic account of the lexical field as a whole. In particular, the interaction between trilateral roots, morphological patterns, and semantic differentiation across classical lexicographic sources remains insufficiently explored.

This study addresses that gap by offering a structured morphosemantic classification of Arabic sleep vocabulary grounded in root analysis and lexical semantics rather than solely textual occurrence. By examining how distinct trilateral roots generate semantically related but conceptually differentiated expressions, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how Arabic encodes experiential phenomena through its root-and-pattern system. The significance of this investigation extends beyond the lexical field of sleep itself: it demonstrates a replicable analytical model for studying other semantic domains in Arabic, particularly in Qur'anic vocabulary, where morphological variation frequently corresponds to nuanced shifts in meaning. Consequently, this study contributes not only to Arabic lexicology but also to broader discussions in morphosemantics, semantic field theory, and translation studies, where precise differentiation between near-synonymous terms is methodologically essential.

To operationalize this objective, the article identifies the verb-root patterns underlying each sleep-related noun and examines how morphological structures interact with semantic values. The first step involves extracting each sleep expression and tracing it to its trilateral root through a root-based lexical search using the web-based Arabic Almanac platform (<https://ejtaal.net/aa/readme.html>), with primary reliance on *Lisānu al-'Arab* by Ibn Manẓūr. The second step consists of systematically analyzing the lexical meanings of each expression as documented in that dictionary. The third step establishes a structured categorization of the sleep nouns based on semantic criteria derived from the lexicographic descriptions. This procedure is grounded in the morphosemantic assumption that while morphological patterns (*awzān*) introduce semantic modulation—such as intensity, temporality, or state—the core conceptual domain is preserved through the stability of the trilateral root. By combining root identification, morphological analysis, and semantic classification, the study seeks to demonstrate how form and meaning interact systematically within a single semantic field.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Morphosemantic Approach

Morphosemantics examines the interaction between morphological structure and semantic interpretation in language. The theoretical basis of this approach lies in structural linguistics, particularly the principle that linguistic form and meaning are systematically related, as articulated by Ferdinand de Saussure (Saussure, 1916). In Semitic linguistics,

this relationship is especially evident in the root-and-pattern morphological system, where trilateral roots encode a conceptual semantic core. In contrast, morphological templates generate lexical and grammatical variation. Studies of Semitic morphology, including those by Wolf Leslau (Leslau, 1995) and John Huehnergard (Huehnergard, 2011), demonstrate that derivational patterns systematically organize lexical meaning by introducing semantic nuances such as intensity, temporality, reciprocity, reflexivity, state, or process. In Arabic linguistic tradition, this principle is reflected in the concept of *ishtiqaq* (derivation), in which words sharing a root are understood to preserve a semantic nucleus despite morphological variation. Within this framework, morphosemantic analysis involves identifying root structures and morphological patterns to explain how lexical forms are structurally related within a semantic domain.

From the semantic perspective, morphosemantics is closely connected to lexical semantic field theory, which views vocabulary as an organized system of conceptually related words distinguished by minimal semantic contrasts (Glanville, P. J., 2018). Scholars such as John Lyons and Eugene Nida emphasize that semantic differentiation within a lexical field can be examined through componential analysis and hierarchical classification (Lyons, 1997; Nida, 1975). In Arabic lexicography, semantic distinctions are preserved and elaborated in classical dictionaries, most prominently *Lisānu al-ʿArab* compiled by Ibn Manẓūr (Ibn Manẓūr, 2003), which documents lexical meanings and contextual usage based on root organization. Drawing on these theoretical and lexicographic traditions, the present study employs a morphosemantic approach by first identifying the roots and morphological patterns of sleep-related nouns and subsequently analyzing their lexicographic meanings to construct a semantic classification of sleep expressions in Arabic.

Despite the centrality of the root-and-pattern system in Arabic linguistics, relatively few studies apply morphosemantic analysis to a single semantic field in order to construct a structured lexical taxonomy. Existing research tends either to focus on derivational morphology independently of semantic field organization or to treat lexical semantics without systematically integrating morphological structure.

2.2 Previous Study on Sleep Expression in the Arabic Language

Previous studies have revealed sleep expressions in the Arabic language in how domains are classified by names occurring in the Qurʾān. There are many studies conducted on this subject with numerous perspectives. Research by Bahammam (2011) examines the meaning, stages, benefits, and deficiencies of sleeping under religious regulation, specifically in Qurʾān verses (Bahammam, 2011). In line with a previous study (Heidari et al., 2014), this study examined the concept of sleep in the Qurʾān and the modern health sciences perspective. They classified sleep in the Qurʾān into four main stages based on modern health classification: rapid eye movement and non-rapid eye movement. The study mainly focuses on explaining each sleep word occurring in the Qurʾān and classifying them into four main classifications (BaHammam & Gozal, 2012), which attributed the more comprehensive classification, including the stages, periods, and positions of the sleep expression in this Islamic holy book based on modern Qurʾān *tafsīr*. All research, as mentioned earlier, mainly explores all sleep expressions within *al-nuʿās*, *al-wasanu*, *al-hujūʿu*, *al-naum*, *al-subāt*, *al-ruqūd*, and *al-tasbīkhu* (Hakim, 2016).

Al-Muthīrī's (2008) collection of verses (Ayat) related to sleep in the Quran and the Hadith shows the fact about sleep, its degrees, grades, and cases in the Holy Quran. In

addition, the Sunnah showed its good manners, times, prayers said at the time of going to sleep, and other things related to sleep. However, this research did not explore other terms beyond the two main sources that lead to incomplete sleep terminology in Arabic. Another sleep expression, *al-qailūlah*, also considers sleep meaning in specific circumstances by Tumiran, Saat, Rahman, & Adli (Tumiran et al., 2010). Their analysis focuses explicitly on the neuroscience and Islamic perspectives in comprehensive practices by Muslims in the Malaysian education system. In this matter, *al-qailūlah*, a short sleep activity occurring about an hour before the Zuhr (the afternoon prayer) period or within the *Zuhr* period (before *Asr*), is briefly highlighted in research by Nor et al. and Riad et al. They viewed this type of sleep from the modern health perspective, especially in maintaining the body as a relaxation after morning work (Mohamad Nor et al., 2018), (Riad & Khadafi, 2023).

From a linguistic perspective, Al-tha'ālibī (2009), in his monumental work, promoted sleep-naming meanings and stages in Arabic (Al-Tha'ālibī, 2009). He developed strategies for organizing 15 vocabularies expressing sleep into hierarchies and organizing them by meaning. Other research on the meaning of Arabic sleep expression was conducted by Maisyah (2021), who mainly focuses on sleep expression in modern Qur'ān *tafsīr*. The study focuses mainly on sleep terms; *al-naum*, *al-ruqūd*, and *al-nu'ās* (Kholiska et al., 2021).

While previous studies have addressed various facets of sleep expressions in the Arabic language, with a specific focus on their contextual interpretation within the Qur'ān, a research gap exists concerning a comprehensive analysis and classification of sleep expressions that encompasses a broader linguistic scope, particularly in terms of morphosemantic analysis and the underlying basic root of sleep-related vocabulary. Although some studies have primarily examined sleep meanings, stages, and classifications within the framework of religious regulations, health sciences, and specific linguistic categories mentioned in the Qur'ān, further investigation is warranted to explore a wider range of sleep expressions beyond those explicitly delineated in religious texts. This research gap necessitates the exploration of sleep expressions in both online and classical Arabic dictionaries, alongside their everyday language usage, to unravel the subtle intricacies of less-explored sleep expressions and their cultural significance. Furthermore, a comprehensive understanding of the topic necessitates an examination of the variations in basic root forms and categorization of meanings across diverse Arabic dictionaries. Conducting such research endeavours would effectively bridge the gap between linguistic analysis, cultural perspectives, and the practical implications of sleep expressions in Arabic.

3. METHOD

The present study adopts a qualitative research design employing a morphosemantic approach to examine the verb-root patterns underlying sleep-related nouns in Arabic (Bounhas et al., 2020). Data collection relies primarily on documentary analysis, drawing on both online and classical Arabic lexicographic sources (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The initial stage involves extracting sleep-related lexical items and identifying their fundamental trilateral roots using a web-based Arabic lexical resource, the Arabic Almanac, which provides access to root-based dictionaries in multiple languages (<https://ejtaal.net/aa/readme.html>). This step enables the researcher to determine the morphological origins of each lexical item and trace its derivational structure.

The analytical procedure proceeds through several stages. First, each word is reduced to its trilateral root in order to identify the morphological base from which the lexical

form is derived. Second, the morphological patterns associated with each root are analyzed to determine their grammatical structure and derivational form, thereby distinguishing between noun and verb constructions and identifying the morphological features that shape lexical meaning (Setiyadi, Anhar, Awaluddin, et al., 2022). Third, the semantic meanings of the identified sleep-related nouns are examined through consultation with classical Arabic lexicographic authorities, particularly *Lisānu al-‘Arab* compiled by Ibn Manẓūr, which documents historical definitions, contextual usages, and semantic nuances of Arabic vocabulary. Finally, the lexical items are categorized by their dictionary-derived meanings to construct a semantic classification of sleep expressions. This categorization considers semantic criteria such as degrees of sleep intensity, duration, and contextual association, thereby enabling a structured morphosemantic interpretation of sleep-related vocabulary within the Arabic lexicon (David, 2006).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The examination of classical and modern lexical sources identified twenty Arabic nouns expressing the meaning of sleep, each representing a distinct lexical construction. These expressions include *al-nu`ās*, *al-wasan*, *al-tarnīq*, *al-karā*, *al-ghumḍ*, *al-taghfīq*, *al-‘ighfā`*, *al-tahwīm*, *al-ghirār*, *al-tahjā`*, *al-ruqād*, *al-ruqūd*, *al-hujūd*, *al-hujū`*, *al-hubūgh*, and *al-tasbīkh*. Further examination of additional lexicographical sources also revealed several related expressions associated with sleep, namely *al-nawm*, *al-subāt*, *al-‘indhijā`*, and *al-qaylūlah*. Together, these lexical items constitute the dataset analyzed in this study and form the basis for the subsequent morphosemantic examination and semantic categorization.

The discussion in this study proceeds through two main analytical stages. The first stage examines the morphological construction of Arabic words expressing the meaning of sleep by identifying the trilateral roots that underlie their verbal and nominal forms. In Arabic lexical structure, most words are derived from trilateral (three-consonant) roots that encode a core semantic concept from which multiple lexical forms are generated through patterned morphological derivation. These root-and-pattern combinations allow a wide range of semantically related words to develop from a single lexical base. Such a system enables linguists to trace semantic relationships among derived forms by analyzing their shared root structures and morphological templates. Consequently, the analysis of Arabic sleep-related vocabulary in this study employs a root-based morphological approach in order to identify the structural patterns that generate these lexical items (Kaye & Holes, 1997; Glanville, 2018).

The second stage of the analysis focuses on the semantic classification of the identified lexical items. In Arabic morphosemantic analysis, a single trilateral root may generate several derived words whose meanings vary depending on the morphological pattern applied to the root. These variations often produce subtle semantic distinctions within a broader lexical field. In the case of sleep-related vocabulary, examining both the root structure and the derived noun forms allows the researcher to classify the words according to their semantic characteristics. In this study, the classification is organized around three principal semantic dimensions: the duration of sleep, the stage of sleep, and the time of sleep occurrence. This analytical framework reflects the traditional Arabic linguistic perspective that considers the root as the primary carrier of lexical meaning, while morphological patterns refine and specify semantic nuances in derived forms (Ahmad Ibrahim, 2020; Al-Rawashdeh et al., 2024).

4.1 Basic Root Identifying

The morphological examination of Arabic sleep-related nouns reveals that most lexical items in the dataset are derived from trilateral verb roots that generate corresponding nominal forms. Identifying these roots allows the lexical items to be traced to their underlying verbal bases and morphological structures. The analysis shows that the majority of the sleep expressions originate from verbal nouns (*maṣḍar*) derived from trilateral verbs, while a smaller number function as common nouns or nouns of time. The root analysis further indicates variation in verb structure, including sound verbs (*ṣaḥīḥ*) and weak verbs (*mu'tall*) such as assimilated, hollow, and defective verbs. These morphological variations illustrate how different lexical forms expressing sleep emerge from distinct root patterns while maintaining a shared semantic domain. Table 1 presents the results of this root identification, including the noun form, its trilateral root, and the corresponding verb type.

Table 1
Basic Root Examination Lists

No	Sleeping noun	Word type	Basic root	Verb types
1	<i>al-nu'ās</i>	verbal noun	ن - ع - س	sound verb
2	<i>al-wasan</i>	verbal noun	و - س - ن	assimilated verb
3	<i>al-tarnīq</i>	verbal noun	ر - ن - ق	sound verb
4	<i>al-karā</i>	verbal noun	ك - ر - ي	defective verb
5	<i>al-ghumḍ</i>	common noun	غ - م - ض	sound verb
6	<i>al-taghfīq</i>	verbal noun	غ - ف - ق	sound verb
7	<i>al-'ighfā'</i>	verbal noun	غ - ف - ي	defective verb
8	<i>al-tahwīm</i>	verbal noun	ه - و - م	hollow verb
9	<i>al-ghirār</i>	common noun	غ - ر - ر	doubled verb
10	<i>al-tahjā'</i>	verbal noun	ع - ج - ه	sound verb
11	<i>al-ruqād</i>	verbal noun	ر - ق - د	sound verb
12	<i>al-ruqūd</i>	verbal noun	ر - ق - د	sound verb
13	<i>al-hujūd</i>	verbal noun	ه - ج - د	sound verb
14	<i>al-hujū'</i>	verbal noun	ع - ج - ه	sound verb
15	<i>al-hubūgh</i>	verbal noun	ه - ب - غ	sound verb
16	<i>al-tasbīkh</i>	verbal noun	س - ب - خ	sound verb
17	<i>al-subāt</i>	verbal noun	س - ب - ت	sound verb
18	<i>al-nawm</i>	verbal noun	ن - و - م	hollow verb
19	<i>al-'indhijā'</i>	verbal noun	ع - ج - ض	sound verb
20	<i>al-qaylūlah</i>	noun of time	ق - ي - ل	hollow verb

The root identification presented in Table 1 indicates that most Arabic sleep-related nouns are derived from trilateral verb roots, reflecting the central role of the root-pattern system in Arabic lexical formation. The majority of the lexical items function as verbal nouns (*maṣḍar*) derived from underlying verb forms, while a smaller number appear as common nouns, such as *al-ghumḍ* and *al-ghirār*, and nouns of time, such as *al-qaylūlah*. Several lexical items share identical roots but occur in different morphological realizations, illustrating derivational variation within the same lexical field. For example, *al-ruqād* and *al-ruqūd* both originate from the root ر-ق-د, while *al-hujū'* and *al-tahjā'* share the root ع-ج-ه, demonstrating how different morphological patterns generate related lexical forms from a common base.

The analysis also reveals that some sleep-related nouns are derived from quadrilateral verb constructions, including *al-taghfīq*, *al-tarnīq*, *al-tasbīkh*, *al-tahwīm*, *al-’ighfā’*, and *al-’indhijā’*. These forms involve additional morphological elements beyond the basic trilateral structure, such as the prefix *’alif* in *al-’ighfā’* and the combination *’alif + nūn* in *al-’indhijā’*. Most nouns in the dataset correspond to verbs that possess both perfective and imperfective forms; however, certain items, including *al-taghfīq*, *al-’ighfā’*, and *al-tahwīm*, are primarily attested in the perfective form, such as *ghaffaqa*, *’aghfā*, and *hawwama*, with classical dictionaries rarely recording their imperfective counterparts. In terms of morphological templates, most verbs appear in the *fa’ila* pattern, while *al-nawm* represents an exception derived from the *fa’ala* pattern. Other derivational patterns, such as *’af’ala* and *’infa’ala*, are also attested, illustrating the morphological diversity of the verbs that generate these sleep-related nouns. Additionally, the noun *al-qaylūlah* demonstrates a diminutive formation (*taṣghīr*) derived from *qayl*, indicating a short or limited duration of rest during the daytime.

4.2 Categorization of Arabic Sleeping Noun Based on the Word Meaning

In this stage of analysis, identifying the meanings of each lexical item related to sleep constitutes the initial step toward semantic categorization. The meanings of the sleeping expressions are primarily derived from the classical Arabic lexicon *Lisān al-’Arab* compiled by Ibn Manzur, which provides detailed explanations of word usage within classical Arabic. For the purposes of translation and semantic approximation into English, the meanings are cross-referenced with A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic by Hans Wehr. Through this dual reference, the semantic range of each sleeping noun can be more clearly identified, combining classical lexical explanations with modern lexical equivalents.

Table 2
The Meaning of the Sleep Noun Construction

No	Sleeping noun	Word’s meaning in <i>Lisān al-’Arab</i>	English translation
1.	<i>al-nu’ās</i>	<i>al-nawm, muqārabatu al-nawm, aw thiqlatu al-nawm</i>	Sleep, the state of being half asleep, heavy feeling of sleepiness
2.	<i>al-wasan</i>	<i>idhā nāma nawman khafīfan, al-nu’ās min ghayr al-nawm, al-nu’ās yabda’ fī al-ra’s</i>	When someone dozes off for a very short period/ type of falling or deep sleep, the beginning of falling sleep starts in the head.
3.	<i>al-tarnīq</i>	<i>al-nawm fī ’aynayhi, al-ḍu’f fī al-baṣar wa-al-badan</i>	sleep in eyes, weakness of sight, and body
4.	<i>al-karā</i>	<i>al-nawm, al-nu’ās</i>	Sleep, especially in a specified manner
5.	<i>al-ghumḍ</i>	<i>al-nawm, aghlaqa ’aynayhi</i>	Sleep, to close or shut eyes in the face-off.
6.	<i>al-taghfīq</i>	<i>al-nawm wa anta tasma’u ḥadītha al-qawm</i>	Sleep condition in which you are conscious of environmental stimuli.
7.	<i>al-ighfā’</i>	<i>nāma ’alā al-ghafā’, wa al-ghafā’ min ghafā bi-ma’nā al-nawm nawman khafīfan</i>	He fell asleep, and <i>al-ghafā’u</i> means light sleep.
8.	<i>al-tahwīm</i>	<i>al-nawm al-khafīf wa al-qalīl, awwal al-nawm; hawwama al-rajul idhā hazza ra’sahu mina al-nu’ās</i>	Light and short sleep, the beginning of sleep, the man wandered if he shook his head out of sleepiness.

(continue on the next page)

Table 2 (Continue)

No	Sleeping noun	Word's meaning in <i>Lisān al-'Arab</i>	English translation
9.	<i>al-ghirār</i>	<i>al-nawm al-qalīl</i>	Light sleep or sleep for a short period. Word <i>ghirār</i> mainly refers to meaning little in sleep period or other if follow-up by word <i>al-naum</i>
10.	<i>al-tahajju'</i>	<i>al-nawmah al-khafīfah fī awwal al-layl</i>	Light sleep at the beginning of the night
11.	<i>al-ruqād</i>	<i>al-nawm fī al-layl</i>	Night sleep
12.	<i>al-ruqūd</i>	<i>al-nawm fī al-nahār</i>	Midday nap
13.	<i>al-hujūd</i>	<i>idhā nāma wa kullu dhālika fī ākhir al-layl</i>	Sleep in the late night
14.	<i>al-hujū'</i>	<i>al-nawm fī al-layl wa al-hujū' laysa bi-al-nawm</i>	Night sleep and it is not a sleep
15.	<i>al-hubūgh</i>	<i>al-nawm, raqada raqdatan aw bi-qadr aw akthar min al-nahār</i>	Sleep, long time sleep as much or more in the day
16.	<i>al-tasbīkh</i>	<i>al-nawm al-shadīd wa qad qīla huwa ruqād kulla al-sā'ah</i>	Severe sleep, and it was said; It is lying down every hour
17.	<i>al-subāt</i>	<i>nawmun khafiyyun ka-al-ghashyah</i>	A sleeplike or half-conscious state without response to stimuli
18.	<i>al-nawm</i>	<i>al-nu'ās; idhā raqada; dīdd al-yaqazah</i>	A heavy feeling of sleepiness, if a person <i>raqada</i> , wakefulness antonym of drowsiness
19.	<i>al-idtijā'</i>	<i>al-nawm; istaqāla wa waḍa'a janbayhi 'alā al-arḍ</i>	Sleeping, He lay down and put his sides on the ground, sleeping like sitting down.
20.	<i>al-qaylūlah</i>	<i>al-nawm fī al-ḡahīrah</i>	Having a nap at midday

The lexical examination presented in Table 2 confirms that all identified nouns belong to the semantic domain of sleep. However, the definitions recorded in *Lisān al-'Arab* demonstrate that these terms do not function as simple synonyms. Instead, each word carries a specific semantic nuance related to the nature of sleep itself. Some terms emphasize the degree or intensity of sleep, such as *al-nu'ās*, *al-wasan*, and *al-tahwīm*, which refer to states of light sleep or drowsiness, while others describe heavier or deeper conditions, such as *al-tasbīkh* or *al-subāt*. Several nouns also indicate contextual aspects of sleeping, including posture (*al-idtijā'*), the physical act of closing the eyes (*al-ghumḍ*), or states in which the sleeper remains partially aware of surrounding stimuli (*al-taghfīq*). This lexical diversity suggests that Arabic possesses a highly differentiated vocabulary for describing the phenomenon of sleep, where subtle semantic distinctions are encoded through different lexical forms rather than through a single general term.

Such variation naturally leads to identifiable semantic patterns within the dataset. When the meanings of the nouns are examined comparatively, they reveal three primary semantic dimensions: duration of sleep, stage or depth of sleep, and temporal occurrence of sleep. For example, expressions such as *al-ghirār* or *al-ighfā'* indicate short or light sleep, while terms like *al-hubūgh* suggest longer sleep duration. Other expressions specify the time at which sleep occurs, such as *al-ruqād* (night sleep), *al-hujūd* (sleep in the late night), and *al-qaylūlah* (midday nap). Similar distinctions appear in Qur'ānic discourse, where different lexical items convey specific aspects of sleep. The term *sinah* refers to drowsiness or the initial stage of sleep, while *nu'ās* denotes a deeper level of sleepiness; *hujū'* indicates lying down for rest, and *ruqād* describes prolonged sleep. These distinctions have been noted to correspond conceptually with modern sleep science, which differentiates between

stages such as light sleep, deep sleep, and REM sleep (Tumiran et al., 2010). The Qur'ānic representation of sleep, therefore, highlights its multifaceted nature and its significance in human life, both physically and symbolically (Bahammam, 2011; Heidari et al., 2014; Jahrami et al., 2023). Building on these observations, the following section presents a systematic semantic classification of the sleep-related nouns according to these three dimensions.

4.2.1 Sleep Expressions Based on Duration

The semantic examination of Arabic sleep-related nouns reveals that the lexicon encodes meaningful distinctions regarding the duration of sleep. Although all identified terms belong to the same general semantic field, namely the state of sleep, their lexical meanings indicate different temporal extents of that state. From a morphosemantic perspective, the shared semantic ground is derived from the underlying root meaning related to rest, stillness, or loss of wakefulness. In contrast, the derived lexical forms introduce nuanced distinctions concerning the length and condition of the sleeping state. Based on the meanings documented in *Lisān al-'Arab*, the lexemes can be classified into three groups: nouns denoting short sleep periods, nouns denoting long or extended sleep, and nouns that do not explicitly indicate duration. The following figure illustrates how Arabic lexical morphology and semantic interpretation interact to structure the conceptualization of sleep.

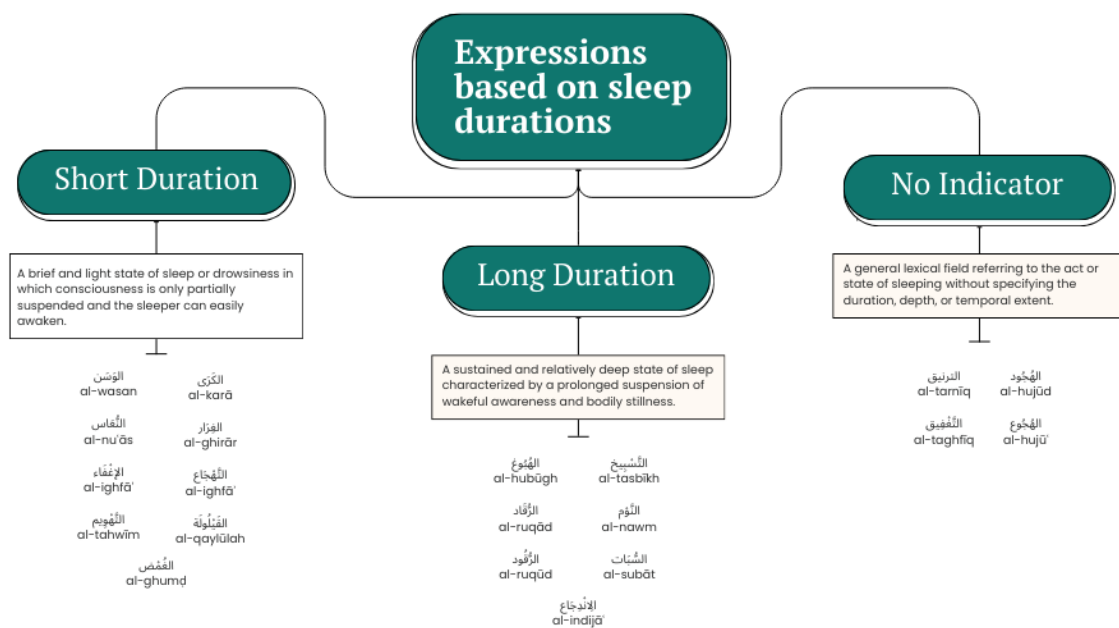


Figure 1. Expressions Based on Sleep Durations

As shown in the picture, the first category consists of nouns that denote short or brief periods of sleep, including *al-wasan*, *al-ighfā'*, *al-tahwīm*, *al-ghirār*, *al-tahjā'u*, and *al-qaylūlah*. These expressions generally describe transitional or light stages of sleep in which the sleeper has not yet entered a deep unconscious state. For instance, *al-wasan* refers to a brief dozing condition associated with *al-nu'ās*, representing a stage preceding full sleep.

Similarly, *al-’ighfā’* and *al-ghirār* describe short, light episodes of sleep that occur momentarily without necessarily implying a longer resting period. *Al-tahwīm* also indicates the early onset of sleep characterized by slight drowsiness. Meanwhile, *al-tahjā’u* and *al-qaylūlah* add contextual specification: the former refers to light sleep occurring at night, whereas the latter denotes a short daytime nap. Classical lexicographers highlight that such terms reflect transitional states between wakefulness and deeper sleep, demonstrating that Arabic distinguishes subtle stages of short-duration sleep within its lexical system (Ibn Mandzur, 1883; Al-Tha’ālibī, 2009).

The second category includes nouns that convey longer or more sustained periods of sleep, such as *al-hubūgh*, *al-ruqād*, *al-ruqūd*, *al-naum*, and *al-tasbīkh*. These lexemes share a semantic emphasis on extended duration or deeper states of rest. *Al-hubūgh* closely aligns with *al-ruqād* in denoting prolonged sleep that may extend over a significant portion of time. Although *al-ruqād* and *al-ruqūd* derive from the same root (ر-ق-د), their lexical usage suggests slight semantic differentiation, where one may be associated with daytime contexts while the other may emphasize nighttime sleep. The general term *al-naum* represents the broader state of sleep in which the sleeper becomes largely unaware of external stimuli (Ibn Mandzur, 1883). In contrast, *al-tasbīkh* denotes an especially intense or heavy state of sleep characterized by extended immobility. Morphosemantically, these lexemes illustrate how the same conceptual domain of sleep can be extended to indicate greater duration and intensity, reflecting deeper levels of physiological rest.

The third category consists of nouns that do not explicitly indicate a specific duration, including *al-nu’ās*, *al-tarnīq*, *al-taghfīq*, *al-hujūd*, *al-hujū’*, *al-subāt*, and *al-idtījā’*. These terms describe general conditions or qualities of sleep rather than its temporal length. For example, *al-nu’ās* refers to drowsiness or the state approaching sleep, while *al-taghfīq* describes a condition in which a person sleeps while still perceiving surrounding sounds. Likewise, *al-hujūd* and *al-hujū’* relate to nighttime sleep without specifying its duration, and *al-subāt* denotes a deep state resembling unconsciousness. The term *al-idtījā’* emphasizes the physical posture of lying down rather than the duration of sleep itself. In morphosemantic terms, these lexemes retain the central semantic concept of sleep while foregrounding other experiential dimensions, such as posture, condition, or degree of awareness.

The classification shows that Arabic sleep-related vocabulary forms a structured lexical network in which shared roots generate related meanings distinguished by duration, intensity, and contextual use. Through morphosemantic derivation, Arabic encodes subtle variations in the experience of sleep. Recognizing these distinctions clarifies the semantic organization of the sleep lexicon and provides a basis for further classification based on other semantic dimensions.

4.2.2 Sleep Expressions Based on Stage

Another semantic dimension through which Arabic sleep nouns can be classified is the stage of sleep, summarized in Figure 2. From a physiological perspective, sleep progresses through several stages governed by the activation of the parasympathetic nervous system, which regulates bodily relaxation and restorative processes. Modern sleep science generally identifies four stages: the stage before falling asleep, light sleep, slow-wave sleep, and deep sleep (Heidari et al., 2014). When examined morphosemantically, several Arabic nouns correspond to these stages, revealing a semantic continuum that ranges from incipient drowsiness to profound unconsciousness. Although these lexemes

share the broader semantic field of sleep, their meanings diverge through lexical nuances that reflect the intensity, depth, and physiological condition of the sleeping state.

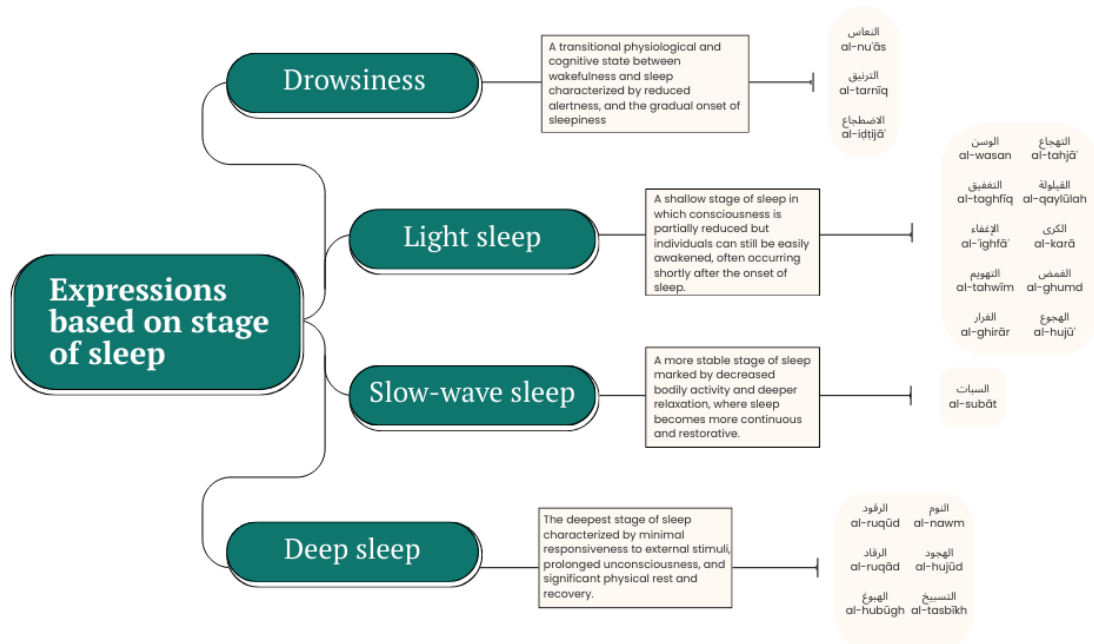


Figure 2. Expressions based on the stage of sleep

As depicted above, the stage before falling asleep represents the transitional phase between wakefulness and sleep. Physiologically, this stage is characterized by slow eye movements, decreased heart rate, reduced breathing, and mild cognitive disconnection, typically occurring within 5–10 minutes before sleep begins (Heidari et al., 2014). In Arabic, this stage is represented by lexemes such as *al-nu'ās*, *al-tarnīq*, and *al-'idhdhijā'u*. Morphosemantically, these terms share a semantic field related to incipient drowsiness and preparatory bodily states preceding sleep. *Al-nu'ās* denotes heavy drowsiness or partial sleep in which a person still retains awareness of surrounding stimuli. *Al-tarnīq* reflects the weakening of physical and sensory faculties, particularly vision and bodily alertness, indicating the gradual decline of wakefulness. Meanwhile, *al-'idhdhijā'u* refers to lying down or reclining, highlighting the physical posture that often precedes sleep onset.

The light sleep stage constitutes the longest portion of the sleep cycle, accounting for approximately 45–55% of total sleep duration. During this stage, individuals become partially disconnected from external stimuli but remain easily awakened. Physiological indicators include decreased body temperature, reduced blood pressure, and slower metabolic activity (Heidari et al., 2014). Arabic nouns associated with this stage include *al-wasan*, *al-taghfīq*, *al-'ighfā'*, *al-tahwīm*, *al-ghirār*, *al-tahjā'u*, and *al-qaylūlah*. These lexemes share the semantic field of brief or moderate sleep accompanied by partial consciousness. Terms such as *al-wasan* and *al-taghfīq* denote transitional states between wakefulness and sleep, while *al-'ighfā'*, *al-tahwīm*, and *al-ghirār* emphasize brief or light sleep episodes. Other nouns introduce contextual nuances: *al-tahjā'u* refers to light sleep occurring at night, whereas *al-qaylūlah* denotes a short midday nap. Morphosemantically, these terms illustrate how Arabic lexical derivation encodes variations of light and intermittent sleep experiences.

The slow-wave sleep stage reflects a deeper physiological condition in which the body enters a restorative phase characterized by reduced responsiveness to external stimuli. Awakening during this stage typically requires stronger stimulation, and sleepers often have limited memory of events occurring during the period (Fabbri et al., 2021). The Arabic noun *al-subāt* corresponds closely to this stage. Semantically, *al-subāt* conveys a state of temporary suspension or disconnection, reflecting the deeper relaxation associated with restorative sleep. Its etymological association with meanings such as interruption, cessation, and rest reinforces the idea of bodily withdrawal from external activity (Bahammam, 2011; Trabelsi et al., 2023; Jahrami et al., 2023).

The deep sleep stage represents the most profound level of sleep, characterized by significant reductions in physiological activity and near-complete unconsciousness. Arabic lexemes representing this stage include *al-ruqūd*, *al-ruqād*, *al-hubūghu*, *al-naum*, *al-hujūd*, and *al-tasbīkh*. These nouns share the semantic field of prolonged and intensive sleep states. The pair *al-ruqūd* and *al-ruqād*, which derive from the same root, illustrate morphosemantic variation within a shared lexical base while maintaining similar semantic meanings of extended sleep. *Al-hubūghu* and *al-naum* emphasize prolonged and heavy sleep, whereas *al-hujūd* refers particularly to nighttime sleep. *Al-tasbīkh* intensifies the semantic meaning further by describing a severe or deeply absorbed state of sleep. Together, these lexemes demonstrate how Arabic morphology and lexical derivation differentiate degrees of sleep depth and duration within a unified semantic domain.

This classification shows that Arabic sleep lexemes form a semantic continuum reflecting the gradual stages of the sleeping process. Although all terms belong to the same semantic field of sleep, their meanings differ according to the depth and condition of the state described. Through morphosemantic derivation, these lexical variations encode distinctions between drowsiness, light sleep, and deep sleep.

4.2.3 Sleep Expressions Based on Time

The semantic classification of Arabic sleep nouns also reveals distinctions based on the temporal context of sleep, as highlighted in Figure 3: whether sleep occurs during the day, during the night, or without reference to a specific time. From a morphosemantic perspective, these nouns share the same general semantic field of sleep but differ in the temporal circumstances embedded in their lexical meanings. Classical Arabic lexicographical sources indicate that some sleep lexemes explicitly encode time-related information, while others describe sleep in a more general sense without temporal restriction. Based on the meanings recorded in *Lisān al-'Arab*, the sleep lexicon can therefore be grouped into three temporal categories: daytime sleep, nighttime sleep, and sleep without temporal specification.

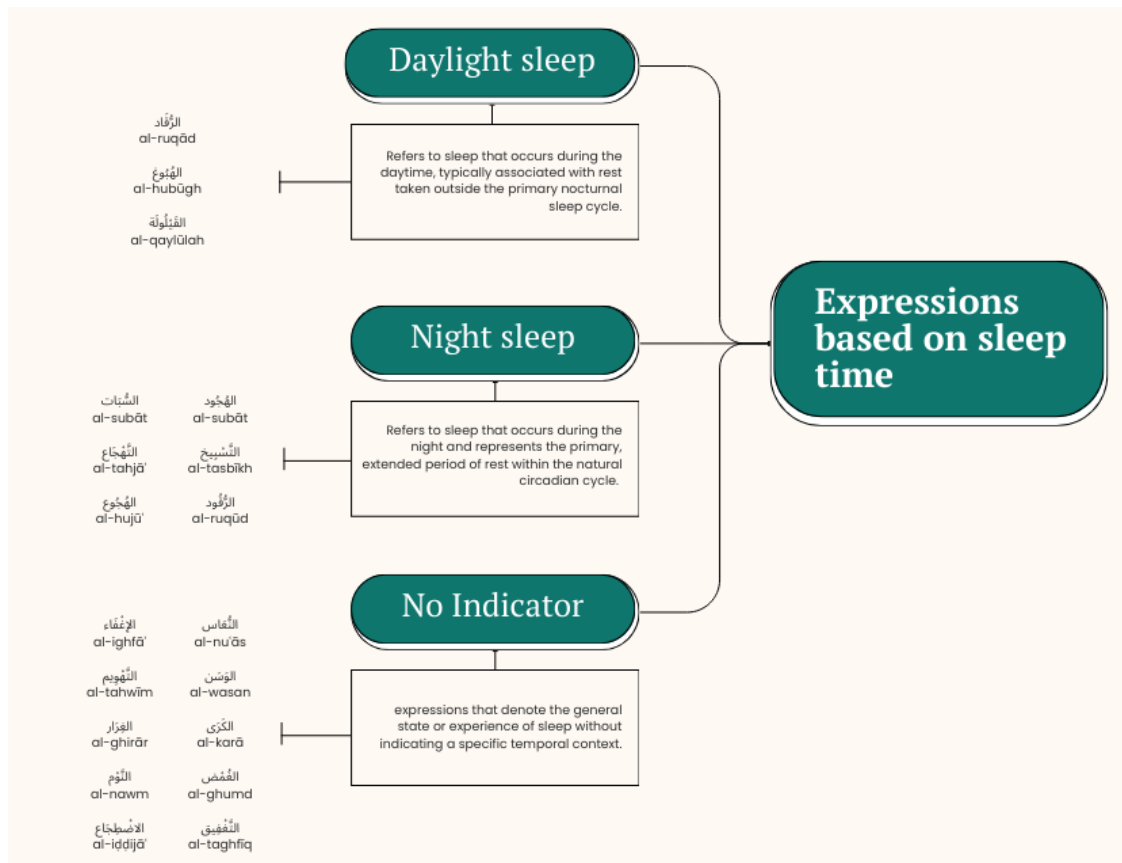


Figure 3. Expressions Based on Time of Sleep

According to the above figure, the first category includes nouns that denote sleep occurring during the day, namely *al-ruqād*, *al-hubūgh*, and *al-qaylūlah*. These terms highlight different forms of daytime rest. *Al-ruqād* refers to prolonged sleep that may occur during the day, emphasizing a relatively extended resting period. Similarly, *al-hubūgh* describes a long and deep sleep associated with daytime conditions. In contrast, *al-qaylūlah* denotes a short midday nap, traditionally taken around the middle of the day. Unlike the previous two lexemes, which imply longer periods of sleep, *al-qaylūlah* emphasizes a brief restorative rest. The presence of this term also reflects cultural practices in Arabic societies, where midday napping is commonly recognized as a distinct form of rest.

The second category consists of nouns associated with sleep during the night, including *al-tahjāʿ*, *al-ruqūd*, *al-hujūd*, *al-tasbīkh*, *al-subāt*, and *al-hujūʿ*. These lexemes illustrate how Arabic vocabulary distinguishes different moments and qualities of nighttime sleep. *Al-tahjāʿ* refers to sleep occurring at the beginning of the night, indicating the early stage of nocturnal rest. *Al-hujūd*, by contrast, refers to sleep during the later hours of the night. Other lexemes, such as *al-ruqūd* and *al-hujūʿ*, describe general nighttime sleep without specifying a precise moment within the night. Meanwhile, *al-tasbīkh* and *al-subāt* emphasize the intensity and depth of nighttime sleep, often indicating profound rest and detachment from external stimuli. These distinctions demonstrate that Arabic sleep lexemes not only describe sleep itself but also encode the temporal context in which it occurs.

The third category comprises sleep nouns that do not specify a particular time of occurrence. This group includes *al-nūʿās*, *al-wasan*, *al-tarnīq*, *al-karā*, *al-ghumdu*, *al-taghfiq*, *al-ighfāʿ*, *al-tahwīm*, *al-ghirār*, *al-naum*, and *al-idṣṭijāʿ*. These lexemes primarily describe conditions or qualities of sleep—such as drowsiness, light sleep, or the physical

posture associated with sleeping—without indicating whether the sleep occurs during the day or at night. For instance, *al-nu'ās* and *al-wasan* describe states of drowsiness preceding sleep, while *al-tagħfiq*, *al-'ighfā'*, and *al-tahwīm* refer to light or momentary sleep episodes. The general term *al-naum* represents sleep in its broadest sense and therefore remains temporally neutral. Similarly, *al-iḏṭijā'* emphasizes the act of lying down rather than the timing of sleep.

Overall, the temporal classification of Arabic sleep lexemes illustrates how the language encodes not only the duration and stages of sleep but also the time at which sleep occurs. Although these nouns share the same semantic domain, their meanings reveal subtle distinctions in temporal context, reflecting the rich lexical structure of Arabic sleep terminology. The interaction between root meaning and lexical derivation thus allows Arabic to represent sleep as a multifaceted phenomenon shaped by duration, depth, and temporal occurrence.

6. CONCLUSION

This study offers a morphosemantic examination of Arabic sleep-related vocabulary by identifying their trilateral roots and analyzing how morphological patterns correspond to specific semantic distinctions. The findings demonstrate that Arabic sleep lexemes can be systematically classified according to duration, stage, and temporal occurrence of sleep, revealing a structured semantic network within the Arabic lexicon. Terms such as *al-wasan*, *al-ghirār*, and *al-'ighfā'* denote brief or light sleep, whereas *al-naum*, *al-hubūgh*, and *al-tasbīkh* represent deeper or prolonged sleep. Other lexemes encode temporal contexts, such as *al-qaylūlah* for daytime sleep and *al-tahjā'u* or *al-hujūd* for nighttime sleep, while several expressions remain temporally neutral. These distinctions illustrate the linguistic richness of Arabic in representing subtle experiential states and demonstrate how the interaction between root meaning and morphological derivation contributes to semantic differentiation within a single conceptual domain.

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to Arabic linguistics, semantic studies, and translation scholarship. By integrating morphological analysis with semantic categorization, the study provides a systematic framework for understanding how Arabic encodes complex human experiences through lexical variation. This approach is also valuable for translation studies, as it highlights the importance of selecting contextually precise equivalents when rendering Arabic sleep terminology into other languages, particularly in scientific, religious, and literary texts. Moreover, the morphosemantic model employed in this study can be extended to other lexical domains in Arabic, allowing researchers to examine how roots and derivational patterns' structure semantic fields related to human perception, emotion, or bodily experience.

Despite these contributions, several limitations remain. Many sleep-related lexemes exhibit overlapping meanings or context-dependent interpretations, which can complicate strict semantic classification. In addition, the analysis relies primarily on classical lexicographical sources, particularly *Lisān al-'Arab*. It therefore does not incorporate empirical or interdisciplinary validation from fields such as neuroscience or sleep studies. The study also focuses on classical and standard lexical forms and does not address regional dialectal variations or modern terminology influenced by contemporary scientific discourse. Future research could expand this approach by incorporating additional lexical sources, examining dialectal variations, or comparing Arabic sleep terminology with

equivalent semantic fields in other languages. Such interdisciplinary and comparative investigations would further demonstrate how morphosemantic analysis can illuminate the relationship between language, cognition, and cultural conceptualization.

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Authors' Contribution

Alif Cahya Setiyadi conceived the research idea, designed the analytical framework, conducted the analysis, and wrote the manuscript. Anhar contributed to data collection and assisted in linguistic analysis and interpretation. Riza Nurlaila supported the data verification process, lexical documentation, and table preparation. Maram Traf contributed to manuscript review, proofreading, and overall refinement of the article. All authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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