



# ARABIC SOCIOLINGUISTICS

Topics in Diglossia, Gender, Identity, and Politics

Reem Bassiouney

Second Edition

## REVIEWS OF THE FIRST EDITION

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‘[This] book is the first of its kind in Arabic sociolinguistics. It will set the standard for the field with its rich insights, brilliant range, and copious examples that make the subject come alive. I have no doubt whatsoever that this book will quickly emerge as the primary text on any course on Arabic in the social world.’

Yasir Suleiman, Director, Centre of Middle Eastern and  
Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge

‘A useful new text book on Arabic sociolinguistics . . . It presents a good overview of the literature . . . and will teach students to look at Arabic language habits as phenomena, and not only as objects of normative discussion.’

Maartten Kossmann, Leiden, *Journal of Arabic Linguistics*

‘*Arabic Sociolinguistics* offers a new perspective on language variation and change, and makes it clear that language variation in the Arab world is undoubtedly different from that in the West. With a readable style, the book addresses the very complex diglossic situation in the Arab world with concrete examples resulting from interesting case studies that challenge the findings of recent studies on different sociolinguistic issues . . . We highly recommend this book to all readers who wish to gain a better understanding of Arabic and the Arab world.’

Radia Benzehra and Don R. McCreary, University of Georgia,  
*Journal of Sociolinguistics*

‘For those interested in the Arab situation from a sociolinguistic point of view, it seems indispensable. The enthusiasm of the author and the abundant and insightful examples make this a good book to be discovered by readers of traditional introductions into sociolinguistics, which, so this book demonstrates, have as their point of departure a western way of looking at things. For many readers, a renewed acquaintance with sociolinguistics will arise after reading it. The book thus calls for more descriptions of language variation situations that are not western.’

Dick Smakman, University of Leiden, *Historical  
Sociolinguistics and Sociohistorical Linguistics*

‘This is an excellent effort in linguistic data collection and analysis and is a remarkable addition to sociolinguistics and indeed to the phenomenology of Arabic language and its reform; no library should be without it.’

Amidu Olalekan Sanni, Lagos State University, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*

‘This volume represents a welcome addition to the body of work on sociolinguistics, and specifically on Arabic sociolinguistics. While this book is a significant contribution to the field of sociolinguistic analysis, its true strength is its value to students interested in pursuing research associated with the Arab world. It will draw their attention to certain sociohistorical, cultural, and political aspects and their intertwining with the different linguistic features in the Arab world.’

Aleya Rouchdy, Wayne State University, *Language in Society*

‘Bassiouney’s book not only introduces various theoretical approaches, but also presents empirical data in order to illustrate the usefulness and limitations of these approaches.’

Muhammad Amara, Beit Berl Academic College,  
*Language Policy*

# Arabic Sociolinguistics

Topics in Diglossia, Gender, Identity, and Politics

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Reem Bassiouney

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# Contents

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Acknowledgements	ix
List of charts, maps and tables	xi
List of abbreviations	xiii
Conventions used in this book	xv
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Diglossia and dialect groups in the Arab world</b>	<b>10</b>
1.1 Diglossia	11
1.1.1 <i>An overview of the study of diglossia</i>	11
1.1.2 <i>Theories that explain diglossia in terms of levels</i>	15
1.1.3 <i>The idea of Educated Spoken Arabic</i>	17
1.2 Dialects/varieties in the Arab world	19
1.2.1 <i>The concept of prestige as different from that of standard</i>	19
1.2.2 <i>Groups of dialects in the Arab world</i>	20
1.3 Conclusion	27
<b>2. Code-switching</b>	<b>30</b>
2.1 Introduction	31
2.2 Problem of terminology: code-switching and code-mixing	32
2.3 Code-switching and diglossia	33
2.4 The study of constraints on code-switching in relation to the Arab world	33
2.4.1 <i>Structural constraints on classic code-switching</i>	33
2.4.2 <i>Structural constraints on diglossic switching</i>	44
2.5 Motivations for code-switching	61
2.5.1 <i>Motivations and discourse functions of classic code-switching</i>	61
2.5.2 <i>Motivations and discourse functions of diglossic switching</i>	73
2.6 A holistic approach to code-switching	87

2.6.1	<i>Translanguaging and the challenge of two grammatical systems</i>	88
2.6.2	<i>Motivations for switching in light of a social construct approach to language</i>	90
2.7	Conclusion	93
<b>3.</b>	<b>Language variation and change</b>	<b>97</b>
3.1	Introduction	98
3.2	Language variation and change	100
3.2.1	<i>Social class approach</i>	100
3.2.2	<i>Social networks approach</i>	101
3.2.3	<i>Third wave approach to variation studies: community of practice</i>	103
3.3	Methodology	104
3.4	Sociolinguistic variables	106
3.4.1	<i>Ethnicity</i>	106
3.4.2	<i>Religion</i>	111
3.4.3	<i>Urbanisation</i>	117
3.4.4	<i>Social class</i>	122
3.4.5	<i>Other factors</i>	123
3.5	Levelling	125
3.6	Conclusion to sections 3.1–3.5	128
3.7	Variation and the social approaches to sociolinguistics	131
3.7.1	<i>Meaning, indexes and stance</i>	134
3.7.2	<i>Stance as the mediator between form and meaning</i>	136
3.7.3	<i>Studies that adopt a novel approach, method or data in Arabic sociolinguistics</i>	138
3.7.4	<i>Discussion and conclusion</i>	153
<b>4.</b>	<b>Arabic and gender</b>	<b>158</b>
4.1	Introduction	158
4.2	Approaches to language and gender	159
4.2.1	<i>The deficit theory and Lakoff's contribution to the study of language and gender</i>	160
4.2.2	<i>The dominance theory</i>	161
4.2.3	<i>The difference theory</i>	162
4.2.4	<i>Community of practice theory: third wave approach to variation studies</i>	163
4.3	Women in the Arab world: framing and background information	163
4.3.1	<i>Diversity in education</i>	164
4.3.2	<i>Diversity in urbanisation</i>	165

4.3.3	<i>Economic diversity</i>	165
4.3.4	<i>Diversity in traditions and religious practices</i>	166
4.3.5	<i>Honour and modesty</i>	167
4.4	Politeness in relation to gender	168
4.5	'Mister master': names, status and identity	173
4.5.1	<i>Names and why they are hidden</i>	178
4.6	When a chicken crows like a cock: women narrators	180
4.7	Language variation and change in relation to gender	185
4.7.1	<i>An overview of studies on language variation in relation to gender</i>	185
4.7.2	<i>An overview of linguistic variation in relation to gender in the Arab world</i>	188
4.8	Projection of identity in the speech of educated men and women in Egypt: evidence from talk shows	192
4.8.1	<i>Description of data</i>	193
4.8.2	<i>Categorising the data</i>	193
4.8.3	<i>Detailed description of the data</i>	198
4.8.4	<i>Conclusion</i>	215
4.9	The symbolic use of language	216
4.10	Gender universals re-examined	220
4.11	Conclusion	224
<b>5.</b>	<b>Language policy and politics</b>	<b>228</b>
5.1	The power of language	229
5.2	What is language policy?	230
5.2.1	<i>Language ideologies</i>	232
5.2.2	<i>Language practices</i>	234
5.2.3	<i>Language planning</i>	235
5.3	Nation and state	236
5.3.1	<i>The relation between nation and language</i>	237
5.3.2	<i>The Arab nation</i>	237
5.4	Countries with SA as the official language	240
5.5	French versus British patterns of colonisation and their relation to language policies	240
5.5.1	<i>French patterns of colonisation</i>	245
5.5.2	<i>British patterns of colonisation</i>	269
5.6	Language policies in other parts of the Arab world	289
5.7	The role of language academies in the Arab world	290
5.8	SA, politics and the aching nation: a case study	293
5.9	Linguistic rights and political rights	298
5.10	English and globalisation	302
5.11	Conclusion	303



<b>6. A critical approach to Arabic sociolinguistics</b>	<b>308</b>
6.1 Critical sociolinguistics	309
6.1.1 <i>Problems with sociolinguistic research</i>	310
6.2 The binary approach to sociolinguistics: a methodological challenge	310
6.2.1 <i>The inaccuracy of the binary approach to linguistic variation</i>	314
6.2.2 <i>The confusion surrounding standard in Arabic</i>	318
6.2.3 <i>The correlation of independent variables to linguistic ones</i>	321
6.3 The native speaker	323
6.4 Power, legitimacy and the social approach to language	331
6.5 The neutral linguist	337
6.6 Principles of methodological approaches in critical sociolinguistics	338
6.7 Western hegemony of the field of sociolinguistics	340
6.8 Conclusion	342
<b>General conclusion</b>	<b>345</b>
Bibliography	348
Index	374

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This book is dedicated to Mark Muehlhaeusler.

# Charts, maps and tables

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Chart 3.1	Fixed independent variables	130
Chart 3.2	Flexible independent variables	130
Chart 4.1	Binary approaches to gender studies	225
Chart 4.2	Construction approaches to gender studies	225
Chart 5.1	The education system in Egypt	277
Map 1.1	The Arab world	21
Table 0.1	Pronunciation of the letters of the Arabic alphabet in Modern Standard Arabic	xv
Table 0.2	Transliteration scheme of the Library of Congress	xvii
Table 2.1	Relation between code choice and speaker's role	86
Table 4.1	Diversity in literacy rates	165
Table 4.2	Strong palatalisation in female speakers in Cairo, by social class	191
Table 4.3	Use of /q/ by male and female Cairene speakers, by social class	191
Table 4.4	Categorisation by use of MSA variables	194
Table 4.5	Male speakers	200
Table 4.6	Female speakers	200
Table 4.7	Number of interruptions and overlaps initiated by women and men	215
Table 4.8	Languages and varieties used in Morocco and their gender associations	217
Table 5.1	Countries where Arabic is a language with official status	241
Table 5.2	Language of instruction by subject and educational cycle: Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia	266
Table 5.3	Weekly hours per language in primary and secondary education: Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia	267

Table 5.4	Weekly hours/periods per language in primary and secondary education: Lebanon and Syria	268
Table 5.5	Weekly hours/periods per language in primary and secondary education: Egypt, Sudan and Palestinian Territories	288
Table 6.1	Demonstratives for near deixis in Tripoli, Misratah and Benghazi	321
Table 6.2	Background of well-known sociolinguists	341
Table 6.3	Editors of sociolinguistics journals, by affiliation	341

# Abbreviations

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## LANGUAGES AND VARIETIES

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CA	Classical Arabic
CB	Christian Baghdadi Arabic
ECA	Egyptian Colloquial Arabic
ESA	Educated Spoken Arabic
ICA	Iraqi Colloquial Arabic
LCA	Lebanese Colloquial Arabic
MB	Muslim Baghdadi Arabic
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
SA	Standard Arabic
SCA	Saudi Colloquial Arabic
SYCA	Syrian Colloquial Arabic
TCA	Tunisian Colloquial Arabic

## OTHER ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

---

acc	accusative
adj	adjective
adv	adverb
asp	aspect
conj	conjugation
CP	projection of a complementiser
CSL	critical sociolinguistics
def	definite
dem	demonstrative
det	definite article
EL	embedded language

f	feminine
fut	future tense
H	high, highly valued
imperf	imperfect tense
ind	indicative
indef	indefinite
juss	jussive
L	low, low-valued
loc adv	locative adverb
m	masculine
ML	matrix language
n	noun
neg	negative marker
nom	nominative
NP	noun phrase
par	particle
part	participle
pass	passive
perf	perfect tense
pl	plural
poss par	possessive particle
pp	prepositional phrase
pr	pronoun
prep	preposition
pres	present tense
rel	relative pronoun
sub	subjunctive
sg	singular
v	verb
voc	vocative
1	first person
2	second person
3	third person

# Conventions used in this book

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## TRANSCRIPTION

---

This book uses the symbols shown in Table 0.1 to transcribe examples and other linguistic data. The table illustrates the pronunciation of the letters of the Arabic alphabet in Modern Standard Arabic.

*Table 0.1 Pronunciation of the letters of the Arabic alphabet in Modern Standard Arabic*

ا	ʔ / a / a:	ذ	ð	ظ	z̤	ن	m
ب	b	ر	r	ع	ʕ	ه	h
ت	t	ز	z	غ	ġ	و	w / u / u:
ث	θ	س	s	ف	f	ي	y / i / i:
ج	dʒ / g *	ش	ʃ	ق	q		
ح	ħ	ص	ʂ	ك	k	ـة	-a
خ	x	ض	ɖ	ل	l	ء	ʔ
د	d	ط	t̤	م	m		

*Note:* \*In Egypt, *g* is accepted as the MSA pronunciation of the letter ج in addition to *dʒ*.

This book uses a broad kind of transcription. However, it should be noted that mainly spoken data is used. Thus there is considerable variation within that data. For instance, the same word could be pronounced by the same speaker first with a long vowel, and then with a short one in the same stretch of discourse. It is important for sociolinguists to capture the performance of speakers rather than the idealised way in which words and phonemes are ‘supposed’ to be pronounced. Thus, the aim of transcribing the data is not to idealise but to render actual pronunciation.

Within the examples, a forward slash denotes a short pause, while two slashes denote a long pause.



## GLOSSES

For the benefit of students and researchers who are not necessarily specialised in Arabic, or in all dialects of Arabic, most examples are glossed, except those in which the structure is not highlighted.

In the glosses, whenever verb forms are fully analysed, the gloss follows the translation for verbs in the perfect (which has a suffix conjugation in Arabic) and precedes the translation for verbs in the imperfect (which has a prefix conjugation), while the mood marking of the verb – if present – is glossed in its natural location at the end of the verb unit.

However, the glossing of an example relates to the context of that example and is not always detailed. If the example is intended to demonstrate how individuals switch between two varieties or two languages, and if this demonstration concentrates on specific morpho-syntactic variables (such as demonstratives, negation, tense, aspect, mood marking and case marking) then the glossing is detailed, as in the example below from Chapter 2:

- (76) *ka:na l-gahdu mustanfaran fi muwa:gahati muskila:ti*  
 To be-3msg- det-effort- exerted-acc in facing-gen problems-  
 perf nom gen  
*l-ams*  
 det-yesterday  
 'All efforts were exerted to face the problems of the past.'

If, on the other hand, the example is used to demonstrate an argument which is more related to content, then the glossing is more basic, as in the following example from Chapter 4:

- (31) *ya rabb/ daṣwa min ḡalb ṣumru ma faqad il- ḡamal wala il-ḡima:n bi:k'*  
 Voc God/ prayer from heart never neg lost the hope nor the-faith  
 in-you  
 'Oh God. This is a prayer from a heart that never lost hope or belief in you'.

Thus, the glossing is not consistent but changes according to the way the data is analysed. All abbreviations and symbols used are listed above.

Finally, note this last example, from Chapter 4:

- (58) لقد دخلت هذه الدار وهي مجرد جدران.. كانوا لا يوافقون على زواج أبيكم مني.. و كنت  
 وحيدة أبوى.. و لم أكن فلاحه.. فزرعتهما أشجاراً و خضروات.. و قال جدكم لأبيكم كيف تنزوج بنت  
 أرملة لا عائلة لها؟  
*laqad daxaltu ha:ða ad-da:r wa hiya mugarrad gudra:n/*  
 Already enter-1sg-perf this the-house and she only walls

*ka:nu: la: yuwa:fiq:n ʕala zawa:g ʔabi:kum minni:/*  
 be-3mpl- neg 3mpl-agree on marriage father- from-me  
 perf yours  
*wa kuntu waḥi:dat ʔabawayyi/*  
 and be-1sg-perf lonely parents-mine  
*wa lam ʔakun falla:ḥa/ fazaraʕtuhuma: ʔafga:ran wa xuḍrawa:t*  
 and neg 1sg-be peasant/ plant-1sg-they trees-acc and vegetables  
*wa qa:la gaddukum li-ʔabi:kum/ kayfa*  
 and say-3msg-perf grandfather- to-father-  
 your-pl your-pl how  
*tatazawwag bint ʔarmala la: ʕa:ʔila laha:/*  
 2msg-marry girl widow neg family to-her  
 ‘I had come to your grandfather’s house when it was just walls. They did not approve my marriage to your father. I was an only child and I was no peasant then. Since then, I have planted trees and vegetables. Your grandfather then asked your father how he can marry a mere widow with no family.’

This example is in fact, from a novel written in Egypt about Egyptians. I have transcribed it as an Egyptian would read it, with the *g* rather than the *ǧ*.

PERSONAL NAMES, TITLES AND TOPONYMS

This book employs the transliteration scheme of the Library of Congress to transcribe names and titles. This facilitates the search for these materials in Library catalogues, where the same conventions are used (Table 0.2).

Table 0.2 Transliteration scheme of the Library of Congress

ا	ā	ذ	dh	ظ	z	ن	m
ب	b	ر	r	ع	ʿ	ه	h
ت	t	ز	z	غ	gh	و	w / ū
ث	th	س	s	ف	f	ي	y / ī
ج	j	ش	sh	ق	q		
ح	ḥ	ص	ṣ	ك	k	ة	-ah
خ	kh	ض	ḍ	ل	l	ء	ʾ
د	d	ط	ṭ	م	m	ى	-ā

Place-names, or proper names of prominent persons for whom there is a common equivalent in English, are excepted from this rule; hence, I refer to Jamāl ‘Abd al-Nāṣir as ‘Nasser’, and to al-Quds as ‘Jerusalem’. Lesser histori-

cal figures, however, are given in full transliteration, in order to preserve the original form of the name, e.g. Salāmah Mūsá.

#### CITING AT ONE REMOVE

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I don't give bibliographic details of sources I mention as cited in another work, e.g. for Silverstein (1998) cited in Woolard (2004), I give source details for Woolard but not for Silverstein.

# Introduction

---

The earth speaks Arabic.

Egyptian saying

This Egyptian saying has always intrigued me. Of course it shows the amount of pride Egyptians and perhaps all Arabs take in their language. But what I find fascinating is the word 'Arabic'. What does 'Arabic' here refer to? Is it the Standard Arabic used in newspapers? The Classical Arabic of the Qur'an? The colloquial Arabic of Egypt?<sup>1</sup> Or is it the Gulf Arabic of Saudi Arabia? For the layperson, there is only one language called 'Arabic'. For the linguist, there are at least three different varieties of Arabic in each Arab country, and some linguists even claim that there are at least five different levels of Arabic in each country, not counting the different dialects of each country.

This is the first problem that one encounters in analysing this saying. The other problem that one encounters is why, if 'Arabic' is the inherent language of the earth, are Arabs so keen on teaching their children foreign languages? Why is it that in North Africa French is still a crucial instrumental language? And why is it that at the time that all Arabs are defending their language as the main source of pride and identity they are also mastering English and French? The answers to all these questions are not clear cut. Language's symbolic nature has always been important in any community and nation. Before proceeding to outline what this book discusses, I would like to refer to specific incidents that the reader may find interesting and that in general terms show the importance of Arabic sociolinguistics and the relationship between language and society.

Years ago, when I was still working in the UK, I was asked by an organisation to become a simultaneous translator in a forum that discusses security issues in Iraq. The forum had Iraqis from different sects and factions. There were Shiites, Sunnis, Kurds and Christians, as well as British politicians. I

started translating from Arabic to English. The Iraqis would usually express themselves in Arabic, whether Standard, Iraqi or both, and I would simultaneously translate what had been said into English. While I was interpreting, a politician started speaking in a language that I did not recognise. I was at a loss, thinking that perhaps she was speaking a dialect of Iraqi that I was not familiar with. I stopped translating and waited until she finished. Once she had finished, a colleague of hers started translating what she had said into Iraqi Arabic. After he did that, I then translated his Iraqi Arabic into English. It took me minutes to realise that she was a Kurdish politician and her colleague, also Kurdish, translated for her. During the break, which I was very glad to have, the Kurdish politician approached me in a friendly manner and addressed me in Iraqi Arabic. For an outsider it may seem impractical and a waste of time that she should speak Kurdish first to an audience that was mostly not Kurd, and that her colleague should then have to translate and then I have to translate. For a sociolinguist, this is perhaps expected. I asked her why she had not spoken 'Arabic' since she was so fluent. She replied confidently that she was Kurdish and by speaking Kurdish, she was making a political statement.

Her statement was indeed appealing, and it alludes to the power and symbolic significance of language choice. The relations between language and politics, and language and identity, are worth investigating. This is exactly what I do in Chapters 2 and 5 of this book.

Later, still while I was working in the UK, I came across a young Moroccan woman working in the foreign office. She was a second-generation Moroccan, and I was happy to discover that her parents were keen on teaching her 'Arabic' and that she spoke 'Arabic' fluently. And indeed she did – except that she spoke Moroccan Arabic. We met for lunch, and she started complaining to me in Moroccan Arabic about her Moroccan husband, who did not understand her. Apart from knowing the general topic of discussion, I did not understand much of what she said, nor did she understand my Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA), nor even my attempts to speak Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). After five minutes, we essentially reached a deadlock. It was clear that we both had to switch to English to understand each other. It was also clear that the Moroccan woman was exposed to neither ECA nor MSA. She was fluent only in Moroccan Arabic. Had either of us been exposed to the other's dialect and not specifically MSA via the media, TV and satellite channels, our communication would have been much easier. The dialects are sometimes mutually unintelligible, and while educated speakers have developed sets of strategies for communicating across dialect boundaries that include using resources from MSA, someone who knows only a single dialect of spoken Arabic will probably not understand an educated speaker of another dialect or be able to make himself or herself understood, especially if one of the speakers comes from North Africa and the other does not. Speakers of ECA have an advantage, but only if their interlocutor has watched a lot of television

in a country that broadcasts programmes from Egypt. Thus, after this incident I could understand the fear that Arabs have of losing their grip on MSA and thus losing their concept of the nation. This will be discussed in detail in Chapters 1 and 5, although this story has many implications that merit more investigation, especially the role of vernaculars in inter-dialectal communication and not just that of MSA.

A third event that left its impact on me occurred when I was invited to give a lecture at Cairo University about language choice and code-switching. Egypt, like any other country in the world, has more than one dialect spoken within it, the most prestigious one being the Cairene dialect for Egyptians. After I finished the lecture, a student came up to me to congratulate me on giving a very good lecture. He was speaking to me in perfect Cairene Arabic. We started a conversation, and he then told me that he came from upper Egypt (*al-šaʿi:d*), which has one or more distinct dialects characteristically different from Cairene Arabic phonologically, semantically and even morpho-syntactically. I then asked him how he spoke Cairene Arabic so fluently. He seemed a bit embarrassed and said, 'I speak Cairene Arabic to you. I can never speak it to my mother. If I speak Cairene Arabic to my mother, she will call me a sissy and possibly kill me!' Knowing how powerful upper-Egyptian women are reputed to be, I feared he might be right! Note that speakers of non-standard language varieties are expected or even compelled to master prestige varieties. In Egypt, for a person from upper Egypt, this would be Cairene. However, the survival of an upper-Egyptian dialect amidst all the pressure from a highly centralised Egypt for all Egyptians to speak Cairene Arabic is indeed worth investigating. The survival of a dialect which may be less prestigious but which carries its own 'covert prestige' (cf. Trudgill 1974) will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3 of this book, although the term 'covert' is now considered problematic.

I recall that throughout my childhood in Egypt, I was fascinated and confused by the way women were addressed. We were living on the second floor of an eight-storey building. A neighbour on the first floor, a middle-aged woman with a husband and four children, was always addressed by the caretaker as *'ħagga laila'*, 'Laila who had made the pilgrimage', thus her first name was always used with the title *'ħagga'*. Our third-floor neighbour, on the other hand, was always referred to as *'ħummi sa:miħ'*, 'mother of sa:miħ', and never by her first name. The reason why one neighbour maintained her first name although she still had sons and another had lost hers is still beyond me. But it also shows that the linguistic situation of the Arab world, especially that pertaining to women, is very complicated, as will be made clear in Chapter 4.

ARABIC SOCIOLINGUISTICS

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My book is called *Arabic Sociolinguistics*. In this section I will explain what sociolinguistics is and why Arabic is important. I will start with the latter.

Arabic is the sole or joint official or national language of twenty-three countries, ranging from Morocco in the north to Sudan in the south and from Mauritania to Yemen. Native speakers of Arabic total around 300 million. Arabic has always been important to western linguists. However, Arabic variationist sociolinguistics flourished after Ferguson's 1959 article on diglossia. In this article, he drew the distinction between the standard language and the different vernaculars of each Arab country. In subsequent years, Arabic variationist sociolinguistics research has tended to concentrate on relating variation in language use to demographic factors like education, age and gender and more recently on issues related to language and identity and its ethnic and nationalistic manifestations (cf. Suleiman 2003: 1).<sup>2</sup>

The earliest occurrence of the ethnonym/toponym 'Arab' dates back to 853 BCE, when an inscription of the Neo-Assyrian king Shalmaneser III referred to a certain 'Gindibu the Arab' (<sup>m</sup>Gi-in-di-bu <sup>kur</sup>Ar-ba-a-a; 'kur' is a geographic determiner). According to Al-Jallad (2018: 315), archaeological evidence suggests a 'continuous tradition of writing Arabic in the region throughout the first millennium BCE', but he also notes that there is no abundant evidence for Arabic as a language until the appearance of inscriptions in Nabatean, Himaic and Safaitic inscriptions at the end of that period.

In the next paragraphs I will define the term sociolinguistics and the main themes that sociolinguists are concerned with as well as the tasks of sociolinguists. I will briefly touch on the problems of terminology in the field. After that I will highlight the contents of this book as well as the limitations of this work. The last section is devoted to the organisation of the book.

There are two kinds of linguistic analysts: those concerned with universals and what languages have in common, and those who look for differences between individuals in relation to a community of speakers. The formers are theoretical linguists and the latter sociolinguists (Shuy 2003). According to Gumperz and Hymes (1972) theoretical linguists analyse linguistic competence while sociolinguists analyse communicative competence. Communicative competence is defined by Gumperz as the ability of the individual to 'select from the totality of grammatically correct expressions available to him, forms which appropriately reflect the social norms governing behaviour in specific encounters' (1972: 205).

Sociolinguistics, according to Crystal (1987: 412), is 'the study of the interaction between language and the structures and functioning of society'. The field of sociolinguistics has developed vastly within the last fifty years. (cf. Paulston and Tucker 2003). Now the field 'examines in depth more minute aspects of language in social context' (Shuy 2003: 5).

According to Hymes (2003: 30), ‘diversity of speech has been singled out as the hallmark of sociolinguistics’. Sociolinguistics entails relations other than social and grammatical structures that can be studied qualitatively. Sociolinguists all agree that no normal person and no normal community is limited to a single way of speaking, nor to unchanging monotony that would preclude indication of respect, insolence, mock seriousness, humour, role distance etc.

In studying language in society and the ways in which linguistic resources and access to them are unequally distributed, sociolinguists give evidence of how patterns of linguistic variation reflect and contrast social differences. In studying responses that language users have to instances of language use, they demonstrate the reality and power of affective, cognitive and behavioural language attitudes. In analysing how language users create links between language varieties and users, institutions or contexts, they uncover language ideologies that create social realities. These are only some of the things that sociolinguists are concerned with. The list is indeed very long.

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#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS AS A FIELD OF STUDY

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Sociolinguistics, as mentioned previously, is in fact a recent field of study. This may be because, as the variationist linguist Labov puts it, it is a field that depended to a large extent on the development of technology. According to Labov nothing could be achieved until the field developed a clearer way of presenting phonological structure, which required the development of tape recorders, spectrograms and sampling procedures, as well as computers to process large quantities of data (in Shuy 2003: 5). However, such a claim is only true for variationist sociolinguists, not the many who have studied language policy, code-switching and language ideology. The interest in the differences in ways people speak is very old, and Arabic linguistics as a field may be traced back to Khalīl ibn Aḥmad (d. between 776 and 791), if not before (cf. Bohas et al. 2006). Khalīl ibn Aḥmad was an Arab philologist who compiled the first Arabic dictionary and is credited with the formulation of the rules of Arabic prosody.

In fact, at the beginning of the twentieth century, there was a great interest in dialectology (see Chapter 5). Linguists of the colonising powers started becoming interested in the dialects and the linguistic situations of the colonised countries. Because of the existence of colonies for countries like France, the UK, the Netherlands and Portugal, linguists started describing multilingual situations, language contact and creolisation (cf. Whiteley 1969; Houis 1971). However, the term ‘sociolinguistics’ was not listed in the *Webster New International Dictionary* until 1961 (Shuy 2003).



Issues of terminology are not entirely resolved even now (cf. Shuy 2003). How do we define a community? What is a social class? What is the difference between code-switching and borrowing? There are even questions relating purely to Arabic that remain unresolved. What is educated spoken Arabic? Is there a pure standard Arabic? These are not easy questions to answer.

To give an example of such problems of defining terms, Labov objected to the term 'sociolinguistics' as early as 1965. Until 1965 no term to define the field had been agreed upon; should it be called linguistics, since this is indeed a way of examining language? Or should it be called language and culture, sociology of language, or language and behaviour?<sup>3</sup>

In spite of the imprecision of sociolinguistic terms in general, as a field of study it has yielded insights into the way people use language that are unprecedented in their significance, as will become clear in this book. It is sociolinguistics that has helped us understand each other more as well as acknowledge differences and similarities between us and others – whoever this 'us' is and 'others' are.

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## AIMS OF THE BOOK

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This book provides an up-to-date account of Arabic sociolinguistics. It discusses major trends in research on diglossia, code-switching, gendered discourse, language variation and change, and language policies in relation to Arabic. In doing so, it introduces and evaluates the various theoretical approaches, and illustrates the usefulness and limitations of these approaches with empirical data. The book aims to show how sociolinguistic theories can be applied to Arabic, and, conversely, what the study of Arabic can contribute to our understanding of the function of language in society.

This book addresses both students and researchers of Arabic and linguistics. It will not require any knowledge of Arabic, nor will it focus narrowly on a single Arabic dialect, or a single group of Arabic dialects; instead, it summarises the present state of research on Arabic in its various forms. Nor does it require knowledge of sociolinguistics or linguistics, though knowledge of both is of course an asset in reading this work.

There are still crucial topics that cannot be covered in this book but that definitely need to be addressed. Thus, pidginisation and creolisation, though mentioned in passing in this book, deserve a book by themselves, although studies in the topic are still developing (cf. Versteegh 2001). Further, with the large number of Arab immigrants in different parts of the Arab world, one has to acknowledge the unique and interesting status of Arabic in the diaspora (cf. Rouchdy 1992). Finally, Arabic as a minority language in different parts of the world is again a topic of interest and has been discussed by Versteegh (2001) and Bassiouney and Walters (2020).

One problem that I encountered in writing this book is how to divide it into chapters. This has sometimes been done forcibly, since language variation and change are related to gender, and gender is related to politics, while politics is related to diglossia, and diglossia is related to code-switching, and there has to be division somewhere. The different chapters are explained in the section below.

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## ORGANISATION OF THE BOOK

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The framing of the book is crucial though not symbolic in itself. Each chapter starts with a discussion of classic work conducted on the west and then moves on to the Arab world. This is not because I believe that work conducted on the Arab world is subordinate to that conducted on the west but rather for other reasons. First, a great number of works published in the western world about the Arab world adopt the classic theories that I discuss, even though these theories were applied first in the west. This is not wrong in any way as long as theories are modified and adjusted to explain the situation in the Arab world. Second, the aim of the book is to help scholars and students begin thinking about how and why matters of language in the Arab world are not always the same as such matters in the west. This cannot be done unless I shed light on the essential theories of western linguists. Lastly, as a matter of practicality, since the book does not assume prior knowledge of linguistics or Arabic, as mentioned earlier, it is necessary to familiarise the reader with the groundbreaking research in the west before discussing the Arab world.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter presents a bird's-eye view of the linguistic status quo of the Arab world. This is achieved by introducing the reader first to the diglossic situation in the Arab world and its implications, then to the different approaches to the grouping of dialects in the Arab world.

The second chapter examines diglossic switching and code-switching as a single phenomenon. In this chapter I give an overview of theories of code-switching that concentrate on assigning structural constraints on switching, thus answering the question of how switching occurs, and theories that examine the motivations for switching – why people switch. The chapter refers to studies carried out by a number of linguists as well as two studies that I conducted myself. The problems and challenges that face the theories of code-switching referred to in the chapter are discussed in a new section that adopts a more holistic, critical approach to code-switching.

In Chapter 3, I highlight three crucial theories in examining variation: the social class theory, the social networks theory and the third-wave approach to variation studies. I first shed light on the methodology of quantitative variation research and its associated problems. I then concentrate on specific

variables that trigger language variation and change, and then go on to discuss diglossia and levelling. An additional section has been added for this new edition in which the social construct approach to variation is examined in light of new data from Arabic.

In Chapter 4, I concentrate on gender, starting with different theories that examine the relation between gender and language as well as gender universals and postulates about gender in general and gender in the Arab world in particular. I also examine the speech of educated women in Egypt in this chapter and how they at times challenge the gender universals.

Chapter 5 deals with the relation between language policies and politics in the Arab world. I examine some case studies and the political/historical factors that influence language policy, as well as the relation between language policies and language ideologies. The status of Arabic and foreign languages in the education system of countries in the Arab world is highlighted. Linguistic rights are also discussed.

The final chapter of this book is a new one for this edition, and it tackles an important approach in sociolinguistics in relation to Arabic: the critical approach to sociolinguistics. In this chapter a number of constructs that were long taken for granted by linguists and researchers are criticised in light of empirical data, including the binary approach to variation, the native speaker as a point of reference and the assumption that the linguist is usually neutral. The western hegemony of the field of sociolinguistics is now at the forefront of research discussion in the field, and linguists dealing with Arabic should be aware of this too. New methods and approaches of studying language and society need to be considered and implemented.

In the first edition of this work, I provided empirical data from my own research, in addition to data from other studies, to help explain the phenomena discussed. All chapters had at least one section on data analysis. I have done the same for this edition, by keeping all relevant examples and adding new ones.

Since the first edition of this work, the Arab world has changed on many levels, and interesting new and more critical approaches to research in language and society have also developed. Changes in the Arab world have leaked into other places, and it has become increasingly clear that no place is an island and also that a coherent, clear, monolingual identity is an abstract construct that is difficult to find in our world today. Since 2010, a year after the first edition of this work was published, there have been upheavals and revolutions in many places in the Arab world, some more peaceful than others, with regimes toppled and refugees created, and civil wars that are still lingering. There have been tragic events and inspiring ones, and such political events have created new social realities not just in the Arab world, but in fact all over the world. Language contact has become inevitable, issues of identity have come to the fore, new forms of media have become devices of resistance and

identification. The world as a whole has been unable to stop the resulting wave of diversity and superdiversity. Sociolinguists have not even begun to measure and study the linguistic impact. As will be made clear in this book, politics has been intertwined with language. A new edition is necessary because all these upheavals may, directly or indirectly, have led linguists to reconsider their methods and tools and to reflect on themselves in the process.

## NOTES

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1. This phrase is spoken in colloquial Egyptian Arabic. However, it is not clear that by 'Arabic', Egyptians mean colloquial Egyptian.
2. It is worth mentioning that there is still a large amount of work to be done on issues of language policy and planning, descriptions of linguistic situations in various countries, Arabisation, debates about the proper role of second or foreign languages, and corpus planning, especially technical vocabulary. These issues will be discussed in Chapter 5.
3. It is noteworthy, however, that Labov's objections to the term at the time were of a different nature. He did not want a hyphenated label for what he did; in other words, he did not want to be marginalised by a label in just the same way that sociolinguists have been for some time, especially in the USA.

# Diglossia and dialect groups in the Arab world

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Mustafa is still Mustafa. He did not change. He still has two tongues in his mouth, two hearts in his chest. A tongue that speaks for him and a tongue that speaks against him. A heart that speaks for him and a heart that speaks against him. When he speaks sincerely his words are in colloquial. A colloquial that was the only variety he knew and used in narration before. But once he starts speaking what they dictate to him, then he speaks in the language of books, and his words become comic!

Muhra, Mustafa's ex-wife, in *Qismat al-ghuramā'* ('The debtor's share')  
by Yūsuf al- Qa'īd (2004)

This extract from the novel *Qismat al-ghuramā'* ('The debtor's share') reflects the tension and ambivalent feelings Egyptians have towards both modern standard Arabic (MSA) and Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA). Perhaps it also reflects the tension that exists in all Arab countries, where people speak one language variety at home and learn a different one in school, write in one language and express their feelings in another, memorise poetry in one language and sing songs in another. Whether doing this is practical or not is a moot point. However, as a linguist, one knows that most linguists would agree that whenever one has more than one language or variety at one's disposal, it is indeed a good thing. Muhra, Mustafa's ex-wife, summarises the dilemma of the Arab world neatly when she says that Mustafa still has 'two tongues in his mouth, two hearts in his chest'. What this means exactly is that Mustafa, like all Egyptians, and all Arabs, lives in a diglossic community. Diglossia is what I would like to discuss in the first part of this chapter.

This chapter is divided into two parts: the first part deals with issues relating to the vertical (diglossia) and the second deals with issues relating to the horizontal (national varieties/groups of dialects). However, note that the focus in this chapter is the linguistic facts. I do not examine, in this chapter,

the complex ways language attitude and exposure to other varieties might influence inter-dialectal comprehensibility or inter-dialectal conversation.<sup>1</sup> In section 1.1 I discuss the concept of diglossia as analysed by Charles Ferguson and others and the developments that have occurred in the evolution of this concept up to the present day. I will also differentiate between MSA and Classical Arabic (CA) (sections 1.1.1–1.1.3). In section 1.2, I discuss the growing realisation by a number of linguists that the ‘standard’ variety is not necessarily the same as the ‘prestige’ variety in Arab speech communities. Finally I give concrete examples of different dialects in the Arab world and compare and contrast them in real contexts (sections 1.2.1–1.2.2).

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## 1.1 DIGLOSSIA

### 1.1.1 An overview of the study of diglossia

The twenty-three countries in which Arabic is an official language have been described as diglossic speech communities, i.e. communities in which two varieties of a single language exist side by side. The official language is usually MSA<sup>2</sup> but there is usually at least one prestigious vernacular that is spoken in each country.

#### *1.1.1.1 Ferguson’s contribution to the study of diglossia*

The following is Ferguson’s definition of diglossia:

Diglossia is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation. (Ferguson 1959: 345)

According to Ferguson, diglossia is a different situation from one where there are merely different dialects within a speech community. In diglossic communities there is a highly valued H (high) variety which is learned in schools and is not used for ordinary conversations. That is to say, no one speaks the H variety natively. The L (low) variety is the one used in conversations.<sup>3</sup> Most importantly, Ferguson claims that the crucial test for diglossia is that the language varieties in question must be functionally allocated within the

community concerned (Fasold 1995: 35). Ferguson stresses that both H and L have to be in ‘complimentary distribution functionally’ (Boussofara–Omar 2006a: 630). According to him, diglossia is a relatively stable phenomenon. Ferguson implies that if a society is changing and diglossia is beginning to fade away this will have specific signs: mixing between the forms of H and L, and thus an overlap between the functions of H and L (Ferguson 1959: 356).<sup>4</sup>

Ferguson proceeds by exemplifying situations in which only H is appropriate and others in which only L is appropriate (1972: 236). He states that the following are situations in which H is appropriate:

1. Sermon in church or mosque
2. Speech in parliament, political speech
3. Personal letters
4. University lecture
5. News broadcast
6. Newspaper editorial, news story, caption on picture
7. Poetry

He also gives situations in which L is the ‘only’ variety used:

1. Instructions to servants, waiters, workers and clerks
2. Conversation with family, friends and colleagues
3. Radio soap opera
4. Caption on political cartoon
5. Folk literature

Ferguson’s definition has been criticised and discussed extensively even by Ferguson himself (Ferguson 1996 [1991]), although it is only fair to note that he was describing a general linguistic situation. He did not set out to describe Arabic diglossia as language standardisation but was describing diglossia cross-linguistically as it relates to issues of standardisation. He, as he acknowledged, was giving an idealised picture of the situation. Questions that arose from his definition of diglossia are summarised below.

How far apart or how close together should the H and L be for a language situation to be called ‘diglossia’? This question was posed by Fasold (1995: 50ff.), who claimed that there are no absolute measures that could specify the distance between H and L in a diglossic community. Britto (1986: 10–12, 321) considered the same question and argued that H and L must be ‘optimally’ distant, as in Arabic, but not ‘super-optimally’, as with Spanish and Guaraní, or ‘sub-optimally’ as with formal–informal styles in English.<sup>5</sup>

Is there only one H? Ferguson spoke only about a distinction between H and L, without distinguishing the two different kinds of H such as exist in the Arab world, where there is a distinction between CA and MSA, although one

has to note that this distinction is a western invention and does not correspond to any Arabic term, as will be clear in this chapter. However, CA is the religious language of the Qur'an and is rarely used except when reciting the Qur'an or quoting older classical texts, while MSA could be used in a public speech, for example. Ryding, in her book *A Reference Grammar of Arabic* (2005: 7), mentions that both MSA and CA are referred to as '*al-luġa al-fuṣḥa*:' (lit. 'the language of the eloquent'), 'the standard language'. This, in a sense, creates a shared past and present. She argues that there are few structural inconsistencies between MSA and CA. The main differences between them are stylistic and lexical rather than grammatical. However, she posits that the journalistic-style of MSA has more flexible word order, coinage of neologisms and loan translations from western languages. For example, journalistic-style MSA uses the *ida:fa* construction (genitive 'of construction') to create neologisms for compound words or complex concepts. Bateson (1967: 84) posits that there are three kinds of difference between MSA and CA. MSA is characterised by having a simpler syntactic structure, by being different in lexicon because of modern technology, and being stylistically different due to translations from other languages and the influence of bilingualism. However, these differences were not taken into account by Ferguson.

What happens in countries where more than one language is in everyday use, such as in Tunisia where some people are also fluent in French? In such countries the term 'diglossia' is too narrow for the type of situation which exists.

How much switching can there be between H and L? Ferguson considered only to a very limited extent the fact that there can be switching between both varieties (H and L) in the same stretch of discourse. Again this is because he did not set out to reflect the realistic situation in Arab countries but rather to give an idealised picture of diglossia. A number of more recent studies have examined switching between H and L in Arabic, some of which will be mentioned in Chapter 2.

Furthermore, Ferguson did not really discuss the sociolinguistic significance of the competing varieties. He did not propose that social factors may have a part to play in the negotiation of choice of variety in a diglossic community in specific sets of circumstances. This may be because, as he said himself, social factors of this kind were not in fashion at the time the paper was written. They were not considered 'true science' (1996 [1991]: 60). Instead, he placed considerable emphasis on the 'external situation' in determining language choice. He claimed that in certain set situations H is appropriate, while in others L is appropriate, without taking account of the possible significance of the individual in negotiating (or deliberately subverting) 'socially agreed' patterns of language choice (and ultimately changing them). Having reviewed these recent reformulations and revisions to his general theory, let us now briefly review the contributions Ferguson made to the study of Arabic diglossia.



Ferguson drew the attention of linguists to the existence of two language varieties in the Arab world, and the fact that people have different attitudes towards these two varieties, although the term '*diglossie*' had been used earlier by the French dialectologist William Marçais with specific reference to Arabic (Fasold 1995: 34). The following is an anecdote recounted by Ferguson (1990: 44). Ferguson says that he was once discussing with some Arab scholars a way of teaching foreigners Arabic – whether it is more useful to teach them MSA or one of the vernaculars used in the Arab world, such as ECA. One distinguished scholar immediately said that there was no need to teach them any kind of Arabic except MSA, and went on to claim that he himself only used 'the correct kind of Arabic' (meaning MSA). The phone rang, and the scholar went to answer it. Ferguson said that he heard the man saying '*flonki*'<sup>6</sup> ('How are you (f sg)?)' in Baghdadi and many eastern Arabic dialects). When the scholar returned, Ferguson could not help commenting, 'You said you never use any kind of dialect Arabic.' 'No, I never do,' said the man. 'You know, there was a phone call a couple of minutes ago and I heard you say the word *flonki*.' He nodded. 'Is that not a kind of dialect?' Ferguson asked. The scholar's reply was, 'Oh, I was just speaking to my wife.'

This story neatly highlights the discrepancy between people's perceptions of their language use and their actual language use. Note also that the scholar thought it acceptable to use dialect with his wife (a person who is close and familiar) and that this fact did not invalidate his statement that he 'never used dialect'. This example shows one role played by the vernacular in the Arab world, which is that of signalling a relationship of intimacy. Gumperz (1976) discusses the role of code-switching as a means of creating solidarity (see Chapter 2).<sup>7</sup>

Despite all the subsequent criticism of Ferguson's theory, his proposal that there are two poles, an H and an L, is still valid, although they both formally and functionally overlap, perhaps more than Ferguson suspected or was ready to admit.<sup>8</sup> Mejdell (1999: 226) posits that the H–L division still has validity. After Ferguson's article, linguists tried to refine Ferguson's concept by proposing intermediate levels, but still these intermediate levels cannot be understood unless one presupposes the existence of two 'poles', H and L. It may be that 'pure H' or 'pure L' does not occur very often, and that there are usually elements of both varieties in any stretch of normal speech, but still one has to consider a hypothetical pure H or L in order to presuppose that there are elements that occur from one or the other in a stretch of discourse. Ferguson himself did, in fact, recognise the existence of intermediate levels, but insisted that they cannot be described except within the framework of H and L:

I recognised the existence of intermediate forms and mentioned them briefly in the article, but I felt then and still feel that in the diglossia

case the analyst finds two poles in terms of which the intermediate varieties can be described, there is no third pole (1996 [1991]: 59).

Ferguson certainly spurred linguists to examine diglossia, but he did not provide any definite answers to a great number of questions. As Walters (2003: 103) puts it,

Our understanding of these phenomena [i.e. sociolinguistic phenomena] would be far less nuanced than it is today had Fergie not taught us to look at Arabic as he did, looking past the norm and deviation paradigm that too often still characterises discussions of Arabic and all diglossic languages. In so doing, he encouraged us to examine with care specific varieties and specific sets of linguistic practices as ways of better understanding the sociolinguistic processes found across speech communities that at first glance might appear quite disparate.

Note also that Fishman (1967) in line with Ferguson identified specific domains to define diglossia. For example, speech events can fall under different domains, like a baseball conversation and an electrical engineering lecture. The major domains he identifies are family, friendship, religion, education and employment (see also Myers-Scotton 2006). He also claims that these speech events are speech-community specific.

Let us now examine models of diglossia which sought to refine and improve on Ferguson's ideas.

### 1.1.2 Theories that explain diglossia in terms of levels

After Ferguson's 1959 article on diglossia, Blanc (1960), Badawi (1973) and Meiseles (1980) thought proposing intermediate levels between H and L would give a more accurate description of the situation in the Arab world. Thus, they recognised that people shift between H and L, especially when speaking, but often they do not shift the whole way, resulting in levels which are neither fully H nor fully L. Blanc, basing his analysis on a tape recording of cross-dialectal conversation, distinguished between five varieties (1960: 85): classical, modified classical, semi-literary or elevated colloquial, koineised colloquial, and plain colloquial. Meiseles (1980) distinguished between four varieties: literary Arabic or standard Arabic, oral literary Arabic, educated spoken Arabic and plain vernacular. Badawi, on the other hand, proposed that there are five different varieties: *fusḥḥa: al-tura:θ* 'heritage classical', *fusḥḥa: al-ʕasr* 'contemporary classical', *ʕa:mmiyyat al-muθaqqafi:n* 'colloquial of the cultured', *ʕa:mmiyyat al-mutanawwiri:n* 'colloquial of the basically educated' and *ʕa:mmiyyat al-ʔummiyi:n* 'colloquial of the illiterates'. Badawi based his

study on the output of the Egyptian media. His classification is both more crucial and more problematic than the other two, because his labelling of varieties implies both a stylistic and a social hierarchy.

Badawi tries to explain which levels of the spoken language are typical of which types of speaker and which type of situation in Egypt.

1. *fushā: al-tura:θ* 'heritage classical': this is the CA of the Arab literary heritage and the Qur'an. It represents the prescriptive Arabic grammar as taught at traditional institutions like Al-Azhar University (Egypt's oldest university). It is a written language, but is heard in its spoken form on religious programmes on TV.
2. *fushā: al-ʕaṣr* 'contemporary classical': this is what I, as well as western-trained linguists, call MSA, which is a modification and simplification of CA created for the need of the modern age. It is used in news bulletins, for example. It is usually read aloud from texts and, if the speaker is highly skilled, may also be used in the commentary to the text.
3. *ʕa:mmiyyat al-muθaqqafi:n* 'colloquial of the cultured': this is a colloquial influenced by MSA which may be used for serious discussion, but is not normally written. It is used by 'cultured' (i.e. well-educated) people on television. It is also often the language used in formal teaching in Egyptian universities, and it is becoming the means of educating students and discussing different topics with them. In other words, it is becoming the medium of instruction in Egyptian classrooms.
4. *ʕa:mmiyyat al-mutanawwiri:n* 'colloquial of the basically educated': this is the everyday language that people educated to a basic level (but not university level) use with family and friends, and may be heard on TV in a discussion of 'non-intellectual' topics, such as sport or fashion. Cultured and well-educated people also use it when talking in a relaxed fashion about non-serious topics.
5. *ʕa:mmiyyat al-ʔummiyi:n* 'colloquial of the illiterates': this is the form of colloquial that is characterised by the absence of influence of MSA. On TV, it occurs only in the speech of certain characters in soap operas, children's shows and situation comedies.<sup>9</sup>

Badawi explains that almost everyone has more than one of these levels at their disposal; people often shift between them in the same conversation (1973: 93). Illiterates and the less well-educated, however, may find it difficult to shift as much, since they control only one or two levels with confidence. It is noteworthy that, when he defines different levels, Badawi uses sociolinguistic factors like education. Using education as a criterion can be considered a problem in his description. It is not clear whether the colloquial levels are built on socioeconomic variables like education or are just 'stylistic registers', or whether they can be both. It is worth mentioning here that Blanc (1960:

151) acknowledges the existence of ‘gradual transitions between the various registers’, while Badawi (1973: 95) says that these five levels do not have clear, permanent boundaries between them, but rather fade into one another like the colours in a rainbow. Therefore instead of five, one could theoretically propose an infinite number of levels. Even in the three levels which Badawi defines as ‘colloquial’, there are no variants that are exclusively allocated to any one of the three. It is always a question of ‘more or less’, with no clear dividing lines between the levels.

Before I conclude this section, I will shed light on a concept different from that of levels, but one that still relates to diglossia, as well as the different dialects/varieties in the Arab world: the concept of Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA).

### 1.1.3 The idea of Educated Spoken Arabic

Mitchell claims that ‘vernacular Arabic [meaning dialectal/colloquial Arabic] is never plain or unmixed but constantly subject to the influences of modern times’ (1986: 9). According to him, ESA<sup>10</sup> is not a separate variety but is ‘created’ and ‘maintained’ by the interaction between the written language and the vernacular.<sup>11</sup> He gives the following reasons for the existence of ESA. First, in the modern world, educated men and women tend to converse on topics beyond the scope of a given regional vernacular. Second, educated people want to ‘share and commune’ with other Arabs of similar educational background. They want to promote forms that are required to meet the pressures of modernisation, urbanisation, industrialisation, mass education and internationalism (1986: 8). Therefore, Arabs need a shared means of communication, and this is inevitably influenced by what they all have in common: a knowledge of the structure and vocabulary of MSA. This does not mean, however, that they switch to ‘oral MSA’, but that they switch to a form of language which contains shared vernacular elements as well as MSA. I want to clarify that understanding regional/national dialects is to a great extent tied to daily life and not academic/professional life; hence, speakers may not have ready vocabulary for discussing technological, learned subjects.

The idea of a shared ESA is important because it is concerned not just with the way people from the immediate community communicate, but with the way different Arabs from different communities communicate across community boundaries. Compare the following similar definition of ESA (from Meiseles):

It is the current informal language used among educated Arabs, fulfilling in general their daily language needs. It is also the main means of Arabic interdialectal communication, one of its most important trends being its intercomprehensibility among speakers of different

vernaculars, arising mainly from the speaker's incentive to share a common language with his interlocutor or interlocutors. (1980: 126)

Mitchell also tries to describe some general structural rules of this shared ESA. For example, in MSA dual number is marked throughout: in demonstratives, verbs, nouns, pronouns and adjectives. In ESA, according to Mitchell, it is marked only in the nouns and adjectives. Negation in MSA is expressed by the particles *lam*, *lan*, *la:* and *ma:*. These are replaced in ESA by other forms used in colloquial varieties with some differences between the regions.

The idea of ESA acknowledges the possibility of switching between the vernacular and MSA without assuming anything about intermediate styles. In that sense it is more inclusive and promising as a heuristic device than the concept of levels. Moreover, ESA tries to account for how Arabs from different countries manage to communicate together, rather than focusing on Arabs in a specific country. The idea that different Arabs from different communities modify their language when they speak together is worthy of attention since it is presumably a rule-governed process, not a random one.

However, the idea of ESA poses a number of questions about the nature of the synchronic relationship between MSA and the different vernaculars. First, the term 'educated Arabs' seems vague. Is an educated Arab a merely functionally literate one or a 'cultured' one? Second, if it is still difficult for linguists to agree about the different levels used even in a single community, how much more difficult could it be, to try to describe what the rules are for inter-communal communication? In my view, one has to try to describe the situation in specific countries first. Merely claiming that ESA exists does not help in applying the concept to the language situation in a particular country, since Mitchell did not manage to give a comprehensive description of how ESA works: that is, of exactly what people do when they switch between MSA and their vernacular. Parkinson (2003) also argued that although ESA is supposed to be rule-governed, there are no clear rules that describe it. He claims that 'Educated spoken Arabic may not actually be anything' (2003: 29). The following is Nielsen's criticism of ESA:

ESA is a mixed variety which is very badly codified . . . apart from very few studies (for example Eid 1982), no research has established what kind of rules actually govern this mixing, nor do we know whether or not such rules are subject to generalisations. This is not to say that native speakers do not know how to mix; but we have no reliable information establishing that the mixing is not a phenomenon heavily influenced, say, by personal or regional factors. (1996: 225)

Part of the issue with ESA is the descriptive versus prescriptive notion of 'rule'. One has to be able to describe the linguistic situation thoroughly and

meticulously before starting to specify a set of practices in a specific community or communities. One also needs to know whether there are discourse functions of ESA which govern its occurrence, and whether these functions differ from country to country.

In the next sections I concentrate on national varieties. However, before I list the groups of dialects or varieties in the Arab world, I want to clarify the distinction between a prestige variety and a standard one.

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## 1.2 DIALECTS/VARIETIES IN THE ARAB WORLD

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### 1.2.1 The concept of prestige as different from that of standard

There has been a growing realisation since the mid-1980s that variation in Arabic speech is not merely (or even mainly) a question of H interference in L. According to Ibrahim (1986: 115), 'the identification of H as both the standard and the prestigious variety at one and the same time has led to problems of interpreting data and findings from Arabic sociolinguistic research'. This identification is the result of applying western research to the Arab world, without noting the different linguistic situation. In research in western speech communities, researchers have generally been able to assume that the standardised variety of a language, the one that has undergone the conscious process of standardisation, is also the variety accorded the most overt prestige.

Many studies have shown that for most speakers, there is a prestige variety of L, the identity of which depends on many geographical, political and social factors within each country, and which may in certain circumstances influence speech. In Egypt, for non-Cairenes, it is the prestige variety of Egyptian Arabic Cairene; for Jordanian women from Bedouin or rural backgrounds, on the other hand, it may be the urban dialects of the big cities (Abdel-Jawad 1986: 58).

In a diachronic study conducted by Palva (1982), materials from Arabic dialects spoken, recorded and collected since 1914 in the Levant, Yemen, Egypt and Iraq were compared. Palva examined the occurrence of phonological, morphological and lexical items in the dialects over a period of time. He found that certain dialectal variants gradually become more dominant than the 'standard' variants. For example, the glottal realisation  $ʔ$  of the historical  $q$ , which is a phonological feature of several vernaculars in the area, became widespread and dominant rather than the MSA  $q$  (1982: 22-4).

Abu-Haidar (1991), in her study of the Muslim and Christian dialects of Baghdad, posits that:

Apart from MSA (the H variety for all Baghdadis), CB speakers

[Christian Baghdadi] use their own dialect as a L variety in informal situations at home and with in-group members, while they use MB [Muslim Baghdadi] as another H variety in more formal situations with non-Christians. (1991: 92)

It has been realised that MSA is not the only source of linguistic prestige and that in virtually every Arab speech community that has been examined, there is a dominant L which exerts influence on the other lower-status Ls in that country or in the surrounding region. The reasons for its influence are various, but principal among them are factors like the socioeconomic dominance of the city (e.g. Cairo) over the countryside or the influence of a ruling political group (the royal families of the Gulf). The dialects of these entities become a symbol of their power and exercise a potent influence over those who come into contact with them or have to interact with speakers of these dialects. This sociolinguistic variation between different varieties will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

In the next section I introduce the five different groups of dialects that exist in the Arab world, in addition to both MSA and CA. I also discuss different approaches of classifying dialects in the Arab world.

## 1.2.2 Groups of dialects in the Arab world

### 1.2.2.1 *Bedouin and sedentary dialects*

There is more than one choice of approach to classifying dialects. One can use a synchronic approach classification which is made by measuring and selecting salient linguistic variables for each dialect or group of dialects (Palva 2006: 604). This is the classification that will be adopted in section 1.2.2.2. On the other hand, one can also use a sociological, anthropological and historical approach which takes into consideration the division between Bedouin and sedentary dialects in the Arab world (Palva 2006: 605). The division in terms of Bedouin and sedentary reflects the historical settlements in the area as well as the language shift and change that has been taking place. Sedentary dialects could be further divided into rural and urban.

Cities in the Arab world do not necessarily speak an urban dialect. In fact, in a number of cities in the Arab world speakers speak a Bedouin dialect and in other cities the Bedouin dialect is more prestigious than the sedentary one (see Chapter 3).

Bedouin and sedentary dialects can be distinguished mainly by comparing and contrasting the realisation of phonological variables in both. However, morpho-syntactic variables as well as lexical ones are also significant. The realisation of the MSA phonological variable *q* as *g* has been a major criterion in distinguishing between Bedouin and sedentary dialects. According to Palva,

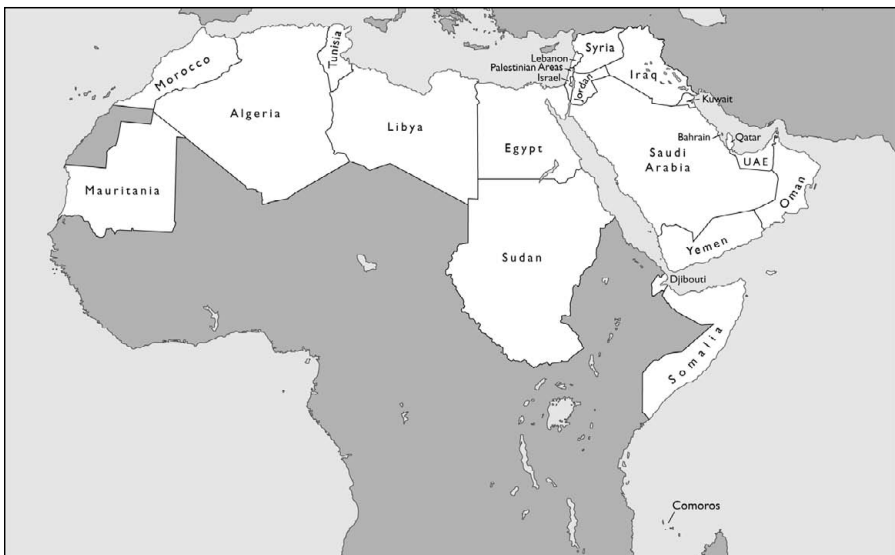
'Bedouin dialects have retained more morpho-phonemic categories than the sedentary dialects' (2006: 606). An example of this is the use of the indefinite marker in (*tanwi:n*) as in *kita:bin* (book) as opposed to the sedentary realisation *kita:b* (cf. Palva 2006: 605 for detailed examples of differences between Bedouin and sedentary dialects, and Versteegh 2001 for a historical discussion of dialects).

#### 1.2.2.2 Regional dialects

Versteegh (2001: 145) distinguishes between five groups of regional dialects in the Arab world.<sup>12</sup>

1. Dialects of the Arabian peninsula, spoken in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf area
2. Mesopotamian dialects, spoken in Iraq
3. Syro-Lebanese dialects, spoken in Lebanon and Syria
4. Egyptian dialects, spoken in Egypt
5. Maghreb dialects, spoken in North Africa

Versteegh himself thinks that the division can at times be arbitrary and depends largely on geographical factors (2001: 145). There are, however, a number of similarities among all the dialects that differentiates them from MSA and CA. These similarities have led to a great deal of speculation about the emergence of dialects in the whole Arab world (cf. Versteegh 2001).



Map 1.1 The Arab world



In all the five groups of dialects, the MSA glottal stop disappears. For example, the MSA *raʔs* ‘head’ is in Syrian, North African and Egyptian Arabic *ra:s* (cf. Versteegh 2001: 107). Likewise, the genitive case in the possessive construction is replaced by an analytical possessive construction. Thus *qalam al-walad* (lit. ‘pen def-boy’) ‘the boy’s pen’, is in Egyptian Arabic *il-ʔalam bita:ʕ il-walad* (lit. ‘pen poss par def-boy’). In Levantine it is *il-ʔalam tabaʕ il-walad* (lit. ‘pen poss par def-boy’), and in dialects of the Arabian Peninsula it is *il-ʔalam ʔagg il-walad* (lit. ‘pen poss par def-boy’). Note that the possessive particle is different in the three examples of the dialects given above. Additionally, the MSA future aspectual marker *sa-/samfa* is replaced in all the dialects by a different marker. In Syrian Arabic it is *rah(a)-lah(a)-*, in Egyptian Arabic it is *ha-*, in Moroccan Arabic it is *ga-*, in Iraqi Arabic it is *rah* and in Yemeni Arabic it is *ʔa* (Versteegh 2001: 108). Versteegh (2001: 98) comments on the range of variability across regional dialects by positing that, ‘It is fair to say that the linguistic distance between the dialects is as large as that between the Germanic languages and the Romance languages, including Romanian, if not larger.’ To some extent this postulation is exaggerated. However, it still alludes to the extent of differences between dialects.

Perhaps because of these differences between dialects, Arab governments are in general still keen on promoting Standard Arabic (SA) as their official language rather than the various vernaculars; this promotion of SA as the official language will be examined in detail in Chapter 5.

I want to illustrate some differences between the different vernaculars for countries in the Arab world by giving a detailed concrete example. I will choose five vernaculars that belong to the five groups discussed above. The vernaculars chosen are: Tunisian Colloquial Arabic (TCA), part of the North African group of dialects; ECA, part of the Egyptian group of dialects; Lebanese Colloquial Arabic (LCA), part of the Levantine group of dialects; Iraqi Colloquial Arabic (ICA), part of the Mesopotamian Arabic group; and finally Saudi Colloquial Arabic (SCA), part of the Gulf Arabic dialect group.

Note that I choose one dialect within Egypt, Cairene Arabic, and one dialect within Lebanon, the dialect of Beirut and so on. Thus, the examples do not represent the whole spectrum of dialects within each country but only give an example of the kind of differences that exist between different national vernaculars.

However, before starting to compare and contrast the differences, one first has to show the MSA counterpart.<sup>13</sup>

#### (1) English

‘I love reading a lot. When I went to the library I only found this old book. I wanted to read a book about the history of women in France.’

## (2) MSA

*ʔana ʔuhibbu l-qira:ʔa kaθi:ran/ ʕindama ɖahabtu ʔila l-mak-  
 taba/  
 I lsg-love- the- a lot/ when went- to the-  
 ind reading lsg library/  
 lam ʔaɖʒid siwa ha:ða: l-kita:b al- wa kuntu ʔuri:du  
 qadi:m/  
 neg lsg- except this the- the- and was-lsg lsg-want-  
 find book old/ ind  
 ʔan ʔaɖraʔa kita:ban ʕan tari:x al-marʔa fi fara:nsa/  
 that lsg-read- book-acc about history the- in France  
 sub woman*

## (3) TCA

*ʔana n-ħibb il-gra:ya waqtalli mfi:t l il-maktba/  
 barfa/  
 I asp-lsg the-reading When walked-lsg to-the-  
 love a lot/ library  
 ma-lqi:ti-f illa ha l-kta:b l-qdi:m/ u kunt nħibb  
 neg-lsg- except this-the- the-old/ and was-lsg lsg-love  
 find-neg book  
 naqra kta:b ʕala tari:x l-mra fi fra:nsa/  
 lsg-read book about history the-woman in France*

## (4) ECA

*ʔana ba-ħibb il-ʔira:ya ʔawi/ lamma ruħt il-maktaba/  
 I asp-lsg the- a lot/ When went- the-library  
 love reading lsg  
 ma-laʔit-f ʔilla l-kita:b il-ʔadi:m da/ wa na kunt ʕa:yiz  
 neg-lsg- except the- the-old this/ and I was-lsg sg-part  
 find-neg book  
 ʔaʔra kita:b ʕan tari:x il-sitt fi faransa/  
 lsg-read book about history the-woman in France*

## (5) LCA

*ʔana b-ħibb il-ʔire:ya kti:r/ lamma reħit ʕ-al-maktebe/  
 I asp-lsg the-reading a lot/ When went-lsg to-the-library  
 love  
 ma lʔe:t ʔilla hal-i-kete:b li-ʔedi:m/ wi ken beddi  
 neg-lsg- except this-the- the-old/ and was-lsg lsg-want  
 find book  
 ʔeʔra kete:b ʕan tari:x l-mara b-fre:nse/  
 lsg-read book about history the-woman in France*

## (6) ICA

*ʔa:ni ʔibb il-iqra:ya kulli:f/ lamman riħit l il-maktaba/*  
 I 1sg love the-reading a lot/ When went-1sg to the-library  
*ma lige:t ġe:r haðe l-ikta:b il-ʕati:g/ u tfimit ari:d*  
 neg-1sg-find except this-the-book the-old/ and was-1sg 1sg-want  
*ʔaqra kta:b ʕan tari:x al-marʔa b-fransa/*  
 1sg-read book about history the-woman in France

## (7) SCA

*ʔana ʔibb il-gra:ya kθi:r/ ħi:n reħt l-mekteba/*  
 I 1sg the- a lot/ When went- the-library  
 love reading 1sg  
*ma lige:t ġe:r haða l-kta:b il-ġedi:m/ wa kint abġa*  
 neg-1sg- except this-the- the-old/ and was-1sg 1sg-aim-  
 find book (want)  
*ʔagra kta:b ʕan tari:x il-mara fi fransa/*  
 1sg-read book about history the-woman in France

I would like to mention that ‘Arabic’ – meaning CA, MSA and the different varieties – is a Semitic language, and therefore built on a root and pattern system. The root is ‘a series of typically three consonants, always occurring in a fixed sequence that has lexical identity’ (McCarus 2007: 240). For example, the root *k-t-b* means to write, writing and so on. The word *maktaba*, which occurs in the examples and means ‘library’, is derived from this root. Pattern is defined by McCarus (2007: 240) as ‘a fixed framework of consonants and vowels that likewise has lexical meaning’. McCarus gives the example of the pattern *mafʕal*, which denotes a noun of place. Although the root can change, the *ma-* and the vowel *a* before the consonant are obligatory. An example of this pattern is *maktab*, derived from the root *k-t-b* discussed above, and meaning ‘office’. *Maktaba* also follows this pattern. This is worth mentioning because it will show the similarities and differences between the dialects and also explain why it is sometimes easy and at other times difficult to comprehend the different dialects for different natives of Arabic.

Now I will compare and contrast each clause in detail.

(8)	pr 1sg	v 1sg imperf-ind	det-n	adv
	‘I’	‘to like’	‘reading’	‘a lot’
MSA	<i>ʔana</i>	<i>ʔuħibbu</i>	<i>l-qira:ʔa</i>	<i>kaθi:ran</i>
TCA	<i>ʔana</i>	<i>n-ħibb</i>	<i>il-qra:ya</i>	<i>barʕa</i>
ECA	<i>ʔana</i>	<i>ba-ħibb</i>	<i>il-ʔira:ya</i>	<i>ʔami</i>
LCA	<i>ʔana</i>	<i>b-ħibb</i>	<i>il-ʔire:ya</i>	<i>kti:r</i>
ICA	<i>ʔa:ni</i>	<i>ħibb</i>	<i>il-iqra:ya</i>	<i>kulli:f</i>
SCA	<i>ʔana</i>	<i>ħibb</i>	<i>il-gra:ya</i>	<i>kθi:r</i>

In this clause, the personal pronoun in four varieties is the same; the exception is in ICA, in which it is phonologically different. The verb is lexically the same but phonologically different in some varieties. Note that an aspectual maker *b-* that denotes the present tense in ECA and LCA is not used in all varieties. This is a morpho-syntactic difference that differentiates ECA and LCA from other varieties. The phonological realisation of the definite article and noun ‘to read’ is also different in all five examples. The MSA *q* of *l-qira:ʔa* is realised as a *q* only in TCA and ICA, and is realised as *g* in SCA and as a glottal stop in ECA and LCA. Meanwhile, the adverb ‘a lot’ is in fact lexically different in MSA, ECA, ICA and TCA. In LCA and SCA it is phonologically different from its MSA counterpart.

(9)	adv	v 1sg perf	prep	det-n
	‘when’	‘to go’	‘to’	‘the library’
MSA	<i>ʕindama</i>	<i>ʔahabtu</i>	<i>ʔila</i>	<i>l-maktaba</i>
TCA	<i>waqtalli</i>	<i>mʕi:t</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>il-maktba</i>
ECA	<i>lamma</i>	<i>ruħt</i>		<i>il-maktaba</i>
LCA	<i>lamma</i>	<i>reħit</i>	<i>ʕ</i>	<i>al-maktebe</i>
ICA	<i>lamman</i>	<i>riħit</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>il-maktaba</i>
SCA	<i>ħi:n</i>	<i>reħt</i>		<i>l-mekteba</i>

This second clause is telling in terms of varieties. The adverb ‘when’ is lexically different in most varieties. The problem of the different usage of prepositions between varieties is very clear. The preposition ‘to’ is realised differently in four varieties. TCA and ICA use the same preposition in that example. In fact, ECA and SCA do not use a preposition at all, while each of the other varieties uses a different one from MSA. In addition, the verb ‘to go’ is lexically different in all varieties from MSA. It is also phonologically different in all varieties. Once more, phonological differences are prominent in the realisation of the noun ‘library’ with the definite article.

(10)	neg	v 1sg	-neg	part.	dem	det-n	det-adj	dem
	‘not’	‘to find’		‘but’	‘this’	‘book’	‘old’	‘this’
MSA	<i>lam</i>	<i>ʔaʕʕid</i>		<i>sima</i>	<i>ha:ða</i>	<i>l-kita:b</i>	<i>al-qadi:m</i>	
TCA	<i>ma-</i>	<i>lqi:-ti-</i>	<i>-f</i>	<i>illa</i>	<i>ha</i>	<i>l-kta:b</i>	<i>l-qdi:m</i>	
ECA	<i>ma-</i>	<i>laʔi-t-</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>ʔilla</i>		<i>l-kita:b</i>	<i>il-ʔadi:m</i>	<i>da</i>
LCA	<i>ma</i>	<i>lʔe:-t</i>		<i>ʔilla</i>	<i>ha</i>	<i>l-ikete:b</i>	<i>li-ʔedi:m</i>	
ICA	<i>ma</i>	<i>lige:-t</i>		<i>ge:r</i>	<i>haðe</i>	<i>l-ikta:b</i>	<i>il-ʕati:g</i>	
SCA	<i>ma</i>	<i>lge:-t</i>		<i>ge:r</i>	<i>haða</i>	<i>l-kta:b</i>	<i>il-gedi:m</i>	

The verb ‘to find’ *ʔaʕʕid* is realised as the jussive first person singular, with no mood marking (0-suffix), of the imperfect of *wadʕada*. The use of the jussive here is mandatory after the negative particle *lam*. The person is marked by the

prefix *ʔa*. The varieties/dialects, on the other hand, invariably use derivations from the root *l-q-y* (to find) in the first person singular perfect form, rather than imperfect form as MSA does. In the perfect form the person is marked by the suffix *-t*. Thus, MSA uses a different aspect/tense for the verb from all the dialects. MSA uses the imperfect, while all the varieties use the perfect.

Negation is also realised differently in most of the varieties; the discontinuous morphemes *ma-...-f* occur only in TCA and ECA. Most of the other dialects use *ma-* only. The MSA demonstrative *ha:ða:* is phonologically different in all the five vernaculars. In fact, ECA is structurally different from all other varieties in that the demonstrative occurs after rather than before the noun it modifies. The adjective 'old' is phonologically different in three varieties and the *q* is realised as a *q* only in MSA and TCA. In ICA it is also lexically different.

(11)	conj	pr 1sg	v 1sg perf.	v 1sg imperf-ind	par
	'and'	'I'	'to be'	'to want/ like'	
MSA	<i>wa</i>		<i>kuntu</i>	<i>ʔuri:du</i>	<i>ʔan</i>
TCA	<i>u</i>		<i>kunt</i>	<i>nħibb</i>	
ECA	<i>wa</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>kunt</i>	<i>ʕa:yiz</i> [pres part]	
LCA	<i>wi</i>		<i>ken</i>	<i>beddi</i>	
ICA	<i>u</i>		<i>tfinit</i>	<i>ari:d</i>	
SCA	<i>wa</i>		<i>kint</i>	<i>abġa</i>	

Again, most of the differences among the six varieties are phonological, but there are still lexical and morphological differences in the realisation of the verb 'to want'. In ECA, it is a participle rather than a tensed imperfect verb as is the case with the other dialects. In fact, it is a different lexical item in five varieties and only ICA shares the same lexical item with MSA, but there are still phonological differences between the two. Note that MSA alone requires a complementiser with this verb.

(12)	v1sg imperf	n indef	prep	n det-n	prep	n def
	-sub	-acc				
	'to read'	'book'	'about'	'history of women'	'in'	'France'
MSA	<i>ʔaqrāʔa</i>	<i>kita:ban</i>	<i>ʕan</i>	<i>tari:x al-marʔa</i>	<i>fi</i>	<i>fara:nsa</i>
TCA	<i>naqra</i>	<i>kta:b</i>	<i>ʕala</i>	<i>tari:x l-mra</i>	<i>fi</i>	<i>fra:nsa</i>
ECA	<i>ʔaʔra</i>	<i>kita:b</i>	<i>ʕan</i>	<i>tari:x il-sitt</i>	<i>fi</i>	<i>faransa</i>
LCA	<i>ʔeʔra</i>	<i>kete:b</i>	<i>ʕan</i>	<i>tari:x l-mara</i>	<i>b-</i>	<i>fre:nse</i>
ICA	<i>ʔaqrā</i>	<i>kta:b</i>	<i>ʕan</i>	<i>tari:x al-marʔa</i>	<i>b-</i>	<i>fransa</i>
SCA	<i>ʔagra</i>	<i>kta:b</i>	<i>ʕan</i>	<i>tari:x il-mara</i>	<i>fi</i>	<i>fransa</i>

The variation in prepositions is indeed apparent again in this clause. The preposition 'in' is realised differently in different dialects. ECA has a lexically

different item for ‘woman’ from the other four varieties. There are morphological differences between TCA realisation of the first person and all the other varieties. Phonological differences are still apparent.

It is noteworthy, however, that in some cases the lexical differences are not very difficult to reconcile. Thus for the verb ‘to want’, ECA uses *ʕa:yiz*, TCA uses *nhibb* and SCA uses *abga*. In MSA the verb *ʔahabba* means ‘to love’. The MSA *baġa:* means ‘to aim at’ or ‘to want’. Thus although four varieties use a different lexical item for the verb ‘to want’, all the lexical items are related in meaning via knowledge of MSA. This poses the question of whether, with no knowledge of MSA at all and with knowledge of only one dialect, the one spoken natively, it would still be possible for people from Tunisia to understand, for example, people from Egypt or the Gulf.

Using the same example, I want to show the differences between two Germanic languages: German and Dutch.

### (13) German

*Ich lese sehr gerne. Als ich in die Bibliothek ging, fand ich nur dieses alte Buch, obwohl ich ein Buch über die Geschichte der Frau in Frankreich hatte lesen wollen.*

### (14) Dutch

*Ik hou heel erg van lezen. Toen ik naar de bibliotheek ging, vond ik slechts dit oude boek, hoewel ik een boek over vrouwengeschiedenis in Frankrijk had willen lezen.*

As one can see from this example, even without knowledge of German or Dutch, the differences are similar to those between the different vernaculars examined above. The examples make one wonder about the differences between different languages and different varieties and whether terms like ‘language’ and ‘variety’ are not political terms rather than linguistic ones.

In this section I wanted to give examples of the different groups of varieties in the Arab world. The question of whether people switch between their variety and MSA will be dealt with in more detail in the next chapter.

## 1.3 CONCLUSION

To conclude I would like to clarify that, first, Arabs perceive all the varieties discussed above as ‘Arabic’. Second, all the varieties above came from countries in which ‘Arabic’, meaning SA, is the sole official language. The complexity of the situation arises from the fact that native speakers of Arabic do not distinguish between MSA and CA. For them there is only one SA. Further, they also use the term ‘Arabic’ to refer to the standard language and

the colloquials of different countries, the national varieties. In these matters native speakers and linguists can disagree. Left to their own devices, linguists could claim each of the national varieties as a separate, distinct language. Speakers of Arabic are aware of a larger entity that somehow unites them: SA. The H variety of diglossia, SA, provides educated individuals with some of the tools they need to understand other varieties.

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## NOTES

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1. Examples of diglossic switching are given in the next chapter.
2. It is important to mention at this stage that native speakers and constitutions in Arab countries do not specify what 'Arabic' refers to, but it is usually MSA. Native speakers also do not make a distinction between MSA and CA. For them there is only one kind of SA which is called '*fuṣḥa*':.
3. Note that this H and L labelling reflects, first, language attitudes among users and, second, the superposed nature of the H. Likewise, it is worth mentioning that sociolinguists may feel uncomfortable with these labels, since clear covert prestige attaches so strongly to the L and since the L has sometimes been the target of attempts in Egypt and Lebanon, among other countries, to be considered the national variety. This issue of territorial nationalism as opposed to pan-Arabism will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 5.
4. Fishman (2002) defines diglossia slightly differently from Ferguson. For him, a diglossic situation is one in which the roles of both varieties are kept separate; there are clear group boundaries between both languages or varieties. The access to the H variety or language is usually restricted to an outsider. He gives the example of pre-World War I European elites who spoke French or another H language or variety, while the masses spoke a different and not necessarily related language or variety. In his definition the H variety or language is a spoken standard, while in Arabic it is not the spoken variety of any country.
5. The question of how different the two varieties should be was perhaps not the main issue for Ferguson, who was more interested in the conditions that could give rise to diglossia in the first place.
6. The word literally means 'what is your colour?'
7. Gumperz is mentioned here although he did not discuss diglossia in the Arab world because his concepts of the discourse functions of code-switching will be applied to diglossic switching in Chapter 2, and diglossic switching and code-switching will be studied within the same framework.
8. I assume that the overlap between H and L existed even at the time when Ferguson wrote his article (1959), since Arabic, like any other language, is dynamic rather than static and unchanging. Walters (1996a) posits that the linguistic situation in the Arab world has always been in a state of change.
9. In Egyptian soap operas almost all characters, even the educated ones, speak in ECA. Only in defined situations, like that of a lawyer in a courtroom, would a speaker use MSA or switch to any of the levels mentioned by Badawi. This has been the case since soap operas began in Egypt in the 1960s.
10. The idea of ESA started to take shape with the Leeds project in 1976 which 'comprises unscripted, unprepared conversations and discussions based on a wide range of inter-personal relationships' (El-Hassan 1977: 120; see also Mejdell 2006 for a full discussion of ESA). Note also that the data concentrated on educated speakers in Egypt and the Levant specifically.

11. The H variety and MSA are in many ways associated with writing and the written language, including the reading aloud of written texts.
12. The words 'dialects' and 'varieties' will be used interchangeably throughout this chapter.
13. The MSA example does not always include case and mood endings; it is rather, the way it would have been spoken by a native speaker and I am interested in the oral performance of this utterance.



# Code-switching

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Language duality is not a problem but an innate ability. It is an accurate reflection of a duality that exists in all of us, a duality between our mundane daily life and our spiritual one.

Najīb Maḥfūz, Nobel Prize winner for literature 1988, in a letter to  
Luwīs ‘Awaḍ

Although he is referring here to the duality between ECA and MSA – what Ferguson calls diglossia – Maḥfūz touches upon one of the main functions of language choice. He does not think that duality or bilingualism in general is an impairment.<sup>1</sup> In fact, it is an enriching ability that all humans possess and that enables them to express themselves differently and express their diverse needs. He echoes what Myers-Scotton discusses in her book *Social Motivations for Code-switching* (1993). She refers to code-switching as part of the ‘communicative competence’ of a speaker, which is the competence that individuals acquire from their community and which enables them to communicate effectively with other members of their community. This will be discussed in detail below. Note that Maḥfūz does not limit ‘language duality’ to either a diglossic community or a bilingual one. In this chapter I will discuss code choice and code-switching, whether this code is a variety or a language. After an introduction and discussion of terminology (sections 2.1–2.3), the chapter falls into two main parts. The first part (section 2.4) will examine structural constraints on classic code-switching; switching between different languages, when one of the languages is a variety of Arabic (2.4.1), and diglossic switching as a subcategory of code-switching (2.4.2). I discuss structural constraints on code-switching by examining different theories that can be applied to Arabic. I then provide a case study from my work on structural constraints on diglossic switching as part of code-switching (2.4.2.1). The second part (section 2.5) explains the social motivations and discourse func-

tions of switching in relation to Arabic (2.5). The first subsection (2.5.1) will concentrate on classic code-switching, and the second (2.5.2) will deal with diglossic switching. Again, at the end of this section I provide a case study of motivations for diglossic switching from my own work (2.5.2.1). Section 2.6 will evaluate research on code-switching in light of recent studies and theories. This section is then followed by a conclusion.

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Code-switching until very recently has been looked down upon for different reasons, in both the Arab world and the western world. In fact, in the Arab world switching between Arabic and a foreign language has been called by one Arab writer, according to Suleiman (2004: 227), 'linguistic prostitution'. It can also be considered a form of 'colonial penetration' (2004: 227). Before the classic article by Blom and Gumperz (1972) on code-switching between dialects of Norwegian in Hemnesberget (a Norwegian fishing town), code-switching was considered part of the performance of the imperfect bilingual who could not carry on a conversation in one language in different situations (Myers-Scotton 1993: 47).

When bilinguals are asked why they switch codes, they usually claim that they do so to fill in lexical gaps, i.e., they do not know a specific word in one of their languages so they use the word from the other one. They may also claim that they do not have a certain word to express their feelings in one of the codes they have mastered, so they have to switch. But this is not always true, because bilinguals can switch between a word from one code and an equivalent from another with exactly the same meaning. And when they switch consistently, they usually do so for a specific purpose (Romaine 1995: 169). If we approach code-switching as a discourse-related phenomenon, then we have to assume that it has sociolinguistic motivations. These motivations cannot be understood in terms of syntactic constraints only, although syntactic constraints are still crucial in that they govern where switching might take place.

The term 'code-switching' can be very broad or very narrow, as are all terms in sociolinguistics. It is noteworthy, however, that what Myers-Scotton calls code-switching does not apply just to switching between different languages, but also to switching between varieties of the same language. Therefore, according to her theory, diglossic switching is a kind of code-switching.<sup>2</sup> She argues that 'varieties is a cover term for selections at all linguistic levels so that choices between varieties include, for example, choices of one language rather than another, one dialect over another, one style or register over another, and one form of a directive or refusal over another' (Myers-Scotton 1998b: 18). Arguing from a similar perspective, Gumperz defines code-switching as 'the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech

belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems' (1982a: 59). He also does not restrict code-switching to switching between different languages. Because of its greater flexibility, I think that Myers-Scotton's and Gumperz's definitions are more adaptable than other definitions. It is more precise to use the term 'code' rather than the terms 'language' or 'variety'. However, there is still a problem of terminology that needs to be addressed in the next section.

## 2.2 PROBLEM OF TERMINOLOGY: CODE-SWITCHING AND CODE-MIXING

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According to Mazraani (1997: 8–9), there is a difference between code-switching and code-mixing. Code-switching usually has a discourse function, and is defined as a phenomenon where 'sections in one code are followed by sections in another one in the same conversation'. She adds that code-switching affects most linguistic levels: syntactic, morphological, phonological and lexical. Code-mixing, on the other hand, is defined as 'the mixing of different varieties within a single utterance or even within a single word'. Code-mixing, she claims, does not have to affect all linguistic levels.

Although Mazraani's distinction may be useful within her framework, I think her definitions are still on the vague side. She does not provide a clear definition of the terms 'sections' and 'utterance'. One cannot be sure what the borderline is for a section or an utterance. However, other linguists like Myers-Scotton (1997: 24) do not distinguish between code-switching and code-mixing and regard this distinction as creating 'unnecessary confusion'. Myers-Scotton states that:

A number of researchers associated with Braj Kachru [ . . . ], but also some others, prefer to label as 'code-mixing' alternations which are intrasentential, although it is not entirely clear whether this applies to all intrasentential CS (code-switching). While I grant that intrasentential CS puts different psycholinguistic 'stresses' on the language-production system from intersentential (code-switching) CS (a valid reason to differentiate the two), the two types of CS may have similar socio-psychological motivations. For this reason, I prefer 'CS' as a cover term; the two types can be differentiated by the labels 'intersentential' and 'intrasentential' when structural constraints are considered. (1993: 1)

Intersentential code-switching is switching across sentences, while intrasentential code-switching is switching that takes place within a sentence. I think that it would be difficult if not impossible to consider code-switching and

code-mixing two separate processes. The definition of code-switching by different linguists renders the term highly inclusive and general (see Gumperz's definition above and that of Myers-Scotton 1993: 1). Therefore, I will stick to the term 'code-switching' to also cover what Mazraani calls code-mixing.

## 2.3 CODE-SWITCHING AND DIGLOSSIA

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Diglossia can, in my opinion, be studied within the framework of code-switching, since switching can occur not only between different languages, but also between different varieties of the same language, as mentioned above. So rather than use the term 'diglossic switching' to refer to switching between MSA and the different vernaculars, one can use the term 'code-switching' for that purpose.<sup>3</sup> As Mejdell posits, code-switching 'should be understood in a broad context to encompass both varieties and different languages' (Mejdell 2006: 418).

## 2.4 THE STUDY OF CONSTRAINTS ON CODE-SWITCHING IN RELATION TO THE ARAB WORLD

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### 2.4.1 Structural constraints on classic code-switching

In this section, I will concentrate on three theories that propose constraints on code-switching, with special reference to Myers-Scotton's model of a matrix language (ML). I will also provide examples of switching that involves different Arabic dialects. Linguists concentrating on the Arab world have tended to focus on the syntactic constraints on code-switching rather than the motivations for switching. In addition, switching between North African dialects and European languages has been studied extensively, as will become clear below.

Although Gumperz (1982a) argues that code-switching is not a random process, but that it depends more on stylistic and metaphorical factors than on grammatical restrictions, some linguists (Sankoff and Poplack 1981; DiSciullo et al. 1986; Myers-Scotton 1997) have proposed that there must be grammatical constraints on any kind of code-switching. The question is: are these constraints universal? Do they apply to all language pairs? If we believe in the idea of universal grammar, then we might expect universal grammar to impose constraints on code-switching. I will examine the following theories introduced by linguists to identify structural constraints on code-switching:

1. the two constraints theory;
2. the government principle;
3. the model of matrix and embedded language.

I will then explain each theory and the problems associated with it in relation to Arabic and other languages.

#### 2.4.1.1 *The two constraints theory*

This theory was one of the first attempts to identify syntactic constraints on code-switching. Sankoff and Poplack (1981) proposed that there are two factors important in code-switching: the free morpheme constraint and the equivalence constraint. The free morpheme constraint predicts that there cannot be a code-switch between a bound morpheme and a lexical form unless the lexical form is phonologically integrated into the language of the bound morpheme. They appeal in their analysis to data from Spanish/English code-switching.<sup>4</sup> This constraint would predict that *flipeando*, meaning 'flipping', is a possible form (1981: 5). In this example, *-eando* is the Spanish progressive suffix. The lexical English form (*flip*) is integral as it stands, in the phonology of Spanish. But the form *\*runeando* 'running', is not possible, because the lexical form *run* has not been integrated into the phonology of Spanish. As a result, it cannot take the Spanish progressive suffix *-eando*. Similarly, *\*flipeando* where *flip* is pronounced with English phonology but *-eando* is rendered in Spanish phonology is impossible.

The equivalence constraint theory states that code-switching tends to occur at points where the juxtaposition of elements from the two languages does not violate a syntactic rule of either language. It will occur at points where the surface structure of the two languages is the same. Sankoff and Poplack (1981: 34–5) applied this theory to Spanish and found that Spanish/English code-switching may occur between determiners and nouns, but not between nouns and adjectives in the noun phrase. Thus, it would be unacceptable to say (Lipski 1977: 252):

- (1) *\*his favorito spot*  
'his favourite spot'

This example cannot occur because it would violate the surface structure rules of Spanish. In Spanish the adjective normally comes after the noun, whereas in English it comes before.

Moreover, Sankoff and Poplack predict possible sites for switches for pairs of languages which differ in basic word order, for example, SOV (subject–object–verb) and SVO (subject–verb–object) languages. In such cases they predict that there will be no switches between V (verb) and O (object). For example, in Panjabi/English code-switching, there should be no switches between verb and object, since Panjabi is an SOV language, while English is an SVO language.

Sankoff and Poplack admit, however, that sometimes switching of this type

can occur where there is no structural equivalence between the languages. But if this happens it is always accompanied by omissions, repetitions etc. Note the following example from German/English code-switching (Clyne 1987: 753). The verb constituents are repeated several times.

- (2) *Das ist ein Foto, gemacht an der beach, can be kann be, kann sein in Mount Martha.*

‘This is a photo taken on the beach, could be in Mount Martha.’

According to Clyne, the switch to English may have been triggered by the use of the English noun *beach*. In German, unlike English, a verb governed by an auxiliary is sentence final; the auxiliary has to be separated from the main verb in declarative clauses, i.e. *es kann in Mount Martha sein*. In this example, there is violation of the equivalence constraint.

The two constraints theory can be applied very neatly to code-switching between Spanish and English, because both languages have, more or less, the same word order, and both have the same government categories, i.e. noun, verb, definite article, adjective etc. However, it turns out that it is difficult to apply the same theory to two languages that do not share the same categories, for example, the pidgin Tok Pisin and English (Romaine 1995: 129). It is, in fact, hard to assign grammatical categories to a language like Tok Pisin (verb, article, negative marker etc.). Moreover, Berk-Seligson (1986: 328) found that in Hebrew/Spanish code-switching, many ungrammatical sequences, like the omission of the definite or indefinite article, occur because the indefinite article does not exist as a grammatical category in Hebrew. Besides, this theory relies on linear order and adjacency (surface structure of the sentence) and not on hierarchical order as in the theory of government, for example (Romaine 1995: 129).<sup>5</sup>

As for studies that involve a variety of Arabic, Nait M’barek and Sankoff (1988) studied Moroccan Arabic/French code-switching. They posit that French declarative sentences have the word order subject–verb, whereas Arabic allows for both SV and VS. This leads to recurrent violation of the equivalent constraint.

- (3) *l’époque où les Arabes wəʃl-u ħetta l’andalousie*  
 det-time when det Arab-pl arrive-3pl-perf to det-Andalusia  
 ‘at the time when the Arabs reached Andalusia’ (1988: 145)

This acceptable example can be explained according to the two constraints theory, since it follows a linear left-to-right switch under equivalent word order from a French subject NP *les Arabes* ‘the Arabs’ to an Arabic verb *wəʃlu* ‘they arrived’. This is not true for the next example, in which the word order verb–subject is not found in French declarative sentences.

- (4) *ʕamor-hum ʒama-k les plats que tu fais ʔi*  
 never-pr3pl come- det dishes rel pr2sg make here  
 pr2msg-perf  
 ‘the dishes that you prepare here never have the taste . . .’ (1988: 145)

Additionally, in French, nouns inserted with French definite articles challenge the equivalence constraint. Nait M’barek and Sankoff also apply the borrowing versus switching distinction to Moroccan Arabic/French data. They argue that the notion of ‘insertion’ must be introduced to account for the frequent use of NP constituents with French article + French noun in an otherwise Arabic context.

Bentahila and Davies (1983: 321), when discussing French and Moroccan Arabic switching, also examine the two constraints theory in their data. They suggest refinement of some other constraints like subcategorisation rules, combining grammatical structures with French lexicon etc. One of the problems that they find with the equivalence constraint is that it would predict that the order of adjective and noun has to satisfy the rules of both languages for a switch to be possible. In Arabic adjectives follow nouns, while in French they can either follow or precede the noun. According to the equivalence constraint, we expect a switch only in positions when the French adjective follows the noun. However, Bentahila and Davies find acceptable examples in which this is not the case. The following example is a case in point (1986: 319):

- (5) *kayn un autre muʕkil*  
 to be-3msg-perf indef another problem  
 ‘There is another problem.’

#### 2.4.1.2 *The government principle*

DiSciullo et al. (1986) postulate that code-switching is universally constrained by the government relation holding between sentence constituents. On the basis of data from Hindi/English code-switching, French/Italian code-switching and English/Spanish code-switching, they found that it is possible for speakers to switch codes between verbs and subjects but not between verbs and objects. They therefore tried to identify the constraints that lead to this distribution pattern of switches. They define government in the following way: X governs Y if the first node dominating X also dominates Y, where X is a major category N (noun), V (verb), A (adjective), P (preposition). They argue that ‘if X has language index q and if it governs Y, Y must have language index q also’ (1986: 5). Their main claim is that within a maximal projection no switch is allowed, i.e. within a verb phrase or a noun phrase, for example, no switching is allowed. According to them, code-switching occurs only between elements that are not related by government. This would explain why there

are no switches between a verb and an object in their data, since a verb governs the object.

The idea of government is more promising than that of the equivalence constraint, because it can account for switching between languages with different word orders and different distributions of categories. It also assumes that switching depends on hierarchical structure rather than linear structure, and can thus take account of a wider range of languages. However, this theory still has its limitations and cannot really be applied universally, at least for the time being.

According to the government constraint theory, there can be a switch between a subject and a verb, but not within a prepositional phrase, or between a verb and an object (Romaine 1995: 137). In the following example, quoted from Romaine (1995: 138), of Panjabi/English code-switching, an English noun is governed by a Panjabi postposition. This configuration is not allowed according to the government principle.

- (6) *Family de nal*  
 'In the family'

In this example, there is a switch within the preposition phrase, which is a maximal projection. DiSciullo et al. (1986) would have predicted that there could be no switch in this case, as the noun and the preposition should have the same language index. Sankoff et al. (1990), in a quantitative study of Tamil/English code-switching, found that it is precisely in object position that switches occur. This finding again violates the government theory, although Sankoff et al. then dismissed these cases as borrowings. I do not, however, think it is acceptable to resort to explaining counter-examples as 'borrowing' whenever one encounters a problem in one's hypothesis about code-switching, since borrowing and code-switching may simply be different labels for what often seem to be identical processes (although perhaps different in terms of the size of the chunks of language to which they are applied). I do not think explaining exceptions as 'borrowings' solves the problem. I agree with Myers-Scotton that 'borrowing' and 'code-switching' are related processes and should be accommodated within one model (1997: 163).

Bentahila and Davies (1983) also found that French and Arabic switching happens within the verb phrase (between the verb and the object). This should not be possible under the government principle of DiSciullo et al. According to Boumans (1998), there are recurrent counter-examples, such as switches between determiners and nouns or between complementisers and complement clauses, found in data with Arabic and a European language.

Other studies that concentrate on constraints on code-switching between a variety of Arabic and another language include the Belazi et al. (1994) study of Tunisian Arabic, which found that in switching between Tunisian Arabic



and French, French nouns are usually inserted together with their definite article, like *l'anémie*. This is also the case in Moroccan and Algerian Arabic (cf. Boumans 1998). The following is an example from the data of Belazi et al.

- (7) *c'est le fer qui donne . . . lli yi-ḥa:rib l'anémie*  
 It is det-m iron rel gives . . . rel 3msg-fight det-anemia  
 'it's iron that gives . . . that fights anaemia' (1994: 226; Tunisian Arabic/ French)

In this example, French nouns have French definite articles and Arabic nouns have Arabic definite articles. This is not always the case, however.

Another enlightening study, this time examining code-switching between Iraqi Arabic and English among university students in Mosul, is Sallo's (1994). He reports that he encountered in his data cases of collocations with English head nouns and Arabic modifier adjectives where the adjective shows gender agreement with the Arabic equivalent of the noun. Note the following examples (1994: 124):

- (8) *as-sensitivity ḥaliya*  
 det-sensitivity high-f  
 'The sensitivity is high.'

In this example the Arabic word *ḥaliya* 'high' is feminine. This is almost certainly because the Arabic word for 'sensitivity', *ḥasa:sijya*, is feminine.

- (9) *at-temperature munxafida*  
 det-temperature low-f  
 'The temperature is low.'

Again, in this example the Arabic word for 'temperature', *daradʒa*, is feminine and so the Arabic word for 'low', *munxafida*, agrees with it in gender and is also feminine.

The following example flouts the government constraint theory as explained by DiSciullo et al. (1986), since there can be a switch even within governed constituents. Note that in Iraqi Arabic possessive constructions are expressed with *ma:l*.

- (10) *ar-result ma:li taku:n negative*  
 det-result poss-f-pr1sg 3fsg-be negative  
 'My result will be negative'.

We have the feminine form of the possessive particle *ma:l* + the pronoun suffix of the first person singular. The verb is inflected for the feminine sin-

gular: *taku:n*, rather than the masculine *yaku:n*. The Arabic noun for ‘result’ would in this case have been *nati:dʒa*, which is a feminine noun.

In the reverse case, the modifying English adjective is not inflected according to Arabic agreement rules as in the last example above. Note the use of the singular form of the count noun following numerals 11–99 in the following example (Sallo 1994: 120):

- (11) *na:xud xamasta:f rat*  
 1pl-take fifteen rat  
 ‘We will take 15 rats.’

It is obvious that the underlying structure in these last examples is Iraqi Arabic rather than English. In the next section I will discuss the concept of an underlying structure, or ‘matrix language’, as Myers-Scotton calls it, in detail.

#### 2.4.1.3 Myers-Scotton’s model of a matrix language

A third theory that attempts to identify constraints on the process of code-switching is the hypothesis that there is normally a base language during the process of switching.

Myers-Scotton’s view (1998b: 19–21) is that human beings are equipped with an innate language faculty that enables them to assess linguistic choices. Code-switching, as she defines it (1998a: 296), is a phenomenon that allows morphemes from two or more codes in the same projection of a complementiser (CP), which is a more precise term than a sentence. A CP refers to a subordinate clause (see also Roberts 1997: 34–5). For example, in the sentence ‘I think that he will come’, the CP is ‘that he will come’. This idea will become clearer later when examples are analysed.

According to Myers-Scotton, when two languages are brought together by a bilingual, there is a dominant language at work.<sup>6</sup> Thus, one language should be assigned the status of what she terms a ‘matrix language’. The matrix language (ML) supplies the grammatical frame of constituents, while morphemes are supplied by both languages. That is to say, in code-switching, content morphemes from another language – the embedded language (EL) – may appear in this grammatical frame, as well as ML system and content morphemes. Myers-Scotton’s hypothesis is that there is always an ML in bilingual communities, and there is always only one ML at a time. Thus, one has to first recognise the ML, then analyse a structure, and perhaps later assign discourse functions to it. According to her, there is an affinity between structural analysis and discourse functions. Both have to be analysed, and both are relevant.

An ML is defined by ‘system morphemes’. There are two kinds of morphemes, based on the lexical feature of plus or minus ‘thematic roles’. Content

morphemes assign or receive thematic roles, like ‘agent’, ‘experiencer’, ‘beneficiary’ etc. This category includes nouns, descriptive adjectives and most verb stems. System morphemes, on the other hand, cannot assign or receive thematic roles. This category includes inflections, determiners, possessive adjectives and intensifier adverbs. Thus, an ML supplies system morphemes which are syntactically relevant. The EL supplies only content morphemes. Myers-Scotton’s hypothesis is that ‘languages can sustain structural incursion and remain robust, but the taking in of alien inflections and function words is often a step leading to language attrition and language death’ (1998a: 289). That is to say, she argues that as long as the system morphemes, such as inflections, for example, come from the ML, then the language is in no danger. Once the inflections, and other system morphemes, come from more than one language, there is no longer a single ML and this may lead to language change and language death.

The following example, quoted from Myers-Scotton (1997: 78), will show how the ML theory works in practice.

- (12) (*leo*)            [*si-ku-come na books z-angu*]  
       ‘(Today) I didn’t come with my books’ (Swahili/English  
       code-switching)

This sentence, according to Myers-Scotton, shows not only intrasentential code-switching (code-switching within a sentence), but also intra-word code-switching (code-switching within a word). The following explains the example in more detail:

<i>si-ku-come</i>	<i>na books z-angu</i>
one word (which is a verbal phrase)	(prepositional phrase)
the verbal phrase is:	<i>na</i> , preposition
an ML + EL constituent	<i>books</i> , noun, English
<i>si</i> pronoun, first person singular	<i>z-angu</i> , possessive pronoun
<i>ku</i> , tense marker denoting the past, and denoting negation	
<i>come</i> , verb, English	

Note that in this example, the system morphemes (pronouns, tense markers, negative markers and prepositions) are all in Swahili, while the content morphemes (verbs and nouns) are in English. Therefore, the ML is Swahili, while English is the EL.

Myers-Scotton also introduced the idea of *islands* in relation to code-switching, which still falls under the ML model (1998a: 297). There are two kinds of islands, ML islands and EL islands.<sup>7</sup> Islands are generally maximal projections within a CP, for example a noun phrase or a prepositional phrase. ML islands are maximal projections within a CP with all the morphemes from

the matrix language. These are quite expected, since one might anticipate finding both system morphemes and content morphemes from the ML in a CP. However, EL islands are more complicated, since they are maximal projections that occur within a CP and are in the embedded language rather than the matrix language. In other words, a hierarchical phrase from the EL is inserted in the ML.

In a study that concentrates on the syntactic constraints on code-switching and applies the ML hypothesis to Moroccan Arabic/Dutch code-switching, Boumans (1998) finds cases which are difficult to explain under the ML hypothesis and even more so under the other two theories discussed above. He gives examples like the following (1998: 83):

- (13) *beʕd l-xeʕr-at ka-ne-lqa-h f mensa teħt ʕend-na*  
 some det- asp-I-find- in student below at-1pl  
 time-pl pr3msg restaurant  
 'Sometimes I find it [a periodical] in the student restaurant below.'

In this example both Moroccan Arabic and Dutch grammar would assign a definite article to *mensa* because the student restaurant in this example is identifiable by the interlocutors, but there is no article. Thus the NP is neither Dutch nor Arabic in structure.

When applying the ML hypothesis to Moroccan Arabic and French, Lahlou (1991) had to explain some of his examples as EL islands. Note the following example of EL islands:

- (14) *Je devais faire pilote f l'armée de l'air*  
 I would do pilot in det-force of det-air  
 'I was going to become a pilot in the air force.'  
 (Lahlou 1991: 254; Moroccan Arabic/French)

In this example, the determiner and the French noun *l'armée* can be considered an island.

Note also the following example from Bentahila and Davies (1983):

- (15) *Dak la chemise*  
 Dem det-f shirt  
 'That shirt.'  
 (Bentahila and Davies 1983: 317; Moroccan Arabic/French)

Again, the determiner and French noun can be considered an island.

A good example in which the ML is Arabic although the researcher did not apply the ML hypothesis is one given by Rouchdy (1992):

- (16) *huwwa la yu-sammok wa la yu-darnik wa la yu-dar awit*  
 He neg 3msg- and neg 3msg- and neg 3msg- out  
                   smoke  drink  appear  
 ‘He doesn’t smoke and doesn’t drink and doesn’t go out at night.’  
 (Rouchdy 1992: 48; Lebanese or Palestinian Arabic/ English)

The morpho-phonological structure of the English words is, in fact, Arabic. For example, *yu-sammok* originates from the English verb (‘to smoke’) but is inflected for tense, gender and number in Arabic. The same is true for *yu-darnik* which originates from the English verb (‘to drink’). Thus the system morphemes are from Arabic.

A final study that applies the ML model is that conducted by Ziamari (2007) in which she examines the conversations of students in two French schools in Morocco. Zaimari argues that the ML for the students examined is Moroccan Arabic and the EL is French and/or English. She gives examples in which French and English verbs adopt Moroccan Arabic morphology. Note the following examples (2007: 280–1):

- (17) *yetaqli*  
 3msg- établir  
 ‘He will establish.’

In this example the imperfect French verb is inflected for person, number and gender according to Moroccan Arabic morphological rules.

- (18) *Laykiti-na*  
 Like-2fsg-perf-pr1pl  
 ‘You liked us.’

In this example the English verb (‘to like’) is again inflected for person, number and gender according to Moroccan Arabic morphological rules.

In general, I think the ML model is the most promising of them all, for a number of reasons. First, it does not rely on a specific theory of grammar such as government and binding theory. This means that the ML hypothesis is not affected no matter which theory of grammatical structure is adopted. This is, in fact, an essential point since syntacticians have been improving on government and binding theory (see Chomsky 1993). The ML theory in its basic framework does not rely on specific languages which happen to be quite similar, like Spanish and English, for example, but is capable of being used with languages which are quintessentially different in their content morphemes and system morphemes, like Arabic and English. More importantly, Myers-Scotton does not claim that code-switching should be studied with reference to structural constraints only. In fact, she emphasises the inter-

twined role of the discourse and structural aspects of code-switching. She tries, in an unprecedented manner, to formulate a theory that can explain both the discourse function of code-switching and the structural constraints on code-switching. She suggests that by positing an ML, linguists can then start addressing the question more clearly of why people switch between languages, since the ML will be the basis of their hypothesis. Linguists can question why the EL and the ML are used when they are, and how both affect discourse.

Myers-Scotton went on to refine the ML model to make it account for more cases of code-switching. She proposed a 4-M model (2004a: 109) based on the notion that when there is code-switching between two languages, both languages should follow the 'Morpheme order principle', which posits that the structure of the ML is always the preferred structure. This is because languages 'participating in code switching do not have equal roles' (2004a: 110). There are four kinds of morpheme, and not just two as posited earlier in the ML model. They are:

1. *Content morphemes*: These have been discussed above. They are usually viewed as heads of the maximal projection in which they occur, and they give and receive thematic roles. Nouns and verbs fall into this category.
2. *Early system morphemes*: They are called early system morphemes because they occur at an earlier level in language production and are in fact accessed at the same abstract level as content morphemes. Early system morphemes rely on their heads (content morphemes) for information about their forms. They add semantic/pragmatic information to their heads. For example, English determiners add specificity to their heads, and plural markers also add specific information to their head.
3. *Bridges (late system morphemes)*: These do not occur at the same abstract level as early system morphemes. However, they are still dependent on their heads, since they signal information between elements. They too receive information about their form within the immediate maximal projection in which they occur. Note however, that they only connect content morphemes to each other, without specific reference to the semantics of these morphemes. Possession or association fall into this category. Thus the English preposition 'of' fits this category.
4. *Outsider late system morphemes*: These are different from all the morphemes above because their form depends on information outside their maximal projection. Even though their form depends on information that comes from governing verbs or prepositions, they function across maximal projections. Case markers, affixes to nouns and markers on verbs that refer to the subject of the verb (which is not the same maximal projection as the verb itself) all fit into this category (2004a: 111). These morphemes are crucial in determining the ML.

It is difficult to understand how the 4-M model works without concrete examples. In section 2.4.2.1 I apply the 4-M model to my own data.

In the next section, as previously mentioned, I consider diglossic switching as part of code-switching and shed light on some of the studies that try to assign constraints on diglossic switching as part of code-switching.

### 2.4.2 Structural constraints on diglossic switching

In the 1980s, some researchers started to turn their attention to specifying how speakers combine elements from the H and L systems to make ‘mixed’ forms at the word or phrase level. The focus was usually more on the ‘form’ of language rather than the motivations for switching. For example, Eid (1988), in a study of diglossic switching unprecedented in its detail, attempted an analysis of the syntactic constraints on diglossic switching between ECA and MSA. Her study examined switching in four syntactic constructions: relative clauses, subordinate clauses, tense plus verb constructions (proclitic plus verb construction, e.g. *ha*, *b-* prefixes) and negative plus verb constructions (1988: 54). She concluded that the process of switching between ECA and MSA is governed by rules that depend on the sentence position of the element that can be switched, the type of syntactic element involved at the switch, and the direction (ECA→MSA, MSA→ECA) of the switch. El Hassan (1980) also studied the demonstrative system in ESA, in particular the frequency of occurrence of standard and vernacular forms of demonstratives (MSA forms and different vernacular forms) in various types of cross-dialectal communication (between Arabs from different countries, Jordanians and non-Jordanians, Egyptians and non-Egyptians etc.).

Linguists who concentrated on structural constraints on diglossic switching include Boussofara-Omar (1999, 2003, 2006b), (Bassiouney 2003a, 2006) and Mejdell (1999, 2006). Boussofara-Omar used political speeches in Tunisia as the basis of her study and analysed her data in the light of Myers-Scotton’s ML model and 4-M model to explain switching between MSA and TCA. Her data comprised 17 public political speeches by the former president of Tunisia, Habib Bourguiba, delivered between the years 1956 and 1968. The recordings were approximately fourteen hours in length. Mejdell’s study is based on two public seminars held in Egypt. The first was on problems of higher education in Egypt and took place at the American University in Cairo. The second was a literary seminar at which a newly published collection of short stories was discussed, and was held at the premises of a political leftist party in Cairo. The recording of both seminars lasted for two hours. Mejdell examines the possible positions and constraints on switching between ECA and MSA. Both studies will be referred to and exemplified in the next section.

2.4.2.1 *Application of the ML model and the 4-M model to MSA/ECA switching: a case study*

In the following paragraphs I would like to shed light on the results of a study in which both the ML model and the 4-M model were applied to switching between MSA and ECA in different kinds of Egyptian monologues. The data consisted of thirty hours of mosque sermons, university lectures and political speeches. For the sake of clarity MSA will be bold, ECA will be in italics and morphemes that belong to both MSA and ECA (which I call 'neutral morphemes') will be in non-italic. I use the term 'mixed forms' to refer to code-switches that occur between a system morpheme and a content morpheme and that take place in the same projection of a complementiser. For example, in

- (19) *al-qaḍiyya* *di*            **muhimma** **giddan**  
       det-issue    dem-f-sg important    very  
       'This issue is very important.'

*al-qaḍiyya di* is a mixed form, since the MSA content and system morphemes in *al-qaḍiyya* 'the issue' are followed by a system morpheme in ECA *di* 'this', and they both occur in the same projection of the complementiser, *al-qaḍiyya di muhimma giddan* 'This issue is very important.'

The data suggests that although at first glance it seems that the ML in the Egyptian community is ECA while the EL is MSA, Myers-Scotton's idea of an ML does not explain thoroughly what goes on in the Egyptian community. The 4-M model can save some of the problematic examples discussed below. However, the 4-M model yields different results from the ML model. The 4-M model can only explain examples that do not fit the ML model by assuming that the ML is in fact MSA rather than ECA. Nevertheless, Myers-Scotton's theory of 'a composite ML' has more validity in any attempt at explaining the situation in the Egyptian community, and perhaps other communities in the Arab world, as will be clear below.

In the data there are examples of mixed forms consisting of:

1. a negative marker in one code and a verb in another;
2. a demonstrative marker in one code and a noun in another;
3. an aspectual marker (the *b*-prefix) in one code and a verb in another.<sup>8</sup>

Negative markers, demonstratives and aspectual markers are all system morphemes, as mentioned above. They do not assign thematic roles. All the mixed forms that occur in the data can be analysed as follows:

ECA negative marker + MSA verbs



ECA demonstrative marker + MSA nouns  
 ECA aspectual marker (*b*-prefix) + MSA verbs.

There are no examples of the following:  
 MSA negative marker + ECA verbs

- (20) *lam*                    *yiru:h*  
 MSA (neg) ECA (3msg-go)  
 'He did not go.'

MSA demonstrative marker + ECA nouns

- (21) *ha:ʔula:ʔ*                    *r-rigga:la*  
 MSA (dem-m-pl) ECA (n-m-pl)  
 'these men'

MSA verbal marker (e.g. *sawfa*, *sa-*) + ECA verbs

- (22) *sa-*                    *yiru:hu*  
 MSA (fut.) ECA (3pl-go)  
 'They will go.'

At first glance, one may claim that if the three markers, which are system morphemes, are realised in ECA, then, according to the ML hypothesis, the ML tends to be ECA, and the EL is MSA. The basis of switching is an ECA syntactic frame-structure, into which MSA lexical elements are inserted.

One can even find examples in my data to support this view. Note the following:

*Negative markers:*

- (23) *il-ʔi:ma:n* *mif* *ka:fi:*  
 det-belief neg enough  
 'Belief by itself is not enough.'

**System morphemes:**

*il* definite article ECA  
*mif* negative marker ECA

**Content morphemes:**

*ʔi:ma:n* noun (belief) MSA  
*ka:fi:* adjective (enough) MSA

In this example one finds a clear-cut case of one ML at work. The negative marker and the definite article, which are considered by Myers-Scotton as system morphemes, are in ECA, while the content morphemes which assign thematic roles, like nouns and adjectives, are in MSA. Therefore the ML in this example is ECA while the EL is MSA. ECA provides the frame-structure for the sentence, while the speaker fills in the lexical slots with MSA items.

*Demonstratives:*

- (24) *il-ṣaqli da ma:dda*  
 det-mind dem-m-sg substance  
 ‘This mind is a substance.’

**System morphemes:**

*il* definite article ECA

*da* demonstrative marker ECA

**Content morphemes:**

*ṣaqli* noun (‘mind’) MSA

*ma:dda* noun (‘substance’) neutral<sup>9</sup>

Again, in this example the morphemes that do not assign thematic (theta) roles, like the demonstratives and the definite article, are in ECA, while the morphemes that assign theta roles, like nouns, are in MSA. This is another example of the ML being ECA and the EL being MSA.

*The b-prefix:*

- (25) *illi bi-taqaf ṣala ḥo:d il-baḥr il-mutawassiṭ*  
 rel asp-3fsg-fall prep basin/base det-sea det-Mediterranean  
 ‘that lie on the Mediterranean’

**System morphemes:**

*illi* relative marker ECA

*bi-* aspectual marker ECA

*ṣala* preposition neutral

*il* definite article

*il* is a definite article. It is not clear whether the vowel preceding the article is the case ending of the preceding word, or the ECA realisation of the definite article. The definite article in this example can be considered both ECA and MSA.

**Content morphemes:***taqaʕ* verb ('fall') MSA*ho:d* noun ('basin', 'base') ECA*bahr* noun ('sea') neutral*mutawassiʕ* adjective ('middle') neutral in this case because used in a collocation

The system morphemes in this example, like the aspectual marker *b-*, occur in ECA rather than MSA, while the content morphemes like nouns, verbs and adjectives are from both codes, ECA and MSA. But note also that in this example some system morphemes are difficult to classify as belonging to one code rather than another.

Apparently, then (judging from the above examples), one may conclude that the ML in the Egyptian community is ECA, and the EL is MSA. But this neat distinction between system morphemes and content morphemes does not always seem to work. A number of examples in the data pose problems for the ML hypothesis, and although, as was said earlier, the 4-M model can explain some of them, it can only explain them by assuming that the ML is in fact MSA. I think these examples suggest that the situation in the Egyptian community is more complicated. Therefore one may have to abandon the idea of an ML in favour of a more sophisticated framework that can explain more precisely what takes place in the Egyptian community.

Let us consider the following example that poses problems for the ML hypothesis:

- (26) *ka:n*                      *fi*                      *ʔittifa:qat*   *bi-tunaffað*  
to be-3msg-perf   loc-adv   agreements   asp- fsg-pass-implement  
'Agreements were being implemented.'

**System morphemes:***bi-* aspectual marker ECAthe *u-a* theme in the verb *tunaffað* denotes the MSA passive form of the verb (discontinuous passive morpheme)**Content morphemes:***ka:n* verb ('to be') neutral*fi*: dummy verb ('there is') ECA*ʔittifa:qa:t* noun ('agreements') MSA*tunaffað* verb ('to be implemented') MSA

If one accepts the ML-EL hypothesis, then in this example it is difficult to decide what the ML is. As the aspectual marker on the verb is in ECA, one might expect the other ML features to be ECA also, as was the case in the previous examples. In this example one cannot claim that there is

only one ML at work. There is, in fact, a discontinuous system morpheme taken from MSA and a system morpheme taken from ECA. The speaker uses the *b*-prefix, which is an ECA element. However, he applies the discontinuous passive morpheme *u-a* to a verb to passivise it, which is a quintessentially MSA system morpheme. This ‘internal’ form of the passive is not available for him in ECA, in the sense that it cannot be applied to verbs which are exclusively part of the ECA lexicon. Such verbs passivise in ECA by the prefixing of *it-* to the suffix stem and *yit-* (*tit-* for feminine) to the prefix stem. Here are the ECA and MSA counterparts of this example:

(27) **ECA counterpart**

*ka:n*                      *fi:*              *ʔittifaʔa:t*    *bi-titnaffiz*  
 To be-3msg-perf loc-adv agreements asp- fsg-pass-implement  
 ‘Agreements were being implemented.’

(28) **MSA counterpart**

*ka:nat*                      *huna:ka*              *ʔittifa:qa:t*    *tunaffað*  
 To be-3fsg-perf adv-existence agreements fsg-pass-implement  
 ‘Agreements were being implemented.’

Existence is expressed in ECA by a morpheme which is historically a locative adverb *fi:* (in it), which has no morpho-semantic analogue in MSA. In MSA existence is expressed by *yu:ɕgad* (a passive verb, ‘is found’) or *huna:k* (an adverb, ‘there’). The example below illustrates this:

(29) *yu:ʒad*                      *raɕgulun*    *fi*              *al-bayti*  
 msg-pass is found man-nom prep det-house

This means that there should be no possibility of switching between the two systems to express existence – the two systems do not overlap at this point of morpho-syntactic structure. In the example the ECA form has been selected. Similarly, as far as the verb (being implemented) is concerned, the passive form is expressed in MSA by structures that have no morpho-semantic analogue in ECA. Here the MSA form has been selected. (Just as there should be no switching possible between *fi:* and *yu:ɕgad* or *huna:k*, so there should be none possible between *tunaffað* and *titnaffiz*.)

If this is the case, one cannot say that in a sentence such as that quoted as example (26) above, the ML is ECA. The speaker obviously knows specific morpho-syntactic forms of both ECA and MSA, and uses them in this example. The example is also particularly interesting because it has intra-word code-switching: in the same word we have an aspectual morpheme from ECA and a passive morpheme from MSA. In this example we have system

morphemes from two different codes in the same projection of a complementiser, more specifically within the single-word verb.

The 4-M model can save this example. If we divide morphemes into four types then the ML of this example will in fact be MSA. The two system morphemes can be classified differently: *bi*, the aspectual ECA marker, can be considered an early system morpheme, since it adds aspect to its head, which is the verb. Thus it adds information to its head. As an early system morpheme it relies on its head, a content morpheme for its form. On the other hand, the *u-a* theme in the verb *tunaffaḍ*, which denotes the MSA passive form of the verb (discontinuous passive morpheme), can be considered an outsider late system morpheme. This is because its form is dependent on information outside its head. This information is supplied by the noun *ʔittifa:qat* (agreements). In that case, the ML of this clause is, in fact, MSA rather than ECA.

The following examples will pose problems for the ML and yield different results with the 4-M model:

- (30) *ha:ḍa*      *k-kala:m*    *laysa*    *ka:fiyan*  
 dem-m-sg    det-talk    neg      enough-acc  
 ‘This kind of thing is not enough.’

**System morphemes:**

*ha:ḍa* demonstrative MSA  
*k* assimilated definite article ECA  
*laysa* negative marker MSA  
*-an* case marker MSA

**Content morphemes:**

*kala:m* noun (‘talk’) neutral  
*ka:fi:* adjective (‘enough’) MSA

- (31) **ECA counterpart**  
*ik-kala:m*    *da*                      *mif*    *kifa:ya*  
 det-talk    dem-sg-m    neg    enough  
 ‘This kind of thing is not enough.’

- (32) **MSA counterpart**  
*ha:ḍa*      *al-kala:m*    *laysa*    *ka:fiyan*  
 dem-sg-m    det-talk      neg      enough-acc  
 ‘This kind of thing is not enough.’

In this example there are system morphemes from both codes. The MSA demonstrative, case marker and negative markers are used, but also the ECA definite article. Therefore, this example poses problems for the ML hypoth-

esis, but again the 4-M model can save this example. According to the 4-M model the ECA definite article *k* is an early system morpheme, since it adds specificity to its head – it adds information that is semantic in nature to its head. Similarly, it depends on its head for its form. Additionally, the structure of the clause is MSA, since in ECA the demonstrative usually follows the noun rather than precedes it, as is the case in this example. According to the uniform structure principle, the ML has to provide the structure of the morphemes in the clause. Since this is the case, then we can consider the ML to be MSA in this example as well.

- (33) *yurfaʃ*            *ʃanhu*            *t-takli:f*            *da*  
 msg-pass-lift prep-pr3msg det-responsibility dem-m-sg  
 ‘And this responsibility is lifted off his back.’

**System morphemes:**

*u-a* passive morpheme MSA  
*ʃan-* preposition (‘from’) neutral  
*-hu* third person pronoun MSA  
*t-* definite article MSA or ECA  
*da* demonstrative ECA

**Content morphemes:**

*yurfaʃ* verb (‘raised’) MSA  
*takli:f* noun (‘responsibility’) neutral

(34) **ECA counterpart**

*wi yitrafaʃ*            *ʃannu*            *t-takli:f*            *da*  
 And msg-pass-lift prep-pr3msg det-responsibility dem-m-sg  
 ‘And this responsibility is lifted off his back.’

(35) **MSA counterpart**

*yurfaʃ*            *ʃanhu*            *ha:ða*            *t-takli:f*  
 msg-pass-lift prep-pr3msg dem-m-sg det-responsibility  
 ‘And this responsibility is lifted off his back.’

The speaker uses MSA content morphemes. He also uses MSA system morphemes, except for the ECA demonstrative. Therefore there are system morphemes from both codes, MSA and ECA. Again, in this example it is difficult to claim that ECA is the ML while MSA is the EL. Moreover, as with the previous examples, there are system morphemes that are difficult to categorise as ECA or MSA. The definite article is a case in point. The 4-M model would predict that the ML in this example is MSA. The passive MSA morpheme *u-a* is an outsider late system morpheme; its form depends on information

outside its head, the verb. Further, the MSA third person pronoun is considered an outsider late system morpheme since it refers to information outside its maximal projection: the person whom this responsibility is lifted off. The definite article, which is considered an early morpheme, as explained in the earlier examples, can be either MSA or ECA. The ECA demonstrative *da* is also considered an early system morpheme, as explained earlier.

#### 2.4.2.1.1 Examples that pose problems for the 4-M model

- (36) *il-mawḍu:ʕ da ka:n ʕuriḍ ʕala l-muʔtamar*  
 det-issue to be-3msg msg-pass prep det-conference  
 dem-m-sg -perf present  
*il-islami*  
 det-Islamic  
 ‘This issue was presented to the Islamic Conference.’

#### System morphemes:

*il* definite article ECA

*da* demonstrative ECA

*u-i* discontinuous passive morpheme MSA

*ʕala* preposition (‘at’, ‘on’) neutral

*l* definite article probably MSA, but I am not sure

*il* definite article; again, the vowel of the article may in fact belong to the word preceding it (MSA), or to the article, in which case the article is ECA

#### Content morphemes:

*mawḍu:ʕ* noun (‘issue’) neutral

*ka:n* verb (‘to be’) neutral

*ʕuriḍ* verb (‘to be presented’) MSA

*muʔtamar* noun (‘conference’) by itself neutral, but the preceding article can make it ECA or MSA

*islami* adjective (‘Islamic’) neutral

#### (37) ECA counterpart

- il-mawḍu:ʕ da ʔitʕaraḍ ʕala l-muʔtamar il-islami*  
 det-issue dem-m-sg msg-pass-perf prep det- det-Islamic  
 present conference  
 ‘This issue was presented to the Islamic Conference.’

#### (38) MSA counterpart

- ha:ða al-mawḍu:ʕ ka:n qad ʕuriḍ ʕala l-muʔtamar*  
 dem- det-issue 3msg-to qad msg-pass- to det-conference  
 m-sg be-perf present

*al-islami*  
det-Islamic

'This issue was presented to the Islamic Conference.'

In this last example the speaker uses an ECA system morpheme, the demonstrative *da*, as well as an MSA system morpheme, the discontinuous s-stem passive morpheme *u-i*, in the same CP. Even with content morphemes, one encounters the problem that several items are shared by the two codes.

The 4-M model will consider the MSA discontinuous passive morpheme *u-i* to be the only outsider late system morpheme, which will yield the ML as MSA. However, there is a problem for the ML because in a pure MSA structure, one has to add the morpheme *qad* to the structure of the clause. Thus one may claim that this example violates the uniform structure principle.

(39) *yaʕni b-yibʔa fi:h ʕima:ya fi: haðihi l-mana:ʕiq*  
msg- asp-3msg- prep protection prep dem-f-sg det-areas  
means become

'That is to say, there was protection in these places.'

**System morphemes:**

*b-* prefix ECA aspectual marker

*fi* preposition ECA or MSA

*haðihi* demonstrative MSA

*l* definite article MSA

**Content morphemes:**

*yaʕni* verb ('to mean') neutral

*yibʔa* verb ('to become') ECA

*fi:h* dummy verb ('there is') ECA

*ʕima:ya* noun ('protection') neutral

*mana:ʕiq* noun ('places') MSA

**(40) ECA counterpart**

*yaʕni b-yibʔa fi:h ʕima:ya fi l-mana:ʕiʔ di/*  
msg- asp-3msg- prep protection prep det-areas dem-f-sg  
means become

'That is to say, there was protection in these places.'

**(41) MSA counterpart**

*ha:ða yaʕni ʔanna huna:ka ʕima:ya fi: haðihi l-mana:ʕiq/*  
Dem- msg- that adv protection prep dem- det-areas  
m-sg means f-sg

'That is to say, there was protection in these places.'



In this example the content morphemes that occur are from both codes. This is expected under the ML hypothesis. The problem is that the system morphemes that occur are also from both codes. The *b*-prefix is an ECA system morpheme and it occurs this time with an ECA verb *yibʔa* ('to become'), but the demonstrative, which is also a system morpheme, is in MSA. There are system morphemes from more than one code in the same projection of a complementiser. Besides, as with the example in (30), there are system morphemes that are difficult to classify as MSA or ECA, like the preposition *fi*.

According to the 4-M model the system morphemes that occur, excluding the preposition which is used in both varieties, are all early system morphemes. The ECA aspectual marker *b-* is lexically related to its head, the verb, and it also denotes meaning to its head. The MSA demonstrative is another early system morpheme, because again it adds meaning to its head; the noun *mana:ʔiq* ('places') is also dependent in its form (the feminine singular) on this head. The MSA definite article *l* is also an early system morpheme since it denotes meaning to its head. There is no clear ML in this example.

Now note the following example:

- (42) *ḥarakit il-ḥaya:h ma-tantazim-fi ʔilla bi:ha*  
 Cycle det-life neg 3fsg-organise-neg except with-pr3fsg  
 'Life does not function without it.'

(43) **ECA counterpart**

*ḥarakit il-ḥaya:h ma-tibʔa:-f munazzama ʔilla bi:ha*  
 Cycle det-life neg-3fsg-become- organised except with-pr3fsg  
 neg

(44) **MSA counterpart**

*ḥarakat al-ḥaya:h la tantazimu sima biha*  
 Cycle det-life neg 3fsg-organise-ind except with-pr3fsg

The negation in this example is in ECA, but the verb is in MSA; although there is no mood marking, the vowel pattern is that of MSA. What is of interest here is that the ECA counterpart of this example will in fact yield a different structure. Thus according to the 4-M model the structure of this sentence is an MSA one. Since the negation here refers to *ḥarakit il-ḥaya:h*, and it is not directly related to its immediate head *tantazim*, then one can consider it an ECA outsider late system morpheme. In this example, there is a clear composite of two MLs: MSA and ECA.

It is worth mentioning that Boussofara-Omar (2003: 40), when analysing data in the light of the 4-M model, found some similar problematic examples of switching between MSA and TCA. The following is one of them.

- (45) *ma-sa-ta-qif-f*  
 neg-fut-3fsg-cease-neg  
 'It will not cease to be.'  
 The TCA counterpart would be:

- (46) *Mu:f be:f te:qif*  
 neg fut 3fsg-cease  
 'It will not cease to be.'  
 The MSA counterpart would be:

- (47) *Lan taqifa*  
 fut-neg 3fsg-cease-sub  
 'It will not cease to be.'

The problem in this example arises from the fact that there are system morphemes from TCA and MSA in the same CP. The future marker *sa* is in MSA and can be considered an early system morpheme since it adds information to its head, while the negative marker *ma-f* is TCA and can also be considered an early system morpheme since it also adds information to its head, the verb. However, the tense person morpheme *ta* is MSA, and can be considered an outsider late system morpheme since it depends on information from outside its head, the verb; it derives its information from the subject. Boussofara claims that the ML in this example is TCA while the EL is MSA. But she admits that this is difficult to explain according to both the ML and the 4-M models.

Note that the structure of an ECA negative marker in combination with an MSA future marker and an MSA verb does not occur in my data. This seems to be a structure that occurs in Tunisia but not in Egypt. Thus the following example is a possible structure in Egypt:

- (48) *ma-tagif-f*  
 neg-3fsg-stop-neg  
 'It will not cease to be.'

However, the following combination is awkward, to say the least, and perhaps not possible for an Egyptian speaker:

- (49) *ma-sa-ta-qif-f*  
 neg-fut-3fsg-stop-neg  
 'It will not cease to be.'

ECA negation does not permit a future marker from MSA. This is evidence that intrasentential code-switching between MSA and different colloquials

is to a great extent dependent on the community being studied, and on the exposure of this community to MSA as well as the means of this exposure, whether it is in schools, clubs or the political arena, or on television.

These examples resist interpretation within the framework of diglossia, and challenge ideas about syntactic constraints on code-switching. First, most linguists studying diglossia have not explained cases of switching of this sort, and have tended to study ECA and MSA variables separately. Although Mitchell (1986: 9) acknowledges the existence of a code that he calls 'ESA' (see Chapter 1), he does not explain the rules and patterns that govern it. There have been few practical attempts to study the use of these variables in actual data (cf. Boussofara-Omar 2003, 2006b; Mejdell 2006). The two constraints theory (Sankoff and Poplack 1981) and the government principle (DiSciullo et al. 1986) fall short of explaining the above examples. For example, both would predict that there would be no switching between an aspectual marker like the *b*-prefix and a verb.<sup>10</sup> They would predict that both have to be in the same code, which is not the case in many examples in my data. More importantly, the ML hypothesis cannot really explain this phenomenon. The ML hypothesis predicts that all system morphemes will be in the ML, and here we see examples of system morphemes from two different codes being used together in the same word and not just in the same clause or CP. The 4-M model would in fact yield opposite results. It would predict that MSA may be the ML for most of the examples.

It is only fair to say that Myers-Scotton did not set off to explain diglossia and that most of the linguists analysing constraints on code-switching were more interested in switching between different languages: bilingual switching rather than diglossic switching. However, if linguists argue that both diglossic switching and code-switching should be studied within the same framework, since the definitions of code-switching given at the beginning of this chapter render code-switching an inclusive rather than an exclusive term, then one would expect theories of code-switching to explain diglossic switching as well. The data above makes it clear that although theories of code-switching can help explain diglossic switching, the situation in diglossic communities is different in many ways and more complicated in others. This does not imply that one should abandon the inclusive definition of code-switching, but rather that within this inclusive definition, one can find a way of explaining the peculiarities of the diglossic situation. I propose that there are two MLs at work here: ECA and MSA. I make this proposition for the following reasons.

First, one might expect that the basis of switching in these monologues would be an ECA syntactic substructure, into which MSA lexical elements would be inserted. This is generally true in the case of the three variables chosen for analysis, but some examples proved to be more problematic, even with the 4-M model. The idea of a single frame-structure (an ML) falls short of explaining the last examples (26, 30, 33, 36, 39) for a number of reasons.

First, the ML hypothesis is based on the idea that there is always only one ML at a time. As previously stated, Myers-Scotton's main hypothesis is that 'languages can sustain structural incursion and remain robust, but the taking in of alien inflections and function words is often a step leading to language attrition and language death' (1998a: 289). That is to say, once there is more than one ML at a time, then this is often an indicator of language death; for example, the taking of inflections and function words from a code other than the ML is a step towards language attrition and death. As shown in all the above examples, there sometimes seems to be more than one ML at work. Although the theory of ML is indeed valid in certain cases, it does not seem to give a clear-cut picture of what goes on in this diglossic community.

Second, as noted earlier, the ML model claims to account for classic code-switching and not necessarily diglossic switching, although it has been applied to diglossic switching (cf. Boussofara-Omar 2003, 2006). What makes the model difficult to apply is the fact that in some examples it is difficult to decide whether a certain morpheme belongs to ECA or MSA. The MSA definite article is (*v*)*l*, where *v* stands for a vowel that has no value of its own, the vowel quality of the article (*a*, *i*, *u*) changing according to its position and function in the sentence. The ECA article is (*i*)*l*-. It is, therefore, sometimes difficult to classify actual examples of usage (*il*-) as MSA or ECA. In addition, some prepositions (which are system morphemes) are shared by both codes. (Note also that it is sometimes difficult to decide what a system morpheme is, since, for example, some prepositions can also assign thematic roles. This problem, however, cannot be dealt with here.)

ECA and MSA are different codes but with a lot of shared content and system morphemes, and it is almost impossible at times to say whether a certain morpheme belongs to ECA or to MSA. Thus, it is not easy to come up with one ML, since it is sometimes difficult to decide which code is being used in the first place. I argue that the existence of two codes that are partially overlapping and partially distinct, as in Arabic, may cause problems for both the ML and the 4-M model.

Unlike other theories, such as the two constraints theory (Sankoff and Poplack 1981), the ML model seems to work better with languages/codes that are typologically different, i.e. codes with different morpheme systems, like Arabic and English, or Turkish and French, than it does with closely related languages, like German and Dutch, or two codes from the same language, like ECA and MSA.

The idea of islands, discussed earlier, seems to permit the occurrence of system morphemes from the EL, under the condition that these system morphemes occur with content morphemes from the EL as well in a maximal projection (NP, PP etc.) that is still governed by the CP. This condition limits the occurrence of islands. For instance, in example (29), one cannot claim that there is an EL island and that there is only one ML (which is ECA)

at work, since in the verb *bi-tunaffaḍ* there is switching within a maximal projection, and thus this example cannot be explained by the idea of islands, at least not as it is currently formulated. There are system morphemes from both codes within this word. In example (30), one can consider *laysa ka:fiyan* an EL island since it is a maximal projection, but *ha:ḍa k-kala:m* will still pose the same problem of two MLs at work within one maximal projection, since there are system morphemes from two different codes in the same NP. Example (39) may be explained using the idea of islands: one may claim that *haḍihi l-mana:ṭiq* is an EL island and the ML is ECA. However, this example still poses problems for the 4-M model. In addition, one cannot use the idea of islands in order to explain examples (33) or (36), because in both there is switching between two different codes within a maximal projection. Therefore there is only one example that can be explained by using the idea of islands, while all the other examples still pose the same problem of having more than one ML, or having a completely different ML according to the 4-M model. The idea of islands falls short in explaining these examples because it does not take into account mixed forms. Similarly, while the ML fails to explain the problematic examples, the 4-M model can in fact explain most of them. However, the 4-M model would predict that in the problematic examples the ML is in fact MSA.

#### 2.4.2.1.2 *A predictable composite*

Myers-Scotton (1998a) has proposed another idea to explain some cases of code-switching. This is the idea of a so-called composite ML (1998a: 299). She posits that when there is a change in progress in a bilingual community, the ML is a composite, based on structures from both codes, but moving towards the new ML. Eventually the change in progress is completed, and a language shift follows, with the new code playing the role of an ML. Myers-Scotton (1998a: 310–12) supports her hypothesis by giving evidence from other linguistic studies on code-switching, such as Bolonyai's (1996) study.

Bolonyai gives an example of a young Hungarian girl who lives in the USA with her parents, and how her ML changes from Hungarian to a composite of Hungarian and English, with the new ML finally becoming English. The following example demonstrates the use of a composite ML.

- (50) *Mom, en meg-find-t-am a ket quarters-t*  
 Mom 1sg perf-find-past-1sg det two quarters-acc  
 'Mom, I found two quarters.' (Bolonyai 1996: 12)

Although Hungarian is a pro-drop language, the girl uses an overt subject (*en*, 1sg). This is an example of convergence to English. The verb, which is a content morpheme, is English ('find'), but the tense marker, which is a system morpheme, is in Hungarian. The word *quarters-t* is an English word with an

English system morpheme (*s*) and a Hungarian system morpheme (*t*), which is a Hungarian case marker. There are different system morphemes from two different codes in the same projection of a complementiser, in fact, and even in the same word. Therefore the ML is a composite. In this example, a composite ML is leading to language change, because eventually English will become the ML.

Now let us consider again example (30) from my data, repeated here as example (51), in which the ML is a composite.

(51) *ha:ða k-kala:m la:ysa ka:fiyan*  
 ‘This kind of thing is not enough.’

In this example the ML is a composite of both ECA and MSA, since there are system morphemes from both codes. The idea of a composite ML can help us explain what is going on in the Egyptian speech community. The problem with this hypothesis is that one cannot just claim that there is change in progress in Egypt, whether language shift or language death. The situation of the Hungarian girl in the USA is different from that of Egyptians in Egypt.

There is, however, something similar in all the Egyptian monologues analysed: the speakers are all educated, and have thus been exposed to MSA. They are all over 40; that is to say, their exposure to MSA has been over quite a long period. I think there are certain system morphemes from both MSA and ECA which they have internalised. But again, it is quite difficult to say that these speakers have an ECA substructure only (an ECA ML). The ECA substructure may be dominant but they still make use of certain MSA system morphemes. Their ML is not just ECA (although it verges on it); it is a composite. The fact that their ML is a composite does not necessarily mean that one code is changing or dying, and it does not mean that one code will take the place of another. Children are exposed to MSA from their first year in school in Egypt. MSA is, in other words, part of the average educated Egyptian’s everyday existence.<sup>11</sup> This systematic exposure to MSA is perhaps different from one country to another in the Arab world, with the result that there are different possible forms for each community, as was made clear in example (45), discussed above, from Boussofara-Omar’s Tunisian data. Therefore language policies in the Arab world have an input in shaping and modifying structural constraints on code-switching (see Chapter 5).

Myers-Scotton later (2004a: 116) says, about composite code-switching, that ‘little systematic analysis of this type of CS (code switching) exists to date’. In the next paragraphs I would like to show some forms that do and do not occur in relation to my data and other data too. These forms are predictable in the sense that they tend to occur frequently and regularly when speakers switch between MSA and ECA. Thus one can posit that structural constraints on diglossic switching in Egypt can be explained in the light of a

predictable composite in which system morphemes occur from both codes: MSA and ECA.

An MSA salient system morpheme that occurs frequently in a composite ML structure is the MSA discontinuous passive morpheme. This morpheme is considered a system morpheme. As was made clear in the examples above, the speakers analysed used the MSA passive form rather than the ECA one; see examples (26), (33) and (36). This was, in fact, prevalent in my data.

However, Boussofara-Omar (2006b), when discussing diglossic switching between MSA and TCA, analysed a number of examples in which the passive is realised in MSA.

- (52) *Haḍaya yuḍkar*                                 *fa yuḥkar*  
Dem     3msg-imp-pass-mention     so 3msg-imp-pass-thank  
‘This should be mentioned and thanked for.’

Boussofara-Omar, however, posits that in Tunisia, MSA verb stems inflected with MSA tense affixes tend to occur in frozen expressions, as in the example above (2006b: 71). This may mean that with regard to the realisation of the MSA passive Egypt is indeed different from Tunisia. This may also be related to language policies in both countries, which will be discussed in Chapter 5. One can only make tentative predictions at this stage but it is indeed a phenomenon worth more investigation.

ECA salient features that occur frequently in my data include the ECA aspectual marker *b-* with MSA verbs. This aspectual marker occurs even with pure MSA verbs. Mejdell (2006: 389) also noted this in her study and posits that although ‘its representation in script violates orthography [and] its phonetic value is distinct’ it still appears even when speakers try hard to stick to MSA. She gives the following example in which the *b-*prefix is affixed to an MSA verb (2006: 352):

- (53) *b-yataga: maz-ha*  
asp-3msg-overcome-pr3fsg  
‘He overcomes it.’

The verb is realised in MSA. The ECA counterpart would be *yitga:wiz*.

Additionally, the following are the predictable structures discussed earlier that can be deduced from my data: a negative marker in ECA and a verb in MSA are a possible combination, while a negative marker in MSA and a verb in ECA do not occur together. The same is true for demonstratives: a demonstrative in ECA and a noun in MSA are possible, but the opposite does not occur.

One needs more data to reach definite conclusions about the structural patterns that occur in diglossic switching and more studies are definitely needed

that concentrate on structural constraints on diglossic switching in the Arab world.

Next, I would like to discuss studies that concentrate on motivations for and discourse functions of code-switching and diglossic switching.

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## 2.5 MOTIVATIONS FOR CODE-SWITCHING

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### 2.5.1 Motivations and discourse functions of classic code-switching

Before Gumperz (1976), Weinreich (1953: 73) claimed that people switch because of the environment around them and because of a certain speech event or situation. For example, a university lecturer is likely to use a formal code when he delivers a lecture because of the environment surrounding him, i.e. because he is in a lecture room, and because he is discussing a non-personal topic. He is expected by the audience to speak in a formal code. If, after the lecture, while he is walking home, a student asks him about a more personal subject, then the situation is different. He may take the student aside and speak in a different code (a less formal one).<sup>12</sup> Thus, according to Weinreich, the nature of the speech event (here 'talking about personal matters') triggers the switch that occurs. From this perspective, switching depends on the topic first and then the participants. The two factors together create a speech event. However, according to this perspective, participants do not exercise choice, but it is the speech event that determines everything. Gumperz questions these assumptions.

According to Gumperz (1982a: 61), the speaker is not just a pawn controlled by the situation. In fact, the opposite is true: it is the speaker who manipulates the situation. That is to say, the speaker, rather than the speech event, is the prime mover in code-switching: 'Rather than claiming that speakers use language in response to a fixed predetermined set of prescriptions, it seems more reasonable to assume that they build on their own and their audience's abstract understanding of situational norms, to communicate metaphoric information about how they intend their words to be understood.' Thus, the individual plays the key creative role in code-switching.

Gumperz's importance, in our understanding of code-switching, also arises from the fact that he treats code-switching as a phenomenon worthy of analysis and study in its own right. He introduced the distinction between situational and metaphorical code-switching (Blom and Gumperz 1972). Situational code-switching is motivated by factors external to the participants, like setting, topic or change in social situation (as in Weinreich above). Metaphorical code-switching, on the other hand, is motivated by the individuals themselves, and is related to the individuals' perception of and presentation of themselves in relation to external factors such as setting, topic or social situation. For example, Blom and Gumperz (1972: 434) point out that



if students in the Norwegian fishing village of Hemnesberget choose to use the standard dialect (after using the non-standard one), they may do so not only because the topic has changed, but also because the use of the standard dialect signals the students' shared group membership as intellectuals. Thus, the students as individuals take account of the fact that all the participants in an interaction (their audience) share the same well-educated background, and use that group's dialect. In this example, using one code rather than another has a discourse function of identifying the speaker with a specific social group.

Additionally, Gumperz later (1982a: 95) discusses for the first time the 'we' and 'they' dichotomy. There are two different codes used by speakers generally: the 'we' code and the 'they' code. The socially inclusive 'we' code is associated with home and family bonds, while the socially distanced 'they' code is associated with public interactions.

Gumperz (1982a: 75–84) identified the following functions for code-switching. According to him, people typically switch for the following purposes:

1. quotations<sup>13</sup>
2. to specify the addressee as the recipient of the message
3. reiterations and interjections
4. to qualify a message
5. to differentiate between what is personal and what is general.

Romaine (1995: 161–2) summarises Gumperz's functions, and also claims that switching can serve the following purposes:

1. as sentence fillers
2. to clarify or emphasise a point
3. to shift to a new topic
4. to mark the type of discourse
5. to specify a social arena.

Safi (1992: 75), examining the speech of male and female Saudi students in the USA, uses Gumperz's model of functions of code-switching to analyse her data. Her data comprised two hours of tape recording. The speakers were enrolled in undergraduate and graduate courses. She had one female informant who was 28 years old and two male informants who were 19 and 33 years old. All informants had been in the USA for at least a year. She found that students switch from English to Saudi colloquial Arabic when they aim at arousing religious or spiritual feelings, as in the following examples:

- (54) *They had a beautiful mubxara.*  
'They had a beautiful incense burner.'

- (55) *They used a big piece of tomb-i-kaṣba for decoration.*  
 ‘They used a big piece of the black dress of the kaṣba.’

In fact these switches refer to referents that have no exact equivalent in English, and the English equivalents do not carry the emotional load that the Arabic ones would for Saudis or Muslims more generally. Safi also noted that SCA is usually used as sentence fillers, as Gumperz predicts. Sentence fillers in SCA include words like *yaṣni* ‘it means’ and *zayn* ‘good’. English sentence fillers include ‘OK’.

In a similar vein, Wernberg-Moller (1999: 238) analysed the speech of eight Moroccans living in Edinburgh.<sup>14</sup> Wernberg-Moller was interested mainly in first-generation immigrants ranging in age from 34 to 49. This first generation had lived there for between seventeen and twenty-two years. They mostly had very little education and were manual workers. Her data was gathered in 1994 and the interviewers spoke Moroccan Arabic to the informants. The study gives an illustration of situational code-switching: an informant is describing in English a book that she read, which possibly, although it is not clear, was also written in English. While she is doing so, another informant, her mother, enters the room and interrupts. The first speaker gets distracted and starts speaking to her mother in Arabic.

- (56) SA: *it's based on a girl it's like it goes through different . . . it's like . . . y'know it goes through in stages like y'know you've got a seed time, harvest time . . . em.*  
 ZA: *qulha b-lṣarabiyya!*  
 ‘Tell her in Arabic!’  
 SA: *manṣraffi kayff nqulha b-lṣarabiyya and those times y'know are sort of like . . . it's like a circle y'know how things change.*  
 ‘I do not know how to tell her in Arabic, and those times you know are sort of like . . . it's like a circle you know how things change.’

When the first speaker turns her attention back to the interviewers, she switches back to English. When she speaks to her mother, she speaks in Arabic.

Wernberg-Moller (1999) even compares this study to the one done by Gumperz in Norway, noting that the Moroccan community in Edinburgh is different from the community in Norway. The former is not yet a well-established community. Its members use different languages for different activities. Thus, Arabic is used in religious activities and at home, for example, while English is used outside the home. In fact, excessive English at home is viewed with disapproval by the Moroccan immigrant community.

Note the following example, in which the speaker compares and contrasts how old people are cared for in Britain and the Arab world (Wernberg-Moller 1999: 245):

- (57) *Wledha, bnetha, awledha, . . . katimfi l- nursing home . . . katimfi l- . . . lhosbitar. He look after it . . . h̄hna ṣandna ṣayb! . . . h̄hna ṣandna ṣayb! . . . makaynf. . . kayn sbita . . . lima f̄hal lima lmra li ma-ṣandha-foo rradḡal li ma-ṣandu-f̄hata fi li yqablu kayimfi l-sbitar, huma yqablu θat tmma Hata ymut*

‘Her son, her daughter, she goes to a nursing home. She goes to hospital where they take care of her. We think that is a bad thing (with us bad), we think that is a bad thing (with us bad)<sup>15</sup> we don’t have it! (it isn’t there)<sup>16</sup> . . . there are hospitals . . . when, for example, when the woman who doesn’t have anything or the man who doesn’t have even someone (something) to look after him, he goes to the hospital (and) they look after (him) there until he dies.’

According to Wernberg-Moller this represents an example of metaphorical code-switching since there is no change in setting at all. Hospital is referred to twice, once as *hosbitar* (a wrong pronunciation of the English word) and once as *isbitar*. The English use refers to establishments in Britain and the Moroccan Arabic use refers to hospitals in Morocco. In addition, the ‘we’ and ‘they’ dichotomy is of use here. The speaker contrasts ‘our’ way of life and ‘their’ way of life. The British way of life is not looked upon favourably.

Another discourse function of code-switching mentioned by Wernberg-Moller is that of authority and factuality. English is associated with these, as in the example below (1999: 254):

- (58) AA: *hedi, hedi [this is, this is] important taṣarafha*  
 ‘This is important that you know it.’

Note also that Arabic is used when speaking about something personal and English is used when trying to be objective, as in the example below:

- (59) AA: *a rasi! a rasi! you need just somebody to cure you!*  
 ‘Oh my head! Oh my head! You just need somebody to cure you.’

Note that the postulation that English is associated with factuality and authority is only a very general one and much more data is required to prove that it is valid. In addition, in Wernberg-Moller’s study the informants were aware that the recording would be used for linguistic research. They in fact ‘viewed the recording as an excellent means by which the researcher could learn more about their language and dialect in particular’. This could have posed a methodological problem for the research since the code used may have been a reaction to the participants’ knowledge that they were being recorded by a linguist. Such problems are difficult to deal with and will be discussed in Chapter 3.

In a different vein, Goffman (1981) discusses the individual as a speaker

who plays different roles and who uses language to mark each new role he or she plays. Everyone plays different roles with different people in different situations. This is what Goffman calls 'a change in footing', i.e. a change in the frame of an event. By 'frame' he means that it is a change in the way speakers perceive both each other and the situation. It is noteworthy, however, that when Goffman speaks about change in footing he refers not just to the bilingual, but also to the monolingual who uses different codes in different situations. According to Romaine (1995), code-switching is merely 'changing of hats', which all speakers engage in all the time. People spontaneously manipulate their language for their own needs, continuously changing their attitude and style.<sup>17</sup>

To summarise, Gumperz and others have emphasised the controlling role of the speaker and have listed speaker-initiated factors in code-switching. Although there have been few criticisms of Gumperz's model, it still has its limitations.

In general, functional approaches to social phenomena necessarily represent incomplete taxonomies, and we could even expect them to, because in contrast to formal taxonomies which begin with an assumption of comprehensiveness and exclusivity of categories, functional taxonomies begin with the assumption that new functions may be uncovered and are generally expected to be. Likewise, most would assume that a switch can simultaneously serve multiple purposes.

Gumperz's division of code-switching into two types – situational and metaphorical – is in practice not always easy to make, and it presupposes that there are different motivations for each type of code-switching. Myers-Scotton (1993: 55) questions the viability of this division, and claims that there are a lot of similarities between situational and metaphorical code-switching, to the extent that they should be accounted for in one theory of code-switching. Auer and Di Luzio (1984: 91) also think that this distinction should be replaced by a continuum. One has to admit that even Gumperz himself moves away from this distinction (1982a) and emphasises the role of metaphorical rather than situational code-switching. In *Discourse Strategies* (1982a: 59), the title of the chapter on code-switching is 'Conversational code-switching', rather than 'metaphorical' or 'situational' code-switching. The point of emphasis in his theory is the individual in relation to codes. Gumperz gave credit to the individual in code-switching in an unprecedented manner. He claims that code-switching is a creative act with the individual playing the major role. However, Myers-Scotton (1993: 59–60) finds problems with this idea. She contests that placing a great deal of emphasis on the individual's creative role in code-switching may make one lose sight of the general nature of the process, since, in her view, code-switching is a rule-governed phenomenon and should be studied as such. She argues that Gumperz views each interaction between people in its own right: 'One must believe in the possibility of generalising

across interactions in order to build explanatory theories, I argue. It is not at all clear that Gumperz has this belief' (1993: 59). She also argues that this emphasis on the individual may 'promote individualised ad hoc explanations' for code-switching (1993: 62).<sup>18</sup>

Another point which Myers-Scotton objects to is that Gumperz and others give lists of functions of code-switching. These lists are useful in explaining why people switch in a certain community, but they fall short of explaining and organising motivations for code-switching in a 'coherent theoretical framework' (1993: 63). There is a distinction between the rhetorical significance of code-switching, which highlights functions of switching, and the interactional significance of switching, which highlights motivations for switching. One needs a theory that can explain code-switching as a universal phenomenon and not as a phenomenon peculiar to one speech community rather than another. Also, these lists can never be exhaustive, because they are linked to communities and how they vary.

In short, what seems to be lacking in Gumperz's analysis are more abstract tools or ideas that can account for what goes on in code-switching. His analysis as well as that of his successors is too descriptive, to the extent that one cannot make generalisations. What is needed is a theory that explains the functions of code-switching at a level of abstraction that applies in both bilingual and monolingual societies, i.e. a universal theory.

I will now examine three theories that attempt to explain code-switching without recourse to lists of its discourse functions or motivations. I will concentrate on the third theory, as in my opinion it is the most valid one. These three theories are the accommodation theory propounded by Giles et al. (1987), the social arena theory of Scotton and Ury (1977) and finally the markedness theory of Myers-Scotton (1993).

Howard Giles et al. (1987) use what they term 'accommodation theory' to explain the social motivations for code-switching among other interaction phenomena. They claim that in social interactions speakers desire their listener's social approval and modify their speech in the direction of the listener's code to get this approval. This is called 'convergence' or 'accommodation'. In some circumstances, however, the speaker may want to differentiate himself or herself from the listener. He or she will do this by emphasising the difference between them through choice of code. This is called 'speech divergence'. Heller (1982: 108–18), in a study carried out in Montreal, gave an example of divergence. She showed that some people in the bilingual city of Montreal find it problematic to communicate with other fellow citizens because the latter, for political, national or cultural reasons, refuse to code-switch from one language to another (English and French). Thus, refusing to switch can serve an individual's purposes just as much as switching. It can convey a negative feeling or attitude towards a rival group, and it is one of the strategies used in maintaining and reinforcing boundaries between groups.

A second model was that proposed by Scotton and Ury (1977), who use the idea of 'social arena'. They argue that there are three universal social arenas which affect code choice: identity, power and transaction. A speaker switches to different codes to define the interaction taking place in terms of a certain social arena or to keep it undefined. The first universal social arena is identity: a speaker switches according to the identity of the person he or she is speaking to, as well as according to his or her own identity. The second social arena is power: code-switching also depends on the power that one has over others, or the power that others have over one. The third social arena is transaction: code-switching depends on the situation, and on the purpose of the speech act. A speaker may not be sure about the social arena: he or she may not be sure about the status of the other person, for example. In that case he or she uses a code which will help keep the interaction undefined. Myers-Scotton (1986: 408) gives the example of a brother and a sister in western Kenya who were conversing in the brother's shop. The sister wanted to have special treatment from her brother, so she used their shared mother tongue. He, on the other hand, replied in Swahili to show her that he was treating her as a customer in his store. The sister chose to emphasise her identity as a sister rather than her identity as a customer in her brother's shop. She used code choice to do so. He, on the other hand, did not accept the identity that she assigned herself. I think to some extent one can say that the sister expected to have power over the brother, and, therefore, to receive special treatment, a better price, a better cut of meat etc. In the end his power as shopkeeper prevailed over her power as his sister. The brother and sister also did not agree on the kind of transaction taking place. The brother wanted the situation to be that of a customer and a shopkeeper, but the sister did not want that. The brother refused to act within the social arena the sister assigned to him and chose another one instead.

Myers-Scotton (1993) proposes a third theory which tries to explain code-switching as a universal, rule-governed phenomenon. She contends that the fact that people switch from one code to another or from one language to another does not necessarily mean that this switching has a social motivation. Code-switching in itself does not have to denote any effect, nor does it necessarily have any discourse function. Code-switching can be used as the unmarked variety of certain communities (as the normal linguistic behaviour). It can be used with no particular social motivation behind it; although for an outsider to this community it does carry a social message, for an insider it is the norm. Labov (1971: 462) gives an example of switching with no social motivation in mind, in which a young African American boy switched between two different codes: Black English vernacular and Standard English. The boy was describing a game of skelly (a New York street game). Labov found the following:

1. Switching sites are often difficult to limit, since many items are shared by both systems, the Vernacular and the Standard.
2. The speaker switches between both systems at least sixteen times in the same stretch of discourse without any apparent motivation.

Labov therefore considers it unproductive to regard this as code-switching.

Romaine, however (1995: 171), posits that this can be considered code-switching since this kind of switching does not only occur in the USA, but in other places too. She contends that this case of code-switching is similar to the one examined by Gumperz for Delhi, between Panjabi and Hindi (1982a: 85). Gumperz suggests that the two codes appear indistinguishable phonetically and almost identical in syntax and lexicon as a result of convergence and borrowing.

Myers-Scotton also argues that whether code-switching has a discourse function or a social motivation depends on both the speaker and the audience. Both are aware of what is conventionally expected from them in a community. This idea of mutual agreement concerning the expectations of audience and speaker is what differentiates marked from unmarked choices. Myers-Scotton explains what she means by markedness by proposing that 'what community norms would predict is unmarked, what is not predicted is marked' (1998b: 5). In other words, switching is governed by tacit social conventions.

Myers-Scotton goes further by proposing that an ability to switch is implied in the communicative competence which all individuals possess (1998b: 6). She compares this communicative competence to the grammatical competence of a language. According to her theory, switching is not just a performance process, but a rule-governed competence which native speakers learn. In other words, all cognitively developmentally normal humans have the ability to learn how the community/communities they are part of evaluate switches, whether style shifts, dialect switches, diglossic switches or bilingual code-switching and, likewise, they possess the ability to learn to perform/practise/use such switches for a range of interactional purposes.

First, Myers-Scotton differentiates between using code-switching with no motivation in mind, as the unmarked choice, and using it with a specific motivation in mind, as the marked choice. Where the phenomenon of switching is unmarked, actual switches are more frequent, and the phenomenon more predictable (one can predict that it will happen, but not how many times or where, i.e. it is predictably unpredictable).

In the following example, the speakers switch between English and Swahili. English is the marked choice in this case. Therefore switching to English has a specific discourse function, as will become clear below (Scotton and Ury 1977: 16–17). A passenger on a bus to Nairobi and a bus conductor enter into an interaction. The conductor asks the passenger where he is going, in order to determine his fare. English (the marked choice) is underlined, and the rest of the interaction is in the unmarked choice (Swahili).

- (60) *Passenger:* *Nataka kwenda posta.*  
 ‘I want to go to the post office.’  
*Conductor:* *Kutoka hapa mpaka posta nauli ni senti hamsini.*  
 ‘From here to the post office, the fare is 50 cents.’  
 (*Passenger gives the conductor a shilling, from which he should get 50 cents in change.*)  
*Conductor:* *Ngojea change yako.*  
 ‘Wait for your change.’  
 (*The passenger says nothing until some minutes have passed and the bus is nearing the post office where the passenger plans to get off.*)  
*Passenger:* *Nataka change yangu.*  
 ‘I want my change.’  
*Conductor:* *Change utapa, Bwana.*  
 ‘You’ll get your change.’  
*Passenger:* *I am nearing my destination.*  
*Conductor:* *Do you think I could run away with your change?*

The passenger switches to English when the conversation has thus far been in Swahili to renegotiate the interaction. Minimally the conductor knows that some extra information has been implied; it necessarily shows the passenger’s level of education. The content of the message also carries a Gricean implicature, which the code-switch underlines. The conductor then replies in English, showing his level of education and thus asserting his own position as equal to that of the passenger. English here is used as the marked variety. As such, it has a discourse function: it is used to express authority as well as anger.

A similar example is reported by Suleiman (2004: 9), in which he describes his trip to Israel as a British Palestinian. He was expected to speak Arabic to the Israeli soldiers and policemen, whether Jewish or Druze, at checkpoints, since his passport indicated that he was of Palestinian origin. He in fact did not use Arabic, although his name and origin all prove he is Palestinian. Yet he decided to answer their questions only in English even when the questions were asked in Arabic. By doing so, he was refusing to acknowledge any bonds of solidarity or even understanding between him and them. Further, using Arabic would have put the soldiers in a privileged position of power over him as a Palestinian. He was essentially making it clear that they were on an equal footing. He appealed to the British part of his identity, which gave him more power over the soldiers. It could also be that he spoke English specifically to have power over the soldiers because his English was much better than theirs. In this case they were not on an equal footing; thanks to his British passport and mastery of English he was clearly in a more powerful position interactionally.

As noted earlier, however, the fact that someone switches between two different codes does not necessarily mean that he or she wants to convey a certain



feeling or assert his or her role. In the following example (Myers-Scotton 1993: 123–4), two school teachers who are native speakers of Shona, a South African language, are conversing about the relative progress of their students. English elements are underlined (according to Myers-Scotton’s model of ML, the ML in this example is Shona).

- (61) *Teacher: Manje zvakafanana kana nekuti uri kuita grade one manje saka vana vazhinji vechisikana ku-primary vanogona sitereki. Vanokasika ku-absorb zvinhu. But as time goes on vana kuenda ku-grade five, six, seven, form one vanonoka kuita catch up mu-ma-lessons. But once they catch up they go ahead.*

‘Now, for example, it is the same when you are in grade one now so that many of the girls understand much better. They hurry to absorb things. But as time goes on, children go to grade five, six, seven, and form one boys are late to catch up with lessons. But once they catch up they go ahead.’

Code-switching between Shona and English is frequent, unpredictable and normal for the speakers in this kind of interaction. That is, it is predictable that there will be switches between Shona and English. The audience or addressee expects it as well. It does not denote any specific discourse function. For these speakers, code-switching is the normal, unmarked choice. But note that this type of switching only occurs in certain communities between people who perceive one another as peers in some way. Hence it may communicate an important message at a more abstract level. However it is the overall pattern of switching rather than the individual switches that are meaningful.

In my English-language school, we started at the age of four to be taught MSA and English simultaneously. The following song was very common among girls at the age of eight when playing together.

- (62) *One day mana mana mana ma:fi*

*I saw a beautiful girl*

*?ulti laha saba:h il-xe:r*

*?a:lit li sabah innu:r*

*?ulti liha I love you*

*?a:lit li very much.*

‘One day while I was walking (lit. “and I walking”. “And I” is repeated three times.)

I saw a beautiful girl.

I told her “good morning” (lit. “morning of blessing”).

She answered “good morning” (lit. “morning of light”).

I said “I love you”.

She said “very much”.’

It is quite obvious that the reason why schoolgirls in an English language school in Egypt switch between English and ECA in this song is simply because they have access to both. They form a community of bilinguals within their school borders. They are in fact expected to switch between both. The song does not have a symbolic effect on any of the participants within the borders of the community. Outside that border it does signal the speakers as coming from an English-language school rather than a government school or a French one.

Everyone, according to Myers-Scotton, is equipped with the competence to assess linguistic choices. Everyone has a 'predisposition' (1998b: 6) to see linguistic choices as marked or unmarked. There is perhaps an extra message in a linguistic choice which is sociopsychological in nature. All speakers have a markedness evaluator, to measure the markedness of an utterance, and crucially they learn the local community's ways of assessing markedness. They have the ability to understand that marked choices will be received differently from unmarked choices. For speakers to have this competence, they have to be exposed to the use of unmarked and marked choices. Just as exposure to grammatical structures makes people competent in a language, so exposure to marked and unmarked choices makes them competent in making and understanding linguistic choices. There is always a link between the use of a linguistic code and its effect in a certain situation, and this is part of learning a language.

The speaker has the competence to assess all code choices as more or less unmarked or marked for the exchange type in which they occur. It is claimed that this communicative competence is both universal, in the sense that all people possess it, and particular, because it is developed in relation to a certain community. That is to say, this competence is acquired through social experience in interactions in a particular community.

Within this framework, speakers as individuals make choices from their linguistic repertoire to achieve certain goals which are of significance to them. They act rationally because they have a set of choices and they presumably make the best choice. By 'the best choice', I mean the choice that will benefit the speaker most given the audience and the circumstances surrounding the speech event, and that involves the least effort on the speaker's part. That is to say, a speaker must calculate the costs and rewards of one choice over another (Myers-Scotton 1993: 110). 'Costs' refer to the quantity of words he or she uses and the stylistic devices, and 'rewards' refer to the intentional as well as referential meaning he or she conveys to the listener (see also Grice's 1975 maxims and the relevance theory of Sperber and Wilson 1986). The speaker makes a choice that minimises costs and maximises rewards. Thus, speakers choose one code over another because of the rewards they expect from that choice, relative to its costs. So the role of the speaker is emphasised. But note also that the choice made by the speaker is connected to the audience's

expectations. The speaker wants to have an effect on the audience and thus maximise his or her own rewards: the audience has certain expectations of the speaker, and whether these expectations are met or not determines whether the choice the speaker has made is marked or not. That is to say, if the code used is expected by the audience, then the speaker is using an unmarked choice and does not necessarily want to have a particular effect on that audience. If, on the other hand, the speaker uses a code which is not expected by the audience then he or she is making a marked choice for the purpose of leaving an impact on the audience.

Another point worth mentioning about Myers-Scotton's theory is that she recalls the fact that speakers negotiate different identities all the time, and she claims that this is a major factor in code-switching, 'A major motivation for variety in linguistic choices in a given community is the possibility of social identity negotiations' (1993: 111).

Speakers negotiate mainly in order to reach an agreement about the mode of the interaction. They make choices either to emphasise their position or to convey their own views.

Myers-Scotton lists five different maxims to help us understand the choice that people make in code-switching (1998b: 25): the unmarked choice maxim, the marked choice maxim, the exploratory choice maxim, the deference maxim and the virtuosity maxim. Although I agree that the idea of maxims that Myers-Scotton proposes is indeed more accurate and thorough than just assigning discourse functions to certain codes, the maxims seem to be more than is needed in an analysis for code-switching, since they could all fall under the umbrella of marked and unmarked choices. Myers-Scotton, for example, posits that the deference maxim and the virtuosity maxim 'complement the unmarked choice maxim' (1993: 148). I think one can concentrate on both the marked and unmarked choices by emphasising the role of both speaker and audience, and by doing this, one is still generating a more general theoretical framework. Nevertheless, I think her theory deserves a lot of attention because of the factors mentioned above.

A related concept to markedness is that of indexicality which is discussed in detail by Woolard (2004), and will be explained in Chapter 3. Woolard explains marked choices in terms of indexes. Indexicality is a relation of associations through which utterances are understood. For example, if a specific code or form of language presupposes a 'certain social context, then use of that form may create the perception of such context where it did not exist before' (Woolard 2004: 88). If a code is associated with the authority of courtrooms and this code is then used in a different context, then it will denote authority. The language of the speaker would then be considered an authoritative language (Silverstein 1996: 267).

To conclude this section, I would like to say that it was quite surprising to find a large number of studies done on constraints of code-switching in

relation to Arabic and few studies done on the social motivations of code-switching. More studies are needed that concentrate on motivations and on different parts of the Arab world and not just among North Africans.

There are still a number of studies that examined the discourse functions of diglossic switching as part of code-switching. These are what I will examine below.

### 2.5.2 Motivations and discourse functions of diglossic switching

A number of other studies have attempted to explain the motivations of switching between the H and L varieties in Arabic-speaking societies. These studies have concentrated less on form and more on motivations for switching. I will briefly mention some of these studies.

Abu-Melhim's (1991) application of the accommodation theory (1991) tries to explain communication across Arabic dialects, arguing (1991: 248) that the idea that Arabic speakers of different dialects rely on MSA when they converse together is not accurate. He studies five conversations, each lasting for half an hour, involving a Jordanian couple and an Egyptian couple. The subjects chose their own topics. The Jordanians were from Irbid and the Egyptians from Cairo. Thus, according to him, they spoke urban dialects. Abu-Melhim demonstrates that speakers employ a variety of accommodation strategies when conversing with each other, and that these strategies include not just switching from their regional dialect to MSA but also switching from their regional dialect to another dialect, for example from Jordanian to ECA, and even switching from their dialect to English (1991: 249). For instance, he posits that Jordanians switch to English to emphasise or clarify a statement (1991: 242), while they may switch to MSA when quoting someone or again to emphasise a statement. Switching from Jordanian Arabic to Egyptian is used by Jordanians to accommodate to the dominant prestigious variety (Egyptian Arabic) and thus to facilitate conversation (1991: 237).

There have also been a number of studies that have attempted to explain switching between ECA and MSA in Egypt, whether in written or oral performance. Abdel-Malek conducted research on the influence of diglossia in the novels of Yūsuf al-Sibā'ī. He found (1972: 141) that the development of the genre 'novel' in Arabic literature in the early twentieth century resulted in considerable tension between H and L and in response to that tension a new linguistic style (developed by Yūsuf al-Sibā'ī) appeared in Arabic prose literature. Abdel-Malek's idea of a mixed written style is similar to the idea of ESA, although he specifies no clear rules to define this style.

Mazraani (1997) examines language variation in relation to three political figures in Egypt, Libya and Iraq and how these three political leaders use language variation as a 'rhetorical strategy' (1997: 25).

Mejdell (1996) examines stylistic variations in spoken Arabic with reference

to recordings of the prolific Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz (Najīb Maḥfūz), quoted at the beginning of this chapter, talking about his life, and tries to explain the kinds of processes that motivate stylistic choices by matching certain discourse functions with the use of one variety rather than another. She concludes that people often switch from MSA to ECA when giving examples, explaining, rephrasing or commenting on a previous statement in MSA. She also alludes to the fact that code choice is related to the way one perceives oneself as well as to the way one perceives others. In a later article (1999), she studies the interaction between MSA and ECA in the spoken performance of Egyptian academics and writers 'in settings where community norms require a mode of speaking that is more formal' (1999: 228). She suggests that code choice should be examined in relation to the speaker's change of role vis-à-vis his or her audience (1999: 231). Mejdell concludes that she considers 'the access to both varieties [MSA and ECA], with the wide span of cultural and social connotations attached to them, a rich stylistic resource for speakers to use creatively' (1999: 227; see also Mejdell 2006).

Note that there is no determinism here: speakers can choose how they speak (although within socially prescribed limits). This refers to Myers-Scotton's (1993) point discussed earlier: that speakers are free to choose but their choices will be interpreted within local understandings of markedness. Rosenbaum (2000) studies the occurrence of a mixed-style MSA and ECA in texts written by Egyptians, a phenomenon which seems to be gaining in popularity. Rosenbaum thinks that a mixed written style, involving clear shifts between H (MSA) and L (ECA), breaks the 'rules, old and new, of writing in Arabic, but does not encounter any serious opposition in Egyptian culture, probably because Egyptian readers have been accustomed to seeing ECA forms in print already for decades'. However, I think the situation in Egypt as well as in other parts of the Arab world is more complex than this and there are still intellectuals who object to the use of dialect in literature. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5, but, to give an example, Mahfouz (Najīb Maḥfūz) himself refused to use any dialect in his writing, even in dialogues.

One can see from all the above studies that linguists have moved forward since Ferguson's article on diglossia and have acknowledged and tried to explain the diglossic switching that takes place in the Arab world. In the next section I will examine empirical data from Egypt.

### *2.5.2.1 The relationship between code choice and speaker's role in Egyptian political discourse: a case study*

In the following study I will examine the relation between code choice and choice of role by the speaker. I argue that in political speeches in general there is a direct relation between change of role and change of code. This relation, though examined here in a modern political speech, is not a new phenomenon.

The speaker will usually choose a linguistic code in order to convey his or her aim. In my data, this means essentially whether he or she chooses to do so using ECA or MSA. However, there are some types of ‘moves’ a speaker may make, for rhetorical purposes, in relation to the audience, and some ways of expressing his or her intention, which appear to be particularly significant for what they tell us about how he or she perceives his or her role in relation to them. These ‘moves’ are often signalled by specific types of syntactic or phonological choices. For example, the use of exclamations rather than declaratives may indicate a change in the speaker’s role vis-à-vis the audience. The choice of the first, second or third person of the verb can also be significant: for example, in developing an argument, if the speaker starts by using verbs in the first person and then shifts to verbs in the third person, this may be a sign of a change in his or her role vis-à-vis both the message and the audience. Syntactic processes like negation, deixis and the expression of verbal aspect require the speaker to make code choices between ECA and MSA, as we have seen, and these choices, quite apparent from the actual message, send signals as to the role he or she is adopting to the audience.

After examining my political data I found that there is a direct relationship between change of role and change of code. This gives evidence for the claims of Gumperz and Goffman.

The speech analysed here was delivered on Labour Day 1999. The speaker is the Egyptian former president Hosni Mubarak, and the audience consists of government ministers and government employees from all classes of society. In this speech the former president gives the Egyptians an account of the achievements of the year, as well as problems that still need to be tackled. The speaker switches from MSA to ECA and back twice in the speech. The speech can therefore be divided into four parts.

### 2.5.2.1.1 Part one

Speaker’s role:

Mubarak starts his speech by outlining the political agenda of the past year and the country’s achievements and aspirations. He assigns himself his basic ‘default’ role, that of a head of state giving an account of what he did throughout the year. By doing so, he creates a formal relation with the audience of governor–governed. For example, he states the importance of an increase in exports and a decrease in imports. He also mentions the fact that it is important for the economy of Egypt not to be dependent on fluctuations of price in a small number of raw materials like petrol. Consider the following example from part one (analysed examples will be glossed below).

- (63) *θa:niyan/išla:ħu l-xalali fil-mi:za:ni t-tuga:ri/ Ğan țari:qi ziya:dati  
 ř-řa:đira:t wa tarfi:di l-đistira:d/ fa qađiyyatu ř-řa:dira:ti l-miřriyya  
 qađiyyatun maři:riyyah/ yagib Ğan tafğala đihtima:ma kullu l-fi?a:t/*

*allati tataħammalu ga:niban min űib?/ wa mas?u:liyati l-inta:gi fi maşr/ wa kullu l-mu?assasa:ti allati taʕmalu min ?agli sala:mati l-iqtişa:di l-maşri/ wa nuqtati l-bad?i ű-şahi:h fi taqdi:ri/ hiya ?an taku:na huna:ka siya:satun wa:điħa/ hadafuha tamsi:ʕa qa:ʕidat wa nawʕiyati ű-şa:đira:ti l-mişriyya ĥatta la: taku:na űurdatan li-taqaalluba:tin kabi:ratin murtabiħatin bi-?asʕa:ri ʕadadin qali:lin min al-silaʕi kal-bitro:l*

‘Secondly, redressing the deficit in the trade balance, by increasing exports and controlling imports. This is because the issue of Egyptian exports is a crucial issue that has to occupy the minds of everyone who is involved in Egyptian production. This issue should also occupy the mind of all establishments that work for the security of the Egyptian economy. The true starting point in my estimation is to have a clear policy that aims at increasing the scale and quality of Egyptian exports, so that it is not susceptible to great fluctuations, related to the price of a few raw materials like petrol.’

Code choice:

The code used here is pure MSA in which even case and mood endings are respected. Usually, as stated earlier, speakers drop case and mood endings even when speaking MSA. However, the president is, in fact, reading and this makes it easier to use case and mood endings. The reason for this choice of code seems connected to the role the speaker is playing in this part of the speech.

There are no verbs in the first person at all. In fact, there is a high degree of depersonalising nominalisation (underlined), which adds to the ‘objectivity’ of the message. For example:

- (64) *ħa:niyan/işla:ħu*     *l-xalali*     *fil-mi:za:ni*     *t-tuga:ri/ ʕan*  
 Secondly redressing-     det-deficit-gen     in-det-balance-     det-trade     by  
                                 nom    gen  
*?ari:qi*     *ziya:dati*     *ş-şa:đira:t*     *wa*     *tarfi:di*     *l-?istira:d*  
 way-gen     increasing-     det-             and     controlling-     det-  
                         gen             exports    gen             imports
- ‘Secondly, redressing the deficit in the trade balance, by increasing exports and controlling imports.’

Had the speaker chosen to do so, these nouns could have been replaced by verbs like *nuşliħ* (v1pl ‘we redress’), *nuraşfid* (v1pl ‘we control’) etc. These verbs would be realised as first person plural and not singular, and the air of objectivity and professionalism that prevails in this part might have been partly lost by the use of inclusive first person verbs.

Mubarak also uses several highly marked MSA features:

1. He uses *ʔiʕra:b* (mood and case endings) in many instances.

Consider the following example, and note the case and mood marking, underlined:

- (65) *fa qadiyyatu ʕ-ʕa:dira:ti l-miʕriyya qadiyyatun maʕi:riyyah/*  
 Thus issue-nom det-exports- det- Egyptian issue-nom crucial  
 gen  
*yagib ʕan tafǧala ʔihtima:ma kullu l-fiʔa:t/*  
 must that 3fsg-occupy-sub interest-acc all-nom det-people  
*allati tatahम्मalu ga:niban min ʕibʔ/*  
 rel 3fsg-carry-ind part-acc from burden  
*wa masʔu:liyyati l-inta:gi fi maʕr*  
 and responsibility-gen det-production-gen in Egypt  
 ‘This is because the issue of Egyptian exports is a crucial issue that  
 has to occupy the minds of everyone who is involved in Egyptian  
 production.’

2. He also uses MSA relative pronouns (underlined).

- (66) *wa kullu l-muʔassasa:ti allati taʕmalu*  
 and all-nom det-institutions-gen rel work-ind  
*min ʔagli sala:mati l-iqtisa:di l-maʕri/*  
 for sake-gen safety-gen det-economics-gen det-Egyptian  
 ‘This issue should also occupy the mind of all establishments that work  
 for the security of the Egyptian economy.’

3. He uses MSA negative structures (underlined).

- (67) *hatta la: taku:na ʕurdatan li-taqaalluba: tin kabi:ratin*  
 So that neg 3fsg-become- susceptible- to fluctuations- big-gen  
 sub acc gen  
 ‘So that it is not susceptible to great fluctuations.’  
 He also uses highly marked MSA phraseology and vocabulary, e.g.

- (68) *hatta la: taku:na ʕurdatan li-taqaalluba:tin kabi:ratin*  
 So neg 3fsg-become- susceptible- to big-gen  
 that sub acc fluctuations-gen  
 ‘So that it is not susceptible to great fluctuations.’

In this example, there is only one verb marked for mood and a number of case marked nouns and adjectives, which again renders the sentence saliently MSA rather than ECA.



Phonologically, this whole section of his speech conforms to MSA, rather than Egyptian norms. Thus, he consistently uses MSA phonemes like *q*, instead of the ECA glottal stop, in cases where theoretically either *q* or *ʔ* could have occurred, e.g. *taqdi:ri* rather than *taʔdi:ri*.

### 2.5.2.1.2 Part two

Now let us consider the role of Mubarak in part two of the same speech. This part occurs immediately after part one and here the code changes from MSA to ECA. The change is sudden and rather drastic. This radical change in the code level from MSA to ECA corresponds to an equally radical change of role on the part of the speaker, vis-à-vis the audience and the way he mediates his message.

#### Speaker's role:

Here, Mubarak narrates a story to support his abstract argument about the trade balance. In narrating the story, he also changes his role vis-à-vis the audience to that of a 'good old friend', or a 'fellow Egyptian'. He takes it for granted that the audience will understand what he is talking about. The audience here is treated like someone who was born, like him, in the countryside, and who, like him, used to make kites out of paper and pieces of string as a child. This was a common activity for poor boys who had no choice but to make their own kites. The kites he and his audience used to make as children are now being imported from Brazil. He goes on to make a similar point, this time about the importation of ice-cream cups and spoons. These concrete examples are given to make his point, that something needs to be done about the increase of imports into Egypt, clear in a code all will not only understand but also identify with. Here he is nowhere near as formal as in part one of the speech; he seems more like a concerned friend chatting with his audience over the garden fence, and part of the way he conveys this is through the use of the language of everyday life.

- (69) *da ʔana marra ʔana kunt / fi farm if-fe:x / ʕarfi:n iṭ-ṭayyara:t illi kunna  
b-niʕmilha fil-fallaḥi:n di / il-waraʔ di / wi-nilzaʔha bi-bu:ʕ wi kuryit  
duba:ra wi nṭayyarha / gaybinha mil-barazi:l / ṭabʕan da mablaḡ ha:yif/  
bi-yʔul lak wi da mablaḡ / ʔana ba-ḡrab masal / ʕaryinha mil-barazi:l  
(applause)  
il / il maḡall illi b-yibi:ʕ ʔays kre:m bi-yaftaxir / il-ʔays kre:m min barra /  
ik-kubbaya gayya min barra l-maʕlaʔa gayya min barra / ya farḡiti / ṭabb  
ma ʕandina maʕa:niʕ*

'I was in Sharm El Sheikh the other day. Do you know these kites we used to make in the countryside, the ones made from paper, the ones we used to fix with reed and a piece of string and then we would let them fly? They import these kites from Brazil. Of course this is a

trivial amount of money. Then someone comes and tells you, “Is this an amount worth bothering about?” I am just giving an example. They buy them from Brazil!

(applause)

The shop that sells ice cream is very proud to say that the ice cream is from abroad, the cups are from abroad and the spoons are from abroad. How wonderful! Come on! Don’t we have factories?’

It is noteworthy that there is no change in topic between parts one and two. Mubarak is explaining the same thing: that it is important for Egypt to have a stable economy and to reduce imports and increase exports. The difference in approach is not in the subject matter, but rather in the way he chooses to tackle it, that is, in the ‘ideation’ triggered by a change in his role and approach, and not by a change in topic. In the first part of his speech, he took a ‘presidential’ look at economic problems. In the second, he alludes to everyday experiences and observations he shares with the audience. The difference between parts one and two is the difference between abstract and concrete and the shift in code choice permits him to demonstrate this difference and to reach people’s intellect as well as their emotions.

Code choice:

Before I analyse the choice of code in this part, I would like to refer to Milroy’s work which is significant here and will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Milroy, in her book *Language and Social Networks* (1987: 10), indicates the relationship between heavy usage of vernacular speech and the internal structure of the group using that speech. She also indicates that people, whether educated or uneducated, exploit dialect as a means of projecting their local identity and emphasising it (see Chapter 3).

Now consider the following typical examples of Mubarak’s use of ECA:

(70) *ṭabṣan da mablaḡ ha:yif/ bi-yʔul lak wi da mablaḡ*  
 Of dem amount trivial asp-3msg- to- and dem amount  
 course say pr2msg

‘Of course this is a trivial amount of money. Then someone comes and tells you “Is this an amount worth bothering about?”’

(71) *ṭabb ma ṣandina maṣa:niṣ*  
 OK prep-have-pr1pl factories

‘Come on! Don’t we have factories?’

The use of the underlined expression ‘someone comes and tells you’ and of the word *ṭabb* are typical features of ECA, but in fact the whole passage is in ECA. Furthermore, Mubarak refers to a very special thing that children

(he and his audience in earlier years) used to do in the countryside, which is making kites out of papers and pieces of string. As a consequence, the verbs are in the first person singular, first person plural and second person plural: *ʔana kunt*, *ʕarfi:n* ('I was', 'do you know'). Moreover, Mubarak starts with a question rather than a proposition to involve the audience and remind them of their shared past:

- (72) *ʕarfi:n it-ṭayyara:t illi kunna b-niʕmilha*  
 2pl-know det-plans rel to be-2pl-perf asp-2pl-do-pr3fsg  
*fil-fallaḥi:n di*  
 in det-countryside dem  
 'Do you know these kites we used to make in the countryside?'

There is also a quintessentially ECA exclamation used here ironically. It does not have a counterpart in MSA and is usually used by Egyptians in personal conversations to signal irony or sarcasm.

- (73) *ya farḥiti*  
 Oh happiness-pr1sg  
 'How wonderful!' (lit. 'Oh my happiness')

It may seem surprising that this expression is used by an Arab head of state, but it seems less surprising if one takes account of the fact that the president is now playing a different role, a role which no doubt appeals very much to his audience. The degree of the audience's empathy is indicated by a big burst of applause. The applause suggests that the audience approves of his change of role, and appreciates his popular mode of addressing them. The speaker's tone of voice also changes in this part to a much more conversational one. One can even hear a trace of a countryside accent in this part. Obviously, the speaker uses ECA rather than MSA phonology. For example, he uses Egyptian *ʔ* rather than MSA *q* in *waraʔ* 'paper', *niʕzaʔ* 'fix, stick', *yiʔu:l* 'says', *maʕlaʔa* 'spoon' (compare this with the use of *q* in part one of his speech).

#### 2.5.2.1.3 Part three

##### *Speaker's role:*

The basic role of head of state giving an account of past achievements and future plans returns in part three, and the code is again MSA. In part three, as in part one, Mubarak again constructs an abstract economic argument, this time part-historical. Egypt is personified as an abstract entity, competing with other countries and obtaining the respect of financial organisations. This was achieved only very recently, and Mubarak (by implication) played a role in this achievement:

- (74) *wa ḥatta l-ʔams al-qari:b lam yakun fi wusʕi mişr/ lam yakun fi wusʕi mişr/ wa ʔukarrir/ ʔan tufakkira fil-ğadi l-baʕi:di ʔaw il-qari:b/ ka:na l-gahdu mustanfaran fi muwa:gahati muşkila:ti l-ams/ muḥa:şaran fi ʔiṭa:ri rudu:di ʔafʕa:l/ aw ḥulu:lin waqtiyya mutafarriqa/ wa fi ha:ða l-mana:x/ lam yakun mumkinan ʔabadan/ ʔan nufakkira/ ʔan tufakkira mişru fi d-duxu:l ʔila ʕaşri l-mafru:ʕa:ti l-kubra/ ʔilla baʕda ʔiʕa:dati tafyi:di binya:tiha l-asa:siyya/ wa ziya:dati qudrati muʔassasa:tiha l-muxtalifa/ fi tanfiði l-mafru:ʕa:ti d-daxma wa rtifa:ʕ naşi:biha min al-istiḥma:ra:ti l-kabi:ra/ baʕda ʔan ʔaşbahat nuqtata gaðbin lil-ʔistiḥma:ra:t il-ʕa:lamiyya/ taḥza b-ḥiqati l-muʔassasa:ti l-ma:liyya k-kubra/*  
 ‘And until very recently Egypt could not, I repeat, Egypt could not think of the far or near future. All efforts were exerted to face the problems of the past. And all efforts were limited to various temporary solutions and reactions. In this environment, it was not possible for us, for Egypt to think about entering an era of big projects, except after rebuilding its main base, increasing the ability of its different institutions to implement big projects and increasing its share of great investments. All of this after Egypt became attractive for international investment that had the confidence of great financial institutions.’

Code choice:

The speaker here, as in part one, uses highly marked MSA features. These include:

MSA phraseology (underlined):

- (75) *wa ḥatta l-ʔams al-qari:b lam yakun fi wusʕi mişr*  
 And until det- det-near neg 3msg-to in power- Egypt  
 yesterday be-juss gen  
 ‘And until very recently Egypt could not,’  
 Case marking (underlined):

- (76) *ka:na l-gahdu mustanfaran fi muwa:gahati muşkila:ti*  
 To be- det-effort- exerted-acc in facing-gen problems-  
 3msg-perf nom gen  
 l-ams  
 det-yesterday  
 ‘All efforts were exerted to face the problems of the past.’

Negative and demonstrative features (underlined):

- (77) *lam yakun fi wusʕi mişr*  
 neg 3msg-to be-juss in capacity-gen Egypt  
 ‘Egypt could not’

- (78) *wa fi ha:ða l-mana:x/ lam yakun mumkinan ʔabadan/*  
 And in dem det-climate neg 3msg- possible-acc ever  
 to be-juss  
*ʔan nufakkira/ ʔan tufakkira mişru fi d-duxu:l*  
 that 1pl-think- that 3fsg- Egypt- in det-entering  
 sub think-sub nom  
*ʔila ʕaşri l-mafru:ʕa:ti l-kubra*  
 to age-gen det-projects-gen det-big  
 ‘In this environment, it was not possible for us, for Egypt to think about entering an era of big projects’

The speaker also goes back to using a highly nominalised style:

- (79) *ʔilla baʕda ʔiʕa:dati tafyi:di binya:tiha l-asa:siyya*  
 except after repeating-gen building-gen base-gen-pr3fsg det-main  
 ‘except after rebuilding its main base’
- (80) *wa ziya:dati qudrati muʔassasa:tiha l-muxtalifa*  
 And increasing-gen ability-gen institutions- det-different  
 gen-pr3fsg  
 ‘increasing the ability of its institutions’

In both these latter cases the speaker could have used verbs rather than the noun phrases. He also uses MSA rather than ECA phonology. For example, again he uses the MSA *q* instead of the glottal stop in *qari:b* ‘near’ and *qudra* ‘ability’.

#### 2.5.2.1.4 Part four

##### Speaker’s role

Here the role of the ‘good old friend’ returns, and the code is again ECA. This part occurs immediately after part three. Mubarak narrates the history of a shared Egyptian crisis that Egyptians managed to overcome because of their good luck and hard work, and because God was on their side. He again appeals to the past he shares with the audience, but this time he does not remind them of their childhood. He rather reminds them of the crisis the country went through, a crisis which was felt by him ‘as an Egyptian’, as well as by them. When there is victory at the end for them all, it is a victory that he as a fellow Egyptian shares with them. Egypt had been losing its economic reputation internationally. As president, he had no choice but to borrow money from abroad. He did, and the problem was solved. He (as well as all Egyptians) managed to return all the money borrowed.

- (81) *ʔintum ʕarfi:n ir-ra:gil il-mustaθmir lama ka:n yi:gi hine/ ʔana kunt*  
*ba-su:f/ ʕa:wiz yidrab tilifo:n ʕalafa:n yisʔal ʕala miʕa:d walla ʕa:ga/*

*yī?u:m ya:xud baʕdu wi yīsa:fir min hina/ ya ?imma l-?ubru? ya ?imma  
lil-yuna:n/ yitkallim wi yirgaʕ/ wi baʕde:n wa:ħid ?alha li/ ?ana  
ʕalafa:n kulli ma ?aʕu:z qītaʕ ġiya:r ħa-ru:h ?asa:fir ?ubru? walla  
l-yuna:n/ ah ma-fi:-f fayda maʕa:kum/ ?alha li kida bi-ʕara:ħa/ ?ulna  
ba?a nistilif mil-xa:rig/ ?ahu l-mukawwina:t il-xa:rigiyya wi ?amrina  
li-lla:h/*

*wi rabbina la buddi ħa-yifrigha/ ?istalafna/ wi miʕi:na/ wi baʕde:n ya  
xwanna rabbina faragħa/ wi filna xamsa wi ʕifri:n milya:r min id-diyyu:n  
illi ʕali:na wi rigiʕna ?abiʕiyin/ /*

(applause)

*fa rabbina dayman maʕa ma?r/*

(big applause)

Audience: *yīħmi:k ya rayyis*

‘You know, when an investor used to come to Egypt, I could see that if he wanted to make a phone call to ask about an appointment or something of that sort, he had to go to Cyprus or Greece to make a phone call and then come back. And then someone told me, “Do I have to travel to Greece or Cyprus whenever I need spare parts? Oh, there is no hope for you.” He told me so quite frankly. So we said, “Let’s borrow money from abroad, get those materials from abroad for heaven’s sake! God will surely make it better.” We borrowed money. We progressed. Then, brothers, God did make it better, and we paid back 25 billion pounds of debt. We are back as we were before, with no debts.

(applause)

So God is always with Egypt.’

(big applause)

Audience: ‘May God protect you, Mr President.’

The story has a happy ending, and the audience shows its pleasure by spontaneously shouting ‘May God protect you, Mr President.’ Note that Mubarak does not claim that getting rid of Egypt’s debts is just his doing. It is not even just the people’s doing; it is also God’s doing. God ‘is always’ with Egypt. Again the topic is essentially the same as in part three: the lack of economic planning in Egypt. Again, Mubarak emphasises the fact that Egypt has achieved a lot in a short period of time, but this time he puts this fact across to his audience with everyday examples, and highly concrete ones, like the difficulties people had in making a phone call and obtaining spare parts. This story could have been narrated in MSA, but much of its vividness would have been lost, especially for an Egyptian audience with whom he shares ECA.

Code choice:

Mubarak in this part of his speech uses ECA. He starts with the introductory phrase:

- (82) *ʔintum ʕarfi:n*  
 pr2mpl part-know  
 ‘You know’

People in Egypt usually begin an anecdote with this phrase. Mubarak uses a similar tactic in part two. In this part, he also uses a story to talk about his achievements and those of other Egyptians. As in any normal ECA story, he uses ECA conjunctions and other linking phrases: the ECA inchoative verb *yiʔu:m* (3msg-to embark on) to introduce a new episode, for example, and *mi baʕde:n* ‘and then’. He employs dialogue to make the story more vivid to the audience:

- (83) *mi baʕde:n wa:hid ʔalha li/ ʔana ʕalafa:n*  
 And then one say-perf-3msg- to-pr1sg I because  
 pr3fsg  
*kulli ma ʔaʕu:z ʔitaʕ giya:r ha-ru:h ʔasa:fir*  
 Whenever 1sg-part-need parts spare fut-1sg-go 1sg-travel  
*ʔubruʕ walla l-yuna:n/ ah ma-fi:f fayda maʕa:kum/*  
 Cyprus or det-Greece yes neg- benefit with-pr2mpl  
 adv-neg  
*ʔalha li kida bi-ʕara:ha*  
 say-3msg-perf-pr3fsg to-pr1sg like this with honesty  
 ‘And then someone told me, “Do I have to travel to Greece or Cyprus  
 whenever I need spare parts? Oh, there is no hope for you.” He told me  
 so quite frankly.’

Egypt’s problem is posed and ‘we’ (the speaker and the audience) have to deal with it. Mubarak does not claim that he dealt with it himself, but that ‘we’ did it, and ‘we’ decided. This use of the inclusive first person plural is strongly associated with the use of colloquial.

- (84) *ʔistalafna/ mi mifi:na/*  
 Borrow-1pl-perf and walk-1pl-perf  
*mi baʕde:n ya xwanna rabbina faragha/*  
 and then voc brothers-pr1pl God make better-perf-  
 3msg-pr3fsg  
 ‘We borrowed money. We progressed. Then, brothers, God did make it  
 better.’

This is a good example of the ‘we’ and ‘they’ dichotomy that Gumperz (1982a: 95) mentions. He uses first and second person pronouns with ECA and third person pronouns with MSA. Mubarak uses ECA and the inclusive first person plural to create solidarity with his audience.

- (85) *ʔulna baʔa nistilif mil-xa:rig/ ʔahu l-mukawwina:t*  
 1pl then 1pl-borrow from-det- that is det-material  
 say-perf abroad  
*il-xa:rigiyya wi ʔamrina li-lla:h/ wi rabbina*  
 det-abroad and destiny-pr1pl to det-God and God  
*la buddi ha-yifriḡha/ ʔistalafna/ wi mifi:na/*  
 must fut-3msg-make borrow-1pl-perf and 1pl-walk-perf  
 better-pr3fsg  
*wi baʕde:n ya xwanna rabbina faragha/*  
 and then voc brothers God make better-3msg-  
 perf-pr3fsg  
*wi filna xamsa wi ʕifri:n milya:r min*  
 and 1pl remove-perf five and twenty billion from  
*id-diyu:n illi ʕali:na wi rigiʕna ʔabiʕiyyin//*  
 det-debts rel on-pr1pl and 1pl return-perf normal  
 ‘So we said, “Let’s borrow money from abroad, get those materials  
 from abroad for heaven’s sake! God will surely make it better.” We  
 borrowed money. We progressed. Then, brothers, God did make it  
 better, and we paid back 25 billion pounds. We are back as we were  
 before, with no debts.’

The verbs in this part of the speech are mostly in the first person singular or plural, *ʔulna*, *nistilif*, ‘we said’, ‘we borrowed’ etc. Mubarak also uses a host of other ECA linguistic features, like the relative marker *illi*, and negative structures like *ma . . . f* in *ma-fi:-f fayda*, ‘you are hopeless’. Phonologically, this section of the speech is entirely in accordance with ECA norms, the only exception being the imported MSA word *mustaθmir* ‘investor’. The *θ* could have become *s* as in ECA pronunciation, but the word itself has no other equivalent in ECA.

#### 2.5.2.1.5 General pattern of the speech

In this speech the speaker adopts a particular strategy of code-switching. He states abstract facts in MSA, and then explains these facts in ECA with concrete, personalised examples, changing his role in the process. This strategy of moving back and forth from MSA to ECA is the basic feature of the ‘design’ of this speech. Table 2.1 summarises the discussion above.

As previously noted, this phenomenon of switching between ECA and MSA, which corresponds to a change in role on the part of the speaker, is not a new phenomenon. To support my data I would like to refer to an older political speech by Nasser, the late former president of Egypt.

Nasser (1918–70; Prime Minister 1954; president 1956–70) was an excellent manipulator of language. He was known for using ECA in his speeches (see Holes 1993). In so doing, he demonstrated to his audience that he was one



Table 2.1 *Relation between code choice and speaker's role*

Kind of monologue	Speaker's public identity	Role adopted by speaker	Role given to audience	Speaker's code
Pt one	President of Egypt	President	Citizens	Pure MSA
Pt two	President of Egypt	Good old friend	Old friends/ fellow Egyptians	Pure ECA
Pt three	President of Egypt	President	Citizens	Pure MSA
Pt four	President of Egypt	Good old friend	Old friends/ fellow Egyptians	Pure ECA

of them, by speaking as they spoke in their daily lives. He also made himself comprehensible for those who knew little MSA.

On 26 October 1954, the year he became president, and in Manshīyah, one of Alexandria's oldest areas, Nasser delivered a speech to all Egyptians: students, peasants, workers and politicians. While he was delivering the speech, a man stood up and fired a gun at him in an assassination attempt. This all happened on air in front of the audience, and was broadcast to everyone listening to the radio at the time. Not surprisingly, it became a very famous incident in Egyptian history. The would-be assassin was arrested instantly, but Nasser refused to move and decided to speak to the people. Indeed, his speech then took another line. He had nearly lost his life. This is enough to explain his feelings at that moment. He must have been frustrated and shocked, if not terrified. He asked the people to listen to him and not to panic or move. He told them that they had to be aware of the fact that, if Nasser died, they were all Nasser. What is quite surprising is that he spoke in MSA.

- (86) *ʔayyuha l-muwa:ʔini:n ʔiða: ma:tq gama:l ʕabd in-na:ʕir fa ʔana ʔalʔa:n ʔamu:t wa ʔana muʔmaʔinn/ fa kullakum gama:l ʕabd in-na:ʕir (x 3) tuda:fiʕu:n ʕan il-ʕizza wa tuda:fiʕu:n ʕan il-ħurriyya wa tuda:fiʕu:n ʕan ik-kara:ma . . . ʔayyuha ir-riga:l si:ru: ʕala barakat illa:h*  
 'Citizens, if Gamal Abdel Nasser dies, he will die happily because you are all Gamal Abdel Nasser (3 times). You all fight for freedom and dignity. Men, move, with God's blessing.'

These words still resonate in Egypt among fans of Nasser. Spontaneously, in the heat of the moment, he spoke in pure MSA, repeating sentences and words, in a moving voice, probably because he was excited and shocked. It seems that MSA is used – at least by the president – in dangerous situations, when one is shocked, furious or experiencing another strong emotion. Nasser was changing his role at that point. He was no longer the friend or peer but was conferring on himself a more subtle status. He was a symbol, an

idea, and this idea was inherent in all Egyptians. Anyone could be him, and anyone could play his role. He was not trying to identify with them; rather he was trying to express his anger and defiance. Even if they killed him, he would still live in every Egyptian. When challenging all those who wanted to get rid of him, he used MSA. MSA also granted him authority – he used the voice of tradition, religious and historical, and the power of his office. This is another example of the direct relation between change of role and code choice.

To conclude this section, it is obvious that there is a clear tendency in political speeches for speakers to change their code as and when they change their role. Given that the point of much political speech-making is to persuade, it is unsurprising that there is such a large amount of switching between ECA and MSA. Persuasion often involves a change of role. The question remains whether the relationship between change of role and code-switching is limited to political speeches, or whether it is a general phenomenon, as some linguists have claimed (Goffman 1981; Romaine 1995).<sup>19</sup> There is also a general pattern in the way both MSA and ECA are used in the political speech analysed. The older speech by Nasser helps support the claim that the relation between change of role and code change is an old one. Note that in Egypt as a diglossic community, it is the speaker rather than the situation that influences language choice, although the role of the situation cannot be denied; but in a hierarchical order the speaker comes first.

## 2.6 A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO CODE-SWITCHING

Recently there has been more focus on code-switching in relation to identity performance, and there has also been an increased emphasis on related phenomena such as crossing (Rampton 1999), which is usually intentional on the part of the switcher and involves the use of a stigmatised code in order to identify with a specific community.

The emphasis on performed speech also means a shift in the data analysed from spontaneous to less spontaneous. Data analysed includes computer-mediated communication (CMC) which is less spontaneous, but informal and very common. This type of data also includes real-time group chats (Dorleijn and Nortier 2012: 127), and written performances such as emails, Facebook newsfeeds etc. (2012: 130).

To elaborate, during the last decade there have been attempts to provide a more holistic explanation of code-switching, and a more interdisciplinary approach in terms of data and methods. Research on code-switching aims to give a better, more thorough explanation of the motivations behind code-switching. This explanation utilises different frameworks to understand the phenomenon, including – but not limited to – the ‘social construct’ approach

to variation, a post-structuralist approach to identity and ethnographic methods of research. The social construct approach to variation will be discussed in Chapter 3 and will be referred to in Chapter 6. The post-structuralist approach to identity (see Preece 2016; Bassiouney and Walters forthcoming) incorporates a critical approach to research in sociolinguistics in which reflexivity and performance as well as new tools of analysis including indexicality are more prominent. This approach is explained in detail in Chapter 6 and will therefore not be elaborated upon here. However, it is important to note that it does influence new research in code-switching and in sociolinguistics more generally.

In terms of trying to divide codes into a dominant one and an embedded one, this new approach finds issues with this division. Recall that in this chapter there were examples that challenged the ML hypothesis. In example (36), in which there is code-switching between ECA and MSA, the speaker uses an ECA system morpheme, the demonstrative *da*, as well as an MSA system morpheme, the discontinuous s-stem passive morpheme *u-i*, in the same CP. In addition, there are content morphemes that are shared by both ECA and MSA. The system morphemes in this example are from both codes. In example (42), the negation is in ECA and the verb in MSA. As argued previously, in the example there is a composite of two MLs: MSA and ECA. The same issues were encountered by Boussofara-Omar (2003: 40), when analysing data of switching between MSA and TCA in the light of the 4-M model.

Boussofara-Omar also contends that there are system morphemes from TCA and MSA in the same CP. Although she claims that the ML in this example is TCA while the EL is MSA, she does admit that the example is difficult to explain according to both the ML and the 4-M models.

I argued in this chapter that these examples resist interpretation within the framework of diglossia, and challenge ideas about syntactic constraints on code-switching. I went on to propose that there are two MLs at work in my data: ECA and MSA. However, I also emphasised that this composite ML does not indicate language death. The proposition was based on the fact that there are problematic examples and there are also morphemes that are impossible to classify as belonging to one code and not another. In the next paragraphs I will elaborate on this concept.

### 2.6.1 Translanguaging and the challenge of two grammatical systems

My 2009 proposition is in line with García and Li Wei's (2014: 8) view of code-switching. They propose a more comprehensive view of code-switching in which the speakers play a more complex and active role in using their linguistic repertoire, which may include different languages, different varie-

ties of the same language or different styles. This more thorough approach transcends clear and neat divisions between languages. It is called ‘translanguaging’. Studies of Arabic in relation to this concept are sorely needed.

Gardner-Chloros (2009: 5) also argues against the division of codes that is based on two grammatical systems. Gardner-Chloros posits that this division does not sufficiently explain how people code-switch. In fact, she goes on to explain why this division is so popular. She argues that treating language as a discrete and coherent entity (2009: 9) has to do with political and social ideologies. It is, in fact, directly related to the concept of a ‘native speaker’ – a concept developed in a monolingual context and assuming that monolingualism is the norm (2009: 9). Gardner-Chloros urges linguists to re-evaluate their methods and theoretical constructs. She posits that trying to find a ‘base language’ may simply be an ‘unconscious deduction’ on the part of linguists that is the result of their own cultural conventions (2009: 165), and reiterates that native speaker and mother tongue are two concepts that are not consistently defined in cases of code-switching. This in itself, she attests, is a methodological challenge (2009: 167). She also concludes that in most cases there are no clear ‘constraints’ on how code-switchers use codes (2009: 172). She postulates that ‘individuals construct their own systems from the input and the models to which they are exposed (2009: 173). That is to say, there is usually an overlap between different grammatical systems.

These very same postulations are reiterated in Coulmas (2018), in which he challenges the assumption that our ideas and thoughts are usually shaped by one language. Coulmas explains this assumption in terms of the ‘public imagination’ (2018: 94). He then gives the example of the author Vladimir Nabokov who wrote in both Russian and English. When asked about his writing process, Nabokov referred to different ‘stages’ in his mind in which images and thoughts are formulated. He claimed that during this process there was no dominant language, and that both English and Russian were equally present.

Coulmas (2018: 95) concludes that the concept of ‘language dominance’ is a changing one and is very much influenced by social processes. Coulmas lists factors that influence this concept. These factors include, but are not limited to:

1. The learning process of the switcher, and language proficiency.
2. The individual traits of the switcher, such as age, personality, family context, level of education, location, political and social settings and attitude towards codes.

In fact, Coulmas also refers to whether the switcher is part of a minority or a majority in a specific place and whether the switcher belongs to a different ethnic community. The language policy and education system are also

essential. Exposure to different codes needs to be considered and whether this code is mainly written or spoken (2018: 95). Coulmas also adds that new media and new modes of writing change the dynamics of communication in ways that impact code-switching and language use more generally (2018: 204).

### **2.6.2 Motivations for switching in light of a social construct approach to language**

As for the motivations for code-switching, linguists are also more aware now than they were a decade ago of the role of metalinguistic discourse about language as well as users' perceptions and ideologies. Linguists studying code-switching – whether they focus on motivations or structure – are now conscious of essential factors such as the proficiency level or identity of the switcher. Identity, in turn, can only be studied in a social-economic-political context.

To give some examples, Sayahi (2014) discusses code-switching in relation to language contact, power, politics and economy. He provides valuable insights into the relationship between code-switching and market forces. In one study in his book he examines bilingualism in Spanish and Moroccan Arabic in the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla. The cities were ceded to Spain in 1668 and 1497 respectively, but are currently self-governed. Their populations are divided between people of Spanish origin and those of Moroccan origin. As might be expected, bilingualism is uneven and exists mainly among those of Moroccan origin. The education system is monolingual in Spanish (2014: 70–1). According to Anton (2006), only 67 per cent of Moroccans in Ceuta who claim to be bilingual state that Arabic is their first language, while 18 per cent claim Spanish as their first language and 15 per cent believe they learned both together. Only 27 per cent claim that their competency in Arabic is higher than their competency in Spanish.

If we think of the claims in the light of recent theories of code-switching and language variation then we can deduce the following: first, the perceptions of these speakers, as usual, may not always be precise. Their claims are influenced by the dominating ideologies and prevalent power in their communities. The fact that 15 per cent of the informants interviewed could not decide which language was their mother tongue is in line with the concept of translanguaging mentioned above. While education in these cities favours Spanish, the reality may, in my opinion, be different from what is claimed by informants.

However, for the Spanish inhabitants of the city learning Arabic is not necessary. As Sayahi posits, 'the fact that the students who attend Spanish institutions have to leave for Spain to continue their university education makes their choice to attend Spanish schools one of socioeconomic significance' (2014: 73). There is a separation between the groups in terms of ethnicity, religion and language choice.

*Yo soy nacida aquí y criada aquí además he salido poquísimos, he estado viviendo fuera muy pocos años, y te lo juro yo de aquí no me siento. Yo digo soy Tetuaní, soy de Tetuán, pero no estoy integrada. Ten cuidado que vivimos en un círculo muy pequeño y vivimos aparte. Yo, por ejemplo, no tengo costumbre musulmana ninguna, la comida sí, me gusta, pero me está gustando ahora, ¿eh? Porque en mi casa siempre se ha cocinado al estilo español, se habla español y se vive el culto religioso, es que somos católicos todos.* (Female Spaniard, Tetouan)

'I was born and raised here, in addition I have been abroad very few times, I have lived abroad for a few years, and I swear I do not feel I belong here. I say I am Tetouani, I am from Tetouan, but I am not integrated. Mind you we live in a very small circle and we live apart. In my case, for example, I do not have any Muslim habits, yes I do like the food though, but only now, eh? Because at home we cook only Spanish food, we speak Spanish and practice our religion, as we are all Catholics.' (Sayahi 2014: 73)

This example shows the intricate relationship between religion, ethnicity, habits, history, socioeconomic factors, and language on the one hand and identity on the other.

Proficiency in language or perceptions of it are related to the indexes and associations of different codes. Inquiring about how informants reflect on their language usage is now part and parcel of research in code-switching and perhaps in sociolinguistics more generally. This again will be elaborated upon in Chapters 3 and 6.

Sayahi also, among other things, examines code-switching between different codes within Tunisia (2014: 121). He argues that children of rural immigrants learn another dialect that carries more power, mainly the dialect used in the capital. He adds that exposure to MSA and French also influences the choice of dialects used (2014: 121). Sayahi gives an example (no. 38, 2014: 121) in which the informants reflect on their language use and the different codes of Arabic they use. This reflection is essential though not necessarily precise. It is essential because, as will be discussed in Chapter 3 and again in Chapter 6, reflecting about language can help explain sociolinguistic phenomena better.

Reflecting on linguistic choices is also clear in the study of Dorleijn and Nortier (2012: 127), who examine code-switching and the internet, and throw light on issues pertaining to stylistic devices used to express an identity. They state that while CMC is usually more informal in nature and is a fertile ground for use of colloquial forms, it is also more conscious than spoken data. Therefore, cases of code-switching in this kind of data are essential to understand identification processes. Dorleijn and Nortier examine two minority groups in the Netherlands: Moroccans and Turks. The groups are similar in size, with 323,000 of Moroccan origin and 364,000 of Turkish origin. They

share the same religion, Islam, and, according to Dorleijn and Nortier, in most cases they share the same lower socioeconomic background (2012: 135). Dorleijn and Nortier differentiate between the attitudes of each group towards Arabic and Turkish. In the case of Turkish the strict linguistic policy in Turkey in which language is directly related to identity and is the main identification category of the Turks influences the way Turkish is regarded in the Netherlands. The fact that Turkish uses Roman script might also play a role in its spread among those of Turkish origin (2012: 135). The sense of identity relating to language may also influence the decision of parents in most cases to send their children to Turkey to be educated, even for a short time. This is not the case among the Moroccan immigrants. A total of 70 to 80 per cent of immigrants are of Berber origin. In fact, Dutch, rather than Arabic or Berber languages, serves as the lingua franca for Moroccans who come from different locations and speak different dialects (2012: 135–7).

In the examples below, Dutch, according to Dorleijn and Nortier, is the main language (2012: 137). This is related to the linguistic situation in Morocco itself as well as the identity construction of migrants in the Netherlands.

- (1) **Ok, I admit**, maar h0e wil je dan 00it **mr Right** vinden als je t0ch geen relaties mag aangaan . . . behalve het huwelijk?  
 ‘OK, I admit, but how will you ever find Mr. Right if you’re not allowed to have any relationships . . . except marriage?’

Dorleijn and Nortier study written exchanges in online chatrooms. In the examples they cite, English, Moroccan Arabic, and Berber words and phrases occur predominantly as insertions in Dutch text. The authors note that the insertion of English phrases, as illustrated by the example above, is a common feature of everyday Dutch. I reiterate that even though this study argues that there is language loss in the case of the Moroccans, it is still difficult to clearly divide the languages in the minds of users. Translanguaging does not conflict with the claims that Dutch is more prominent given the identity formation and political and social factors of this group.

They further point out that the Roman alphabet is generally used to represent Arabic and Berber. In the absence of an orthographic standard, this leaves room for creative variation and to lend emphasis to particular phrases (2012: 137).

- (2) Amazigh roos: En **Aythwayaghers** praten met een vreegeteken.  
 Ahraifi: Soms ook met een uitroepeteken! [. . .]  
 IkHaatWerken: **maghaaaaaaaaaa?**  
 Amazigh roos: **hahaha nishan ayomahhhhhh??**  
 Amazigh Rose: And people from A. speak with a question mark.  
 Prefossor: Sometimes also with an exclamation mark! [. . .]

IHateToWork: Whyyyyyyyyyy?  
 Amazigh Rose: Hahaha right my brotheeeeer?

In the following example, CS is used to achieve a rhyming pattern. The Moroccan Arabic words in bold all rhyme in -h (represented here by the number ‘7’, a convention in Arabic online chats) (2012: 137):

Je bent nog mooier dan mijn **remra7**, gezien vanaf de **sta7**, bij het  
 krieken van de **sba7**.  
 ‘You are even prettier than my courtyard, seen from the roof, at the  
 crack of dawn.’

In the examples above as well as the discussion it was clear that code-switching is the most prominent sign of language contact (Bullock and Toribio 2012: 1).

In terms of methodology an ethnographic approach, in which the communities’ context and history are studied, will render the data easier to explain. In general terms, as Bassiouney (2014) argues, code-switching can be used as a stylistic device. Gardner-Chloros (2009: 4) also argues that code-switching is used by bilinguals as a stylistic device and as such it cannot be studied in isolation from different social and linguistic phenomena, especially identity construction and language contact (Gardner-Chloros 2009: 4). Bilinguals use code-switching as a stylistic device to communicate not just words or meaning but also an extra message; monolinguals can do the same thing by using different dialects, registers and other linguistic resources. ‘The characteristic ways in which bilinguals combine their languages in a particular community constitute a way of expressing their group identity-like a characteristic accent’ (2009: 5).

## 2.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have discussed both the structural constraints and the social motivations of code-switching in relation to Arabic. For the sake of clarity I divided the chapter into two main parts, one (section 2.4) about the constraints of both code-switching and diglossic switching as a subcategory of code-switching, and the other (section 2.5) about the motivations and discourse functions of code-switching and diglossic switching. In addition, two empirical case studies from my own research were presented in this chapter. The last section before the conclusion sheds light on recent approaches to the study of code-switching and explains the term translanguaging.

I would like to conclude this chapter by highlighting several important facts.



1. Diglossia can be studied within the framework of code-switching. Applying theories of code-switching to diglossia can clarify and refine our understanding of diglossia in the Arab world in general. When exploring motivations and discourse functions of both classic code-switching and diglossic switching, it is apparent that research into code-switching can indeed shed more light on diglossia and can be successfully applied to data in which there is switching between two varieties of Arabic, when one of the two is MSA. However, when applying structural constraints theories and models of code-switching to diglossic switching, it becomes clear that there are issues with a clear division between languages or even codes.
2. It was concluded in the first edition of this book that structural constraints on diglossic switching must first consider one diglossic community at a time before making any generalisations, given the difference in exposure to MSA between Arab communities, and the difference in internalised MSA structures that have been acquired in each community. That is, issues of proficiency, language acquisition and linguistic diversity were alluded to in the first edition and are now emphasised in this new one.
3. A point mentioned in the first edition and worth repeating now is that the amount of work done on diglossic switching as part of code-switching is small compared to work carried out on classic code-switching. There is still a great deal of work needed to fully comprehend or even predict the phenomenon of diglossic switching.
4. In this new edition, I argue that a more holistic approach to code-switching is needed in which ethnographic methods of research are utilised, and in which the linguist sets aside ingrained concepts about the 'native speaker' as mastering one code only and dividing codes in a neat and predictable manner. Therefore, we cannot assume that in all cases of code-switching there are two clear codes; there may instead be a new creative entity that is not necessarily divisible.
5. Perhaps the most essential new contribution to research on code-switching is how it is now clearly tied to a critical approach to sociolinguistics, as will be made clear in Chapter 6, and how it is also tied to political, social and other factors that construct an identity, as I go on to discuss in the next chapter. 'It is the sociolinguistic history of the speakers, and not the structure of their language, that is the primary determinant of the linguistic outcome of language contact' (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 35).

A suggestion for further study includes examining indexicality and language attitudes in relation to code-switching, as well as metalinguistic discourse and stance-taking in relation to code-switching and identity construction.

After examining diglossia and code-switching, it is time to study in more detail language variation in the Arab world and the reasons that trigger both variation and change.

## NOTES

1. Mahfouz (Najīb Maḥfūz) was vague in his statement, and did not limit duality to diglossia, although perhaps diglossia was what he was describing. It is difficult to know what he had in mind exactly.
2. Diglossic switching will be dealt with later in this chapter, but for the sake of clarity, I want to mention that this switching is usually between the H and L varieties and usually between MSA and one of the dialects, such as Tunisian (cf. Boussofara-Omar 2006a), or Egyptian (cf. Mejdell 2006 and Bassiouney 2006), or any other dialect from the dialect group discussed in Chapter 1.
3. There may still be particularities of diglossic switching that are due to the specifics of diglossia seen as a case of prolonged intimate contact between two varieties of what is perceived as a single language.
4. Data on code-switching usually comes from oral performance rather than written.
5. This fact in itself is not enough to reject a theory.
6. It is noteworthy however, that Mejdell (2006: 391) differentiates between a dominant variety and an ML. according to Mejdell, a dominant variety will characterise the speech of all speakers, while an ML can be any variety or language they master depending on the situation. It is not necessarily a prevalent variety all the time.
7. Myers-Scotton's use of islands is distinct in some ways from its general use in syntax literature.
8. These possible structures are exemplified below.
9. The term 'neutral' refers to morphemes that can occur in both MSA and ECA.
10. Mejdell (2006) also found numerous cases in which a *b*-prefix is inserted with an MSA verb.
11. This may be changing now in Egypt as well, since it has become more prestigious to learn English than MSA. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.
12. Reality is more complex. Many will shift their code in bilingual lectures, and even in monolingual lectures lecturers may shift their style from formal to informal and vice versa.
13. Note that code-switched quotations are often not reporting the language of the actual utterance, but in using code-switching demarcate the quotation from the surrounding talk.
14. Wernger-Moller did not state the number of hours of her interviews.
15. The word 'bad' here may be translated better as 'shame'. Thus what the speaker wants to say is 'we would be ashamed' rather than 'we think it is a bad thing'.
16. This sentence is better translated as 'it is not like that here' or 'we do not have anything like that here'.
17. Following Gumperz, a number of linguists began to examine switching as a phenomenon with sociological linguistic relevance (see Gardner-Chloros 1985, 1991; Heller 1988; Thakerar et al. 1982). Auer and Di Luzio (1984) examined code-switching among the children of Italian guest workers in Germany. Clyne (1982) examined European immigrants' languages in contact with English in Australia, and Appel and Muysken (1987) examined language contact and code-switching.
18. The difference between Gumperz and Myers-Scotton is to some extent a case in point, illustrating more formal versus more functional approaches in terms of what each thinks is necessary for progress in the field.

19. It could be that the relationship differs from one community to another. More studies are required that compare and contrast different Arab communities or even Arab and non-Arab communities.

# Language variation and change

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There are differences between me and the children in the area. These differences make me feel inferior although some of them are as miserable as I am . . . They say about me, ‘he is from the countryside. He comes from the place of hunger and murderers . . . he does not know how to speak Arabic! All villagers are ill this year. They have the hunger disease’.

From the autobiographical novel *al-Khubz al-ḥāfi* (‘For bread alone’) by the Moroccan writer Muḥammad Shukrī (2000)

The protagonist in the passage above moves from a village to a city. In the village he spoke a dialect of Berber, but now in the city his native variety is looked down upon and is associated with poverty and death. If he does not speak Arabic, he will be forever ostracised from this new community. In the novel he does indeed learn to speak Arabic. Because he moves from one place to another and thus breaks his social ties to the village, and because of the negative associations of his native language, he has to give it up in favour of Moroccan Arabic. The change that he undertakes reflects not only on him personally, but also on both his old community and his new one.<sup>1</sup> The association of a particular dialect with economic power and another with poverty is a factor in determining the direction of change, as will be exemplified in the next section.

In this chapter I will examine variation and change in the Arab world and the different factors that trigger such change. But before doing so, I will first introduce the subfield of language variation and change, which is essential in any sociolinguistic study.

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

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William Labov is often considered to have initiated a new perspective in the study of language. He posited that language in general is not static, but is as dynamic as society itself. For him, language is always changing and developing, in accordance with the interaction between different parts of society and the way society is organised and is being developed (see Guy et al. 1996). Labov was interested in examining linguistic variation and change in different communities. He also wanted to know the direction of the change and the reasons behind it. It is also worth noting that, unlike earlier students of language change who assumed that it is invisible and difficult to study except after it has taken place, Labov contended that diachronic change grows out of synchronic variation. Thus, if we want to understand diachronic change, we must analyse variation at any given time. In this chapter I first highlight the main concepts that Labov concentrated on (section 3.2.1). I then move on to the idea of social networks as developed by Milroy (section 3.2.2). I also briefly refer to what is called the ‘third wave’ of variation studies, as discussed by Eckert (3.2.3). Then I briefly shed light on the methods used to study language variation and change in relation to the western world as well as the Arab world (section 3.3). There are specific extra-linguistic variables that influence language variation and the process of change. Some of these variables are examined in section 3.4 in relation to studies done on the Arab world and with reference to studies done on other parts of the world. One variable which perhaps does not play a major role in the studies done by Labov and others outside the Arab world is diglossia. Therefore, section 3.5 is devoted to diglossia and its outcome, levelling. In section 3.6 the chapter will also shed light on new approaches to variation and sociolinguistics more generally. The social approach to variation will be discussed and exemplified in relation to Arabic with reference to indexicality, stance-taking, performance and media. My main aim is to provide the framework for future studies and to give both a theoretical and an empirical background of work conducted on variation and change. Before proceeding to do so, I would like first to clarify some sociolinguistic terms that will recur whenever one discusses language variation and change.

A sociolinguistic variable, according to Milroy (1987: 10), is ‘a linguistic element (phonological usually, in practice) which co-varies not only with other linguistic elements, but also with a number of extra-linguistic independent variables such as social class, age, sex, ethnic group, or contextual style’. This concept was in fact developed by Labov. Walters adds that ‘empirical studies of sociolinguistic variation in the Arab world have, like quantitative studies in the west, generally been studies of phonological variation’ (1996a: 184). What this means is that usually linguists interested in variation will be interested in phonological variables, such as vowels and consonants, although there are still studies that include lexical, grammatical or morphological variables.<sup>2</sup>

Traditionally the target of a linguistic study has been a speech community. There has been more than one definition of a speech community. Labov (1966: 125) contends that a speech community is an entity that is 'united by a common evaluation of the same variables which differentiate the speakers'. However, Trudgill (1974: 33) alludes to the difficulty of assigning individuals to abstract groups. Milroy (1987: 14) posits that a community constitutes 'cohesive groups to which people have a clear consciousness of belonging'. These groups have a strong territorial basis and a common locality to the extent that they might fear moving outside their area. Milroy thus emphasises the geographical component of a speech community. This will be very significant when studying the Arab world.

Labov likewise assumes that individuals usually belong to a specific social class. 'People can be ordered with respect to the rest of society by quantifiable characteristics like income, education, occupation, residence, or life-style' (Milroy 1987: 13). For example, a clergyman is perceived as being of higher status than a plumber, although in some countries the plumber may actually earn more than the clergyman. That is to say, Labov, following American sociologists, assumes that society is organised into social classes, hierarchically arranged.

Meanwhile, the question of how to observe language change is definitely worth asking. Usually irregularities in the usage of a variable may provide evidence of linguistic change in progress (Guy et al. 1996). Thus, if a phonological variable such as the *q* in Arabic is used irregularly by a specific community, this may be a sign of a change in progress. Labov (1972a: 163) contends that the best way to observe change is to observe two or more successive generations of speakers. These generations have to have comparable social characteristics 'which will represent stages in the evolution of the same speech community'. He also posits that there are two directions for change. There is a change from below, which is the 'generalization of all forms to all members of the subgroup' (1972a: 178). It is also a change that is below the level of consciousness and generally moves from the lower social classes to the higher ones without the latter's awareness. Stigmatisation, which is the association of a variable with a lower social class or a social group not highly regarded, can also initiate change from above, which indicates a correction of a variable towards the model of the highest-status group. A change from above is a conscious choice and often involves inconsistent borrowing from outside the group. In section 3.2 I will analyse in more detail Labov's and Milroy's classic works in sociolinguistic variation and change.

## 3.2 LANGUAGE VARIATION AND CHANGE

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### 3.2.1 Social class approach

Labov also took the initiative in moulding and emphasising the relation between language variation and even change and the social stratum of a specific group. In 1961, he began his research into the role of social patterns in linguistic change on the island of Martha's Vineyard, off the coast of Massachusetts. The island had the advantage of being a self-contained unit, separated from the mainland by three miles of ocean. Yet it still had enough social and geographical complexity to make studying it worthwhile for any linguist (1972a). Labov conducted his study by interviewing a large number of speakers drawn from various social groups on the island. He interviewed a range of people representing various sociodemographic groups; he had both sexes and different age groups represented. Instead of eliciting single lexical items from one speaker by means of a formal questionnaire, Labov based his analysis on the conversational speech of his many informants, supplemented by data from reading passages and word lists. He researched a great deal of background information about the island. For example, one important change which may have influenced language is that the island had first been dependent on fishing for its income but in the 1960s was already becoming dependent on tourism from the mainland. Today tourism is the major industry. This kind of economic and historical change is very similar to the change that took place in the 1970s in Gulf countries and will be referred to frequently in this book, since it also reflects on language.

Labov examined in detail the location and ethnic origin of typical Vineyarder families. He also examined other communities living on the island, and was very interested in the attitude of Vineyarders towards their community. This method used by Labov sets a standard in the study of variation and change, as will become clear in section 3.3.

Labov analysed the use of the diphthongs *ay* and *aw*, as in 'mice' and 'mouse', and was in fact able to observe linguistic change in progress in relation to them. He noted that a movement was taking place away from the standard New England realisations of the vowels, towards a centralised pronunciation of the second element of the diphthongs associated with conservative and characteristically Vineyard speakers. The heaviest users of the centralised diphthongs were young men who wanted to identify themselves as Vineyarders, who rejected the values of the mainland and resented the interference of wealthy summer visitors in the traditional island way of life. It was clear that there was a change taking place: a change that was not towards Standard English and that was initiated not by older speakers but by young ones. What is interesting, according to Milroy (1987), is that this use of diphthongs was independent of education. Some college-educated young

men who had returned to the island were the heaviest users of the vernacular diphthongs.

A methodologically more rigorous study, according to Milroy (1987), was the one Labov conducted in New York City. The study used 340 informants selected by means of a random sample,<sup>3</sup> which suggests that the sample was truly representative of the speech of all Lower East Side New Yorkers. He also sampled a range of different styles ranging from the formal to the quintessentially casual. His method this time was acquiring recordings of conversations, both formal and casual. There was always a stranger asking the questions. Then sometimes there would be someone entering the room to get the participants more involved. This newcomer might start narrating some personal experience, for example. Labov also asked his informants to read long passages of prose, and he followed that with a word list of single lexical items and sets of minimal pairs, like 'god' and 'guard', which many New Yorkers pronounce the same.<sup>4</sup>

Labov mainly examined phonological variables such as the *r* sound and how it was realised differently in his target community. He was interested in whether a speaker pronounced or deleted the consonant *r* in final or post-vocalic pre-consonantal position as in 'car' and 'cart'. His concern was post-vocalic *r* in two contexts: syllable-/word-final, and followed by a consonant. He found that all New York speakers of all statuses agree that pronunciation of post-vocalic *r* is prestigious. Southern British English speakers behave in the opposite fashion by stigmatising this pronunciation, because they in fact represent a different speech community with different rules. Another example is the dropping of *h*, which is stigmatised in Southern British English but is irrelevant in New York, Belfast or Glasgow (see Trudgill 1974).

In this section I have defined what a social class is according to Labov. However, a number of linguists find problems with the concept of class (e.g. Trudgill 1974; Milroy 1987). Trudgill, for example, points out the difficulties that arise in trying to assign individuals to abstract groups such as an upper class or a lower class etc. Milroy also asks 'why people continue to speak low-status vernaculars and, even more interestingly, how they manage to maintain vernacular norms, when the social gains in adopting a form of speech closer to the standard are apparently considerable' (1987: 8).

Because of the fact that specific variables which are not necessarily associated with a powerful or a richer group persist in a society, Milroy decided to use a different sort of framework when examining language change and variation. She uses the concept of social networks.

### 3.2.2 Social networks approach

Milroy's classic work on Belfast was based on the concept of social networks; this concept not only complements Labov's work based on social class, but also



stands by itself as sometimes the main or only explanation of language variation and change. Milroy conducted her fieldwork for the study of Belfast working-class speech in 1975–6 in three well-defined communities: ‘Ballymacarrett’, ‘the Hammer’ and ‘the Clonard’. She immediately noticed the problems associated with the presence of the tape recorder, the use of reading word lists and the nature of interviews. Milroy discovered a big methodological obstacle, different from the observer’s paradox (discussed below), which is the fact that a linguist analysing a specific community is indeed a stranger, and as such his or her access to the real linguistic situation is limited, no matter how hard he or she tries. Thus, she introduced herself to the three communities as a friend of a friend. She called her relation to the members of the three communities that of a ‘second order network contact’ (1987: 44). She was also female, which meant that people were less suspicious of and aggressive towards her than they would probably have been to a male fieldworker in Belfast at that time. Since she was not only a woman but also alone, she did not present any threat. Both facts triggered good faith and trust on the part of community members. She was thus both an insider and an outsider. She was an insider who could be trusted, but still an outsider who could ask certain questions and inquire about different facts in the community. By recording her informants, she hoped to get a clearer picture of community life as well as samples of language in interaction that were closer to the way the speakers normally spoke than Labov was able to capture for the Lower East Side.

Because of the limitations of the concept of social class, Milroy and Gordon highlighted the concept of social networks. Their definition of networks is as follows: ‘An individual’s social network is the aggregate of relationships contracted with others, a boundless web of ties which reaches out through social and geographical space linking many individuals, sometimes remotely’ (2003: 118).

She admitted later that no canonically correct procedure for analysing social networks can be identified (2003: 118). Networks can be described in relation to density and multiplexity. A dense network is one in which a large number of people are linked to each other in ties of kinship, occupation, specific voluntary group membership etc. For example, in certain areas there are youth gangs who spend a lot of time together and belong to the same club and neighbourhood (2003: 121). A network can also be multiplex in that the same person, for example, is connected to another as a colleague, neighbour, relation etc. – that is, in several ways. Both density and multiplexity are efficient indicators of pressure to adopt the norm of a community. They act as ‘norm enforcement mechanisms’ (Milroy 1987: 50). For example, an older woman in ‘Ballymacarrett’ placed a low value on her relationship with neighbours and seemed to reject the local team value. Thus, she had weak networks within the community and her behaviour was unlike that of someone with closer ties to the community. It is easy to maintain one’s vernacular in close-knit com-

munities in spite of cultural pressure. However, when networks are weakened then language change is often triggered. Social networks can also interact with other variables such as gender (see also Aitchison 2001).

### 3.2.3 Third wave approach to variation studies: community of practice

Eckert (2005) introduced a third approach to the study of variation and change and called it the ‘third wave’ of variation studies. According to this approach variation should not be studied as a reflection of an individual’s social place, but as a ‘source’ for the ‘construction of social meaning’ (Eckert 2005: 1). A key factor in this new approach is the concept of a community of practice, defined by Eckert (2005: 16) as:

An aggregate of people who come together on a regular basis to engage in some enterprise. A family, a linguistics class, a garage, band, roommates, a sports team, even a small village. In the course of their engagement, the community of practice develops ways of doing things – practices. And these practices involve the construction of a shared orientation to the world around them – a tacit definition of themselves in relation to each other, and in relation to other communities of practice.

Thus, instead of examining the relation between individuals and abstract categories defined by the researcher such as class, gender and ethnicity, one has to examine the constructed relation between an individual and a larger imagined community, which is mainly his or her community of practice. According to this approach the individual usually uses variables to build an identity and to select a community of practice. Eckert supports her argument with work done by anthropologists such as Ochs (1992), who claims that linguistic choices do not mark the social categories of individuals directly but rather reflect attitudes, activities and ways of life that are associated with particular categories. Rather than placing people into categories – gender categories, class categories, age categories and so on – linguists should try to understand how the construction of identity is part and parcel of the construction of social meaning. As Eckert puts it, linguists should ask ‘how do variables mean?’ (2002: 4); that is to say, they should ask themselves ‘how linguistic variants acquire the social meaning that is locally relevant to speakers’ (Clark 2008: 267). This approach to variation and change is related to that discussed in section 3.6.

In section 3.3 I summarise the methodologies used to measure variation and change. Since measuring variation and change is crucial in assessing the situation in any community, methodology is the key factor in a valid analysis

of any kind. I also give an overview of methodological tools used by linguists in analysing language variation and change, especially in the Arab world.

### 3.3 METHODOLOGY

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The methodologies used by both Labov and Milroy in collecting data served as a template for other studies in both the Arab world and the western one. Before discussing this issue further, I would like to refer to the main methodological problem recognised first by Labov and eventually by all those who came after him. Labov (1972a: 207) stated that the main aim of a linguist working on language variation is to find out how people talk when they are not 'systematically observed'. To do that linguists depend on data that can only be obtained by systematic observation. This situation creates what he terms the 'observer's paradox'. To overcome this paradox, one can supplement formal interviews with other data, or seek to change the structure of the interview situation one way or another, that is, to manipulate the context in some way – for example, by asking people to discuss childhood experiences or relate emotionally charged events. However, the problem still persists and there is no thorough and efficient way of eliminating it altogether.

Problems of collecting data for measuring variation and change have been discussed by Milroy (1987), according to whom using word lists or eliciting single lexical items is not sufficient to permit us to note the regularity and direction of language change, nor is the interview a reliable method by itself. If the interview is held by a stranger with an isolated speaker, it will be difficult for the linguist to have access to the real vernacular of that speaker. By its nature the interview's format is not likely to elicit the speaker's vernacular or most unguarded speech. Gumperz (1982a) tried to deal with this problem by having family members present during the interview to make it less formal, or by asking about something personal and getting his informants involved in narrating a personal experience.

One way of trying to collect data that is more natural and presents unguarded speech is to use both insiders and outsiders as interviewers, as Labov did when he studied what was then termed 'Black English Vernacular' (1972b). He focused on the speech of adolescents up to the age of sixteen and used African-American fieldworkers, insiders and outsiders. He also used peer-group recordings of his informants together and alone. He recorded them in real-life situations such as eating, drinking and playing cards.

Collecting background information is really the first step in variation research. This is what Labov did with his study of Martha's Vineyard. It is also what Milroy did in her study of Belfast, and what Blom and Gumperz did in their study of the Norwegian village of Hemnes (1972).

Linguists studying the Arab world have used mainly the same methods

as Labov and Milroy. In fact, Milroy's method of collecting data was used in Haeri's study of sociolinguistic variation in Cairo (Haeri 1997). Haeri was also a female working alone, and as an Iranian, she shared the religion of her informants, Islam. Therefore, it was easy for her to be both an insider and an outsider in various ways. She was then able to study phonological variation in the speech of men and women in Cairo in relation to class. She used the sociolinguistic interview in addition to radio and TV programmes for children and adults, as well as a word list reading. She analysed the speech of eighty-seven speakers (fifty women and thirty-seven men) and limited her study to traditional urban and modern or industrial urban groups in Cairo. To overcome the observer's paradox, she not only used the social network approach, but also tried to speak about personal things with her informants, such as childhood games, their schooldays, family, falling in love and local customs.<sup>5</sup>

Daher (1999), in his study of variation in Damascene Arabic, was aware that the presence of the tape recorder makes it difficult to elicit spontaneous speech. This is because the tape recorder makes informants more careful about their speech; educated speakers are more likely to use MSA more often than they usually would. Daher tried to overcome this problem by using an interviewer who was familiar with the culture, had the trust of the informants and was a member of the speech community. The interviewer was also a member of the large social network. Most of the informants were either friends, family members or co-workers, which, as noted above, influences the degree of representativeness of the data. Daher also chose a cosy setting for the interviews, usually the home of the informants, when other family members were present. Then he began the interview by asking about personal experience, memorable stories, hobbies, school and television in Syrian society – unthreatening topics. He found that stories based on lasting memories worked well in reflecting the real vernacular used by the informants. He recorded long narratives of informants' stories about a journey on foot from Beirut to Damascus, a marriage and an accident. In analysing the data, he also decided to ignore the first five minutes of the interview, in order to give the informants time to relax and begin to talk more naturally.

Jabeur (1987), in his sociolinguistic study of Rades, decided first to gather information about the history of the place, the reasons for the increasing population, internal rural migration and the phenomenon of increasing residential mobility. He conducted a study of the sociodemographic characteristics of Rades. He studied the language of twelve women, and to overcome the observer's paradox, when collecting his data he adopted the social network approach, which is based, as stated earlier, on the idea that people are influenced by their network and so behave differently in a group. Jabeur introduced himself as a friend of a friend. He thus depended on existing relations within a community rather than creating new relationships. He used the interview by recording

information in places where people usually met to drink tea, and since they were network members, this would have reduced the effect of observation.<sup>6</sup>

Before examining independent social factors that influence language variation and change, I would like to note that most of the linguists dealing with the issue of variation, especially those dealing with it in the Arab world, build their work on the concept of quantitative studies. Quantitative studies aim to examine the correlation between linguistic variation and other variables, in particular social class (Coates 1993: 61). One uses quantitative methods to seek to uncover statistical relationships between independent variables such as age, sex, sect, social class, place of origin or level of education, and dependent variables such as the relative use of specific linguistic variants that together make up a linguistic variable.<sup>7</sup>

### 3.4 SOCIOLINGUISTIC VARIABLES

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I will now examine some of the extra-linguistic variables that influence change and variation, and that have been studied by linguists examining the Arab world. Independent variables analysed below include ethnicity, religion, urbanisation and social class (sections 3.4.1–3.4.4). Gender will be examined in Chapter 4. It is noteworthy, however, that dividing the triggers of language variation and change into independent variables is not an easy task and is at times arbitrary. The variables studied overlap and interact with each other. Their definitions also overlap in most cases. For example, in a study that concentrates on women, urbanisation and ethnicity, such as Al-Rojaie's study of Qaṣīm in Saudi Arabia (2013) discussed below, it is difficult to examine the study from the perspective of one specific variable. Also, across the Arab world sectarian differences are often linked to issues of social class and ethnicity in complex ways. Thus the division of variables is fuzzy and serves only as a guide in our understanding of variation and change.

#### 3.4.1 Ethnicity

Ethnicity is a crucial variable in a great number of places in the world at large, and in parts of the Arab world in particular. However, it is a variable that is crucial when present but not as crucial in places or communities that are not ethnically diverse, although these are now few and far between. In the next paragraphs I will explain how ethnicity in the Arab world may differ from ethnicity in the west, and how linguists dealing with the Arab world define ethnicity. In some cases the definition of ethnicity is flexible: in some cases, it could include differences based on nationality or religious affiliation and in others the differences could be based on skin colour.

According to Davies and Bentahila (2006: 58) ethnicity is 'an analytical

concept used to describe the bonds which lead certain people to identify themselves as a group'. This bond could be an ancestral lineage. Fishman (1977: 17) describes this bond as a paternity bond, and posits that 'Ethnicity is, in part, but at its core, experienced as an inherited constellation acquired from one's parents as they acquired it from theirs, and so on back further and further, *ad infinitum*'. As Edwards (1985: 10) argues, the ethnic group's boundary 'can be sustained by shared objective characteristics (language, religion, etc.) or more subjective contributions to a sense of "groupness", or by some combination of both'.

Note that according to Fishman this bond can be lost and is not inherent, that is, one can acquire or lose an ethnicity.

Davies and Bentahila (2006: 59) also argue that both ethnicity and nationalism can be considered 'as points on a continuum'. Degree of self-awareness, organisation, mobilisation or ideologisation can all be factors that distinguish nationalism and ethnicity (cf. Connor 1978; Edwards 1985; Fasold 1995; Paulston 1994).

Fishman's definition of ethnicity relies on patrimony and ancestral lineage. However, Owens (2001: 434), when discussing ethnicity in the Arab world, posits that ethnicity is 'Any of a number of social parameters by which, non-national social groupings are distinguished, including religion, shared history, skin colour, kinship, lineage and place of origin. The relevant criterion or criteria defining ethnicity may differ from place to place.' Owens includes religion in the definition of ethnicity, which may imply that in Iraq Sunnis and Shiites can be considered two ethnic groups, as can Copts and Muslims in Egypt. Such a proposition would be politically charged and may not reflect the way in which people perceive themselves. For example, most Egyptians tend to perceive themselves, whether they are Copts or Muslims, as descendants of the ancient Egyptians and tacitly feel different from other Arabs because of their Ancient Egyptian history<sup>8</sup> (see also the views of Salāmah Mūsá, discussed in Chapter 5). However, Kurds in Iraq may be considered an ethnically different group because historically they were part of a specific entity with the same ancestors and a shared history (Davies & Bentahila 2006), although they are mostly Sunni Muslims.

I prefer to retain Fishman's definition of ethnicity rather than Owens' more general one, simply because religion is a more complicated and historical intertwined factor than it seems. Thus I will consider Palestinians, Muslims and Christians as one ethnic group and Jordanians, Muslims and Christians as another ethnic group. Although Palestinians and Jordanians may have a lot in common, they both perceive themselves and each other as different, although they may share the same religion. They perceive themselves as coming from different lineage and different ancestors. This is when the line distinguishing nationality from ethnicity is blurred. The importance of family bonds and paternal ancestors is a salient feature in the Arab world. Arabs from different countries define themselves according to the tribe they belong to, the

family they belong to and finally the country they belong to. Omani men, for example, until recently needed permission to marry a non-Omani woman. I have attempted above to clarify what ethnicity refers to in this book, and how it is different from religion and other extra-linguistic factors.

In multi-ethnic communities language variation and change are very apparent and significant. In the past century the Arab world has been in a state of flux for different reasons, some of them political and some economic. We definitely need more studies that examine variation between different ethnic communities in the Arab world.

A country that has been analysed exhaustively by linguists is Jordan. Although a relatively small country with a relatively small population (10.4 million),<sup>9</sup> Jordan has one of the most interesting situations in the Arab world, with two nationalities, the Palestinians and the Jordanians, living together, sometimes as friends and sometimes as enemies. In fact, the present-day situation is even more interesting, with the king, Abd Allah, being of Jordanian origin and Queen Rania being of Palestinian origin. Whether this will eventually influence language variation and change in Jordan is still to be seen.

It is worth mentioning that Jordan itself was formed after World War I by Britain. Palestinians and Jordanians are not two ethnic groups, precisely, but rather two political entities; however, they perceive themselves and each other as different. This is a case where politics meddles with linguistics. Numerous cases of this meddling will be discussed in Chapter 5. Given that the Arab world is loaded with political changes and foreign political interference, this is not surprising. Before explaining the linguistic situation in Jordan, I first want to first give an overview of the history of Jordan.

### *3.4.1.1 Jordanians versus Palestinians*

#### *3.4.1.1.1 History of Jordan*

Jordan lies between Israel to the west, Syria to the north, Iraq to the east and Saudi Arabia to the south. Jordan as we know it now was created by Britain after World War I. Britain seized what was then referred to as Transjordan from the Turks after the war, separated it from the Palestinian mandate and placed it under the rule of 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥusayn in 1921. In 1946 Britain abolished the mandate and Jordan gained independence.

The 1948 war resulted in the displacement of half a million Palestinians, most of whom fled to Jordan as refugees. This war also led to the incorporation of the West Bank into the Jordanian kingdom, thus changing the western borders of the country. The population of Jordan then rose from half a million to 1.4 million. In May 1967, King Hussein of Jordan signed a defence pact with Egypt against Israel (Mansfield 2003: 273). After the 1967 war, another 250,000 Palestinians sought refuge in Jordan. The war also resulted in the loss by Jordan of East Jerusalem and the West Bank. After the defeat in the 1967

Arab-Israeli war, frustrated Palestinian guerrilla forces took over sections of Jordan and in 1970 open warfare broke out between the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) and government forces. Syria intervened at that point, but Hussein's army defeated the Palestinians. The Jordanians drove out the Syrians and 12,000 Iraqi troops who had been in the country since the 1967 war. Despite protests from Arab countries, Hussein had, by mid-1971, crushed the PLO in Jordan and thereby forced it to shift its activities to Lebanon, where many of the guerrillas had fled. This incident created tension between Palestinians and Jordanians for a long time.

In July 1988, Jordan renounced its sovereignty over the West Bank. In so doing, it emphasised that there are two separate national entities, a Palestinian one and a Jordanian one. Prior to 1988, while Jordan claimed sovereignty over the West Bank, all Palestinians entering the country were granted full citizenship. After the disengagement of 1988, new regulations were enacted to downgrade the Jordanian passports of Palestinians living in the West Bank to the status of travel documents: West Bank residents who are holders of Jordanian passports no longer have full citizenship rights and, crucially, no access to national ID numbers (Gabbay 2014). Within Jordan, on the other hand, Palestinians have been granted full citizenship since 1949, even though the nature of their national identity has been contested and debated over the years (Nanes 2008).

Ryan argues that separate identities are reflected in a 'de facto ethnic division of labour', in which Palestinians dominate and lead the private sector, while Jordanians control the public sector and the state apparatus (Ryan 2011). On the other hand, as Ryan also points out, this division is not clear-cut, and class divisions are a crucial element of social organisation in Jordan.

It is clear that Jordanian society encompasses various groups with more or less distinct identities. According to earlier research, this is reflected in language. Cleveland (1963) distinguished an urban Palestinian dialect, a rural Palestinian dialect, as well as a Bedouin and a rural Jordanian dialect. To illustrate the difference between these dialects, note the realisation of *q* in each one:

urban Palestinian dialect: [ʔ] (glottal stop)

rural Palestinian dialect: [k] (voiceless stop)

Bedouin and rural Jordanian: [g] (voiced stop) (cf. Abd-El-Jawad 1986).

Suleiman (2004: 102) confirms this division, and calls the dialects '(1) the Madani variety with its emblematic [ʔ]; (2) the Bedouin variety with its emblematic [g]; and (3) the Fallahi variety with its emblematic [k]'.

However, as one might expect, there is some degree of flux between these varieties. According to Suleiman (2004), after the bloody confrontation between Palestinians and Jordanians in 1970, Palestinian male students at



university started using *g* for *q*, as opposed to the glottal stop of their urban dialect or the *k* of rural Palestinian Arabic. In other words, they started accommodating to Jordanian Bedouin men. Suleiman recalls how his Palestinian male friends, especially rural Palestinian students, started to use *g* with the soldiers who operated the checkpoints between the town centre and the university (2004: 115). At that time, when the Jordanian government was using force in dealing with Palestinians, the Jordanian dialect was not only the more prestigious one but also the safest one to use. Thus, although the Palestinian urban dialect was associated with urbanism, finesse, wealth and modernism, for Jordanians, the change seemed to be towards the local dialect of Jordanian Bedouins.<sup>10</sup>

After the reconciliation between Jordanians and Palestinians, the Palestinian urban dialect was still a symbol of modernity and education, but Jordanians, especially men, did not accommodate to it. Abd-El-Jawad (1986) claimed that this refusal had to do with feelings of local identity, pride in origin and solidarity. In fact, although Abd-El-Jawad does not spell it out in these terms, it has to do mainly with social networks. Jordanian tribes have dense and multiplex social networks. Abd-El-Jawad for example, noted that each tribe had a clubhouse in which members met to discuss different matters. Thus it is not surprising that Jordanians, whether rural or Bedouin, kept their *g*.

In this section I have concentrated on Jordan as a multi-ethnic community. While it is easy to project a different facet of one's identity at different stages of one's life, it is difficult to change perceptions of ethnicity in the Arab world. For example, in the case of Palestinians in Jordan, although they are integrating to a great extent with the Jordanians at different levels, they still perceive themselves as Palestinians and not Jordanians. Note that there are other studies that deal with ethnicity in Jordan, such as those that deal with language change among Armenians in Jordan (Al-Khatib 2001; Abd-El-Jawad 2006).

Another point worth mentioning here is that tribes form communities of practice. Individuals choose to belong to their tribe because this provides them with social strength and status. A clubhouse exclusive to tribe members is a community of practice.

However, more studies are needed about language variation in other multi-ethnic communities. For example, a study that examines the dialect of Palestinians in Egypt or Syria and how it is changing, or not changing, would be well worth its salt. The Gulf, since the 1970s, has also attracted people from different ethnic origins. More studies done on the Gulf and pidgin Arabic are also necessary. Recently there has been a flux of Syrian refugees to Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt. So far there are no studies on the impact of this on language change.

### 3.4.2 Religion

#### 3.4.2.1 *Religion in the Arab world*

The religious landscape of the Arab World is an extremely complex one. It is common knowledge that Islam, Christianity and Judaism are represented among the populations of the region. At the same time, these religions themselves are divided into different sects.

Thus, Muslims may be divided into Sunnis and Shiites. The former group is largely coherent theologically (if not in actual practice); the latter group falls into various subgroups, such as the 'Twelvers' (after the number of consecutive imams in their theological system), Ismailis, Ibadis and Zaydis. In addition, there are historical offshoots of (Shiite) Islam, such as the Druze, the Alevis and Bahais.

Christianity, likewise, falls roughly into three large groups: Orthodox churches, Catholics and Uniate churches, as well as Protestants, with some additional offshoots that belong to none of these categories, such as the Mandeans. Many of these churches are also national churches in the sense that they are linked with a particular territory, and in the sense that they employ a particular language in their liturgy. Hence, there is the Coptic Orthodox Church (which uses Coptic and Arabic in its liturgy), the Greek Orthodox (Greek and Arabic), the Armenian Orthodox Church (Armenian) etc.<sup>11</sup> Finally, there are distinct subgroups within Judaism, too, such as the Karaites, and offshoots, such as the Samaritans.

With all this variation, it is difficult to generalise about religious groups, as their presence or absence in the various parts of the Arab world are largely the result of historical circumstance. Thus, the Arabian peninsula has no native Christians to speak of, whereas Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Israel-Palestine and above all Lebanon all have sizeable Christian communities. Of these, the Copts are found almost exclusively in Egypt, where they form the national church, while the Maronites are restricted mostly to Lebanon (that is, if we ignore expatriate communities elsewhere). The once thriving Jewish communities of Egypt and Iraq have all but disappeared, but in Morocco and Tunisia, small communities remain.

These communities, groups and subgroups often live side by side within the same national entity, but they may, at times enter into fierce competition among themselves; an example of this is the ongoing contention among the Christian denominations for space and rights within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, which has turned violent at times. The Shiite-Sunni conflicts in Lebanon and Iraq are cases in point. It is clear then, that religious identities in the Arab world are multi-layered, as they relate not only to an abstract religion, but also to a distinct group or community within that

religious group, or even to a 'national' or ethnic group, as is the case with the Armenians in Egypt, Jordan or Lebanon.

Lebanon, as an Arab country, used to contain the largest number of Christians. In 1975, on the eve of the Lebanese civil war (1975–90), Christians constituted 55 per cent of the population of Lebanon, most of whom belonged to the Maronite Church. This has dropped to 36.2 per cent (around 2.2 million people) in recent years,<sup>12</sup> as has the percentage of Christians throughout the Arab world. As for Syria, while in 1960 Christians formed approximately 15 per cent of the population (about 1.2 million), they are estimated to constitute only 10 per cent now, due to immigration and lower birth rates among Christians than among their Muslim counterparts.<sup>13</sup> In Jordan Christians, constitute 2.2 per cent of the population,<sup>14</sup> while in the Palestinian territories of the West Bank, about 1–2.5 per cent of the population are Christian.<sup>15</sup> There are also roughly 190,000 Palestinian Christians living in Israel and around 400,000 Palestinian Christians living in the diaspora. Egypt's population is estimated to be approximately 100 million, of which some 10 per cent are Christian (mostly Coptic Orthodox).<sup>16</sup> In North Africa, there are very small communities of Christians who mainly belong to the Roman Catholic Church and who live in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.

Jews, on the other hand, who formed a significant minority in the Arab world, were forced to leave or migrated after the formation of Israel in 1948. The small communities that remain in the Arab world range from fewer than 100 in Egypt<sup>17</sup> to 7,000 in Morocco and about 1,000 in Tunisia.

It is worth mentioning that Muslims in the Arab world make up less than one quarter of the world's Muslims in general – estimated (in 2015) at around 1.8 billion.<sup>18</sup> They are mainly Sunnis with a substantial Shiite minority. In fact, Shiites comprise 64–69 per cent of the population of Iraq, and approximately 75 per cent of the population of Bahrain.<sup>19</sup> Countries such as Lebanon, Yemen and Kuwait have substantial Shiite groups. Saudi Arabia also has a Shiite minority in its Eastern province of al-Aḥasā', and the southern province city Najrān harbours a minority of Ismailis.

#### *3.4.2.2 Religion as an independent variable*

Like other social variables, religion does not stand in isolation but is connected to other categories, and in the Arab world specifically, it is also closely connected to the political system of each country. Religion is important in terms of language variation and change only in the sense that it can create a close-knit community whose members feel for one reason or another that they are united by it.<sup>20</sup> I think political factors are essential in a great number of communities in the Arab world and may be intertwined with religion in most cases.

It is worth mentioning, however, that in the Arab world, unlike the west, religion is usually not seen as a matter of individual choice, but as a matter

of family and group affiliation; one is born a Muslim, a Jew or a Christian, and that fact becomes almost similar to one's ethnicity. As was established earlier, it is almost impossible to change your ethnicity, because it is dependent on how you perceive yourself and how others perceive you, not just as an individual but as part of a community. The same is true for religion. This kind of attachment to religion is perhaps different among highly educated westerners. Changing one's religion is not just perceived as a serious crime, but the convert is also seen as rejecting the existing social order, tradition and family obligations. Even the rituals and appearance of religion are more prominent in the Arab world, where it is common for a Muslim man to go to the mosque regularly and for a Muslim woman to wear a headscarf, as well as for a Christian man or woman to go to church regularly and to wear a cross.

Studies that have concentrated on religion as a variable in the Arab world include Abu Haidar's study (1991) on Baghdad, which examines the differences between the Muslim (MB) and Christian (CB) Arabic of Baghdad. Her study is different from a great number of studies on language variation since it not only depends on phonological variables but also examines syntactic and semantic ones, which are more difficult to observe. Her study predicts a change in progress towards the Muslim dialect. Abu Haidar argues that the dialect which is changing, CB, is in fact the older dialect and that it is moving towards a newer one, in this case MB.

Abu-Haidar states that there were one million Christians in Iraq at the time of her data collection. In fact, there were villages in the north of the country where the population was entirely Christian. Baghdad, on the other hand, had around 100 churches – the largest concentration of churches in the whole country. She goes on to explain the history and tradition of the Christians in Iraq. The indigenous Christian group, the Jacobites, traditionally live in northern villages as well as in central cities like Baghdad and Basra. Their church was founded in the sixth century and follows the belief that there is only one nature of the divine in the person of Christ; thus the church is regarded as heretical by both the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches. However, there are also some Armenian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholics and Protestants in Iraq, although their percentage is very low compared to the Jacobites. The Christians of Baghdad are a well-established community. Their dialect is a sedentary variety of Arabic which evolved from the Arabic vernacular of medieval Iraq. In that sense it is different from the Muslim dialect of Baghdad, which is more recent and of Bedouin origin (Jastrow 1978: 318). In fact, some districts in Baghdad remained completely Christian, at least until the time of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. Christians are usually clustered around churches.

In Baghdad, MB and CB, as with everyone across the Arab world, share MSA as a high variety. MB is the low variety for Muslim Baghdadis, but as the language of the more powerful, richer community, it also serves as a second

dialect for Christian Baghdadis. For Christians, it is not used at home and not spoken among group members, but it is used in formal, less spontaneous situations. Therefore, one can think of CB speakers as triglossic speakers who use three varieties of Arabic in different situations that differ in their formality. Abu-Haidar gives an example from her childhood. In her primary school in Baghdad in the early 1950s, conversations between the teachers, who were all Christian women, and the pupils were often in CB, but when the teacher referred to the text or assumed a more serious tone, even with a Christian child, she would use MB. Interestingly, MSA was not the only variety used as the medium of instruction in schools. The following are examples that show the difference between MSA, MB and CB (Abu-Haidar 1991: 144):

- (1) MSA: *laqad*                      *samiʕa*                      *annaka*                      *huna:*  
           *laqad*                      hear-3msg-perf      that-pr2msg      here  
           ‘He heard you were here.’
- MB: *Semaʕ*                      *enta*                      *hna:*  
       hear-3msg-perf      you                      here
- CB: *ken*                      *samaʕ*                      *anta*                      *ho:na*  
       *ken*                      hear-3msg-perf      you                      here
- (2) MSA: *al-kalbu*                      *kabi:run*  
           det-dog-nom                      big-nom  
           ‘The dog is big.’
- MB: *ʔfaleb*                      *ʔfabi:r*  
       dog                      big
- CB: *l-kaleb*                      *agbi:ġ ya:nu*  
       det-dog                      big

It is noteworthy, however, that Abu-Haidar recognises that even within CB, there is still variation between one group of speakers and another, and even within the repertoire of the same speaker. For example, there is a high level of phonological variation within CB. She stresses that this variation is not related to social variables such as gender or generation. She gives the example of an elderly woman who gave both *tma:m* and *tama:m* for ‘complete’ or ‘whole’. A man from a younger group of informants provided the two variants *nha:ġ* and *nahaġ* for ‘day’, while Blanc (1964: 146) gives *nha:ġ* as the CB equivalent for ‘day’.

Abu-Haidar contends that CB is changing and that its existence is being threatened from several directions. The reasons for these changes are, first, the accommodation process. Most CB salient features are adjusted towards MB during CB/non-CB interaction.<sup>21</sup> Some sociolinguists, such as Dorian (1973) and Trudgill (1983, 1986), argue that long-term adjustment can sometimes result in complete reduction and/or loss of certain salient stigmatised

features, that is, language change. To support her claim, Abu-Haidar mentions the fact that Blanc (1964) found that some overtly stigmatised features, like dental *t* for interdental *t*-, were optional among speakers he interviewed.<sup>22</sup> Such irregularity can itself be an indicator of language change in progress, as was mentioned before by Labov. Additionally, some of Abu-Haidar's older informants thought that CB features serve as overt markers of one's Christian identity, and that many young people do not want to retain them in their speech. Most of her young informants saw the postpositional copula and particle *ken* as redundant.

Abu-Haidar posits that '[t]he most immediate danger to CB which could lead to dialect death, similar to the fate Dorian (1981) predicted for Scottish Gaelic, is due to social, rather than to linguistic factors' (1991: 150). She explains that the main threat for CB is the fact that CB speakers have recently been scattered all over the world. Since the 1960s, many have settled in non-Arab-speaking communities. Although first-generation CB emigrants tend to preserve their variety, it is difficult to predict whether they can maintain it. In fact, there is a strong likelihood that they cannot. Furthermore, even if they do, it will undergo changes in its various locations.

It is apparent that once more it is weak network ties that may encourage language change. Yet, although the situations in Iraq and Bahrain are similar in the sense that it is the group that is losing its strong social ties that leads the change, the situations in the two countries differ historically, politically and economically. Christian Baghdadis are losing their ties because of immigration rather than economic changes and movement within the country associated with the distribution of wealth and power, as is the case in Bahrain.

Khan (1997) studied the Arabic dialect of the Karaite Jews in the Iraqi town Ḥīt on the Euphrates, 150 km west of Baghdad. Khan, like Abu-Haidar, provides historical background about the community he studied and their present status. Unlike the other two researchers, however, Khan did not try to examine language change in progress, but rather to describe the dialect and record it. The Karaites are a Jewish sect that broke away from mainstream Judaism in the Middle Ages: the movement began in Iran and Iraq in the eighth century and spread to Palestine, Egypt, North Africa, Spain, Asia Minor and Eastern Europe. Early urban settlement of Ḥīt can be traced back to the tenth century. The Karaite Jewish community there was one of the most important in the Middle East, and known for its scholarly tradition. However, by 1951 the community had declined to twenty families, who then emigrated to Israel and settled on the same street in Beersheba. The dialect is characterised by some particular syntactic, phonological and lexical features. For example, the consonant *h* is dropped in the third person pronominal suffixes immediately after other consonants, as in *gibtim* 'I brought them', as opposed to *gibthim*, or *ma:lim* 'belonging to them', as opposed to *ma:lhim*. It is still retained sometimes as in *minhim* 'from them' (1997: 69). Khan claims

that the dialect still maintains some variables of the Qəltu dialect that was spoken in the old urban settlement of Ḥīt. Although the community is a direct descendant of medieval urban settlements, it still maintains Bedouin features today and shows almost no interference from other Arabic dialects. However, some Hebrew words have entered the dialect because speakers were bilingual in Arabic and Hebrew. Although Khan did not mention it, it seems that the reason why this dialect maintained itself even after the families immigrated to Israel is related to the density and multiplexity of their ties.

The question still remains as to what extent religion as a variable is significant in the Arab world. We certainly know that, as with other variables, one cannot speak about the 'Arab world' as one entity. The situation is different from one country to another and even from one community to another in the same country.

Tomiche (1968: 1178–80) tried to distinguish the Jewish dialect spoken by the Jewish community of Alexandria and Cairo until the 1960s from other dialects. He states that the Jewish dialect was characterised by the absence of emphatics and the use of *n-* and *n-u* for first person singular and plural imperfect. According to Miller (2004), this claim was refuted by Blanc (1974), who prefers to call this dialect a non-standard Cairene Arabic which is shared by other groups. For example, the *n* is one of the North African features as well as a feature of other areas of Egypt, namely the western delta and the western oases (Behnstedt and Woidich 1985–8). In fact, coming from Alexandria myself, I know that the use of *n-* and *n-...-u* for first person singular is a characteristic of Alexandrian Arabic and not just limited to a specific religion.

Other studies that concentrate on religion include studies on Bethlehem in Palestine by Spolsky et al. (2000), in which they indicate that Christian speakers, both women and men, tend to use more urban features, like the glottal stop, than do Muslim speakers, who tend to use MSA *q*. Blanc's 1953 study of the Northern Palestinian Arabic dialect used by Druze remains a classic, one-of-a-kind study, mainly because there are very few, if any studies that concentrated on linguistic variation in the speech of Druze (cf. Walters 2006a for other references).

Miller (2004) explains religion as a variable by positing that in most Arab cities religious minorities used to live in certain areas and thus developed different linguistic models, as in Baghdad and Fez. Different religious communities kept their vernaculars for centuries and did not acquire the dialect of the Muslim community. This was due to a degree of segregation, but also to the fact that the Muslim urban Arabic dialects were not associated with power, because political power was in the hands of foreign rulers up to the beginning of the twentieth century. Only recently has there been any change. An additional cause is the demographic changes that have taken place in different parts of the Arab world.

Miller states that there has been some linguistic variation between different

religious groups but mainly at the lexical level, for religious terms and the like. She also thinks that the belief that there are still religiously segregated areas is open to question, and the situation may not be as clear cut as was thought before. This postulation of Miller has to be tested. There are still religiously segregated areas in Lebanon and Iraq, for example, but to what extent this influences language variation beyond the lexical level needs more study. A more critical approach to independent variables such as religion will be discussed in Chapter 6.

One can conclude from the above discussion that religion by itself is not enough to explain variation or to initiate change. Religion is only one factor in shaping and moulding linguistic variation and change. Blanc (1964) claims that religious linguistic differences are not dominant in Arab cities. They are, in fact, the result of political changes and demographic changes related to the sedentarisation and urbanisation of former Bedouin groups as well as ethno-regional differences (Miller 2004: 189).<sup>23</sup> This postulation may not be true for the entire Arab world, however.

### 3.4.3 Urbanisation

Miller posits that ‘urbanization has been one of the greatest social changes of the last century in Arab countries’ (2004: 177). The population of most Arab countries was mainly rural until the mid-twentieth century (Miller 2007: 2). To illustrate this, note that the creation of Nouakchott, the capital of Mauritania, took place in 1957. It was created mainly for political and administrative reasons. In 1962, the population of the city was 5,807, and by 2005 it had risen to 743,511 (cf. Taine-Cheikh 2007). The same rapid growth occurred in the second half of the twentieth century in Casablanca, Morocco (cf. Hachimi 2007). This rapid growth in urban populations has a number of linguistic ramifications.

Miller (2004) claims that the process of Arabisation in general started in urban centres. Sometimes in cases of inter-dialectal contact, speakers who use features close to MSA may drop them and acquire non-MSA urban/regional features. Note the cases of Egypt and Syria, in which the migrant population came from rural neighbouring areas speaking sedentary rural dialects, and accommodated to the main urban dialects, Cairene and Damascene respectively, which are considered the prestige variety of the national dialect. Bedouin dialects have not had any significant influence on the dialects of these centres. One can also add that the ruling family in Egypt (before the revolution) did not speak a Bedouin dialect, as was the case in Jordan or Iraq, for example. Even after the presidency was in place in Egypt, the president did not speak Bedouin. Thus political power also has a role in language change, and not just urbanisation.<sup>24</sup>

Urbanisation also means interaction, language contact and a greater degree



of homogeneity. In fact, there is a difference between the degree of homogeneity in Damascus and Cairo. Miller (1997) posits that the degree of homogeneity in Cairo is greater than in Damascus. Children born in Cairo to migrants from rural areas shift to Cairene Arabic almost automatically (see also Lentin 1981). When there is interaction between different groups and one group's variety is stigmatised, change towards the non-stigmatised variety will take place. The following example will clarify this point: Woidich (1994) mentions that the Cairene dialect of today is a mixed dialect formed in the second half of the nineteenth century, when many people from the countryside moved to Cairo. A number of features became stigmatised as a result of being associated with low-prestige rural dialects. According to Versteegh (2001), this process of stigmatisation led to the disappearance of rural forms and the emergence of new forms, as for example the loss of pausal *ima:la* (palatalisation) in Cairene Arabic. Versteegh (1993: 70) also describes the influence of Cairene Arabic in the delta.<sup>25</sup> He mentions the example of the isoglosses of the realisation of *q* and *č*. In Cairene the sound *q* is pronounced as *ʔ* and the *č* sound is pronounced as *g*; in the delta *q* is pronounced as *g* and *č* as *č*. Versteegh postulates that there is a 'formidable clustering of isoglosses' in Egypt. Many Egyptians will admit to modifying their dialect when they come into contact with the speech of the capital, and with time they may give up their original speech habits.

In fact, sound change in a community such as that in Cairo will be of a different nature from sound change in an isolated community, like Oman, for example. This may be because Cairo is in a state of flux – because of its geographical position, because of the waves of immigrants from all over Egypt and simply because of the sheer number of people who live there, estimated at around 20 million now. In contrast, Oman has been geographically isolated for a long time, and its population is small. Trudgill (1974) claims that isolated communities – of the sort found in Oman – are more resistant to change. Thus, while the differences between Cairene Arabic, the delta dialects of Egypt and the Bedouin dialect of Egypt are clearly demarcated and registered, the differences between rural and urban communities within Oman are likely to be much more difficult to study.

Although there are differences between Bedouin and sedentary dialects in the northern part of the Arab world, these differences appear to be less marked in Oman, where there is greater similarity between Bedouin and sedentary dialects (Eades 2009). This may be related to the social, geographic and economic characteristics of the country. Geographically, Oman is cut off from the rest of Arabia by deserts and mountains rising to over 3,000 metres (Townsend 1977: 15). Furthermore, until 1970, the government of Sultan Said enforced strict social and political control, effectively barring substantial modern development (1977: 65–9). Eades observed the retention of archaic, distinctive linguistic features within remote communities in Oman. He attributes this retention to the relative isolation of these communities and their

tight-knit social structure. He contrasts this with the speck of urban centres, where the social fabric is of course much looser (Eades 2009). Indeed, the main change that has taken place in Oman in the past thirty years is urbanisation, which has left its mark on language in different ways.

According to Miller (2004), old urban centres with a declining urban elite and population are going through a great wave of language change now. In North African cities such as Fez, Tangier, Rabat and even Tunis, the old urban vernaculars are restricted to older women (Caubet 1998; Dendane 1994; Iraqui-Sinaceur 1998; Jabeur 1996; Messaoudi 2001, 2002; Trabelsi 1988). It is worth mentioning, however, that this fact in itself is not surprising. Older women are most likely to retain and use features associated with older prestigious urban varieties, given the constraints placed on their lives, along with changes related to urbanisation. Note also that, in general, sedentary urban dialects are often perceived as more effeminate than rural Bedouin ones, especially at the phonological level. In Egypt, for example, upper-Egyptian migrants regard Cairene Arabic as more soft and effeminate than their own upper-Egyptian dialects. Some male workers consciously keep realising *q* as *g* rather than *ʔ* (Miller 1997). This situation seems very similar to the one in Jordan discussed above.

I would like now to refer to a study that concentrated on the city of Tripoli in Libya (Pereira 2007). The people of Libya, like those in a number of other countries in the Arab world, led a nomadic life to a large extent until independence in 1951 and the discovery of oil in 1955. Since then, there have been large waves of urban migration into big cities such as Tripoli and Benghazi. Libya is now considered one of the most highly urbanised countries in Africa and the Arab world. The population of Libya is roughly 6.8 million,<sup>26</sup> 85.8 per cent of whom live in urban centres. In 1954 only 25.1 per cent lived in urban centres. The population of Tripoli specifically increased between 1964 and 1995 by 450 per cent (Fontaine 2004). The Tripoli dialect started as a Bedouin-type dialect but has changed over time due to internal and external immigration. Between 1954 and 1973 there were 187,000 foreigners in Libya, half of them settling in Tripoli. The main immigrants came from neighbouring Egypt, but there were also some from Syria, Lebanon and Tunisia. Because of the complex nature of Tripoli, its dialect is a hybrid; it has maintained features from Bedouin dialects, Egyptian colloquial Arabic, MSA and even Italian (Pereira 2007: 91).

Pereira's data is not described clearly. He compiled it between November 2002 and February 2005 in Tripoli and enhanced it with recordings he made with two 25-year-old Tripolitans in Genoa in 2003 (2007: 77). Pereira examines morpho-syntactic as well as phonological and lexical characteristics of the dialect of Tripoli. Bedouin morpho-syntactic features include the dual number for nouns, which is formed by suffixing *-e:n* to nouns as in *walde:n* 'parents', and *yome:n* 'two days' (Pereira 2007: 87). In addition, the dialect of

Tripoli ‘makes a gender distinction in the second person singular of the verb inflection for prefixal and suffixal conjugations’, as in the following examples (2007: 85):

- (3) *kle:t* 2msg    *kle:ti* 2fsg (to eat)  
       *tʒi:b* 2msg    *tʒi:bi* 2fsg (to bring)  
       *di:r* 2msg    *di:ri* 2fsg (to do)

Phonological characteristics include the MSA *q* variable which is also realised as a voiced *g* (2007: 84). ECA borrowing includes words such as *kumayyis* ‘good’, *fi* ‘there is’, *bi-yithayaʔli* ‘I think’, ‘in my opinion’ (2007: 90).

What is noteworthy, however, is that the dialect of Tripoli, unlike that of Cairo, for example, is not the most prestigious dialect in Libya. According to Pereira (2007: 92) everyone in Libya is proud of his or her own dialect. Muammar Gaddafi, the former president of Libya, was, in fact, of rural Bedouin origin and those who currently hold political and economic power in Libya are also of Bedouin origin.<sup>27</sup>

I would like to conclude this section with a study about Qaṣīm in Saudi Arabia. In this study urbanisation interacts with education, age and gender.

In his 2013 study, Al-Rojaie discusses the relation between the sociolinguistic variables age, gender and education level and a linguistic variable, namely the velar stop *k*, which can be realised as *k* or *t̪s* in the stem and suffix (Al-Rojaie 2013: 43). His data comprises informal speech of seventy-two speakers of the local dialect of Qaṣīm province in the central Najd area of Saudi Arabia.

According to Al-Rojaie (2013: 48), Qaṣīm’s population was about one million at the time of the study. As in other provinces of Saudi Arabia, the society of Qaṣīm has developed from a rural one into an urban one, and most of its population is now in the regional capital of Būrayḍah, which is considered the largest city in central Saudi Arabia after Riyadh. Rojaie also discusses dialect contact between Riyadh and Būrayḍah which is due to education and mobility within the kingdom.

For the purpose of his analysis, Al-Rojaie divided his participants into three age groups: ‘younger’ (aged 13–25), ‘middle-aged’ (25–55) and ‘older’ (above 55). He also classified his participants by biological gender and by level of education (no education, high school diploma, college-level education or higher). He conducted interviews in cooperation with his assistant for nine months.

Al-Rojaie posits that in the dialects of central and north central Arabia (Najd), the velar stops *k* and *g* may be realised as two dental and affricated variants *t̪s* and *d̪z*, respectively (2013: 43). The two variables he studied are the variants of *k*, namely *k* and *t̪s* in the stem, and in the feminine singular pronoun suffix. In the stem, one might find the variant *t̪s*, as in *atsil* ‘food’, or

*k* as in *barkih* ‘cistern’ (2013: 49). For the suffix *-ik*, the variants  $\widehat{ts}$  as in *mint $\widehat{s}$*  ‘from you (f)’ and *k*, as in *kita:bik* ‘your (f) book’ are found. In the latter case, Al-Rojaie argues that that affrication is a morpho-phonological feature with a syntactic function, because it marks the gender of the speaker: *-ik* is used for the masculine, while  $\widehat{-its}$  marks the feminine (2013: 47).

He goes on to argue that the phonological context of the variables studied is an independent variable which affects the realisation of the phoneme. In the analysis, he notes that affrication tends to occur with front vowels, especially high front vowels (2013: 51). He further notes that stem affrication is clearly correlated with age, level of education and gender (2013: 52, table). The study concludes that older uneducated speakers of both sexes are far more likely to use stem affrication  $\widehat{ts}$ , while young or middle-aged educated speakers use the supralocal variant *k* more frequently. This is especially the case with women.

The patterns of variation observed are typical of regional dialect levelling, in which the supralocal variants associated with the speech of major cities are spreading, while the traditional and regional, socially marked variants of speakers of smaller towns are decreasing in usage (2013: 45–6). The urbanisation and socioeconomic changes of Saudi Arabia make this change faster and more evident. Based on the range of difference between the independent variables, it is clear that age and education play more of a role than gender in linguistic variation (2013: 52). Education appears to be the most important variable, followed by age, and then gender.

However, while a change towards a deaffrication of *k* can be observed in Qaṣīm –especially in the speech of young educated women – this change is only found in the stem. The second person singular feminine suffix is categorically realised as  $\widehat{-its}$ , due to its syntactic function.

According to Al-Rojaie, language change taking place in Qaṣīm is the result of social and extra-linguistic factors such as the following:

1. Language contact with families in Riyadh, for ‘the Buraydah speakers approximate the Riyadh form, as it can be associated in local ideology with urban personae, modernization, progress, and social mobility’ (2013: 57).
2. Metalinguistic evidence and indexes of variables, while not discussed explicitly in the article, are discussed implicitly. Al-Rojaie gives the example of hearing a mother asking her daughter not to use  $\widehat{ts}$  at any time (2013: 57). To explain her remark, she claimed that  $\widehat{ts}$  was associated with ‘provinciality’ and ‘old fashioned speech’. Another example mentioned by Al-Rojaie is that of an informal conversation with a young female speaker, in which she repeatedly linked the use of the variant *k* with the new urban style, associated with being ‘modern’, ‘correct’ and ‘normal’. He notes that ‘these comments clearly suggest that the Buraydah speech community in their local ideology have developed a

social meaning for the deaffrication of [k] associated with urban style, and that they use this variation as a linguistic resource to index their locally constructed urban identity' (2013: 57).

Al-Rojaie concludes his study by suggesting that explicit information about speakers' attitudes and perceptions are vital in a study of variation:

However, several issues deserve additional investigation. One concerns the possibility of the effect of other factors, such as socioeconomic class, local identity, and social mobility. Other factors may also include the context of the interaction, accommodation, and the personal attitudes of the speakers. (2013: 59)

These issues will be elaborated upon in section 3.7 and in Chapter 6.

#### 3.4.4 Social class

Class, as a variable and not in isolation, can be useful. In an effective study of Philadelphia vernacular, Kroch (1996) managed to define a specific community as belonging to the upper class. He first claimed that there are well-defined geographical boundaries and ethnic boundaries that determine contemporary urban dialects. For example, the Philadelphia vernacular was confined to the local metropolitan area and did not extend to the countryside beyond Philadelphia suburbs. Thus, it was not spoken by the African-American residents of the city.<sup>28</sup> Ethnic and geographic factors are as important in studying different communities in the Arab world, as was shown above.

Kroch's study compared the vowel pronunciation of upper- and middle-class Philadelphians. The speech of the upper class was called 'main line', 'chestnut hill' and 'lockjaw'. Membership of the upper class was limited to families meeting its financial, ethnic and religious standards. The upper class was based on inherited wealth, and ethnicity, since it was white and 'Anglo-Saxon'. Since the Civil War its religion had been Episcopalian. It constituted a generation that grew up before World War II. Its members were privileged and isolated, and the men usually worked as managers or lawyers or owned large business enterprises. They had large households with domestic staff, such as a butler, servants and so on. The women did not work outside the home, but were engaged in civic and charitable work. Men and women belonged to sexually segregated social clubs where membership was limited to that class. They also all received invitations to the yearly assembly ball. Kroch found that vowel pronunciation cannot be the source of the distinctiveness of upper-class speech. There were no important differences between upper- and middle-class pronunciations of vowels. The properties that distinguished upper-class speech were not phonemic but prosodic and lexical. Upper-class speech was

characterised by a drawling and laryngealised voice quality and frequent use of intensifying modifiers for both men and women.

I refer to this study because I think similar studies in the Arab world are greatly needed. Furthermore, this study defines social class in relation to ethnicity and religion. This may be needed when analysing parts of the Arab world. A study that examines the language of the ruling class in different Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait would be useful, and a study that concentrates on the speech of upper-class Egyptians would also be worthwhile. Some of the work that examines class as a variable includes Haeri's study of the phonological change of urban middle-class women in Cairo who had a stable urban vernacular (1996a). One of the phonological variables she concentrated on is palatalisation. She found that variables associated with upper-middle-class women tend to become prestigious norms associated with refinement (see Chapter 4, section 4.7.2).

Unfortunately there are few studies that concentrate on class in the Arab world. Linguists still know very little about how class status is defined in the Arab world, especially for the old elite. There is also the problem of access. How can linguists who do not belong to an elite class in the Arab world themselves have access to the upper elite classes, for example? The upper class in the Arab world can keep social scientists out of their lives in a way the middle and low class cannot. Nevertheless, there is still room for new studies that deal with language variation and change, especially in relation to class.

### 3.4.5 Other factors

Other factors that are significant in the study of language variation and change include sociodemographic variables such as age and education, and external factors such as political upheavals and civil wars. Miller (2004) claims that more studies are needed that concentrate on young speakers of Arabic in different communities, since youth speakers constitute the majority of Arabs. There have been very few studies on this group. I agree with Miller on that point. According to Eckert (2005: 4) in the USA it is, in fact, adolescents that lead other age groups in sound change and in the use of 'vernacular variants' more generally. I would predict that this is the case in a large number of communities in the Arab world as well, but studies that examine this are needed. Further, countries that have gone through civil wars or upheavals like Lebanon are worth studying, since they are likely to be undergoing language change. There have been some studies on San'ā' (Watson 2003, 2007) and Algiers (Boucherit 1986, 2002). Still, more studies are needed about Beirut or Baghdad, for example.

One study that concentrates on Beirut is the one conducted by Germanos (2007) in which she does not examine a phonological variable but greetings in Beirut. Germanos depends in her study on observations in public places,

shops, kiosks, fast food outlets, business areas and medical centres. Unlike other cities discussed above, such as Tripoli, Casablanca and Nouakchott, Beirut is not growing. In fact, since the beginning of the civil war in 1975 the city's population has not increased. When the war broke out the city was divided into two parts: East Beirut for Christians, and West Beirut, where Muslims lived. During the first years of the war 110,000 Muslims and 75,000 Christians left Beirut. Even today the line between East and West Beirut is 'very much alive' in the minds of its inhabitants. This division is not just a territorial one, but a 'human and economic' one (Germanos 2007: 150). The Muslim greeting *as-sala:mu ʕalaykum* 'peace be upon you' is restricted to specific areas such as Sabra and Nweyri. The French form of greeting, *bonjour*, is never used in these areas, and the same is true for the English form *hi*. Christians seem to prefer the French *bonjour*, while Shiites prefer *as-sala:mu ʕalaykum*. Forms such as *hi* and *marhaba* 'welcome' are more neutral.

According to Miller (2004), the widespread increase of education in the Arab world has resulted in the use of a written form of Arabic by more and more speakers. This gives more exposure to MSA and a wider range of changes, perhaps sometimes in the direction of MSA. However, although education is an important variable discussed by most linguists studying variation in the Arab world, there is no study that concentrates on education as a main variable. There are some, however, that focus on the role of diglossia in language change. Walters (2003) posits that diglossia represents a case of long and stable language contact between two varieties. This is indeed a defining feature of diglossia as characterised by Ferguson. This means that any type of change must be related to the nature of the contact and degree of similarities or differences between the varieties involved, namely MSA and the vernacular. Walters contends that increased access to literacy and MSA has given rise to an intermediate variety based on the grammar of the dialect but with a large mixture of MSA vocabulary. However, it is only fair to say that Walters makes it clear that linguists are better off thinking about practices of switching rather than focusing on an intermediate variety. Likewise, we need to distinguish inter-dialectal and intra-dialectal interactions.

Haeri (1991), for example, contends that a variable such as *q* is a diglossic variable. This is indeed true, since one cannot study the glottal stop or the *g* sound without referring to the standard realisation, the *q*. In these senses, language variation in the Arab world is different from that in the west. In addition, because of the increase of inter-dialectal communication in the Arab world due to satellite channels and immigration, it is necessary to study levelling in relation to language change. Therefore, I would next like to discuss levelling in relation to diglossia and change in the Arab world.

### 3.5 LEVELLING

Levelling, like a number of linguistic terms, can be sloppy and hard to define. The definitions that follow may overlap with some of the concepts already discussed or to be discussed in the next chapters, such as accommodation (discussed in Chapter 2). In the Arab-speaking world, levelling occurs in inter-dialectal communication between people from different countries and it is also closely related to the diglossic situation. Here are some definitions of levelling by different linguists, with examples.

Levelling is defined by Blanc (1960: 62) as a process that occurs in 'inter-dialectal contact', meaning contact between dialects of different countries in the Arab world rather than dialects within the same country. According to Blanc, levelling refers to the influence of standard Arabic on different dialects. In such contacts, speakers may replace some features from their dialect with others from a different dialect that carries more prestige. This different dialect is not necessarily that of the listener. Blanc quotes the example of villagers in central Palestine who may try to use the dialect of Jerusalem or that of non-Muslim Baghdadis who may try to move towards features of Muslim Baghdadi. Note that levelling does not necessarily mean that speakers will abandon their dialect in favour of another one. They may, for example, choose features which are more 'urban' and abandon features which are more 'rural' and therefore more difficult for the urban listener to understand. Thus, levelling as defined by Blanc is not just accommodation to a different dialect, but rather a process of unselecting local and rural features in favour of others which are easier to understand because they are more common. In the following paragraphs, I will first explain the process of levelling more thoroughly, and then proceed to examine the relation between levelling and language change.

Versteegh (2001: 65) defines levelling as a general process in which the differences between the different varieties of speakers that make a speech community have almost disappeared. This new variety, which is the result of levelling, is different from all the specific existing varieties of the speakers. He also uses the term 'koinisation' as a synonym of levelling. Versteegh posits that the process of koinisation or levelling is in most cases connected with situations in which groups of speakers were thrown together by accident. Therefore, the process is in his opinion usually an unplanned one. However, he mentions one case where levelling was a planned process, namely that involving settlers in the new polders of North Holland that were reclaimed in the first half of the twentieth century (1993: 65).

The position of MSA is strong and it is difficult for any vernacular to replace it (Versteegh 2001: 71). MSA is in most Arabic-speaking countries the only official and national language in the constitution. This situation may be different from levelling in other communities in which there is no language or



variety with a special status. Versteegh contends that as a result of this special status of MSA, inter-Arabic conversation in dialect will not converge in the direction of a regional dialectal variety but will tend to exhibit an increasing use of MSA features against inter-dialectal conversations. That is to say, levelling will not eventually lead to the disappearance of MSA in favour of any vernacular.

For example, Gibson (2002) mentions the fact that increased mobility and education influence language in Tunisia. He claims that during the twentieth century non-standard dialects became closer to the standard variety in many languages, including, English, because of the spread of television, radio and other mass media. He tries to examine whether the same is true in the Arabic-speaking world, with reference to ongoing phonological and morphological changes in Tunisian Arabic. He admits that although there is a great influence from MSA on the vocabulary of Arabic dialects, including the Tunisian one, the same may not be true for phonology and morphology. Thus, he examines the assumption that because of the prestige of MSA, as well as the spread of education and mass media, change is towards MSA. He studies four Tunisian variables, including the increased use of *q* instead of *g* which is used in Bedouin dialects. But one should bear in mind that the realisation of this variable is shared between the urban dialect of Tunis and MSA. Another variable examined is the treatment of the final vowel in defective verbs. Gibson concludes that the direction of many of the changes is towards the modern-day dialect of Tunis (2002: 28). In fact, in the case of the conjugation of defective verbs changes are moving away from MSA-like forms. This may still be related to the spread of mass media, since media makes use not just of MSA but of different varieties, especially urban ones.

Levelling and language change is discussed by Versteegh (2001). He (2001: 103) gives the example of the Arab armies in the past to illustrate the relation between levelling and language change. They consisted of a mixture of different tribes, so as a result the existing differences between pre-Islamic dialects were levelled out. He posits that the new dialects in the conquered territories must have been the result of independent local evolution. Continuing on this historical line, he explains cases of levelling within the same dialect (2001: 149). He contends that, in the Arabian peninsula, the 'nomadic-sedentary dichotomy does not function in the same way as outside'. This is because many tribes have settled members with whom there is frequent interaction both economically and socially. Therefore, all dialects including the sedentary ones exhibit Bedouin features.

Another example of language change given by Versteegh (1993: 72–5) is the development of Juba Arabic in the southern Sudan. This example is significant because Juba Arabic dialect displays ongoing 'decreolising change'<sup>29</sup> in the development of aspectual and agreement marking of the verb. Versteegh refers to a thesis on Juba Arabic (Mahmud 1979), which predicted that in the

future the linguistic variety or varieties spoken in Juba would become more and more similar to Khartoum Arabic. Depending on the political situation, which determines the amount of exposure to MSA, Juba Arabic may undergo the same equalising influence of MSA as all Arabic dialects undergo. This may result in a situation where Juba Arabic would be nothing more than a regional variety of general Sudanese Arabic, without any trace of its creole origins. Versteegh concludes that if it is possible for a creolised variety to acquire through a process of semantic change features that are found in normal dialects, one can conclude that the only way to distinguish between a decreolised and a normal dialect is by an analysis of the historical facts connected with those varieties, since the linguistic structure cannot give us any clue to the genetic origins.

The development of Juba Arabic may lead one to start wondering about the real origins of present-day regional varieties. Versteegh concludes that the levelling that takes place in Sudan and the rest of the Arab world proves that the emergence of a regional standard, when it occurs, is identical to the levelling process resulting from the influence of a prestigious variety of speech. A creolised dialect may be decreolised to such a degree that it seems a normal dialect. This is an example of levelling changing a creole into a normal dialect (see also Manfredi 2017).

If one assumes a creolisation analysis of the development of the dialects (cf. Versteegh 2001), then one has to ask whether levelling has played the major role in explaining the process of decreolisation and the formation of different dialects of Arabic in the Arab world. Versteegh (2004: 352) argues that the influence of the standard language should not be ruled out completely. One can find examples in the modern Arab world of illiterate speakers who can still produce standard forms (see Palva 1969). This shows that the standard language may still have played a major role in modern Arabic dialects. Versteegh also adds that at all levels hybrid forms such as *b-tuktab* are heard (cf. Bassiouney 2006). In this hybrid form there is an ECA aspectual marker *b-* suffixed to an MSA passive verb form. The influence of MSA is not just related to the spread of education and mass media, but has its religious significance as well, according to Versteegh, as it is used in mosques, for example.<sup>30</sup> Thus the exposure to MSA is almost inevitable.

I want to point out that a number of linguists who studied levelling in Arabic contend that levelling is not necessarily in the direction of MSA. Ibrahim (1986), Abd-El-Jawad (1986) and Gibson (2002) explain that MSA is not a spoken variety, and this is why levelling does not necessarily have to move towards standard Arabic but could also be directed towards the prestigious vernacular of different countries. Gibson also rejects the term 'prestige' when discussing levelling, since there is an overt and a covert prestige (cf. Trudgill 1972). This concept will be re-evaluated in later work in sociolinguistics (see section 3.7 and Chapter 6).

Finally, one has to note that there are degrees of levelling. For example, Egyptians in an inter-dialectal context may accommodate their speech to others and use levelling less than North African speakers. However, as noted earlier, levelling is not necessarily towards Egyptian Arabic in spite of the prestige of this dialect. This is because levelling is dependent not only on prestige but on a number of factors brought together, such as the status of the speaker and the influence of political ideologies. Another example that proves that there are degrees of levelling is given by Versteegh (2001). He posits that the Bedouin dialects in the Arabian peninsula are more conservative than those outside, because they do not allow levelling to the same extent as those dialects outside the peninsula, the most conservative of them all being Najdi Arabic.

Meanwhile, what is needed, according to Versteegh (2004: 355), is 'a much more detailed and fine-grained analysis of the demographic, cultural, and social circumstances of the early period of Arabisation'. In fact, there is an urgent need to study this phenomenon from different perspectives and in relation to different variables such as education, gender, social class, community etc. However, there are relatively few detailed studies on levelling in Arabic.

In the next section I provide a conclusion to sections 3.1–3.5. This conclusion is a slightly modified version of the one in the first edition of this book. It will be followed by a new section and a new conclusion that discusses the social approach to variation.

### 3.6 CONCLUSION TO SECTIONS 3.1–3.5

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In sections 3.1 to 3.5, I briefly outlined the framework of the study of language variation and change in the west as well as in the Arab world, including a comparison between the methods and findings in the west and the Arab world. The methods used by linguists to study the Arab world are similar to those used in the west. Independent variables such as ethnicity and religion are essential in both the Arab and the western worlds. However, in the Arab world the implications of ethnicity and religion are different. To a great extent ethnicity is intertwined with historical and political events and with nationality. Religion plays a major role in defining political affiliations, social networks and communities of practice. It is part and parcel of one's identity and sense of belonging, more so than it is in the west. Indeed, religion like any other variable cannot be studied in isolation, but interacts with other variables. Social class as an independent variable in the Arab world has been examined by Haeri (1996a), but by very few linguists since then. The reason for this is that defining class in terms of income, education, residence etc., as Labov does, does not reflect the situation in a number of Arab countries, in which the tribal system is dominant and in which one's social confidence is derived

not from income or education but from the status and strength of the tribe. Indeed, there are still countries with a clearly defined social class system, such as Egypt. However, even in Egypt, the interaction between social class and social networks is crucial. This needs to be examined in future research.

A major variable that can distinguish the Arab world broadly from the western world is urbanisation. As said earlier, there was a huge wave of urbanisation that took place in the Arab world only half a century ago and that changed the demographics of many countries, resulting in linguistic variation and change. Other factors that have been discussed in this chapter and that have helped mould the direction of change and variation in the Arab world are the following:

1. The discovery of oil in Gulf states led to changes in the communities of practice in countries such as Bahrain, Oman, Libya and Saudi Arabia.
2. Social and political upheavals took place in the Arab World after World War I.
3. Wars in the region changed the distribution of the populations of many countries. Examples of the impact of wars on language variation and change are apparent in the case of Jordan and especially of Palestinians in Jordan. Civil wars like that in Lebanon have also left their impact on language variation and change. The Gulf wars must have left a great impact as well, but they have not yet been examined in relation to linguistic variables. The main outcome of wars is the dislocation of a large proportion of the population, which consequently leads to language variation, change and in some cases language death. Recently there have been wars in Libya, Syria and Yemen.
4. The majority of the population of the Arab world is young. This again is a major factor that can influence language.

One fear that comes up whenever one correlates language variation with quantifiable independent variables is the fear of falling into a circular argument. For example, if we examine linguistic variation in relation to gender and social class, we have to assume that there are linguistic differences between different social classes and that there are also linguistic differences that are related to one's gender. Rather than constructing independent variables as they go along, linguists can start by predetermining them and thus lose much of their insight into the real linguistic situation that characterises a specific community. This will be discussed more in the next section and in Chapter 6.

Another point worth mentioning is that independent variables are themselves different. There are variables that can be shaped and moulded by the individual in relation to the community and variables that are difficult to change and are assumed as almost uncontrollable. In the Arab world especially

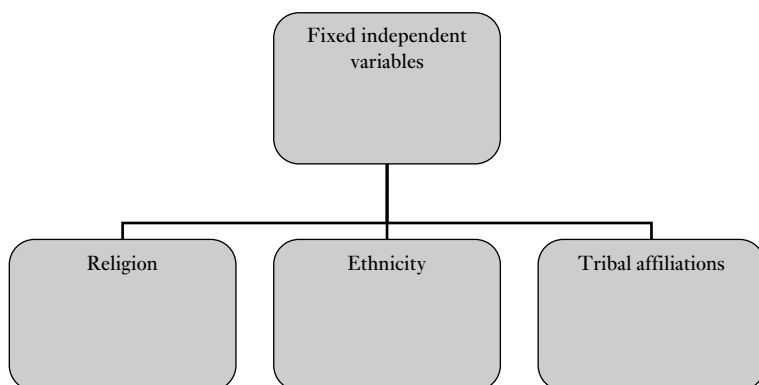


Chart 3.1 Fixed independent variables

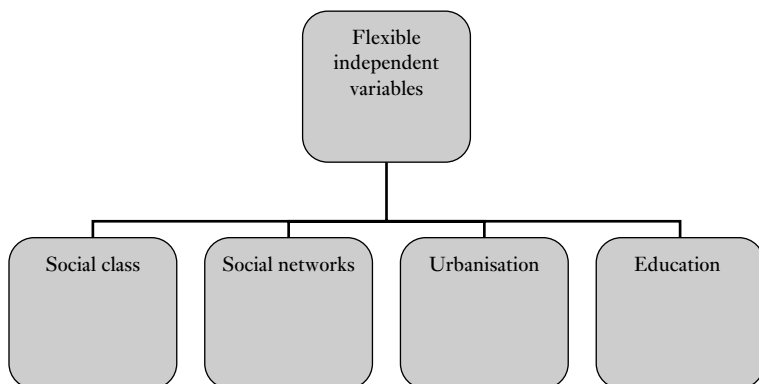


Chart 3.2 Flexible independent variables

one can divide independent variables into two types: fixed independent variables (Chart 3.1) and flexible independent variables (Chart 3.2).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, religion in the Arab world is not a matter of individual choice. One is born a Muslim, a Christian or a Jew. One is also born a Palestinian, a Kurd or a Berber. Even if there is intermarriage between different ethnic groups, there is still a difference between them. This difference is the consequence of the way Kurds, for example, perceive themselves and are perceived by others. In tribal communities, the individual may be able to change neither tribal affiliation nor the tribe's status, which mirrors his or her social status.

On the other hand there are flexible independent variables (Chart 3.2). It is possible for an individual to change and modify social class, education or where he or she lives. In Egypt, for example, where there may be a clear social class system, it is still possible to move from one class to another, and this is usually related to education, place of residence and social income to a great extent. Thus a lower class individual who studies medicine and opens a

private clinic may turn out as a famous doctor and takes two or more leaps up the social ladder. Variables are hierarchically different. This difference is part of the cultural and social makeup of different communities.

There are independent variables that cannot be classified as fixed or flexible, such as age and gender. These two, like all variables, interact with other variables and play a more prominent role in certain communities than in others.

The diglossic situation in the Arab world adds a new dimension to our understanding of language variation and change in the region. A salient phonological feature such as the *q* is in fact an MSA variable. Its realisation by different speakers in different communities of the Arab world may be related to education and literacy as well as exposure to MSA.

The relation between gender and language change will be discussed in the next chapter. This is because, although gender is one variable that interacts with others, it is an essential one in the study of sociolinguistics and there have been numerous studies concentrating on it. In itself, gender can help us understand the underlying cultural constructs that may be characteristic of the Arab world. There is a huge body of research on gender that cannot be covered in this book. However, gender will be discussed not just as an independent variable which is non-classifiable as fixed or flexible, but also as a discourse variable that sheds light on sociolinguistic aspects of language use.

Note that I have not touched upon pidgin Arabic in this book except in passing, but it is indeed worth studying. Miller thinks that nowadays there are cities with a large component of non-Arabic-speaking populations, which leads to pidgin and creole types of Arabic and to regional dialectal varieties (Miller 2004; Miller and Abu-Manga 1992; Abu-Manga 1999). In Sudan, the non-Arab immigrants speak Arabic but with non-standard Khartoum Arabic dialect. Because of the immigration wave to Gulf cities such as Kuwait and Dubai, a new pidgin Arabic has been created.

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### 3.7 VARIATION AND THE SOCIAL APPROACHES TO SOCIOLINGUISTICS

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New research in sociolinguistics faces new challenges. For example, categories that were essential in earlier sociolinguistic studies are shifting rapidly. Locality is a case in point: with a flux of refugees and migrants all over the world, and with a highly globalised and mediatised world, it is now difficult to identify social categories and correlate them with linguistic variables and variants. It is also now insufficient to do so. The world is more complicated, more ideological, more commodified, more mediatised than before, and research needs to keep up with these changes and understand them better. In fact, we need to critically review previous research in order not to fall into the trap

of imposing our socioculturally constructed categories on culturally diverse communities. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

New approaches to variation research, and to sociolinguistics more generally, question the essential methods and categories utilised in research and draw attention to concepts that were previously thought to be separate from variation research; if they were discussed at all, they were a side issue, while the focus was on the sociolinguistic variables discussed in the previous sections. These variables include language ideologies and their manifestations, talk about talk, or reflexivity. Comments about dialects and codes more generally are no longer just referred to at the end of a study, but have become the focal point of many studies. Again, this will be elaborated upon in Chapter 6. For example, the social construct approach to language has scarcely been applied to the Arab world (see Bassiouney 2017a). Hymes (1970), Gal (1989), Fairclough (2001) and Heller (2011) posit that linguistic codes are resources for individuals. Gal (1989: 347) also contends that linguistic resources do not just reflect a social order, but are a coherent part of that social order – linguistic resources produce and construct this order. In fact, the value of a linguistic code depends on whether it can provide access to political, economic and social power. In a similar vein, Fairclough (2009: 321) argues that discourse helps in the ‘construction’ of ideologies to maintain a social status quo. Heller also argues that within the process of social construction, linguistic resources usually acquire specific values, which are connected to certain methods of interpretation: ‘[I]t is always someone’s notion of what counts, and someone’s ability to control access both to resources and to the definition of their value, which ultimately make a difference to people’s lives’ (Heller 2007: 14). Public discourse, especially in the media, not only echoes shared belief systems and ideologies, but also constructs and controls access to them. Therefore, language can be defined as a set of resources that, like all resources, is distributed in unequal ways, depending on the social networks and ‘discursive spaces’ of individuals. An approach similar to Heller’s is adopted by Blommaert (2010: 180), who contends that sociolinguists need to start examining language as a resource, within which ‘language events and experiences’ take precedence over ‘language-as-form-and-meaning’.

Before I explain in detail the backbone of this new approach with examples from studies about Arabic, I would like to summarise briefly the main shift in focus.

First, since it is argued in this approach that language ideology is part and parcel of variation and change research, one needs to understand what linguistic variables ‘mean’ to different speakers. Linguists also argue that independent social variables are not separate from semiotic interpretations of utterances. That is, the ‘meaning’ and associations of using a linguistic variable may be the most important factor that needs to be studied in variation research. A semiotic approach to variation is discussed by Gal (2016)

to account for linguistic variation, and in this approach our interpretation of linguistic differences is essential in understanding both diachronic and synchronic variation. Associations of specific linguistic variables, such as the association of the use of affrication in Saudi Arabic (see Al-Rojaie 2013), are related to language ideologies, which are only understood fully if we examine how speakers evaluate linguistic variables, how they talk about them and what meanings they associate with them, hence the importance of indexes in variation research. Indexes are semiotic associations attached to linguistic codes and variables, and they acquire their meaning from the cultural, political, social and ethnographic make-up of communities. The means by which speakers evaluate linguistic variables and codes is through stance-taking. Speakers take a stance towards an object – in this case, a linguistic variable or a code – and interpret its utterance in conjunction with their own cultural concepts, which are the by-product of ideologies that in turn are the product of a political, historical and social environment. Speakers ‘enregister’ (to use Agha’s 2005 term) these associations. When these associations change, they allow more room for linguistic change to take place.

In addition, the changes in media in the past twenty years have also led to new ways of speaking, as well as new forms of identification and alignment. This also means that researchers need to look for new data, and not necessarily spontaneous data. That is, methods of research in sociolinguistics more generally, and in variation in particular, need to be developed in order to account for the new forms of communication that are now available. This new approach to variation challenges conventional ways of data collection in which the observer’s paradox was never really overcome, and in which the linguist and accompanying researchers were influenced by their own cultural concepts, mostly binary ones, in which there is a dichotomy between a standard and a non-standard, a man and a woman, or even one ethnic community and another. This new approach regards data collection as a process in which observation is essential in deducing the cultural constructs of a specific community, rather than imposing on it ready-made ones from the linguist. This means that performed speech is as essential as spontaneous speech, for it is in performed data that the linguist can discern language ideologies and indexes and understand stances taken by speakers and/or performers. These will then shed light on spontaneous speech and on language variation and change. By examining style as a concept that shapes variation we can also better understand it.

Note that ‘style’ is defined by Eckert (2001: 119) as an aggregate of linguistic resources that are associated with social meaning. Style does not just produce social meaning, it enables negotiations about social meaning (2001: 126).

These two points will be explained in detail below, then followed with examples from studies conducted about Arabic.

Eckert (2016: 69) reiterates that in studying linguistic variation, linguists



should acknowledge that social variables do not have a direct relation to linguistic variants that can be spelled out in a clear binary fashion. In fact, the relation between social variables and variants is both indirect and dynamic. Third-wave research has established that variation does not just reflect social reality but also constructs it. It also expresses the agency of speakers in this process.

Eckert (2016: 71) posits that ‘in their day-to-day lives people do not experience class as a stratification of economic and status indicators, gender as a simple binary, or age as a biological or calendric continuum – even if they can learn to think of them these ways’. She highlights the essential role of speakers’ agencies, personal and social style, and the social indexes of linguistic forms. For example, she argues (2016: 71) that when a phonological form is associated with a social meaning it becomes an index or a sign. In addition, Gal (2016: 117) challenges previous approaches to variation by stating that methodologically these previous studies (for example, Labov 1972a and 1972b) took as their starting point the linguistic form and how it is distributed, but Gal suggests that linguists should start by examining a group of speakers and their cultural concepts to understand the semiotic and social significance of linguistic patterns. Gal (2016: 117) and Agha (2007) go a step further by arguing that the ‘metapragmatic’ labels attributed to communities of speakers assume that the linguist is the all-knowledgeable being who can impose categories from above. Categories such as upper-class speech, radio announcer talk and literary talk, for example, are ideologically loaded. They associate types of speakers with contexts, events (literary context for literary talk), types of people (upper-class speech) or function (radio announcer). In understanding these labels we first need to understand the semiotic associations of each one; hence we need to examine their indexes. Gal (2016: 119) argues that our knowledge of ‘cultural stereotypes’ is essential in our understanding of an individual’s linguistic repertoire and register. Register, according to Gal, is a ‘cultural model’ associated with types of speakers (2016: 117–19). This model is metasemiotic in nature. It is related to meaning in a socio-political-economic context. These cultural models make linguistic variation meaningful and interpretable by participants. The population of speakers can and does understand the indexical associations of types of speakers in different contexts and speech events (2016: 117). In sum, meaning is related to indexes, and indexes are mediated through a process of stance-taking.

### 3.7.1 Meaning, indexes and stance

In his evaluation of variation research, Silverstein (2016: 37–9) calls for a semiotically and ‘social anthropologically informed view of variation’ (2016: 37). He proposes that indexicality and, with it, enregisterment provide the

best framework for studying variation. While at its onset indexicality was a philosophical concept developed by Charles Sanders Peirce, the term has since been utilised by linguists such as Silverstein (2003) and Ochs (1992). Indexicality is the means by which an observable phenomenon can become an iconic sign over time. If a specific way of speaking is related to migrants from Mexico, for example, or a specific phonological variable is associated with ignorance in the minds of speakers, then this code and this variable will index a meaning for members of this community. This meaning is constructed conventionally through the repetition of this process of assignment and the evaluation of this code and variable by speakers in this community.

The concept of indexicality refers to the process of creation of semiotic links between linguistic forms and social meanings (Ochs 1992; Silverstein 1985, discussed in Bassiouney 2014). Johnstone et al. (2006: 81) argue that there are two kinds of indexes: referential indexes, which are dependent on the context of utterance and refer to the denotation of morphemes, such as demonstratives and pronouns; and non-referential indexes, which are linguistic forms that presuppose and entail social meaning (see Bassiouney 2014). Collins (2011: 410) contends that in order for indexical signs to be understood we need to place them in 'situated encounters' in which the time and context of 'exchange' are essential.

Indexes are ordered. First-order indexes are not noticeable to members of a community; they are not intentional and not performed (Johnstone et al. 2006: 82). Second-order indexes, according to Silverstein (2003: 220), are usually 'superposed', 'creative' and 'entailing' (Silverstein 2003: 220) and can be assigned an 'ethnometapragmatically driven native interpretation' (2003: 212) (see Bassiouney 2014 for a discussion of indexes). He adds that the feature analysed has usually been 'enregistered'. It has become correlated with a style of speech and can be used to create a context for that style.

Forms that are enregistered conventionally index cultural models. These models are understood by the way they are used in contexts, by speakers, and the ways in which they are interpreted and talked about (Lacoste et al. 2014: 118)

Johnstone et al. (2006: 82) also argue that if a linguistic form becomes noticeable and speakers associate it with specific social meanings based on shared ideologies, then it can be considered second-order indexicality.

In relation to this, Gal (2016: 116) mentions different means by which speakers express their language ideology, which then leads to the establishment of indexes. Ideologies about language can be explicit, such as when someone explicitly asks a person not to say something; they can be in the form of generalisations about a community, such as claiming that a specific way of speaking is vulgar; or they can be in the form of nominal statements, such as claiming that a group of people do not perform a specific linguistic process. Gal argues that language ideology is a form of reflexivity. 'It is

metacommunication, participants' talk about talk, or their reflections, signals, and presuppositions about linguistic forms and their use' (2016: 116).

Related to these concepts of Gal's is the concept of reflexivity. Reflexivity is 'the way language inevitably refers to itself' (Johnstone 2005: 463–4). It refers to the way in which speakers, including linguists, reflect on their own language use and that of others.

Methods of variation research have been challenged, and theories to explain variation are now more focused on meaning and on language as a resource. In order to better understand meaning, linguists are utilising concepts such as indexicality, enregisterment, language ideology and stance. When speakers reflect on language and other social issues they take a stance. Stance then becomes the mediator between form and meaning in relation to identity and style.

### 3.7.2 Stance as the mediator between form and meaning

Stance can be considered a method of understanding identification and stylisation. According to Gal (2016: 118), the difference between stance and identity is in the concept that, when talking and performing, speakers do not just reveal a static identity, but rather align and disalign with a subject. This alignment and disalignment is directly related to indexes. Certain linguistic forms are enregistered. This means that they index a cultural type and are associated 'conventionally' with it. In order to decipher these conventionally culturally dependent models, we need to understand the context, how speakers interpret this context and how they talk about it (Gal 2016: 118). Individuals do not always align and disalign or reflect an identity related to their own cultural social context; they can also reflect and 'voice' a style that is different from their own (for concepts such as crossing and stylisation see Rampton 1995; Coupland 2001).

Stance is considered by Ochs (1992) as the mediating path between linguistic forms and social identities. Du Bois (2007) analyses stance as a social action that is both a subjective and an intersubjective phenomenon. According to Du Bois, stance shows evaluative, affective and epistemic orientations in discourse. As he states: 'I evaluate something and thereby position myself, and align or disalign with you' (2007: 163). Speakers usually position themselves and others as particular kinds of people – almost stereotypes. This positioning can then become an entity that we may call an identity. By studying evaluative expressions, grammar, phonology and lexis, one can have a better understanding of the stance of a specific individual.

The Stance Triangle, as explained by Du Bois, is based on evaluation, positioning and alignment. An individual evaluates an object (for example, a statement); positions a subject, usually the self; and aligns with other subjects. An individual may express doubt, cynicism etc., and may also show disalignment (see Bassiouney 2014).

To explain further, in a single act of stance-taking, three things are achieved: evaluation, positioning and alignment. Evaluation refers to the process in which a stance-taker ‘characterises’ the object of the stance as having a ‘specific quality or value’. Positioning is when the stance-taker makes his or her affective stance clear and claims certainty and knowledge. Alignment is the act of standardising and normalising the relation between different stances (see Du Bois 2007).

Indexes are mediated through speakers’ evaluations. That is, as Jaffe (2016: 89) argues, indexes are mediated by stance. She states that social indexicality is mediated by stance in combination with statistical/behavioural frequencies. Patterns of usage enable users to identify associations (2016: 89). This also means that language change can be measured by studying stances along with indexes. Linguists can measure a shift in evaluation-stance, which indicates a shift in indexes, which in turn indicates a linguistic change (2016: 94).

The way in which we evaluate an object gives it associations. Ochs (1992) argues that stance mediates role to create semiotic sociolinguistic indexes. For example, when Egyptians from the south reflect on what it means to be *Sa’idi* ‘from the south’, as in the study by Bassiouney (2018) discussed below, they review the social types available to them in relation to the indexical field. See Jaffe (2016: 109) for examples and clarifications.

The studies below show the importance of performance, reflexivity and ideology in relation to the social approach to language. They emphasise the shift in focus to meaning and ideology, rather than a description of dialectical features in a community. The studies indirectly usher in a new method and theory; they point out the pitfalls of the traditional approach and offer an alternative. This will be important in Chapter 6, where we will refer to some of these studies once more in relation to critical sociolinguistics.

All the studies below depend on data from the media. Cotter (2015: 796) holds that the term ‘media’ includes not only television, radio and printed resources in the public domain, but also many other public resources in which the audience’s proactive role is apparent and visible, including YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and so on. Androutsopoulos (2014: 242) draws attention to the fact that the media is not just a static, unchanging factor in language variation that only reflects ideologies, but rather a dynamic factor that accommodates the proactive and involved role of both speaker and audience, who share a cultural construct (Androutsopoulos 2014: 242; Stuart-Smith 2011). The media, as a ‘wider-reaching cultural vehicle’, spreads and cements language ideologies, both through discussions about language and through performance or representation of codes (Bucholtz 2009: 158). ‘Performance’ is defined by Schilling-Estes (1998: 53) as the register speakers use to ‘display to others a linguistic code/variety whether this code is their own or that of another “speech community”’.

The studies are examined chronologically in order to trace the development of

data, methods and theory within Arabic sociolinguistics. This is, of course, merely a selection of studies (for further work that adopts this or similar approaches see Bassiouney 2017a and 2017b; Bassiouney 2019). What all these studies have in common is that the data is performed rather than spontaneous, reflexivity is apparent, and stance-taking and indexes are discussed in most of them.

### 3.7.3 Studies that adopt a novel approach, method or data in Arabic sociolinguistics

Chun and Walters (2011) offer new and innovative insights into the way variation intersects with race, ideology, stance-taking and metalinguistic discourse. As argued earlier, through stance-taking individuals evaluate objects, and in turn they display their ideologies and create and enregister indexes or associations of different variables and codes. Chun and Walters' study examines a performance in which performers use linguistic codes to discuss race and stereotypes in the Arab world and beyond. It would be impossible to appreciate or even to understand this reflection on race and linguistic choices without grasping the dialogic nature of the performance. The Axis of Evil comedy group analysed by Chun and Walters consists mostly of American performers of Arab descent and is a product of an ongoing dialogue in the US from 2001 to 2009, in which former president George W. Bush accuses specific countries of being evil. The comedy group ridicules this proposition, first through their name, then through their performances, which are mainly in English.

In 2007 the Axis of Evil toured a number of cities in the Arab world, including locations in Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon and Dubai. During these tours they were joined by the comedian Wonho Chung. Chung is of Korean and Vietnamese descent, but was born in Saudi Arabia and spent all his life in Amman, Jordan until he moved to Dubai in 2004. In fact, as Chun and Walters state, he is more at home in the Arab world than any of the other members of the group, who are of Arab descent but have never really lived in the Arab world. However, Chung does not look like an Arab. He may speak fluent Arabic and have spent all his life in an Arab city, but he is clearly of Asian descent. Being 'Asian' in the Gulf and in Jordan is associated with specific jobs, mainly menial ones in the service sector. As Chung says in the show, his mother was mistaken for a housekeeper by a delivery man simply because of her Asian features. The humour of Chung's performance would be lost to an audience who is not aware of the 'oriental' stereotype or its indexes. As Chun and Walters (2011: 251) argue, Chung uses his racial characteristics to reflect on ideologies of language and race in the Arab world.

Chun and Walters examine two videos of Chung's performances, posted on YouTube in May and September 2008, as well as 530 text comments posted by viewers of the video between September 2008 and February 2010.

Utilising YouTube comments as data that sheds light on how individuals

position themselves in relation to language variation and identity is a new contribution to research on variation. It is a direct result of new media forms and is also an outcome of interest in language ideologies as reflected through stances taken by individuals who evaluate objects in their comments. This kind of data is also examined by Hachimi (2013), mentioned below.

Chun and Walters exemplify how metalinguistic discourse and performance can draw on stereotypes about the ‘inferiority’ and ‘otherness’ of the Orient (2011: 252). The YouTube reviewers propose and negotiate indexes of the Orient and what is expected from the Orient in terms of linguistic choices. In this way, YouTube comments do not just allow ideologies to be contested and challenged; they may also reinforce them.

In the show, Ahmed, a member of the comedy group, introduces Chung by saying that they looked for a funny North Korean to include in their group but could only find a funny South Korean. By referring to Bush’s comments about the axis of evil, Ahmed clearly uses dialogicality to position himself and Chung (Chun and Walters 2011: 257).

When Chung first comes on stage, he looks around helplessly, making it clear that he is at a loss as to how to communicate. He takes Ahmed’s hand and bows to him three times, imitating an Oriental gesture of greeting. He convinces the audience of his foreignness. When asked in English to introduce himself he replies in Korean. Chung and Walters state that his Korean is not fluent, although the audience cannot assess this. Ahmed then declares that he has no idea what Chung said (2011: 258).

Chung continues to display awkwardness. He is then asked to speak into the microphone. Once more he pretends to be at a loss and shows his embarrassment, as if he is not sure what to say. However, once he takes the microphone he starts singing a well-known Egyptian song in fluent Egyptian Arabic. The audience applauds, showing their surprise. Once he finishes the song, he comments in Jordanian Arabic on the audience’s expectations that he could not speak Arabic and the surprise he gave them.

- (4) wo: deħa:kt ʕale:kum/ ule le:ʔ/ iʃ-ʂedme: illi: entu fi:he:/ betʃi:r  
maʕi:/ ʕa:dy dʒıdden kul yo:m/  
‘I fooled you, didn’t I?/ The shock that you are experiencing now/ I  
see it normally every day.’<sup>31</sup>

He later declares that people mistake him for a Filipino. These comments about race and authenticity are revealing. The next example shows comments on the YouTube video left by ethnic Arabs in the diaspora (after Chun and Walters 2011: 265).

- (5) xPsYcHoSyS (Canada): SPEAKS BETTER ARABIC THAN  
ME!!!! // for those of you who dont speak

- arabic, trust me hes perfectly fluent, no accent either
- xx3xotiicxx (Canada): HOLYYY SHITTTTTTT. i was not expectin that at ALL he speaks better than my parents :
- L45 (United Kingdom): Wow This guy is inspiring..to be able to speak all those languages is something special. He speaks better Arabic than me! :)
- stlais1094 (United States): oooooo god . an asian speaks arab more than me and im full lebanese, and has a better accent

By claiming that Chung speaks Arabic better than they do, the commenters position themselves as evaluators of Chung's linguistic skills and also bemoan their own lack of this skill. However, in this stance-taking process they are also authenticating their own 'Arabness' by positioning themselves as equipped with a native speaker's intuition to judge the linguistic skills of others. They also speak about the object of evaluation, Chung, as if he is a non-Arab, and thus his native-like performance is to be praised as not 'natural'. That is, they highlight their authority and their authenticity. The native-speaker ideology is not spelled out in the Chun and Walters article but is an essential concept that needs elaboration, as will be made clear in Chapter 6.

It is noteworthy that in 2016 Chung performed the main role in the Kuwaiti TV adaptation of the Arab Booker Prize winner *Bamboo Stalk* by Sa'ūd al-San'ūsī (2013). The novel and the TV series deal with a young Filipino-Kuwaiti man who suffers discrimination in Kuwait due to his mother's Asian origin. It is no coincidence that the role was given to Chung, surely as a result of his performance in the *Axis of Evil*. The television role sheds even more light on race and language and needs a study in its own right. Chung is not Filipino or Korean, but the Arabic perception of Asians does not necessarily distinguish between different nationalities. Like all perceptions, it is arbitrary and impressionistic. However, such perceptions are in the weft and warp of sociolinguistics.

The importance of the Chun and Walters article is that it deals with indexicality, stance, performance and the importance of language ideology in linguistic variation, as well as the role of reflexivity in authentication and identification. The study relies on a new kind of data that is the direct outcome of new media: YouTube comments as displaying power relations, language ideologies and stances related to identity and authenticity. The study also refers indirectly to essential concepts such as race, passing and authenticity.

Another article that also uses media, albeit of a different kind, to shed light on language variation and change is Miller (2012). The issues it raises lead us to question assumptions about what constitutes a prestigious code, or in

western terms, a standard vs dialects. Miller indirectly tackles the controversy over which code should represent Morocco in dubbed TV series – specifically, the dubbing of Mexican soap operas into the Casawi or Casablanca variety of Moroccan Arabic. She highlights the role of media in promoting a koine or reflecting a need for one. What is essential about this article is the conclusion that there is neither a clear standard or prestigious Moroccan Arabic nor a clear consensus about which variety or dialect deserves this title. This conclusion challenges many of the predisposed attitudes of researchers towards the Arab world and the world at large. Without mentioning the social approach to language, Miller highlights the role of market forces in the linguistic choices made by the producers and the proponents of one dialect over another.

Miller discusses the issues involved in the dubbing of the novella *Ana* that was done by The Plug In company. The company started its work in December 2008 and finished in two months. Up until then Moroccans were used to watching soap operas from Egypt in Egyptian Arabic, or Turkish soap operas dubbed into Syrian Arabic or SA, or foreign series in French, but they had not previously encountered Mexican soap operas in Moroccan Arabic (2012: 170). Moroccans also produce their own TV series, and the dominance of Egyptian series is waning (2012: 169). However, according to Miller (2012: 171), ‘many Moroccans had difficulty conceiving that non-Moroccans could speak Moroccan Arabic’. The company had already produced commercials in SA and Moroccan varieties of Arabic, but not soap operas. The company used two translators to translate the 120 episodes, each of which is approximately fifty-two minutes long.

The script was written in Arabic characters in order to enable the actors, who included Chuaib Khalili and Myriam Salam, to read it easily. The actors performed in the Casablanca dialect, Casawi, and not in the dialect of the capital, Rabat, or old cities such as Fez. This in itself is significant and led to a controversy over code choice. According to Miller, the conservative wing criticised the use of *darija* (colloquial language), which they believe is a tool used by French-speaking groups in Morocco to marginalise the Arab identity. As well as criticising the linguistic choices, they also criticised the moral values of the characters in the soap opera and the western values of consumerism that are apparent in the plot and the dialogue. These nationalists were led by the Istiqbal wing. The level of *darija* was also criticised in comments in newspapers as being ‘vulgar’ street language (Miller 2012: 171).

What Miller calls the ‘progressive wing’ considered *darija* to be part of Moroccan identity. However, they did not agree on which form or code of *darija* was worthy of being shown on a TV series (2012: 172). Others thought that the choice of Casawi did not reflect the social and geographical diversity within Morocco, nor did it represent the prestigious way of speaking (2012: 172). Even those in favour of colloquial language would have preferred a more ‘cultured code’, a ‘higher level’ of speaking (2012: 172).



Some thought the translation was awkward and even ‘ridiculous’ to Moroccans watching. As problematic as the code were the themes and the lexical content of the soap operas. Commentators found it difficult to believe that Moroccans could engage in the kinds of romantic encounters presented in the Mexican shows.

The comments of viewers quoted in newspapers included people asking how an old person could speak the street language of Casablanca. Others said that people from Casablanca would be happy with the choice of language, but not people from other cities, who might find Casawi difficult to understand because it has different lexical items (2012: 172). As Miller observes, ‘the debate via the media indicates that the notion of “an adequate level of language” does not reach a public consensus’ (2012: 174).

Miller explains this controversy and its implications in terms of urbanisation and the effect of ideology and the media, stating that Morocco was later in urbanising than, for example, Egypt and Lebanon (2012: 175). With urbanisation comes language change, as established earlier. She postulates that in 1980 the level of urbanisation in Morocco was 38 per cent, compared to 59.8 per cent in Egypt and 60.6 per cent in Lebanon (2012: 175). Further, unlike in Lebanon and Egypt, there was no single colloquial that gained prestige, as the Cairene variant did in Egypt (see Bassiouney 2018); instead, the Moroccan elite utilised French to express their status. The media market in Morocco until 2000 was also weak, with the country producing only two to five films per year.

Recently, however, there has been a growing impact from a new economic class linked to liberal market forces and the media in Casablanca (2012: 175). Along with this economic growth there has been a change in the link between SA and national identity in terms of greater acknowledgment of the role of colloquial language and Berber languages in promoting a distinct Moroccan identity (2012: 177). In another measure of change, the boundaries between the public and private have been challenged in Morocco, along with the emergence of new ways of expressing identity associated with youth movements which may be universal, such as hip-hop (2012: 179). Under the influence of this ‘global youth urban culture’ (2012: 182), ‘many young artists claim to look for a real or daily language that reflects the harsh reality of their life and want to break away from a “sanitized” *darija*’ (2012: 179). This new movement is not exclusive to Morocco, of course, but wields influence all over the world.

The challenges facing Casawi as a potential prestige variety raise issues for linguistics. First, there is the challenge of standardising the orthography of colloquial varieties, which is a challenge for the entire Arab world. There is no standard orthography for writing any colloquial dialect, no grammar and, in Morocco, no consensus about which form should be promoted (2012: 178). Some Moroccans consider Casawi vulgar and not refined enough for the media, in spite of the economic and demographic weight of Casablanca, which

is the fourth most populous city in the Arab world after Cairo, Baghdad and Riyadh. At the time of Miller's writing it had a population of 4 million (2012: 181). The prestige of pre-Hilali dialects still persists despite this numerical advantage. However, the translator, Imam Lajjam, who is from Fez, was asked by the company to use Casawi because the Fez dialect is associated with elderly people.

According to Miller (2012: 181), urban dialects in Morocco can be divided into three groups: (1) pre-Hilali or Andalusian sedentary dialects, such as the dialects of Fez, Rabat and Mdiini, and the Shimaali dialects; (2) koinised or mixed urban dialects, recognised by their mixture of urban characteristics; and (3) rural Bedouin Hilali 3uruubi dialects, such as those of Casablanca and el-Jadida.

Miller argues that there old city dialects are currently in decline while the mixed urban dialects of the central Atlantic coast are on the rise. She raises the question of whether Casawi will become a national koine. Caubet, in a number of recent studies, also refers to the essential role of *darija* in the Moroccan media (2017a, 2017b).

Hachimi (2013) achieves two important goals in her article. First, she identifies and discusses issues pertaining to reflexivity, performance, stance and indexicality in relation to variation; second, she depends on a new kind of mediated performed data for her analysis. She analyses clips from the pan-Arab TV talent show *Star Academy* and examines YouTube viewers' comments on these clips (2013: 269). The clips show different interactions between Arabs in particular situations. *Star Academy* presents sixteen young men and women who are trained in singing, acting and dancing, and who are usually judged weekly after classes (2013: 275).

In this study the ideologies of 'authentication' and 'deauthentication' of linguistic Arabness are at the forefront. Hachimi argues that new media forms serve as platforms for renegotiating established language ideologies and the social and political aspects of identity in the Arab world. She adds that while previous studies usually take as their starting point the relationship between standard Arabic and different regional colloquial forms of Arabic, this study is concerned with the tensions and conflict over establishing and re-establishing 'hierarchies' among regional varieties of Arabic, mainly Maghreb varieties (Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria in this case) versus Mashreq ones (Egyptian, Gulf, Lebanese) (2013: 269). She underlines the ways in which a globalised and mediated age brings the tension between the two to the forefront.

Discussions and performances of these dialects revolve around two concepts, intelligibility and purity. Hachimi argues that, in the data analysed, Maghreb speakers are ridiculed or mocked for being unintelligible, which means that they bear 'the communicative burden' (Hachimi 2013: 2070; see also Lippi Green 1997).

In her analysis of the interactions between different Arabs, Hachimi utilises

stance-taking as a process of ‘evaluation’, ‘ideological positioning’ and ‘social differentiation’ (2013: 271). Stance-taking reproduces and highlights established language ideologies of authenticity and purity. She raises the question of who is considered an authentic Arab speaker. She also contends that the metalinguistic discourse around intelligibility and authenticity enhance an indexical order in which varieties carry social meanings or indexes that are enregistered in the minds of speakers (Hachimi 2013: 272; Agha 2005). She argues that media forms reproduce, and perhaps at times renegotiate, established semiotic links between dialects. These links cannot be understood except by understanding the political and socio-historical context in relation to language ideologies.

In the example below, a Tunisian woman named Sumayya interacts with an Egyptian man, Muhammad. The Tunisian is suffering from a sore throat and tries to ask the Egyptian for medicine. At the beginning of the interaction, the Egyptian seems to understand what she wants, since he suggests Strepsils, but then the communication between them appears to falter (Hachimi 2013: 278).

- (6) *id-dawa* (Egyptian Arabic) *lli aṣṭa:k iyya:h et-ṭabi:b* (Tunisian-Fuṣṣa)  
 ‘the medication that the doctor prescribed for you’  
*hayda* (Lebanese Arabic) *id-dawa lli nta axadtū* (Egyptian/diglossic switching?)  
 ‘that, the medication that you took.’

Summaya tries to accommodate to Muhammed by explaining again what she means, using French loan words and other tactics. However, Muhammed – sometimes sincerely, perhaps, sometimes mockingly – pretends not to understand. Note the metalinguistic comment (2013: 279):

- (7) *ya: rabbi muṣkilt il-luḡa ya: rabbi, qultu ḥalqi fa:yih fnu nqullu yaṣni, ḥalʔumi?*  
 ‘Oh my God, the problem of language, my God, I told him *ḥalqi* (my throat) is dry, what shall I tell him then, *ḥalʔumi?*’

Hachimi provides other similar examples of interactions between North African speakers and Kuwaitis or Lebanese in which, again, the communicative burden is on the North Africans, and the speakers of the Mashriqi codes expect the North African speakers to make all the accommodations; they position themselves as the authentic Arab speakers (2013: 281). Hachimi, interestingly, postulates that the issue in these interactions is not gender, but established language ideologies.

In the following example from a YouTube comment, the commenter adopts an evaluative stance in which he accuses Mashriqi speakers of laziness and unwillingness to understand (2013: 286):

- (8) العرب كسالى عندما يتعلق الأمر بالدارجة المغربية. إنها قمة الجهل والوقاحة عندما نسخر من لغة الشخص فما بالك بلغة شعب. كفى من التعالي والانغلاق..وحصر العالم في الذات

...  
 ‘The Arabs are lazy when it comes to the Moroccan vernacular. It is the height of ignorance and insolence when we mock a person’s language, let alone the language of a whole people. Enough arrogance, closed-mindedness and ethnocentrism’ (posted by Marrakech1, from Morocco).

The commenter, by using standard Arabic, is already taking a sociolinguistic stance in which he displays his superiority, appealing to the authoritative, legitimising indexes of SA (see Bassiouney 2014). Hachimi points out that ‘the rise of pan-Arab satellite broadcasting and the internet are technologies that connect the Arabic-speaking world in new ways’ (2013: 289).

In a similar vein, Schulthies (2014) recognises the changing nature of new media and, along with it, new forms of linguistic variation. In fact, she argues that these new pan-Arab TV competitions may be not only re-emphasising established indexes of different varieties but also challenging hierarchies and promoting ‘inclusion’ and ‘legibility’ of varieties of Arabic that were not established as legitimate or authentic before, such as Tunisian or Emirati (2015: 59). Schulthies argues that there are also regional dialects in the Mashriq that are struggling to attain a more positive status (example after Schulthies 2015: 60–1).

- (9) Kāzīm al-Sāḥir: *tahki ʕarabi:* Do you speak Arabic?  
 Sārah al-Ḥajjām: *nahki tunsi:* I speak Tunisian  
 Šābir al-Ribā‘ī: *ʕarabi:* Arabic  
 Kāzīm: *nahki: maʕk al-fuṣṣa* [Should I] speak standard Arabic with you?  
 Sārah: *ḥaka nafham fi:k* This way (*ḥaka*) I understand you.  
 Kāzīm: *ḥaka how?* How ‘this way’?  
 Sārah: *ḥakika* like this  
 Kāzīm: *ḥakika, OK farḥana aw* like this, OK. Are you happy or  
 Sārah: *Oui, je suis très content*  
 (Programme editor inserted MSA subtitle for French) I am very happy  
 Kāzīm: *beaucoup, beaucoup?*  
 (Programme editor inserted MSA subtitle for French) very, very?  
 Sārah: *beaucoup, beaucoup.*  
 (Programme editor inserted MSA subtitle for French) very, very.

In the next example, the producers of the show choose to subtitle certain interactions, usually those of North African speakers, in SA. However, what

speakers do in this interaction is essential to understand the complex nature of ideologies and variation (example from Schulthies 2015: 67).

- (10) Widād: *mshan tkabrni: ġala i:dik*  
 ‘So you can raise me under your tutelage.’ (lit: your hands)  
 (Mashriqi causative connector, Mashriqi pronunciation of  
 ‘your hands’, *i:dik*, rather than Moroccan *yidik*)
- Nancy: *masha:n bitkabarne ġala i:dak*  
 ‘So you can raise me under your tutelage.’  
 (Nancy repeats the entire phrase to Ragheb in Lebanese  
 phonology with epenthetic vowels and Mashriqi intonation  
 while laughing)
- Hasan: *Bil-ġaks is-sinn aṣ-ṣuġayr dayman kwayis*  
 ‘On the contrary, youth is always good.’  
 (Egyptian phonology, lexicon, and morphology)

This example is taken from a conversation with Widād, a Moroccan participant in the 2013 television programme *Arab Idol*. The backstory of this contestant, pre-recorded in Moroccan Arabic, was subtitled in MSA. In the live interaction, the speaker is seen to accommodate to Mashriqi forms, probably based on the assumption (even by the speaker herself) that Moroccan Arabic would not be understood. It may be true that North Africans need to accommodate to Mashriqi Arabic to promote their careers (2015: 63) but they also challenge and evaluate others as well as themselves in different contexts. They continually attempt to evaluate others’ talk, to shake the ‘social’ and ‘historical’ hierarchies (2015: 63). ‘More recent shows, however, suggest that there has been an expanding understanding of Arabness, and an orientation towards the indexical valuing of non-Arabic speakers and Maghrebi and Gulf Arabics as a way to broaden the programs’ appeal for emerging markets’ (2015: 70).

Schulthies’ important contribution to work in linguistic variation is her challenge to the notion that variation is built on a binary basis. That is, she questions methods that correlate linguistic variation to religious differences (Sunni versus Shiite, Christian versus Muslim, standard versus colloquial, Maghreb versus Mashriq etc.). She correctly contends that the linguistic reality is far messier, less delineated, and best understood by examining meta-linguistic discourse in relation to the global sociopolitical context.

Linguists who have studied Arabic have reproduced, amended and challenged these difference classifications, most often within a diglossic theoretical frame in which the transnational standard, known as MSA, or *fushā*, was contrasted with all the other local distinctions. In other words, linguists found a theoretical frame to reproduce another axis of differentiation: the standard versus everything else (Schulthies 2015: 62).

These ideas are important for us to understand better the linguistic situation in the Arab world. They will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

Bassiouney (2015) discusses language ideology, reflexivity in relation to identity, and language contact in Egypt, especially Cairo. Her article discusses the stance of non-Egyptian celebrities performing in Egypt, especially in ECA, and/or living in Egypt. The study explores the dynamics by which these celebrities are forced to acknowledge ECA and use it in Egypt. Metalinguistic, as well as linguistic, resources are not just intertwined but are also directly related to a struggle for cultural dominance. Note that in the last fifteen years there have been numerous debates regarding the role of Egypt as a cultural hub in relation to the Egyptian media. This is due to the increasing threat from other emerging cultural hubs – such as Dubai and Lebanon – both of which have greater financial resources and allow the use of other Arabic dialects.

The data examined includes over 100 television interviews with seventeen non-Egyptian celebrities who perform in ECA, some of whom have decided to settle in Egypt, as well as non-Egyptians who refuse to perform in ECA. Forty-four newspaper interviews with these same artists, in which Egyptian identity and language are highlighted, are also referred to. One celebrity discussed and studied in the article is Šāfināz, an Armenian/Russian belly dancer. The stances of this celebrity in different media contexts are examined. Her stance towards Arabic, especially ECA, and towards Egypt are usually discussed together. Examples are given of her attempts to hold interviews in ECA, mainly Cairene standard Arabic. Her ‘patterns of collective positioning’ (Jaffe 2009: 18) are explored in order to show how she constructs an identity related to language and to her stance towards Egypt and Egyptians.

As Jaffe argues, social identity is ‘the cumulation of stances taken over time’ (2009: 11). For celebrities, one’s identity does not just accumulate over a period of time; it is also regularly performed in public.

This study initiates and encourages work that explores the role of immigration, code choice and stance-taking in the Arab world in relation to celebrities. It also points to the struggle of access to linguistic resources, which is usually a reflection of a wider conflict directly and indirectly related to identification and national identity.

Below are some examples from the Šāfināz data. She arrived in Egypt at the beginning of 2011 and has been threatened with deportation twice: the first time because her visa had expired and the second because she performed in a costume in the colours of the Egyptian flag. After the second threat, she gave a number of interviews and became more visible in the media, not just as a belly dancer, but as a celebrity. In an interview for the talk show *Yaḥduth fi Miṣr* she was asked by a male interviewer, Sharīf, about the Egyptian Arabic dialect and how she learned it.

- (11) Sh: *inti itšallimti šarabi izza:y/*  
 Š: *min talat sini:n tabšan/awwil ma ge:t mašr w-širift inni mayinfafš  
 tiħarraki:ha fi mašr law inti mabtašrafi:f tikallimi:ha šarabi*  
 Sh: [repeats sentence and laughs]  
 Sh: How did you learn Arabic?  
 Š: Three years ago, of course. Once I arrived in Egypt and realised  
 that one cannot function without learning Arabic.  
 Sh: [repeats sentence and laughs]

Her conditional sentence in Egyptian Arabic has a number of errors. For example, she uses second person pronouns when she should have used a first person pronoun. Šāfināz's answer, with its grammatical mistakes, does not satisfy her interviewer, so he repeats his question (and laughs), in order to prompt further discussion concerning her process of learning Arabic:

- (12) Sh: *itšallimti izza:y baʔa/*  
 Š: *fi-fuḡlina/min ašħa:bna kida/min ge:r ħaddi yišallimmi/šalafa:n  
 kida ana ma-bašraf-fi tiʔra šarabi/yado:b mikassar.*  
 Sh: *wi itšallimti izza:y yašni/bi-tismašni aḡa:ni/*  
 Š: *awwil ħa:ga umm kalθu:m wi šabd il-ħali:m/baħibb asmašu wi  
 arʔuš šala umm kalθu:m wi šabd il-ħali:m wi ana/[. . .] masalan  
 ašli mumassila/wi ana bil-nisba liyya raʔš ašni tamsi:l/bil-nisba  
 li humma maša bašd/šalafa:n kida ana ma-bašraf-f yurʔuš min  
 ge:r tamsi:l/masalan turʔuš šala šabd il-ħali:m/walla šala umm  
 kalsu:m/law ħaddi ma-bi-yašraf-fi luḡa šarabi huwwa ħa-yitfarrag  
 šalayya fil uḡniyya wi ħa-tišraf ħali:m bi-tšu:l ʔe:h/la:zim ana  
 ħa-yifham humma bi-yiḡannu e:h/šalafa:n kida šallimt šarabi*  
 Sh: *šalafa:n kida itšallimti šarabi/šafa:n tifhami šabd il-ħali:m  
 bi-yiʔu:l e:h/*  
 Š: *ah*  
 Sh: *di ħa:ga šašba gidan*  
 Š: *ana ašu:l ma-titkallimi:-f maša:ya ingli:zi šafa:n ana la:zim  
 atkallim šarabi*  
 Sh: So how did you learn it, then?  
 Š: In my work, from my friends and so on, but without anyone  
 teaching me, and that is why I cannot read Arabic well, just about  
 . . .  
 Sh: So how did you learn, then? Did you listen to songs?  
 Š: First I listen to songs by Umm Kulthūm and 'Abd al-Ḥalīm. I love  
 to listen to them and dance to Umm Kulthūm and Abdel Halim  
 songs, and I . . . For example, I am originally an actress and for me  
 dancing is acting; they always come together for me. That is why  
 I cannot dance without acting. So if you want to dance to Umm

Kulthūm and ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm’s songs and you do not know Arabic, it is not possible. So when people watch me dance to a song, they should know from my acting the words of the song, they should know what Ḥalīm is saying. So I need to understand what they sing. That is why I learned Arabic.

Sh: So that is why you learned Arabic? To understand what ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm says?

Ş: [smiling] Yes.

Sh: This is really difficult.

Ş: That’s why I tell people ‘Do not speak to me in English, because I must speak in Arabic.’

Şāfināz does not explain in detail the method she uses to learn Arabic. This is different from other celebrities, who systematically explain how they mastered ECA when questioned in interviews (see Bassiouney 2014 for examples). She first states that she had to learn it in order to function in Egypt as a belly dancer. Then she claims that she never took any formal classes in ECA, but learned it from friends and through her work. However, this answer does not satisfy the interviewer, who then proceeds to prompt her into providing him with a clear answer. She responds by referring to past dialogues that all Egyptians are familiar with concerning Egypt’s role as a beacon of culture. She provides the interviewer with a personal narrative of the process of learning ECA as if it was a necessary, natural outcome of listening to iconic Egyptian musicians, such as Umm Kulthūm and ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Ḥāfiz. This romantic and perhaps unrealistic answer seems to strike a chord with both audience and interviewer: the fact that she learned Arabic in order to understand Egypt’s cultural heritage and thus to be able to feel and transmit it through her art. While the music of Umm Kulthūm, a classical singer, is not normally used for belly dancing, Şāfināz did dance to this music on a number of occasions. In this article, concepts such as stance, dialogicality, indexes and identity were discussed together, and examples were given of performed data from the media.

Bassiouney (2018) also explores data from the media, including soap operas, poetry – both written and performed – postcards and songs, as well as interviews. This study uses indexicality and stance-taking to shed light on the metalinguistic discourse of Sa‘idis and non-Sa‘idis in the media. ‘Sa‘idi dialect’ is a general term used to refer to a group of dialects that stretch from the south of Cairo to the Sudanese border. The negative indexes of this dialect are well known inside Egypt, and perhaps in the Arab world in general because of movies and soap operas about them.

Sa‘idi Arabic is one of the most ridiculed, stigmatised and stereotyped codes in the Egyptian media. Salient phonological and semantic variables of Sa‘idi are associated with ignorance, stupidity, a lack of sophistication, and so



on. However, the study also shows how some Sa'idi intellectuals and public figures use the stereotype to their advantage, by emphasising other positive traits of their community. They display their local identity by employing these highly negative salient features. By so doing they create a positive stance towards this group of dialects.

Bassiouney's 2018 study adopts the viewpoint that linguistic codes are resources. It builds on the work of Hymes (1970), Gal (1989), Fairclough (2001) and Heller (2011), to argue that linguistic codes are not distributed equally and do not carry the same value. Dialects in Egypt are a case in point. Media in Egypt is always centred around Cairo, the capital. In fact, non-Cairenes call Cairene dialects 'Egyptian' and Cairo itself is referred to as 'Egypt'. The process of stigmatisation of Sa'idi, both the people and their dialects, reflects unequal treatment of speakers of this group of dialects on both the political and the social levels. Note that, as Gal (1989: 347) argues, linguistic resources do not just reflect a social order but are part and parcel of a social order, and also produce and construct it. That is, the 'value' that a code carries lies in the access it gives to the public sphere.

This study attempts to account for the different means of establishing indexes of Sa'idi dialects in the Egyptian media by examining metalinguistic discourse about the people and the dialect in talk shows, movies and soap operas. Salient Sa'idi features that comprise second-order indexes are also discussed. These features are phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical. The study also shows how speakers of Sa'idi dialects who are also performers refute the negative indexes attributed to their dialect and their local identity. They highlight what they perceive as the positive traits of Sa'idis, such as courage, honesty, chivalry and manliness.

The data utilised by Bassiouney covers a span of fifty years and includes forty soap operas produced in Cairo that deal with Sa'id as a region and Sa'idis as inhabitants of this region. It also includes fifteen films that mainly focus on Sa'idis, and forty songs produced in Cairo and performed in a Sa'idi dialect. The study examines in detail twelve talk shows that deal with issues pertaining to the Sa'idi identity or dialect – specifically, the stance of actors towards the dialect and the people. It is usually actors from Cairo who represent Sa'idi characters, and they receive coaching in one of these dialects.

The study argues that linguistic resources are the by-product of both micro and macro social and political contexts. In the case of Egypt, the media is controlled by the social and economic advantage of the capital, Cairo, and the Cairene standard is, as one might expect, the most powerful resource. This level of discrepancy reflects a significant centralisation in Egypt and also reflects the social and political exclusion of the south in some contexts.

Note that the most salient difference between Sa'idi dialects and Cairene Arabic is that the former realise the standard Arabic *q* as *g* and standard Arabic *dʒ* as *dʒ*, whereas CA has *ʔ* and *g*. For example, the glottal stop in CA *yiʔra* 'he

reads' becomes a voiced velar *g* (*yigra*) in Sa'idi dialects, while Cairene voiced velar *g* in *ge:t* 'I came' is realised as *de:t*, *dze:t* and so on, depending on the region. These differences are widely known and are commonly assumed to be the defining features of Upper Egyptian speech.

- (13) A number of actors and actresses in the soap opera *Silsāl al-damm* ('Blood Chain') are speaking at a press conference (2015):<sup>32</sup>

Actress: *Amil marra atkallim ṣaṣi:di/ wi fil amwil kunt ḡalḡa:na ḡami*

Actor: *goli:ha bil ṣaṣi:di*

Actress: (in Sa'idi dialect) *galga:na gami*

Actress: The first time I spoke in a Sa'idi dialect. I was so worried at first.

Actor: Say it in Sa'idi!

Actress: I was so worried.

Actor: (in Cairene) *maṣamalf maṣa:ya maghu:d/ w inta ḡa:sis innak ṣaṣi:di/ wi la:bis ṣaṣi:di / bi-yixali:k f-mu:d ṣagi:b*

Actress: *fi:ha naḡama/ kul markazz wi lih naḡama*

Actor: I did not need a lot of effort. When you are dressed like a Sa'idi and feel like one, it puts you in a strange mood.

Actress: The dialect has such a different melody, each local area in Sa'idi has a melody.

- (14) The actress Dalia Behery talking about her role in *al-Qa:ṣira:t* ('Under-aged Girls', 2013):<sup>33</sup>

*Ammil marra aṣmil ṣaṣi:diyya/ fa bil-nisba li marṣuba/ il-kala:m saṣb awi:/ wi fi: tafki:l fil kala:m zaḡy il-luḡa il-ṣarabiyya bi-zabṭ/ (. . .) fa tabṣan fi ṡa:qa inn inta tiṡallaṣ infiṣa:l wi tmassil b-lakna inta mish malikha b-yixalli:k tiṡallaṣ ta:qa aktar/ innak tizhir ilmaṣa:ṣir/ fa rabbina yistur w aṣraf aṣmil siṣi:diyya kuwaḡyisa*

'It's the first time I've played a Sa'idi woman. So I am very frightened. Speaking Sa'idi is very difficult and it has vocalisation just like standard Arabic (meaning written standard Arabic). Of course it takes more energy to show your emotions and feelings in a dialect you do not master. It makes you use more energy in acting to show your feelings as well. May God help me when I act as a Sa'idi woman and I do it well.'

- (15) The actress Arwa on her role in the movie *al-Jazīrah* ('The Island', part two, 2014):<sup>34</sup>

*Ka:n aktar ḡa:ga kunt xayfa minha hiyya fikrit inni ḡana hazbbut iṣ-ṣaṣi:di: wala laḡa/ bas tabṣan ka:n ṣandi siḡa kbi:ra fi . . . illi humwa mulaqqin ṣaṣi:di: bita:ṣi:*

'The thing I was frightened of the most was mastering Sa'idi dialect, but I had a lot of trust in . . . who is my dialect coach.'

(16) Actor Muhammad Karim:<sup>35</sup>

*fagʔa ʕamalt do:r iʕ-ʕaʕi:di il-vilan wi firi:r/ idʔarre:t inn ana ʔatqin  
il-luġa iʕ-ʕaʕi:diyya fuwayya/ fa ʕa:yiz aʔulak kulli l-bama:bi:n  
illi fil mantiʔa ʔaʕadt maʕa:hum/ ka:nu ʕuħa:bi li-muddat fahre:n/  
bi-nitkallim maʕa baʕd/ wi nuxrug maʕa baʕd/ ʔabʕan fi na:s fil loke:fin  
b-yiʕaħħaħu-lna/*

'I suddenly had to act as a Sa'idi villain and had to master the Sa'idi language a bit. I want to tell you I befriended all the doormen in my area and we used to hang out together for two months, we talked together and went out together, and of course we also have dialect coaches on site when filming.'

In the examples given above, in which actors reflect on their use of the Sa'idi dialect, the dialect is portrayed as difficult and different, and mastering it is viewed as an achievement. Dalia Behery shows her affective stance by expressing her worry about mastering the dialect, which is so alien to her. She even appeals to God to help her in her attempt.

There is also confusion about how many dialects there are in Upper Egypt. Intonation is mentioned as one of the features that make Sa'idi difficult to master. When imitating a Sa'idi dialect, the actress from the soap opera *Silsāl al-damm* uses the consonant *g* as opposed to the CA glottal stop, twice in *galga:na gami* (rather than *ʔalʔa:na ʔami*). She believes that she is switching to Sa'idi by merely switching the consonants, which is, of course, not the case, as she later mentions. It is the salient features that are perceived by Cairenes as typical Sa'idi ones that she mentions and that are easy to imitate.

In the examples above, one actor claims that there is a relationship between dress and linguistic code, and argues that just by dressing as a Sa'idi he becomes one.

An interesting example is that of Muhammad Karim, who displays his stance not simply towards Sa'idi dialect, but rather towards Sa'idis in general by reporting that in order to master Sa'idi he had to befriend doormen and porters in Cairo. Karim expresses the common stereotype that people from the south are poor and uneducated, and mostly have menial jobs. On a linguistic level, he claims that only these real Sa'idis can help him master the dialect.

In this last example, a dialect coach from Upper Egypt reiterates the stereotype about the difficulty of mastering the dialect and its negative connotations:

(17) Dialect coach Muhammad performs the interview in Sa'idi (2014).<sup>36</sup>

When asked by the announcer how she can master Sa'idi, he replies:

M: *ʕafaa:n taʕrafi tifukki ʕaʔala:t wiffik wi tguli:ha*  
'You need to loosen the muscles in your face to say this  
[Sa'idi sentence].'

While discussing how actors and actresses react to

performing in Sa'idi, he brings up the example of Dalia Behery (see example 14 above):

M: *il-ustada dalya il behe:ri ana la:zim aramiḥ a fu:fīṭa:lya amri:ka xamasta:fr yo:m/ asha:n aṣrif aha:wil ardzaḥ lli ana kunt Ṣale:h gabl kida*

‘Madame Dalia said that she had to go away for fifteen days to get back to speaking her own dialect. She said, “I need to go to Italy or the US to get back to speaking the way I spoke before this soap opera.”’

Another actress forbade him from speaking Sa'idi to her daughter on location:

M: *madam feri:n ḡalit li wi raḥmit abu:k matikalimsh maṣa il-bint ṣaṣi:di ḥatibga muṣkila wi miṣ ḥaṣraf akallimha ta:ni*  
 ‘Madame Sherine said to me: “May God have mercy on your father, do not speak to my daughter in Sa'idi. It will be a problem. I will not be able to speak to her again [meaning ‘to communicate’ with her].”’

Presenter: *ana binti law simṣitak ḥatintiḥr*

‘If my daughter hears you she will commit suicide!’

All of the above studies use data from the media and rely on methods and theories related directly to stance, indexicality, performance, ideologies and identity.

### 3.7.4 Discussion and conclusion

In the conclusion to this chapter in the first edition of this book, the binary approach to variation was criticised:

One fear that comes up whenever one correlates language variation with quantifiable independent variables is the fear of falling into a circular argument. For example, if we examine linguistic variation in relation to gender and social class, we have to assume that there are linguistic differences between different social classes and there are also linguistic differences that are related to one's gender. Thus, rather than constructing independent variables as they go along, linguists can start by predetermining them and thus lose much of their insight into the real linguistic situation that characterises a specific community. (2009: 123)

This critique was elaborated upon with suggestions for the future in the previous section.

The pivotal development in the field of sociolinguistics is in the emphasis

on the role of meaning in understanding all aspects of communication and differentiation between speakers. To this end, linguists in the Arab world and beyond have now shifted focus, to some extent, to data from the media, which is mainly performed. This kind of data is not spontaneous and cannot tell us exactly how people use the language, but it does reveal how they perceive usage of linguistic resources by different aggregates of people. This information sheds important light on the role of language ideologies in indexical constructions. Spontaneity is reduced in the use of new media: Snapchats are not as spontaneous as a conversation, but they are not as performed as a letter or an email.

These issues are now at the forefront of research in variation. Greater emphasis is placed on differentiation that is achieved through use of language and talk about language. As Queen (2013: 218–19) contends, '[a]ll language in the media is primarily performed, or representational, in that it does not present "real life", face-to-face conversations, the data most sociolinguists rely on for their research'. However, it is the semiotic significance of such data that attracts sociolinguistics. As Agha (2011: 164) states, '[m]ediatization is simply a narrow special case of semiotic mediation'. To explain further, Agha argues that media recontextualises associations and ideologies through different vehicles. 'The media construct is an ideology of communication that focuses on fragments of a fragment: it isolates some objects as representative of media while ignoring others' (2011: 164). In order to appreciate the semiotic selection, speakers need the cultural background that enables them to presuppose and decipher indexes (see Agha 2011; Cotter 2015). Performance is linguistic codes and registers in display (Schilling-Estes 1998: 53). Bauman reiterates that performance is 'an act of expression' that is displayed and objectified by a performer and then interpreted and evaluated by an audience (Bauman 2001: 1).

Coupland (2001:198–202) also emphasises the essential role of culture and performance in variation, and he argues against the binary approach mentioned above in which a standard is contrasted with a non-standard:

Dialect style should be treated, analytically, as a repository of cultural indices, mediated by individual performance. Its salience will be located not within any aggregated 'level' or 'range' of dialect variants, but in the placement of individual or specifically grouped dialect features relative to other culturally signifying linguistic and discursive forms—dialect styles operating within ways of speaking.

The metasemiotic approach to variation as coined by Gal (2016: 117) was discussed in relation to indexicality, stance and performance. To reiterate, this approach is concerned with the means by which cultural categories and linguistic forms are moulded by cultural, political and economic changes (Irvine

and Gal 2000: 127). It posits that contact between speakers does not always lead to similarities but can also be a resource for differentiation.

Linguistic differentiation is a component of identity construction. As Lacoste et al. (2014: 8) argue, speakers use resources to ‘construct’ and ‘deconstruct’ their identities during an act of communication, as well as to ‘stage’ this identity.

So far we have discussed the importance of performed data in sociolinguistic research and the essential role of indexicality in understanding variation as an act of differentiation, in some cases (Gal 2016), or belonging, in others. Stance and indexicality are closely related, and examples of metalinguistic evaluations of linguistic codes were presented. Reflexivity was also discussed in relation to language ideologies and index constructions. Reflexivity is ‘the way language inevitably refers to itself’ (Johnstone 2015). It refers to the means by which speakers reflect on their own linguistic performance and that of others. As a process, reflexivity is reflected in studies of linguists themselves and not just in the interaction between speakers (Cameron 2012; Johnstone 2015).

This new approach does not undermine quantitative research on variation, but attempts to strengthen it with new approaches and new methods of research.

Johnstone (2010: 30) argues that ‘[S]ociolinguists have, in fact, talked about “social meaning” for some time . . . since then, new ways of thinking about identity and new reasons for talking about it have deepened our understanding of what language can accomplish in addition to denotation and pragmatic illocution.’

## NOTES

1. Note that this example represents individual language shift- giving up a Berber language or at least adding Arabic to the protagonist’s linguistic repertoire, that is, becoming bilingual. This is not exactly what variationists have in mind when they write about language variation and change. However, the example shows the importance of social pressure and extra-linguistic factors in language variation, change and even language death.
2. The reason why their interest is mainly in phonological variables is that these occur frequently. They are also less salient in many ways than lexical or morpho-syntactic variables and thus are less subject to consistent, conscious manipulation. Sound change was the major concern of historical linguistics traditionally (cf. Walters 1988).
3. In fact, Labov used a secondary sample. That is, he eliminated certain categories of speakers from an earlier random sample created for a sociological study called ‘mobilization for youth’. Thus the sample was not 100 per cent random, but it was much closer to a random sample than variationist work has been generally.
4. Labov delineated five categories: casual and careful spoken material and literacy-based prompts such as reading passages, word lists and minimal pairs.
5. Haeri used networks to recruit subjects, a fact that sometimes makes results less representative.
6. There are also a number of studies of language use in the Arab world that rely on techniques

other than the interview for gathering data. These include the study mentioned in the next chapter by Abu-Lughod (1987), who analyses folk poetry, that by Hayasi (1998), who analyses the language use of a TV series, and that by Eid (2002a), who analyses obituaries. Although these studies are not variationist studies, they teach important things about language use and linguistic variation in the Arab world.

7. Studies that rely on statistics relating variation to other social correlates include, in chronological order, Hurreiz's study (1978) of Khartoum and the relation between language, gender, age and education; Owens and Bani-Yasin's (1987) examination of language used by men and women in the Jordanian dialect of the Bani-Yasin tribe in relation to level of education and age; and Abu-Haider's (1989) comparison of the language used by men and women in a Baghdad community in relation to language change. There are statistical studies relating gender to social class. Haeri (1992), for example, in her study of Cairene Arabic, provides statistics that compare the linguistic behaviour of men in three social classes with that of women belonging to the upper middle class. She found that the process of palatalisation is associated with the lower middle class; upper-middle-class women tend to avoid it. She also used statistics in the same study to relate gender to age and/or social class. Daher (1999) used statistics that relate gender to age and education, bearing in mind other factors such as word frequency and phonological environment.
8. At the beginning of the twentieth century Sayyid Darwish composed a nationalistic song about Egypt, which starts with the following words: *'ʔana l-maṣri: / kari:m il-ʕunsuri / bane:t al-maḡd'* ('I am the Egyptian. I am the one who comes from a noble blessed lineage (ethnicity). I am the one who has built a civilisation (glory)'). In 2005 a young Lebanese singer sang about Egypt and started her song with the following words: *'ʔana maṣri: wa ʔabu:ya maṣri: / bi-sama:ri: wi lo:ni masri: / wi b-xiffit dammi: maṣri'* ('I am Egyptian. My father is Egyptian. I am Egyptian because of my colour, my tanned skin and my sense of humour').
9. Source: CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>; last accessed 4 April 2019.
10. A famous Jordanian joke goes as follows: two young Palestinian men join the army. The military officer asks their names. The first one answers *'ʔismi ʔa:sim'* ('my name is *ʔa:sim* (for "Qa:sim)"). When the military officer hears the glottal stop rather than the Bedouin Jordanian *g*, he says, 'You speak like a woman. You are now in the army and you must learn to speak like a man.' He then asks the second Palestinian his name. The second Palestinian replies, *'gaḥmad'*. Thus the second Palestinian changed all his glottal stops into *gs* even in the words that should necessarily start with *ʔ*, such as the name *ʔaḥmad* 'Ahmad'. The joke is indeed very significant linguistically.
11. A walk along the row of Christian cemeteries in Alexandria illustrates the confusing variety of Christian denominations: the Latin cemetery borders the Lutheran, which lies adjacent to the cemetery of the Maronites, which is next to the Greek and Coptic Orthodox ones; there are also burial sites for Anglicans, the Armenian Orthodox and so on.
12. Source: CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/le.html>; last accessed 10 April 2019.
13. Source: CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/sy.html>; last accessed 10 April 2019.
14. Source: CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>; last accessed 10 April 2019.
15. Source: CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html>; last accessed 10 April 2019.
16. Source: CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/eg.html>; last accessed 10 April 2019.

17. Source: <http://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/about/communities/EG>; last accessed 10 April 2019.
18. Source: Pew Research Center Fact Tank: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/06/why-muslims-are-the-worlds-fastest-growing-religious-group>; last accessed 10 April 2019.
19. Source: CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html>; last accessed 10 April 2019.
20. Religion may be regarded in the Arab world as an essential part of one's identity, perhaps more so than in the west. However, as a factor that influences language variation and change it may be equal in importance to other factors such as ethnicity. This varies from one community to another.
21. Blanc (1991) noted this also.
22. It should be noted that his work predated variationist research and represented structuralist description.
23. I think it has to be admitted that since the independence of many Arab countries, Jews and Christians have decreased in number and ratio because of political climates. Thus communal varieties have to a large degree disappeared. Whether sectarian fighting in Iraq and Lebanon is the outcome of religious differences, ethnic differences or political differences is not to be discussed here. However, the linguistic reflexes of these conflicts are yet to be studied.
24. For a study of the historic formation of Cairene, see Woidich (1994).
25. The Egyptian delta stretches along the river Nile and does not include Cairo.
26. Source: CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/ly.html>, last accessed 10 April 2019.
27. For a discussion of linguistic variation in Libya after the revolution see Chapter 6.
28. Note that there has been an African-American elite class in this community since before the civil war, but Kroch, perhaps replicating the biases of the dominant society, defined the elite in the terms of that society.
29. This term is used by Versteegh. Others do not necessarily label this a creole.
30. Note that the difference between CA and MSA is not discussed in detail here because it does not contribute to the main argument, but see Chapter 1 for a discussion of this difference.
31. After Chun and Walters (2011: 259), transcription slightly adapted.
32. See <https://youtu.be/209vvrTw7Ac>; last accessed 12 June 2016.
33. See <https://youtu.be/ZYrM6xtYTxg>; last accessed 12 June 2016.
34. See <https://youtu.be/RC2A6njevkI>; last accessed 12 June 2016.
35. See <https://youtu.be/gF44WnGp2Cg>; last accessed 12 June 2016.
36. See <https://youtu.be/k-64OMiNQQ0>; last accessed 12 June 2016.



# Arabic and gender

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God created Eve from Adam's bent lower rib. That is why women are always twisted. They never talk straight.

An Egyptian Bedouin recounting the story of Adam and Eve, quoted by Abu-Lughod (1987: 124)

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

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The idea that women never talk straight is an assumption found not only among the Bedouins in Egypt, but also more universally. Holmes (1998: 461) contends that the myth that women talk too much exists in all cultures. Supposedly women do not know their own minds. They hedge and qualify everything they say. As Holmes puts it, they are supposed to be 'indirect and devious' (1998: 461).

However, the presupposition that men and women, because of their sex differences, speak differently should not be taken as a given. The research on gender has moved and developed beyond this presupposition. Holmes and Meyerhoff (2003b: 9) contend that when linguists make generalisations about a community at large, they apply their generalisations to both men and women. Gender is still an essential factor in language variation and change. However, it is a factor that interacts with other independent variables in a community, that is, it has to be 'put into context' (2003: 9). Sadiqi (2003a: 312) posits that it is in fact only within a particular culture that 'gender performance acquires meaning'.

This chapter gives an overview of the study of gender in the field of linguistics in relation to Arabic. Gender has been defined by Coates (1993: 4) as 'the term used to describe socially constructed categories based on sex'. On the other hand, gender is perceived by feminist linguists as something that one performs in an interaction rather than something which one has or possesses:

Gender is not a part of one's essence, which one is, but an achievement, what one does. Gender is a set of practices through which people construct and claim identities; not simply a system of categorising people. And gender practices are not only about establishing identities but also about managing social relations. (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003: 305)

Thus gender is the product of social interaction. Individuals construct a gender identity when they interact with other individuals. If we assume that individuals speak differently and have their own repertoire of registers, then we must also assume that the process of 'talking' itself modifies or fixes one's identity and one's social sphere continually (Holmes and Meyerhoff 2003b: 11).

I will first (in section 4.2) outline briefly approaches to gender studies from a linguistic perspective. Then I will go on to discuss gender in the Arab world in general terms to enable readers who are not familiar with the Arab world to have a grasp on the diversity of Arab countries, and to enable them to appreciate the cultural differences which may also lead to different linguistic contexts between the Arab world and the western one. The two concepts that will be of relevance in this discussion and that will recur in this chapter are the Arabs' perception of honour and modesty. The veil as a paralinguistic communicative device is also discussed. Section 4.4 addresses politeness in relation to women. Related to the concept of politeness are terms of address. In section 4.5 I deal with terms of address, names and status. Section 4.6 sheds light on women as narrators in control of language, with an emphasis on poetry. Section 4.7 will investigate the role of gender in language variation and change and will tie up with Chapter 3. In section 4.8 I present a study of the projection of identity in the speech of men and women in Egypt in talk shows. Section 4.9 will deal with the symbolic significance of language in relation to gender. The final section will re-examine language universals in the light of data examined and observations.

#### 4.2 APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE AND GENDER

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Sociolinguistic theories that concentrate on gender include the deficit theory, the dominance theory, the difference theory, the reformist theory, the radical theory and the community of practice theory (see Sadiqi 2003a for a summary of these). Some of these theories are chronological and some overlap. In this section, I will deal only with four prominent theories: the deficit theory, the dominance theory, the difference theory and the community of practice theory. I will start with the deficit theory and highlight in the process of discussing it Lakoff's contributions to the study of gender in relation to language,

since the interest in language and gender has sprung from Lakoff's work on language and gender in the 1970s.

#### 4.2.1 The deficit theory and Lakoff's contribution to the study of language and gender

In 1975, Robin Tolmach Lakoff published her groundbreaking article 'Language and woman's place' (reprinted, with commentary, in Bucholtz 2004). Through her research, she was able to highlight the linguistic dimension of discrimination against women in many cultures, as well as the dominance of men, who practically set the rules.

Lakoff said: '[W]e will find, I think, that women experience linguistic discrimination in two ways: in the way they are taught to use language, and in the way general language use treats them' (2003a [1975]: 203); hence the idea of dominance and difference, which assumes that women speak differently because they are taught to do so, but also that language does not treat them fairly because of men's dominance. She gave examples like the power relation between master and servant: while it was normal to say:

- (1) He is a master of the intricacies of academic politics  
it is less usual to say
- (2) She is a mistress of . . . (2003a [1975]: 204).  
'Mistress' had acquired different, sexual connotations, which indicated that women had frequently been treated as subordinate, sexual objects.  
Another example Lakoff gave was:
- (3) He is a professional  
When said about a man, it meant he was a lawyer, doctor etc, but when one said:
- (4) She is a professional  
it meant she was a prostitute (2003a [1975]: 205).

Lakoff added that a woman is identified in terms of the men she is related to. It was normal to ask a woman on occasion, 'What does your husband do?' However, we seldom asked a man 'What does your wife do?' His reply might be, 'She is my wife', and that in itself was a woman's occupation.

According to Lakoff, women's language reflected their marginalisation in society. For example women tended to use indirectness, empty boosters, such as 'I am glad you are here', tag questions and hedges such as 'it's probably dinner time' (McConnell-Ginet 2004: 137). Women's language might be deficit because it reflected women's insecurity and powerlessness in society (Freed 2003: 701).

One has to acknowledge that Lakoff wrote her article in the 1970s and that since then, the position of women has changed not only in the US, but in many

other parts of the world. However, Lakoff has been criticised for a number of reasons: first, some linguists (cf. Mills 2005) claimed that Lakoff relied on anecdotal evidence for her generalisations. Thus there is no evidence that 'all women' used what she called 'women's language'. What Lakoff claimed was women's language could be considered a range of repertoires available to women (McConnell-Ginet 2004: 137). In addition, O'Barr and Atkins (1980) argued that much of what Lakoff had identified as women's features are in fact associated with power as defined by status in courtrooms and is not dependent on the sex of the speaker (cited in McConnell-Ginet 2004: 139). Similarly, Dubois and Crouch (1975), when examining patterns of language use among the participants at a conference, found that male speakers used more tag questions than females. Lastly, Lakoff was understood as placing women in a powerless class which does not conform to the structural classes of society (Hall 2003: 363). This in itself ignores issues such as social status and hierarchical relations in different communities.

#### 4.2.2 The dominance theory

The dominance theory, which was discussed by Thorne and Henley (1975) (see also Freed 2003: 701), assumed a linguistic difference between men and women that is based on power inequality between both sexes. It focused on male dominance, which resulted in women being perceived as unequal to men. According to this theory, norms of society are being formed by men and so are language practices. 'Language differences were identified as part of a structure of unequal access and influence' (Freed 2003: 701).

In fact, the following words uttered by Jane Austen's Anne in the novel *Persuasion* at the end of the eighteenth century, are a very early explanation of the dominance theory: 'Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands' (1993: 167). Anne summarised the disadvantages of women in her time by mentioning that it was men who dominated history and its writing. They had access to it, and they shaped it. It was also men who were educated while women were not.

When speaking about Arab women, Ghidhdhāmī (2000) posits that women are talked about but never talk. In fact, it is considered better for women not to talk but to listen. This contradicts the claims of both western and Arab cultures that women are chatterboxes who do not know when to keep quiet, which brings us to the distinction between practical behaviour and ideology.

According to Ghidhdhāmī, a woman is the one who is loved and adored; things happen to her, but she does not take the initiative. Again this is the assumption that may be prevalent but which does not necessarily reflect reality. As Freed (2003) puts it, the media, when afraid of change, tries to impose its own fixed ideas about gender differences.

The problem with theories that rely on power is that they tend to oversimplify the definition of power (Sadiqi 2003a: 7). As will become clear later in the chapter, there are many facets of power at different stages of one's life in the Arab world and they are related not only to gender, but to a different number of independent factors including those discussed in Chapter 3.

### 4.2.3 The difference theory

The 'difference theory', or 'cultural approach' as it has also been called, was first formulated by Maltz and Borker (1982), and is frequently associated with Deborah Tannen's work (Tannen 1993: 4; see also Freed 2003: 702). This approach explains linguistic differences between men and women as a result of their being two distinct groups, or even two distinct cultures (cf. Tannen 1994); women and men use different styles and linguistic forms which were developed in same-sex childhood peer groups. The focus of this theory is more on language differences than on power differences. Cameron (2005), however, calls into question the postulation that men and women as groups talk differently. Sadiqi (2003a: 10) also posits that this bicultural model cannot be applied 'cross-culturally'. The difference between men and women cannot be studied in isolation from power relationships (cf. Freed 2003: 701).

The difference theory mainly studies gender by analysing the speech of heterosexual couples, and it also does not concentrate on differences among women themselves; El-Kholy (2002), for example, states that more studies are needed in the Arab world that deal with the dynamics of same-sex power relationships, such as that of mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law in Egypt. There are also men who break our stereotypes and talk as we expect women to talk (Freed 2003). Thus, there is a difference between our expectations as analysts and members of a certain community and linguistic reality. Again this difference is nurtured by the media in order to impose a fixed reality in which women play specific roles that do not change or develop (Freed 2003; see also Cameron 2008).

#### 4.2.3.1 Gender universals

As an outcome of theories that perceive gender as a binary opposition (Freed 2003: 702), Holmes (1998: 468, 472) suggests some language universals related to gender. First, women are more sensitive to the feelings behind what is said rather than the content. Men, however, focus on the information. Second, women provide more encouragement, supportive feedback or minimal responses like *mm*, *uh-huh* etc. in conversations between couples (Fishman 1980, 1983), in management discussion groups (Schick-Case 1988), in political debates (Edelsky and Adams 1990) and even in interactions between women and men in laboratory or studio conditions (Leet-Pellegrini 1980; Preisler

1986). Women are more concerned for their partner's positive face needs. They value solidarity. Women tend to use linguistic devices that stress solidarity more often than men (for Mayan Indians see Brown 1980; for Javanese see Smith-Hefner 1988). Third, they also, according to Lakoff (2003), tend to use hedges, tag questions, and terms such as 'sort of' and 'as you know', which are all signals of uncertainty. Fourth, interruption comes from men, not women. And men tend to speak more. Men want to maintain and increase their power; women tend to maintain and increase solidarity (Holmes 1998: 472). Note that Holmes acknowledges that there are some societies in which this is not true, for example in Madagascar, as will be discussed below. These assumptions about gender will be discussed and challenged throughout this chapter.

#### 4.2.4 Community of practice theory: third wave approach to variation studies

This theory, discussed in detail in Chapter 3, section 3.2.3, can help explain the interaction between gender and other independent variables without resorting to differences among men and women. The theory is built on the concept of a community that is defined according to what is local and practical. Individuals construct their identity in terms of 'allegiance' and 'alliances' (Eckert 2003; Sadiqi 2003a: 10). These 'allegiance' and 'alliances' are not gender specific but community specific. Gender is thus not considered a fixed point that individuals revolve around, but rather a factor in defining and constructing an identity, a factor that evolves and changes with the individual. It is not necessarily the most essential factor in a community. Other factors such as tribal affiliations or social class may be more significant in certain communities in the Arab world.

Sadiqi (2003a: 17), for example, posits that all cultures, to varying degrees, impose control over their members. Moroccan culture is a 'type that strongly constrains the behaviour of men and women'. Sadiqi's postulation about Moroccan culture echoes Eckert and McConnell-Ginet's (2004) ideas of allegiances and alliances. Before proceeding further in this chapter, I will attempt to sketch the situation of women in the Arab world, trying throughout to break stereotypes. The concepts discussed below are general and perhaps basic, but they are needed for a thorough understanding of the relation between language and gender in the Arab world.

### 4.3 WOMEN IN THE ARAB WORLD: FRAMING AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I will start the discussion of women in the Arab world with a quote from Sadiqi (2003a: 212–13) in which she alludes to the fact that it is not helpful

to look at Moroccan women as one entity since diversity within Moroccan society is essential for a clear understanding of women's position in society.

Granting the existence of some deeply human and universal social values, the components of Western culture are significantly different from, and sometimes incompatible with, those of Moroccan culture. The histories, geographies, religions, oralities, social use of languages, social organisations, economic statuses, and political organisations are different . . . Moroccan women are perceived as one entity in which social boundaries do not seem to count. These women are very much associated with terms 'Arab', 'Oriental' . . .

If it is an oversimplification to speak about 'Moroccan women', then it is indeed almost impossible to speak about 'Arab women', without acknowledging the diversity in their situations and positions. Although, as this chapter will reveal, there may be some underlying similarities in the social concepts that govern gender performance (honour and modesty are cases in point), the disparities, whether economic, political or social, between different communities cannot be overlooked. Thus, while the Arab world is certainly patriarchal to an extent and in ways that may seem greater than in the west, what outsiders may miss is the great diversity of the situations of men and women in the Arab world. This diversity will be discussed below roughly in terms of diversity in education, urbanisation, economy and traditions. Part of the discussion will be devoted, as said earlier, to the veil and its implications in different communities. Before ending this section I will draw attention to two main concepts related to linguistic gender performance in the Arab world: honour and modesty.

### 4.3.1 Diversity in education

Because some countries in the Arab world can be characterised as late modernisers (at least with regard to the west), again with great variation across and within countries, we commonly find university professors – male and female – whose parents are illiterate teaching alongside colleagues whose parents were professors or members of the 'liberal professions' (law, medicine, etc.). Across and within countries and over the last decades things have been changing rapidly for women. See Table 4.1 for an example of the diversity in literacy rates of women aged 15–24 in eight Arab countries in 1990, 2004, and between 2012 and 2017.

The table shows that within the period of twenty-seven years, there was a leap in the literacy level of all the countries presented. There is also a difference between different countries. Thus, while in Egypt the literacy level of women has increased from 51 per cent to 87 per cent, in Oman it has increased

*Table 4.1 Diversity in literacy rates*

Country	Literacy of women aged 15–24 (per cent)		
	1990	2004	2012–17
Egypt	51	79	87 (2017)
Jordan	95	99	99
Kuwait	87	100	100
Morocco	42	60	88 (2012)
Oman	75	97	99 (2017)
Saudi Arabia	79	94	99 (2013)
Syria	67	90	94 (2012)
Tunisia	75	92	96 (2014)

*Source:* UNESCO, <http://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=166>; last accessed 12 May 2019.

from 75 per cent to 99 per cent. This is indeed linked to economic and social changes in both countries.

### 4.3.2 Diversity in urbanisation

While the Arab world is increasingly urban now, as discussed in Chapter 3, rural/Bedouin life, rural/Bedouin ways and memories of rural/Bedouin ways play roles there that they do not play in the west (cf. Miller 2007). This is because, although urbanisation may be well established in old centres such as Damascus and Cairo, it is a relatively new phenomenon – around sixty years old – in other urban centres such as Muscat, Tripoli or Nouakchott.

### 4.3.3 Economic diversity

There is likewise the issue of disparity in wealth across the countries. Nearly half of Egyptians live on less than US\$2 a day, while the per capita average annual income in 2017 was US\$2,412. The per capita income in Yemen in the same period was US\$1,107, while it was over US\$29,040 in Kuwait and the Emirates and over US\$63,000 in Qatar.<sup>1</sup> These economic disparities have great consequences for language use and certainly for issues related to language and gender and how communities function in a wider sense. Note also that in a country such as Egypt, at the beginning of the new millennium 18 per cent of households were headed by women and not men (El-Kholy 2002: 34), which may not be the case in some Gulf countries, for example.



#### 4.3.4 Diversity in traditions and religious practices

Tradition is perhaps one of the fixed independent variables that play a major role in Arab countries. A number of customs or ways of life that one may associate with religion are in fact associated with tradition. Magic and witchcraft, alluded to in this chapter, are both practices that can go hand in hand with religion, although they may be prohibited by it. Some communities may not perceive any contradiction in practising magic and worshipping God (Kapchan 1996).

One of the much discussed religious practices is wearing the hijab, or veil, which usually constitutes covering one's hair and showing only hands, feet and face. For some communities the veil is a tradition, for others it is a religious symbol and for many it is both.

##### 4.3.4.1 *The veil*

An outsider and an insider to a great extent may fail to distinguish between a traditional dress and a religious one. The connotations associated with veiling are lost for an outsider. Although women may wear the veil as a result of religious conviction, peer pressure or modesty code (discussed below), veiling as an extra-linguistic communicative device has deeper meanings and connotations. It may reflect social class, security, status, defiance, tradition, confidence and age, to name but a few.

Wearing the veil may also be read as displeasure with the politics of the governments of the west as well as those of Arab governments such as that of Egypt or Tunisia which emphasise its secular image. In both Egypt and Tunisia there are jobs in which women are prohibited from wearing the veil. For example, in Egypt, women working as presenters on television are prohibited from wearing the veil and if they do then they have to accept work behind the screen, as editors or scriptwriters, for example, instead of as presenters. Tunisia takes this even further, by prohibiting women working in government offices from wearing the veil during work hours. Thus, in countries like Tunisia women have to take off the veil at work and once outdoors they put it back on. In some Gulf countries women put the veil when they go out and once indoors they take it off. Veiling is associated with the concept of the public sphere and the private sphere, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

According to Abu-Lughod, 'a woman's veil can be manipulated to indicate degree of social comfort' (1987: 127). Note also that wearing the veil is not necessarily a sign of subordination, but may even be a sign of arrogance. In the 1930s and 1940s in Egypt, before the 1952 revolution,<sup>2</sup> there was a strict system of aristocracy and feudality. Aristocratic women had to cover their faces or hair when they went to investigate their lands in the countryside,

even if they did not usually do so, so that the peasants did not know what they looked like. Peasants were forbidden to look up and warned to avoid eye contact with an aristocratic woman. They might even be whipped if they looked up when these women were passing by. For these women, wearing the veil served as a social barrier that separated them from peasants, similar in our times to building high walls to mansions in Egypt or forbidding members of the lower class from entering certain quarters of the house. Thus, the veil is not necessarily a sign of piety or modesty, but was once, for a certain class, used to signal social hierarchies. For a detailed discussion of the significance of the veil see Heath (2008).

There are two concepts that help in our understanding of linguistic practices, especially those associated with women. Both concepts have been discussed exhaustively in anthropological studies and both may govern the underlying linguistic performance of most communities, if not all, in the Arab world. These concepts are honour and modesty.

#### 4.3.5 Honour and modesty

Abu-Lughod (1987), in her anthropological study of Bedouins in Egypt, which will be discussed in detail below, posits that there are two values that represent the core of the moral system of Bedouins. These two values are honour (*ʿaraf*) and modesty (*hifma*). I think understanding both values helps analysts understand the linguistic choices available to women and the sociolinguistic position of women in the Arab world in general.

Friedrich defines honour as ‘a system of symbols, values, and definitions in terms of which phenomena are conceptualised and interpreted’ (1977: 284, cited in Abu-Lughod 1987: 86). The key factor that is essential in defining honour is, in fact, self-control. One has to control pain, needs, desires, passions and capricious behaviour. By doing so, one can achieve honour. Thus, honour has to be achieved and/or preserved in a specific community. Abu-Lughod also mentions that freedom from domination, independence, pride and strength to stand alone are all values associated with honour. Honour is also related to respect, and respect is associated with self-image. For example, ‘failure to reciprocate gifts, miserliness, can lead to loss of respect’ (1987: 92). Abu-Lughod (1987: 105) also differentiates between obeying elders and showing respect to them, and being forced to obey superiors, which may entail loss of respect. Superiors are also expected to respect the dignity of others by avoiding aggression and confrontation. ‘When a superior publicly orders, insults, or beats a dependent, he invites the rebellion that would undermine his position’ (1987: 99). Note also that honour is age specific.<sup>3</sup> All members of a community are responsible for the perseverance and achievement of each other’s honour.

Modesty, according to Abu-Lughod (1987: 73), is connected to veiling to

a great extent although, as I have exemplified, veiling can also be used as a status marker. 'Veiling constitutes the most visible act of modest deference . . . veiling is both voluntary and situational' (Abu-Lughod 1987: 159). Note that modesty is displayed by women in more than one way. Yet it is mainly displayed by ignoring or disregarding anything that calls attention to their sexuality.

Women's modesty is connected to men's honour. However, although Abu-Lughod claims that honour is associated with men and modesty with women, she gives a significant example in which men also care for the modesty code. In the Bedouin tribe that Abu-Lughod studied, men as well as women cover their heads. Men cover their heads as a sign of modesty. Men who do not cover their heads are considered 'brazen and lacking in religion' (1987: 137).

Both concepts of honour and modesty can help explain numerous sociolinguistic cases in which Arab women behave differently from western ones and in which Arab men also behave differently from western ones.

#### 4.4 POLITENESS IN RELATION TO GENDER

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In this section I argue against the assumption that women in general are more polite than men and are concerned with solidarity (defined below) while men are concerned with power (cf. Kiesling 2003: 514). I also argue that power is, in fact, context-dependent as will be made clear below.

There are two concepts that recur when discussing politeness: power and solidarity. After defining each of them, I will go on to define politeness and face. According to Brown and Gilman,

one person may be said to have power over another in the degree that he is able to control the behaviour of the other. Power is a relationship between at least two persons, and it is nonreciprocal in the sense that both cannot have power in the same area of behaviour. (2003 [1987]: 158)

Power, therefore, refers to a hierarchy rank between individuals. Solidarity, on the other hand, refers to the social distance or lack of distance between individuals. According to Brown and Gilman, solidarity is usually the result of frequent contact between individuals as well as by marked similarities between individuals. As Brown and Gilman put it (2003 [1987]: 160), 'power superiors may be solidary (parents, elder siblings) or not solidary (officials whom one seldom sees)'.

Politeness is related to power and solidarity. First, politeness reflects a behaviour which 'expresses positive concern for others'. Brown and Gilman

distinguish between two kinds of politeness: negative politeness and positive politeness. The first associated with power and the second with solidarity. Negative politeness aims to preserve the addressee's freedom of action and space (Kiesling 2003: 514). It is a means of underlining the hierarchy and distance between the speaker and addressee. Positive politeness, on the other hand, is associated with solidarity. It highlights the similarities between speakers (Kiesling 2003: 514).

Politeness is usually a means of preserving the face of others and is also context-dependent (Holmes 1995: 21). Face is the public self-image that everyone wants to claim for themselves (cf. Brown and Levinson 1987). Negative politeness and positive politeness aim at preserving the face of self and others or at least making sure it is not threatened. The following two examples (Holmes 1995: 21) will show how context-sensitive politeness is:

(5) Judge to witness in law court:

The witness will please repeat his response to the last question for the benefit of the Jury.

In this formal context the judge preserves the face of the witness by referring to him in the third person and using politeness devices such as 'please'. Now note the following example:

(6) Husband to wife at home:

Mm? what was that, love?

The address form 'love' is again a politeness strategy but used in an informal rather than a formal context. In fact, it would be inappropriate and face-threatening to use it in a formal context. Also, the direct question reflects the intimacy of the relation and the casual context. The same direct question, if asked in a courtroom, would be face-threatening.

The question is whether there is a direct relation between politeness and the social status of women. Many studies would argue that this is definitely the case because of the lack of power of women; the less power one has in any given interactional context, the more likely one is to be concerned with expressing or displaying politeness, especially negative politeness, explicitly. Deuchar (1989) applied Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness and face to the use of prestigious forms, and posited that powerless people usually monitor face more carefully than powerful ones. They do so by using more prestigious forms that encode status. One usually speaks respectfully to superiors no matter how well one knows them (Holmes 1995).

It is suggested that men in most cultures have more access to power and status than women. They can use more power-related techniques with impunity because their face is already protected. Women, on the other hand, cannot

use more assertive techniques when speaking since this may be considered face-threatening. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that studies have found that women use back-channel responses, simultaneous talk to show interest and support, and facilitative tag questions (Holmes 1995).

However, there are some studies that did not find any differences in the way both sexes use language, or in the degree of politeness they encode (Salami 1991). In fact, Keenan (1974) conducted a study in Madagascar in which it was found that women there are less polite than men. Keenan (1974: 142) also postulates that direct speech in Malagasy is associated with loss of tradition. Men prefer indirectness as an expression of respect. Thus, men's requests are typically delayed and inexplicit. Their criticism is more subtle. Women can be direct and straightforward. They in fact perform tasks such as interacting with strangers more than men do – tasks which, for example, involve buying and selling.

Studies like the last one pose problems. First, does the fact that women seem less polite automatically mean they have more power than women in other communities in which women are more polite than men? The problem with terms such as 'power' and 'politeness' is that they can be very general. Thus, while women in all communities are not completely powerless, there are some communities in which women and men divide their share of power in different contexts. So a husband is powerful with his wife, but a mother has more power over the children than the father does, or a husband has power at work, and a wife controls the household, deciding what to cook etc. Although to us this power given by a husband to his wife may seem little and demeaning, the hidden power of women in communities in which men are supposed to be all-powerful cannot be ignored.

In a groundbreaking study that examines the way Moroccan men and women bargain, Kharraki (2001) discusses the concept of politeness and face in relation to both sexes. Brown and Gilman's model of politeness was used. The study analyses more than sixty bargaining exchanges. The conclusion reached is that it is in fact men rather than women who in Moroccan society use more linguistic solidarity devices, that is, it is men who use more positive politeness techniques than women in bargaining. In fact, women's use of insisting strategies is perceived as 'a daring act of assertiveness' (2001: 623). Men, on the other hand, feel that such strategies could be face-threatening and reduce their social power. Men in this specific community derive their social status not by maintaining hierarchies between them and others, but by emphasising similarities. Women, on the other hand, emphasise their status by appealing to the hierarchical rank. Note the following example of a woman who wants to buy some onions (2001: 623):

- (7) Context: a woman wants to buy onions  
Setting: a shop

Woman: *baf-ḥal l-besla ʔa ḥassan?*  
How state the-onion voc Hassan

Greengrocer: *60 doro*  
60 doro

Woman: *ʔiwa ma-tebqa-f tedʒri mor l-meftariyya rexxes fwiyya/*  
Yes neg-be-neg run from the-buyers reduce- a little  
*letnin tkun xir rebʕin doro*

Monday to be only forty doro

Greengrocer: *ma-fi-ha-f ʔa ḥadʒʒa*  
neg-in-her-neg voc ḥajja

Woman: How much are these onions, Hassan?

Greengrocer: Sixty doros

Woman: Oh! Don't send your customers away! Reduce the price a little! On Monday, they cost only forty doros.

Greengrocer: There is not much profit in it, ḥajja!

In this example, the woman does not use a greeting or any form indicating solidarity. She does not use any forms indicating endearment, such as *ḥabibi* 'my love', *ʕazizi* 'dear' etc., as is often done in such interactions. These forms of endearment are also forms of solidarity. Rather, the interaction opens with a woman's straightforward question:

(8) Woman: *baf-ḥal l-besla ʔa ḥassan?*  
How state the-onion voc Hassan

Woman: How much are these onions, Hassan?

Then she makes a demand with the hope of getting a good price. There are no 'polite' terms, such as please etc. In some cultures, such behaviour would be considered abrupt and rude.

Sellam (1990: 90) posits that, in general, the way Moroccans make requests is different from the way the speakers of English do, for example. The woman in this example is not particularly rude. In fact, this exchange does not result in any damage to the face of the greengrocer or the speaker. His reaction to her does not carry any insult. Insisting is another strategy of bargaining with vendors used by women. Other strategies also include repetitions, oaths or threatening to buy from another seller (Kharraki 2001).

Now note the following example of a man who wants to buy some water-melons from the same greengrocer (2001: 622):

(9) Context: a man wants to buy watermelon from a greengrocer, who is a close neighbour  
Setting: shop

Man: *assalamu ʕalikum/ delliʕ hada ʕal Hassan/*  
I greet on-you/watermelon this good Hassan

Man: Peace be upon you. What wonderful watermelon you have there Hassan!

At first sight, this difference between the way men and women bargain in this specific Moroccan community may seem bewildering. From the examples given by Kharraki (2001), women are much more assertive than men when bargaining and much more persistent. This may be, as Kharraki puts it, to demonstrate their skills as housewives. It may also have larger implications for the power spheres of both sexes in this community. As was said earlier, power is context-sensitive. However, the interaction between the women and the street vendors in Morocco is not just a manifestation of politeness and power relations. It is in fact a manifestation of the intricate relation between politeness as a communicative device and independent variables discussed in Chapter 3, such as social class, tribal affiliations, ethnicity, age and so on. Social class and status are at work in the above examples. From my observations, upper-middle-class women in Egypt, when bargaining or arguing with men from a lower class who are serving them, such as a porter, caretaker, street vendor etc., can seem very rude to an outsider, using insults and a higher pitch and omitting greetings altogether. Men from the same class deal with the situation differently, being calmer, using greeting terms and rarely using verbal insults. This is worth studying and may yield surprising insights into the power relation between men and women.

Although independent variables like social class could explain why women in the Moroccan context were not concerned with the face of the greengrocer, independent variables are not enough to explain why men from the same social class act differently. An examination of the way men and women are expected to behave in an interaction is needed, as are studies into the implications of different face-saving strategies employed by both before one can reach definite conclusions. There are other communities that are similar in this respect, such as the one mentioned above by Keenan (1974) in Madagascar.

To sum up, since power is context dependent and since it is almost impossible to make generalisations about politeness, then one has to concentrate on defining the different contexts which may have been taken for granted so far and which may render a clearer argument about women, men and politeness strategies.

Related to politeness, as was said earlier, are terms of address. In section 4.5 I shed light on both names and terms of address and their relation to status, gender and identity.

#### 4.5 'MISTER MASTER': NAMES, STATUS AND IDENTITY

How we label ourselves and others is significant because it can 'offer a window on the construction of gendered identities and social relations in social practice' (McConnell-Ginet 2003: 69). In this section I examine terms of address and names in relation to specific communities, and I also correlate methods of referring to both men and women to the underlying structures of a number of Arab societies, bearing in mind that there may be a coherent concept of social order in all Arab communities that dictates a specific way of using terms of address and names. As McConnell-Ginet (2003: 72) puts it, referring to others is basic not just in conveying information, but also in maintaining the social structure of a community.

Ever since Mahfouz published his classic 'Cairo Trilogy' in the 1960s (2001), women have been angry in Egypt and elsewhere in the Arab world at the way the wife in the novels, especially the first of the trilogy, *Bayn al-Qaṣrayn* 'Palace Walk', is treated. Though we are not interested here in the way the husband hypocritically managed his life and how he betrayed his wife with impunity throughout the novel, I am very interested in the choice of terms of address between the husband and wife. The wife, Amīnah, is careful throughout the novel to address her husband as *si*: 'mister' and never to look him in the face or argue with him. He, on the other hand, always addresses her as Amīnah and is much more confrontational and tyrannical. It is no coincidence that his first name is Sayyid, meaning 'master'. Thus throughout the novel, his wife refers to him as 'mister master'.<sup>4</sup>

The relationship between them can be neatly explicated in terms of Brown and Levinson's theory of power and politeness (1987). Amīnah, the wife, has little if any power, has to maintain her face as much as possible and has to preserve the face of others. The husband, Sayyid, has much more power; he does not have to pay attention to face within their relationship, and he can flout all the rules without threatening his face. His face is already protected because he is a man. It is the wife who has to try to use more polite forms to protect her face.<sup>5</sup>

In the case of Amīnah there is a clear case of power differences. Whether names and terms of address are always a reflection of power relations between men and women is a crucial issue. I will discuss this in the next paragraphs. Again, as with everything pertaining to gender, the answers are not always clear; the case of Amīnah and Sayyid, which was very clear cut, will not be repeated often in real-life data without complications or other implications. In addition, cases in which terms of address involve two men or two women may not necessarily reflect power. One should not just take interactions between pairs of adults – one female, the other male – as the quintessential or



perhaps the only context to try to analyse or understand gender (Holmes and Meyerhoff 2003b).

Parkinson (1985), in a study of terms of address in Egypt, did not find significant differences in the way men and women used these terms. Terms of address were more sensitive to other factors including class, age and occupation. Although this study is now more than twenty years old, it can help us assess the linguistic situation in Egypt more scrupulously. Parkinson noted that:

Knowledge of the proper use of terms of address is, therefore, as important to the overall success of a communication as knowledge of the conjugation of verbs would be. The terms give the entire communication its social setting and tell addressee how the rest of the communication is to be taken or understood . . . the terms of address maybe peripheral to the syntax of ECA, but they are central to the process of communicating in ECA. (1985: 225)

He gives the following example to show the importance of terms of address in communication in Egypt and perhaps in the whole Arab world: a group of men who were entering a shop in Cairo saw an artist in shabby and paint-stained clothes. They started addressing him as *ya rayyis* 'hey boss'. The man was angry and ignored them. Once they entered the shop they realised the man was not a painter but an artist. They were very embarrassed and said:

- (10) *la: muḍaxza ya baḡmuhandis, ma-kunna:-f ḡarfi:n*  
 'Please don't take offence, engineer, sir, we didn't know.' (1985: 224).

Terms such as 'engineer', 'doctor' or 'Pasha' (an old Turkish title; in the time of the monarchy in Egypt it was given by the king to aristocrats) are used loosely in Egypt. A male police officer could be addressed as a Pasha, a male or female nurse or student of medicine could be addressed as doctor, a male or female graduate assistant is also addressed as doctor (which also means professor) and a male mechanic could be addressed as an engineer. Terms such as *ḡamm* 'uncle' are used by both children and adults with older male workers such as drivers and porters. Problems can arise from addressing someone by a term that denotes a lower status, as in the example above. Note also that painters in Egypt are usually men. It would not have been possible to make this mistake had the paint-stained person been a woman, because a woman would have been expected to be an artist or an engineer. In the same way, a police officer is always a Pasha (even though titles were abolished after the 1952 revolution in Egypt), but a woman is not usually called a Pasha because there are few female police officers in Egypt.

Parkinson likewise studies terms such as *ḡagg* and *ḡagga* which refer to

someone who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca. These terms, according to Parkinson, are used to address men and women equally. Although they are terms of respect, they can replace ‘mother’ and ‘father’ when parents get older. They can also appear alone or with the first name. Note the following example (1985: 152): a working-class man aged 55 asks a working-class young man aged 17 about the destination of a bus in Cairo. Here is the answer the 17 year old gave:

- (11) *la: ya ḥaggi mif bi-yru:h it-taḥri:r*  
 ‘No pilgrim it doesn’t go to Taḥri:r square.’

The next example (1985: 152) is that of a 55-year-old working-class wife and her 60-year-old husband: the husband is standing in the street, and the wife sees a bus coming towards him, so she yells:

- (12) *taḥa:la hina ya ḥagg*  
 ‘Come over here, pilgrim.’

It is not clear whether these people addressed as pilgrim have actually made the pilgrimage or not. The term ‘pilgrim’ is used to strangers and/or intimates to show respect.

Now note the last example (1985: 153): two older, upper-class female neighbours meet by chance at the door of the building:

- (13) *ḥizzayyik ya ḥagga layla*  
 ‘How are you, pilgrim Layla?’

The neighbour uses the first name of her neighbour Layla because she has known her for a while. She could also have used *ḥagga* without the first name.

Again, all the above examples show that both terms, *ḥagg* and *ḥagga*, are used by both sexes. There is no evidence that women feel insecure and thus use terms of address more (as Trudgill suggested in 1972). In the following example the term *ha:nim*, which is a Turkish term that means ‘gentlewoman’ or ‘lady’, is used by a pickle salesman in the market to an upper-class woman to denote respect and formality.

- (14) *ḥayma ya sitt ha:nim ḥayza bika:m?*  
 ‘Yes madam, how much worth (of pickles) do you want?’ (1985: 167)

In this example it is clear that the status of both speaker and addressee in Egypt is indeed much more significant than their sex.

Some of what has to be accounted for is cases where men and women behave similarly, which is something the variationists discussed later in this

chapter seemed to overlook. Abu-Lughod (1987: 154), in her study of Bedouin women of the western desert of Egypt, claims that Bedouin women must try to be modest. This implies hiding their sexual or romantic attachments. This is reflected in the way women address their husbands; they do not use their husbands' first names but refer to them as 'that one', *hada:k*, or if they are affectionate, 'the old man', *fa:yib*, or 'the master of my house', *ṣaḥib be:ti*. They do this when others are around or when they are in formal situations. It seems as if this situation is not very different from the one described by Mahfouz, which was supposed to have taken place in Egypt at the beginning of the twentieth century and not in the 1980s. However, as noted earlier, the situation is not as simple as it seems. One can claim that women in these societies have less power than men and have to maintain their face by using terms of address and thus being more polite. The only problem is that men in a lot of Arab societies, including Bedouin ones, do not refer to their wives by name in formal gatherings either, as Abu Lughod also noted in her study.<sup>6</sup>

Hachimi (2001: 43) reports that husbands in Morocco would refer to their wives as *mallin ddar* 'owners of the house' or *drari* which literally means 'children', and which refers, in that context, to both 'children' and 'wives'. It is only non-traditional married women who are referred to by their names. Mothers are addressed and referred to using terms such as *ḥadḡḡa* (*ḥagga* in Egypt) – again, a term of respect for someone who has made the pilgrimage – *lalla* 'mistress' and *frifa* 'lady with noble blood'. Hachimi also notes that while in other Arab communities, mothers are addressed as 'mother + name of her eldest son', for example *ʔumm ʔaḥmad* 'mother of Ahmed' (cf. Minai 1981), this is not the case in Morocco. When addressed by strangers, a woman in Morocco could be called *madame* followed by her husband's name, 'Mrs + husband's name', although legally women in the Arab world do not take their husband's family name but keep that of their birth family, which is usually their father's family name. Educated Moroccan men at embassy receptions, for example, introduce their wives as *madame* 'madam', very rarely as *mrati* 'my wife' or by her first or family name (Sadiqi 2003a: 134). Again this is related to the honour and modesty code.

The way a woman refers to herself is context dependent (Sadiqi 2003a: 135). In Egypt a woman could use 'madam' + her husband's first and last name when ordering food over the phone, for example, or when in contact with people she does not know, whether men or women. A woman uses her first and last name at her workplace and when buying or selling her properties. This does not only pertain to the honour and modesty code discussed above, but also to the power the name has, as will be discussed below.

Terms of address can be used to mark the distance between females and males who could be potential sexual partners (Sadiqi 2003a: 79). In communities in which honour and modesty are two essential factors that, combined, define an individual's worthiness, as explained earlier, the way individuals

are addressed is loaded with meaning. In Egypt when two close male friends converse and ask about each other's wives, they do not use the wife's first name, since this may imply a violation of the honour and modesty code by the male friend. A man could ask his friend 'how is madam so and so (first name)?' or 'how is the *hagga*? (no first name) (*al-hagga*)?' etc. Interestingly, when two female friends converse they can use each other's husband's name. This shows again that the modesty code is not exclusive to women, but manifests itself differently in the interaction between men and women. However, these observations need to be studied systematically.

From a different perspective, sadness at the loss of women's names, whether the women are dead or alive, and perhaps the implications for loss of identity with the loss of name, are discussed in an unprecedented study by Eid (2002a), which takes as a source obituaries in three communities: Egyptian, Persian and American. She obtained her data from three major newspapers, *Al-Ahram* (Egyptian), *Ettela'at* (Iranian) and the *New York Times* (American). Her data was collected for one-month periods at ten-year intervals from 1938 to 1998. Eid (2002a) uses statistics that parse different kinds of information, such as the use of the names of the deceased (whether men or women), the use of professional titles (for the deceased and their relatives) and the use of relatives' names for both men and women (whether the relatives are male or female). She measures the impact of gender, culture and time independently and combined on obituaries. Of the dead women she studied, she writes:

I remember their names, except those women who lost theirs in the world of obituaries . . . I will always remember the joy I felt every time I found more Egyptian women with their names, American women with their professions, and Iranian women mentioned at all. (2002a: 281)

Her study implies that women in Egypt are identified in obituaries not by name but by their relation to the different males and perhaps even females in their lives. Thus a woman who dies is known as the mother of so and so, the wife of so and so etc. This practice also means that by herself, she may not be identified at all. Whether or not obituaries reflect society may not be clear, but the fact that they are written by members of society is already evidence that they at least reflect our ideal belief about what society should be like. In that 'society' a woman is not 'someone', but the mother, daughter, wife, sister of someone.

In obituaries, Egyptian women were the only group who in 1998 still appeared without a name 10 per cent of the time, while 100 per cent of Iranian women's names are present in 1998 obituaries. When it comes to occupation and professional titles, the space belonged to Egyptian men, who occupied 94 per cent of occupation space (space devoted to discussion of professional life)

and 97 per cent of professional title space, while social space remained the domain of women in Egyptian obituaries 63 per cent in 1998. In American obituaries, women and men were represented equally, although there was still a difference in professional space even in the 1990s. Only 36 per cent of American women had their occupations mentioned and only 8 per cent of American women had their professional titles mentioned. In obituaries, at least, women were thus lagging behind with regard to professional titles in all three countries.

In comparing the treatment of Egyptian and American woman in obituaries in 1998, Eid observes that what an Egyptian woman loses after she dies is her first name. What an American woman also loses, alive and dead, is her last name if she is married. A dead American woman may have her maiden name given in parenthesis, if at all. A dead Egyptian woman's first name may or may not be mentioned, but even if it is, her daughter's name may not be. She may only be defined as the wife of such and such, and in most cases her mother's name will not be mentioned. Eid gives examples of inconsistencies sometimes depending on different individuals, but the overall picture seems to be consistent. Women's first names in Egypt are preferably not mentioned in obituaries, while women's maiden names in America are again preferably not mentioned, and if they are mentioned then they are not in bold face but in parenthesis.

Again, if names are part of one's identity then women seem to give up a lot of their identity in most cultures, although one has to note that given their cost, obituaries will appear for only some of the deceased, whether males or females. However, the symbolic nature of names means that they do not stop at being markers of one's identity, but may play an even more subtle role.

#### 4.5.1 Names and why they are hidden

In Egyptian culture names hold power, especially the first name of a mother. The power I am referring to here is not just linguistic in nature but in fact magical. Although religion in the Arab world is taken seriously by members of all religious communities, Egyptians – whether Christians or Muslims – still tend to believe in magic and supernatural forces. For example, in rural areas specifically, women may resort to magic, usually done by an older person who is reputed to be in touch with jinn (spirits) to solve marriage problems, to cause harm to enemies, to make a man impotent, to bear children, to make a married couple get divorced and so on. Magic can be used to inflict harm or solve problems. However, in order to use magic on someone, especially in a harmful way, this person's mother's first name is needed. A mother's name is more like an Achilles heel, a vulnerability, and over time it has also become something shameful and yet sacred.

To elaborate on this point, a mother's name, especially if the mother is dead, is not mentioned except within the immediate family and definitely not

to people who are not to be trusted. A father's name does not hold the same power. For example, when praying for her children, a mother would use the child's first name followed by 'son of (mother's name)', for example 'Ashraf son of Fāṭima'. Thus, it is quite common for elderly women when asked about their mother's name to give a false one consistently, especially to young children who might reveal the secret to other adults, who might then use the name to cast a spell on the elderly woman or on her offspring. Thus, refusing to use a woman's first name, whether she is alive or dead, is culture-specific and may have to do with the power the name has rather than the power women lack. So, wedding invitations usually include the name of the bride and her father but not her mother's name, and the name of the groom and his father but not his mother's name.

Sadiqi (2003a), in her sociolinguistic study of Moroccan women, discusses fortune telling, witchcraft and black magic. Although she does not go into details of how names are used in the three practices in Morocco, she emphasises the importance of the three practices in the Moroccan community. She posits that 'the three practices are very real in Moroccan culture as they are believed to offer "solutions" and "remedies" to weak, problem stricken literate and illiterate men and women that are victims of social stress that they cannot handle' (2003: 73).

The importance of witchcraft and magic is not exclusive to Egypt and Morocco but is found in the Arab world at large.<sup>7</sup> The implications of this for women and how they are addressed are indeed crucial for a more thorough understanding of the interaction between gender and language in Arab communities. One needs a study that evaluates all the implications of women's names. However, there is no study that does this to date.

In this section I have only briefly touched the tip of the iceberg. There is a lot to be studied in the way women are addressed and how they address others, as well as in the way they retain or give up their names, or have them taken from them. The answers, as always, are not clear, but that should only make the journey of discovery worth taking. What is obvious, though, is that despite the great differences and disparities of many sorts we find between Arab communities, there are sound reasons for claiming that these communities do in fact have a culture in common at some profound level and this culture is manifested in the two interlinked values: modesty and honour. Although each takes different shapes in different communities across the Arab world, they are at the core similar and essential for a successful communicative process.

In section 4.6 I show how women as narrators survive in parallel to men and use similar themes and forms in their narration.

#### 4.6 WHEN A CHICKEN CROWS LIKE A COCK: WOMEN NARRATORS

Al-Farazdaq, the famous medieval Arab poet (641–742), once said of a woman who recites poetry:

- (15) *ʔiða: ʃa:ħat id- dadʒa:dʒatu ʃiya:ħa d-di:ki*  
*fa-ðbaħu:ħa:*  
 ‘If a chicken crows like a cock,  
 slaughter her.’  
 (Ghidhdhāmī 2000: 154).

Though there are fewer female Arab poets than their male counterparts, there are still some remarkable female poets who have decided to ‘crow like a cock’, beginning with the pre-Islamic female poet al-Khansā’ (Tumādir bint ‘Amr, d. 634 or 661) and still in evidence today. What is interesting about the poetry of al-Khansā’ is that in theme it is not that different from the poetry of men. Although al-Khansā’ does not describe any weaponry in detail, as male poets often do,<sup>8</sup> she does use the same forms and grammatical constructions and almost the same themes as her male peers. These similarities are interesting, since, as detailed below, studies done on women’s poetry from a linguistic point of view, as well as studies of women who recite poetry rather than compose it, have not come up with much evidence that there are any major differences between the themes or the forms of poems created by men and women. Some marginal differences have been detected, but none pertaining to women specifically. Whether the case is different in other cultures is worth investigating. In this section I will summarise some of the major studies done across the Arab world, on women’s poetry and women’s prose from a linguistic perspective. Note that the three studies, which I will examine in more detail below, depend on folk genres of poetry rather than high-culture poetry which is in MSA and is perhaps less spontaneous or less representative of the ordinary people. I will then shed light on a study conducted by Eid (2002b) that examined women’s prose.

First, Stillman and Stillman (1978) used various genres of songs in order to study the language of women in relation to society. They concentrated on women’s songs in Morocco. Songs sung when women gathered together during work or play were analysed, as were those sung on semi-religious occasions such as weddings, circumcisions and funerals. These songs were called *ʃarabi* by members of this community. The researchers also examined songs dealing with topics of interest to women rather than men.

Stillman and Stillman (1978) studied the Jewish community of Sefrou, a provincial town in Morocco that lies 18 km south of Fez. In the 1940s the community comprised 6,000 Jews – one-third of the total population of

Sefrou. In 1972, when the fieldwork began, there were only 200 Jews left, the others having emigrated mainly to Israel. They retained their own distinctive dialect, the Sefriwi dialect of Jews.<sup>9</sup> The female poet whose poems Stillman and Stillman analysed, Simḥa poni, was an illiterate married woman in her fifties. Like most Arabic folk poetry, her verses were sung, not recited. She composed while singing using specific formulaic expressions. Stillman and Stillman also examined singing duels, which were similar to a war of words between women. One woman composed her verse from a cue in the last line of her opponent's verse, and then the duel continued. This competition could get personal, as when one referred to the other's husband and so on. Simḥa specialised in *mamma:l*, a type of poem or song that originated in Iraq and is sung throughout the Middle East.

The themes that occurred were usually melancholic ones, such as separation, loneliness, unrequited love and exile. These themes do not differ depending on gender, according to the researchers, but rather seem like traditional Andalusian themes.<sup>10</sup> Another motif found in these Moroccan songs is that of the Andalusian garden. Note the following example:

- (16) *tmenni:t gelsa maṣa: ḡza:li: fil-ṣarṣa*  
*l-ṣarṣa xa:liya ma: fiha-r-rbba*  
 'I wish I could sit with my gazelle in a garden,  
 a deserted garden whose owner is not there.' (1978: 73).

Stillman and Stillman compared themes and structures used by women to those used by men and concluded that both men and women refer to gardens, baths, high ceilings and windows in their poetry. Not only is there no clear difference between the poetry of men and women, but there are also almost no differences between the poetry of Jews and non-Jews, that is, Muslims. Stillman and Stillman posit that, 'There is nothing in the content of the "ṣarabi" as sung by our poetess which could be identified as particularly Jewish, with the exception of the occasional mention of personal names, such as David' (1978: 74).<sup>11</sup>

Abu-Lughod (1987), whose work was referred to earlier, has studied the social function of the Bedouin poetry of men and women in Egypt. She concentrated on the sociolinguistic and pragmatic significance of poetic discourse in a Bedouin tribe in the western desert in Egypt called Awlād 'Alī. She studied how poetry and songs were used by men and women to express different attitudes and feelings ranging from love to anger and defiance, and how poetry also defines and redefines the degree of intimacy between individuals.

Her study is crucial in a number of ways. First, although she did not mention it by name, she indirectly and very early on used the social networks approach for collecting her data. She used her Muslim background as an



asset in her research, as well as her father's background in Egypt. She was both an insider and an outsider. She was an insider because she shared with the Bedouins their Muslim identity<sup>12</sup> and stayed with them long enough to be able to participate in their daily rituals without them feeling uncomfortable, and an outsider because she was not from that community herself, and therefore was allowed to ask questions and behave differently. She claimed to have taken the role of 'an adoptive daughter' (1987: 15). Note that she started her fieldwork mainly as an anthropologist but ended up with a study on the discourse significance of poetry in that community. We can read her work as ethnography of communication. Still, the methods she used to integrate in that community were not different from those used by others, such as Haeri (1996a).<sup>13</sup> In fact, at the onset of Abu-Lughod's study, her father accompanied her. She said that as an Arab, he realised that being a young unmarried woman travelling by herself on an ambiguous mission was not going to help her in her research (1987: 11). He knew his culture well and was aware that she would not be able to gain the trust of the community if she arrived on her own, and thus would have a hard time convincing them to open up and feel at ease with her. In her behaviour, she appealed to the half-Arab identity she had, and behaved with respect towards the culture of the community.

It was clear to Abu-Lughod from the beginning that as a woman she would not have many liberties, but she would be able to enjoy an intimacy with other women that would eventually open new doors for her. Similarly, early on she became aware of the great importance of poetry in the community under investigation, an importance that surpassed all her expectations. While staying in the house of one of the seniors of the tribe, a shepherd's wife helping in the household recited a poem about despair in love. Abu-Lughod, in all innocence, read it to the *hajj* (the senior person she was staying with), who was usually a calm, helpful man. Suddenly his attitude changed and he became angry and asked her who had recited the poem to her. He was afraid that it had been his wife, and that the poem had been a reflection of her feelings towards him. The *hajj*'s senior wife<sup>14</sup> scolded Abu-Lughod for having revealed something as sensitive as a woman's poem to a man (1987: 11). Abu-Lughod then realised that poetry in this community was used 'as a vehicle for personal expression and confidential communication' (1987: 26).

Abu-Lughod focused specifically on poems called *ginna:was*, which are little songs similar to lyrical poems. They also have a similarity to the American blues in content and emotional tone. They are mostly about romantic love. They describe a feeling and are usually 'personal statements about interpersonal situations' (1987: 27). This kind of poetry uses sound elements such as alliteration, intonation and rhythm to a great degree. Words, for example, are usually repeated in reverse order. Note the following example:

- (17) *damʕ za:d ya: mawla:y*  
*xaṭar ʕazi:zi fi wa:n iz-zaʕal*  
 ‘Tears increased, oh lord.  
 The beloved came to mind in the time of sadness.’ (1987: 179).

In the above poem

*fi wa:n*  
 in when  
 ‘in the time’

is repeated nine times.

*ʕazi:zi fi wa:n iz-zaʕal*  
 beloved me in when the-sadness  
 ‘beloved in the time of sadness’

is repeated twice. The order is reversed, as in:

<i>fi wa:n</i>	in the time
<i>fi wa:n</i>	in the time
<i>fi wa:n iz-zaʕal</i>	in the time of sadness
<i>fi wa:n</i>	in the time
<i>ʕazi:zi fi wa:n iz-zaʕal</i>	beloved in the time of sadness
<i>fi wa:n</i>	in the time
<i>fi wa:n</i>	in the time
<i>ʕazi:zi fi wa:n iz-zaʕal</i>	beloved in the time of sadness

Although these poems are rarely sung by men in public any more, but instead are usually sung by women at weddings and similar occasions, both men and women recite poetry about their beloved ones, though in different settings and mainly without anyone of the other sex being present. Much of Bedouin life remains sex-segregated to a great extent, more than life in urban centres such as Cairo or Alexandria. The following poem was recited by a jilted man and reveals feelings of grief and pain caused by loss. When it was recited to women of the community by Abu-Lughod, they were touched by it.

- (18) *ʕazi:z lil-kfa: ma: ha:n*  
*sayya:tha: xaṭa: wa:ʕa:mi:*  
 ‘Her bad deeds were wrongs that hurt  
 Yet I won’t repay them, still dear the beloved.’ (1987: 189)

Similar themes occur in a poem recited by a woman:

- (19) *ḍahabit ge:fun l-awla:f*  
*kanni:ba zini:ni: ydʒi:bhum*  
‘I have lost their tracks, the loved ones  
perhaps my singing will bring them.’ (1987: 242).

Here the power of poetry is called upon by the woman, and indeed poetry is powerful in this community. Abu-Lughod states that both men and women lead two parallel lives: a public one and a private one. There are codes of behaviour that they have to maintain, among them the modesty code and the honour code. Poetry, the domain of private life, can violate all codes as long as it remains private. Men and women of the community express through poetry weaknesses that may violate the honour code and romantic love that may violate the modesty code. Both men and women share poems only with friends and close kin. Poetry is not to be shared with men or women across different generational or status lines. The public and private spheres are distinct and well defined. In the public sphere the modesty code and the honour code have to be maintained.

Abu-Lughod’s study is an eye-opener in many respects. First, it reframes and analyses values such as honour and modesty within the framework of a specific community, and in so doing correlates how both concepts can be used in different parts of the Arab world. Second, she draws attention to the nuanced nature of the relation between men and women, the public sphere and the private sphere, and an individual and a community. Although Abu-Lughod does not state clearly in her study the complex nature of the power relation between men and woman in the Arab world at large, she refers to the spheres that men and women control and modify.

Rosenhouse (2001) studied the narrative structure of stories narrated by Bedouin and sedentary male and female speakers from Israel, specifically that of a type of folk story dealing with fantastic events and characters. The analysis focused on linguistic elements such as clause structure, number of words per clause, use of verb tenses, and demonstratives. The sixteen stories were of the same type and from the same dialect area; eight were narrated by males and eight by females. Rosenhouse concluded that there were inter-gender and inter-group differences, but also similarities. In fact, the differences between Bedouin and sedentary dialect narratives were much less than Rosenhouse expected. There was also a large number of occurrences of the *yifʕal* form<sup>15</sup> used as part of a modal structure in all the data, to give vividness to the story and to express the present tense. One inter-gender difference was that women used demonstratives more than twice as often as did men. However, no other major differences were noticed.

Eid (2002b) examined eight female modern Egyptian writers and the various ways they use both MSA and ECA in their work. The women writers varied in the way they used ECA and MSA. Some used only MSA, even in

dialogue, while others used both, or just ECA. The study does not compare female writers to male writers, but makes it clear that there was no obvious tendency for women to use ECA or MSA. Although there are a number of studies in the Arab world that deal with the themes of women writers, there are few, if any, studies that deal with the language variation of women and men writers in the Arab world. There is a great need for such studies.

In this section I have examined some linguistic studies that concentrate on women as narrators of poetry (poets) or prose (writers). In fact, none of the studies discussed demarcates a clear and crucial difference in the way men and women use language in narration. Perhaps there is none. More studies are needed, however, before one can reach this conclusion. What is worth mentioning is that in poetry the differences between men and women, whether real or imaginary, are blurred. Poetry in different communities in the Arab world creates an ideal environment in which both men and women can express their weaknesses and needs. From al-Khansā' in pre-Islamic poetry to the women in the western desert in Egypt, women have found a means of expressing themselves, an outlet through art. Abu-Lughod (1987: 185) calls poetry 'a discourse of defiance'. Perhaps it is.

In sections 4.4–4.6, I have concentrated on women in relation to politeness; terms of address; names and status; and women as narrators. In the next section I examine linguistic variation between men and women in more detail.

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#### 4.7 LANGUAGE VARIATION AND CHANGE IN RELATION TO GENDER

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I argue that quantitative sociolinguistic research tends to treat gender as a given and then examine variation between males and females; categories such as social class, ethnicity and sex are treated as clear and simple variables that can be used directly to account for variation within a community. This in itself, as was mentioned in Chapter 3, is an oversimplification.

I first (section 4.7.1) give an overview of studies on language variation in relation to gender in general, and then (section 4.7.2) concentrate on studies done on the Arab world. Finally, I question some earlier claims about language variation between men and women in the Arab world.

##### 4.7.1 An overview of studies on language variation in relation to gender

There is a claim in the western world that women use more prestigious language forms than men. Women, especially in the lower middle class, took the initiative in the introduction of new prestigious forms of many of the phonological variables studied in the US, UK and other industrialised socie-

ties, such as Sweden (cf. Romaine 2003). Men initiate change from below (Labov 1990).

This may first be related to economic and social factors. Nichols in 1983 conducted a study in two small villages in South Carolina in which three groups were examined. Nichols was able to link the patterns of linguistic variation to the economic positions of men and women in the community. The poorer/working-class women were interacting with speakers of more standard varieties of English far more than their husbands. Women used more prestigious norms because of the differences in profession and economic exposure of men and women. James and Drakich (1993) argued that the use of prestigious linguistic forms by women is related to the economic opportunities available to them. That is to say, if one sex is exposed more often to the prestigious forms of language because of the jobs they hold or their social and economic circumstances, they will eventually use more prestigious norms.

To the extent that such a claim is valid, it may account for the fact that women's speech in working-class communities in the west has been found to be closer to the standard than men's. Lower-working-class women are in contact with middle-class people more. However, this factor cannot be considered an essential one in language choice, since Holmquist (1985) found that young men in a Spanish village were exposed more to standard Spanish<sup>16</sup> than were young women, because the men worked more outside the community and because they spent time in the military service; yet women in that community still used more prestigious forms. This pattern of behaviour may be related to Milroy's concept of social networks, discussed in Chapter 3. Men in the Spanish village have more dense and multiplex networks than the women, although they may come from the same class. In fact, it is not always men who have the strongest social networks. Cheshire (1982) revealed that older women in a Welsh community were the ones who used more non-standard forms of speech; she accounts for this finding by pointing out that they had the strongest social networks. The theory of market forces and the theory of social networks complement each other, since both depend on interaction between people. Still, although the idea of social networks is valid in explaining the differences between the two sexes, it is not enough in itself to account for all cases of differences.

Even in studies that examined language change in bilingual communities, women seem to be initiating a change towards the more prestigious variety. Gal (1978a) studied a Hungarian village in Austria in which social networks and market forces interact strongly. Gal posited that young men and young women there did not differ in their type of social networks. Nonetheless, women still used the prestigious variety, standard German. Gal (1978a) states that the reason for this is that women feel less loyal to the community than men do. In fact the major independent variable in that case was not sex but

'peasantness' of network, peasantness being defined in local terms: having cows and chickens. Younger women had fewer peasant networks because they had a goal of speaking German without an accent – the goal of the youth but not their elders – which increased the likelihood that young women could marry German-speaking, urban, middle-class men and leave their current peasant lifestyle. Their life would then be materially easier. Their use of standard was a way of showing their attitude towards being peasants. They in fact chose not to be peasants, and this was symbolised by their language choice.<sup>17</sup>

Women in the Western world were assumed to be more status-conscious and less secure in their social positioning (cf. Romaine 2003). According to Trudgill (1972), language is used as a symbolic means of securing social status. He claims that women have a less secure position in society, are subordinate to men and, as a result, use more prestigious forms. This is an overgeneralisation and has been criticised in a great number of studies (cf. Holmes and Meyerhoff 2003a). Romaine gives the example of women in Sweden, which is a country famous for gender equality and in which women still use more prestigious forms than men. Nordberg and Sundgren (1998) conducted a comparison of gender differentiation across two generations, first in 1967 and then again in 1996, in a town called Eskilstuna in central Sweden, about 110 km from Stockholm. They concluded that gender differentiation in most of the variables had not changed. They examined six morphological variables. Women were still using more prestigious forms than men, although, as noted earlier, women's status in Sweden is secure. Thus, correlating the use of prestige with social security is not always viable.

Women are supposed to use language as a means of gaining respect and influence. Gaining respect and influence means asserting one's membership in all the social groups to which one belongs. If, for example, one belongs to a group that uses a prestigious-standard variety, using this variety may be a way of gaining respect in that group. Eckert (1998) examined the speech of two groups of girls in a Detroit high school. She found that the working-class group spoke a less prestigious variety than the middle-class group. This was because the latter group did not need to rebel against society. They considered society a means of asserting their identity. In fact, women can use language as a way of gaining respect, if they cannot do so in a more direct way. Salami (1991) found that Nigerian women do not use a more prestigious language than men because they do not need to gain respect. They already enjoy a high level of participation in society.

The most important interpretation of studies done on the west, and the one that concerns us directly, is that lower-middle-class women tend to use more prestige forms to compensate for their socially insecure position (cf. Labov 1982; Trudgill 1972; Paulston and Tucker 2003). However, Labov (1982: 201) claims that this is not the case in the Near East and South Asia and that

in these areas women are not necessarily more conservative than men. Labov may not have taken account of the difference between a prestige variety and a standard one (see Chapter 1). Many linguistic studies in the Arab world have shown that for most people, at least in urban areas, there is a prestige vernacular, the nature of which depends on many geographical, political and social factors within each country. In Egypt, for example, for non-Cairenes it is Cairene. It is usually the urban dialect of the big cities. There is also a standard variety, MSA. This linguistic situation does not exist in western societies, with the consequence that at first glance the results reached by some western linguists concerning language and gender seem to contradict those reached by some linguists in the Arab world.

The fact that linguists such as Daher (1999) provide evidence that specific women of a specific background in a particular locale may not use some standard features of language does not contradict the findings of Labov and others, since women may still use the prestige form of language, which, as already stated, is different from the standard one. Note also the claim made by Abu-Haidar (1989: 479) that young women in the Arab world are more sensitive to linguistic changes and more innovative than old and young men. Abu-Haidar's interpretation is in line with the claim made by Labov (1972b: 243) that women are more sensitive than men to prestige patterns.

In section 4.7.2 I will first give an overview of linguistic studies that concentrate on variation and then examine a selected number of them in detail.

#### **4.7.2 An overview of linguistic variation in relation to gender in the Arab world**

Studies that concentrate on phonetic, phonological and prosodic features are mentioned chronologically. First, Roux (1952) examined the differences between men's and women's speech in Morocco in relation to specific consonants, such as *s*, *z* and *r*. Hurreiz (1978) in his study of Khartoum also examined the use of intonation. Royal (1985) studied the relation between pharyngealisation, class and gender in Egypt. Al-Khateeb (1988) studied a number of consonants used in Irbid in Jordan, which include *q*, *k*, *t* and one vowel, *a*. He studied them in relation to gender, education and age. Trabelsi (1988) studied the use of diphthongs and monophthongs in relation to gender in Tunisia. Al-Muhannadi (1991) studied the articulation of some segments including the *q* in the speech of Qatari women. He found that certain segments characterise the speech of the Bedouin community while others characterise urban speech.<sup>18</sup>

I will now examine some of the studies on variation in more detail. Walters (1991) made a quantitative sociolinguistic study of Arabic as spoken in Korba, a small Tunisian town, to examine sex differentiation there. He compared and contrasted his findings with western studies. To collect his data, he used a

male Tunisian teacher of French and a female student of language. The issue was also to see whether the sex of the interviewer mattered. He was interested in phonological variables, especially the *ima:la*, vowel raising (palatalisation, produced by a rising movement of the tongue towards the prepalatal region).<sup>19</sup> He found that *ima:la* is used by older people, less educated people and females. It is considered a feature of the dialect of Korba which is now looked down upon, especially when used outside Korba and with Tunisians from other areas.

Daher (1999) examined  $\theta$  and  $\delta$  as MSA variables realised differently in Damascene Arabic. He measured the way both phonological variables are realised by men and women. In Damascene Arabic the variables would be realised as *s* and *z* respectively. He found that men tend to realise them more in their standard form (which is different from the prestige form),  $\theta$  and  $\delta$ , than women did.

Daher's methods were very effective. He tried to overcome the observer's paradox in more than one way. He was aware that it is difficult to elicit spontaneous speech in the presence of a tape recorder. The recorder makes the informants more conscious and thus they use more MSA than they usually do. Daher made sure the interviewer was familiar with the culture, had the trust of the informants and was a member of the speech community. The informants were mostly either friends, family members or co-workers. The setting was their homes, where other family members were present. Daher then ignored the first five minutes of the interview to allow informants the time to relax. He started by asking about personal experiences, memorable stories, hobbies, Syrian television and society in general. Stories with lasting memories worked well, such as those about a journey on foot from Beirut to Damascus, a marriage, an accident etc. His informants had all finished at least elementary education. He found that speakers who realised the two variables in their MSA form were those whose professions involved a lot of use of the written language, that is, they were mainly men. He claims that 'men are more likely than women to approach the standard variant as a speech norm' (1999: 180). This situation is stable; there is no change in progress taking place. MSA is used in major institutions such as law, education etc. Because of that it is associated with men, who have more access to education and to a profession.

In an earlier study (1998), Daher examined another phonological variable realised differently in Damascene Arabic and Standard Arabic, namely the uvular variable *q*, which is realised as a glottal stop in Damascene Arabic. His study was based on thirty hours of tape-recorded sociolinguistic interviews with twenty-three men and twenty-three women. The informants were classified into three levels of formal education: elementary school, high school and college degree. They were also classified into three age groups: 15–24, 25–39 and 40–70. He found that men tended to favour the connotations and usage of



*q*, while women avoided its connotations and usage. The *q* variable was being introduced into the dialect through education. And since, according to Daher (1998: 203), education was 'traditionally the domain of a small male elite', women did not use the *q* as much as men. In fact, he contested, even educated professional women tended not to use it because the glottal stop is associated more with urbanisation and modernisation, while *q* is associated with men and rural speakers. He concluded that men and women in that context approached different norms, since MSA and the vernacular were two sets of norms and not one.

The attachment of women to the urban variables and to modernisation is common for studies done on the west (cf. Romaine 2003) and those done on Arabic. Havelova (2000) reached a similar conclusion in the study he conducted in Nazareth. He posited that it was gender more than religion directing phonological variation. When examining the realisation of the MSA *q* variable, he found that women used the glottal stop more, while men tended to use the rural variant *k*.

In a different vein, Haeri (1996a) was interested in the variation within Cairene Arabic between men and women, especially in the processes of fronting and backing. She noted that data from ten different communities in Cairo suggests that women take the lead in fronting processes, and she posed the question of whether this variation between men and women is anatomical in nature or social. She concentrated specifically on two variables: the degree of pharyngealisation and apical palatalisation. Pharyngealisation is a secondary articulation which involves the backing of the tongue towards the pharynx (cf. Jakobson 1978 [1957]), while palatalisation is a fronting process that involves tongue fronting as well as raising (cf. Bhat 1978; Haeri 1996a: 106). She contended that social class plays an important role in this variation between men and women. She concluded that men have heavier pharyngealisation than women perhaps in order to sound tough and manly (1996a: 107), while weak or no pharyngealisation is characteristic of women in general and upper-middle-class men and women in particular (cf. Royal 1985). Although strong pharyngealisation is a process found in CA, it tends to be avoided by women. For women, weak pharyngealisation is associated with the upper classes, civilised society etc., while strong pharyngealisation or backing is associated not just with men but with men from the lower classes. Haeri (1996a) found that in Cairo it is in fact middle-class women who initiate change. Variables associated with upper-middle-class women tend to become prestigious norms associated with refinement and thus become models for lower-class women who have social ambition.

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 summarise some of Haeri's findings with regard to palatalisation and the use of the MSA phonological variable *q*. The tables show that both class and gender interact as independent variables in Egypt and

Table 4.2 *Strong palatalisation in female speakers in Cairo, by social class*

Class		Strong palatalisation	Weak palatalisation	Total tokens	% of total tokens
Lower middle	N %	697	877	1574	41
		44	56		
Middle middle	N %	322	478	800	21
		40	60		
Upper middle	N %	266	688	954	25
		28	72		
Upper	N %	30	469	499	13
		6	94		
Total	N %	1315	2512	3827	
		34	66		

Table 4.3 *Use of /q/ by male and female Cairene speakers, by social class (average number of tokens per 1,000 words)*

Class	Female speakers	Male speakers
Lower middle	0.37	3.14
Middle middle	7.60	8.20
Upper middle	4.91	8.59
Upper	3.57	9.76

influence linguistic variation. However, an MSA variable such as the *q* is used more frequently by men than women across almost all classes.

Other studies also found that young, educated, middle-class women use more foreign lexical items than men do (cf. Lawson-Sako and Sachdev 2000 for a study done on Tunis).

The above studies all indicate, first, that women sometimes do not have access to education and professional life to the same extent as men do and thus they use MSA less than men. This interpretation echoes Jane Austen's claim in her novel *Persuasion* discussed at the beginning of this chapter. On the other hand, when women have a choice between the prestigious urban variety, a rural variety and MSA, they are more prone to choose the urban variety as a symbolic means of asserting their identity.

Haeri (1996a: 307) claims that 'studies of gender differentiation have shown that women who have equal levels of education to men use features of classical Arabic significantly less than men' (see also Haeri 2006: 529). Note that Mejdell (2006) found that this generalisation did not apply to some of her female informants.

In the following paragraphs I will show the limitations of quantitative variation studies that rely on gender as an independent factor:

- Variation research that relies on gender as a variable starts with categorising people into males and females and places them into fixed social classes which may yield circular arguments as was discussed in Chapter 3. Language in this case will just be a reflection of already existing social identities rather than a construction of identities and communities (Romaine 2003). Research against this kind of categorisation includes Goodwin (2003), Eckert (2003) and Holmes and Stubbe (2003).
- Two key factors in the variation of speech between men and women, according to Romaine (2003: 109), are 'access' and 'role'. The amount of access that women have to the prestige language and the role that they play in their community are significant in their language use. Both factors have to be considered before any conclusions about variation and gender can be reached.
- Variationists claim that in the Middle East women move away from the prestige forms (cf. Romaine 2003). This is not necessarily true and may be the result of the confusion between standard and prestige which was discussed in Chapter 1 and will be alluded to again in the next section.
- In addition, use of language may have a discourse function and is not just an outcome of social factors. For example, according to Larson (1982) women use more standard in Norway when they want someone to do something or when they want to persuade (Larson 1982).

#### 4.8 PROJECTION OF IDENTITY IN THE SPEECH OF EDUCATED MEN AND WOMEN IN EGYPT: EVIDENCE FROM TALK SHOWS

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This section has two purposes. First, it examines the use of MSA and ECA in talk shows. I shed light on code choice and code-switching by women specifically in relation to identity. Second, it examines assertiveness techniques such as interruption and floor-controlling by women.

Variationist studies done on the Arab world all indicate the following: first, that women sometimes do not have access to education and professional life to the same extent as men do and thus they use MSA less than men. On the other hand, when women have a choice between the prestigious urban variety, a rural variety and MSA, they are more prone to choose the urban variety as a symbolic means of asserting their identity.

In spite of the fact that talk shows may not be representative, as stratified samples of variationists research should be, talk shows can help demonstrate that certain general conclusions about the use of MSA by educated women should not be drawn. This study aims to provide another perspective, one that shows that educated women with access to MSA in fact can and do use it in certain contexts for a discourse function and to project a specific identity on

themselves. The question that this section poses is why women and men use MSA when they do. It also shows that in specific contexts, Egyptian women are as assertive as men, if not more.

My data consists of fifteen hours of talk shows. The analysis includes five talk shows. Two are exclusive to one group, males or females, and not another. Note that all the participants are in the same age group, 45–55.

In programmes featuring exclusively men or women, there is still no difference in the way MSA is used by each. The quantity of MSA is related to the role the speaker wants to take and which part of his or her identity he or she calls on. The use of the phonological variable *q* specifically was not exclusive to men. Both women and men use *q* and sometimes it is women rather than men who do so.

#### 4.8.1 Description of data

The talk shows examined are the following:

1. *kala:m nawa:ʕim* ‘Women talk’: Four women from different parts of the Arab world discuss current issues in the Arab world and beyond (no presenters).
2. *ma wara:ʔ al-ʔahda:θ* ‘Beyond events’: Four men from different parts of the Arab world discuss current affairs (male presenter).
3. *ħima:r ad-dustu:r* ‘The constitution dialogue’: Educated men and women from Egypt discuss changes to the Egyptian constitution. Sometimes there are three men and one woman, and sometimes two men and two women (male or female presenter).
4. *il-buyu:t ʔasra:r* ‘Home secrets’: Usually two men and two women from Egypt discuss family problems in Egypt (female presenter).
5. *qabla ʔan tuħa:sabu* ‘Before you are held accountable’: A group of two men and two women, usually from Egypt, discuss a current problem with religious implications (female presenter).

#### 4.8.2 Categorising the data

In this study, I try throughout to distinguish broadly between ECA and MSA as distinct code levels. The main difficulty encountered by a linguist dealing with two languages or two varieties that are closely related, like MSA and ECA, is to differentiate clearly and consistently between them. This is because MSA and ECA have a lot of shared vocabulary and syntactic and morphological features. If we put to one side the absence of case and mood endings, some utterances could be classified as either ECA or MSA. It was therefore difficult at times to make a clear distinction between them.

After an initial survey, I categorised my data on the basis of counting MSA

and ECA variables, whether lexical, morphological, phonological or syntactic. The categories start from MSA and move gradually and quantitatively to ECA. Note that in cases where the participants come from different parts of the Arab world and use a different colloquial from MSA, the categories are still able to help us in our understanding of the choice of variety. In these cases I replaced ECA with the variety used, so instead of categorising an utterance as basically ECA, I categorised it as basically SCA, for example.<sup>20</sup> These seven categories are in the following order:

- MSA
- MSA with insertions of ECA
- Basically MSA
- Mixture of MSA and ECA
- Basically ECA
- ECA with insertions of MSA
- ECA

As said earlier, I measured these categories by counting the MSA percentage of variables in the speech of the participants (see Table 4.4).

Note that the MSA category has a wider range than the ECA category; MSA has 80–100 per cent MSA variables, while ECA has 0–10 per cent MSA variables. This is because my data is spoken and something as subtle as the quality of a vowel can render a morpheme or word ECA in the counting process.

I have ordered my data using these seven categories because I am attempting to show how code choice and social motivations are related and how, in a stretch of discourse that is basically geared towards one variety rather than another, the speaker's motivations may be different. In a stretch of discourse geared towards MSA, the speaker's relationship to the audience and projection of self may be different from one that is geared towards ECA. Again, whether and how code choice substantiates and expresses pragmatic variables of this kind is handled more insightfully if the speaker's code is first carefully analysed and divided into different categories on the basis of form alone.

*Table 4.4* Categorisation by use of MSA variables

Category	Use of MSA variables (%)
MSA	80–100
MSA with insertions of ECA	70–80
Basically MSA	60–70
Mixture of MSA and ECA	40–60
Basically ECA	20–40
ECA with insertions of MSA	10–20
ECA	0–10

Therefore, this rough categorisation is an important first step to enable us to get to grips with how and why a speaker moves from using one kind of Arabic to using another.

The categorisation above has, of course, no formal status either as a linguistic or a social construct, the only purpose being to help arrive at an understanding of how the dynamics of switching between MSA and ECA, the ‘poles’ at either end of a stylistic line, take place. I do not claim that the notion of categories occurs in the mind of Egyptians when speaking, nor that these are in any sense consciously ‘used’ by Egyptians. The only operational difference between my ‘categories’ is in the quantity of MSA or ECA features, regardless of whether these features are phonological, morpho-syntactic or lexical in nature. The basis of my division is simply the quantity of features from both codes in a given stretch of discourse.

I exemplify below the features used to distinguish between MSA and ECA.

#### 4.8.2.1 *Lexical features*

Certain lexical items and expressions are markers of one code rather than another. For example, the verb ‘to go’ in MSA is *ḍahaba*, while in ECA it is a different lexical item altogether, *ra:h*. This type of item is the easiest to spot. For example, in programme 2 in the series ‘Before you are held accountable’, the male journalist, who speaks ‘basically ECA’, uses a number of quintessentially ECA expressions and vocabulary.

(20) *fi ḥa:ga*  
‘there is something’

(21) *ʔa:h*  
‘yes’

The MSA counterpart of these words and expressions is different:

(22) *huna:ka faʔyʔan*  
‘there is something’

(23) *naʕam*  
‘yes’

On the other hand, in programme 2 in the series ‘Home secrets’, the female judge, who speaks ‘MSA’, uses many quintessentially MSA lexical items.

(24) *naḥnu*  
‘we’

- (25) *nabħaθ*  
'we search'

The ECA counterpart of these lexical items and expressions would be:

- (26) *ʔiħma*  
'we'

- (27) *nibħaθ*  
'we search'

Note that there is a large amount of vocabulary shared between the two codes, and sometimes the difference between two lexical items, one in ECA and the other in MSA, is only a low-level phonological one, as in examples (25) and (27) above. The only difference between the MSA and the ECA realisations of the same verb is in the vowel pattern and syllable structure.

It is by no means clear whether differences on the phonological or lexical level are more salient. This needs further research and a large amount of data.

#### 4.8.2.2 *Morpho-syntactic features*

Case and mood marking are purely MSA morphological features. If a speaker consistently uses case and mood endings, this indicates that his or her utterance is stylistically 'high flown'. It is noteworthy, however, that in spoken MSA in Egypt, people tend to drop case and mood endings except in the most elevated (especially religious) discourse. So in Egypt the criterion of case and mood marking has limited usefulness in deciding which code is being used, since it is so rare. On the other hand, the aspectual/mood marker *b* or the tense marker *ħa* are features that are characteristic of ECA, with a different counterpart in MSA, and their use is a sign that a speaker has moved in the direction of ECA.

There are numerous other significant morpho-syntactic differences between MSA and ECA. For example, there are major differences in the way in which negation, deixis, tense and aspect are realised in MSA and ECA. There are also other significant differences in the expression of syntactic processes such as relativisation and interrogation.

The following examples illustrate how ECA and MSA morpho-syntactic features can combine. Note this example from programme 2 in the series 'Home secrets', in which the female judge uses a number of salient MSA morpho-syntactic features:

- (28) *al-aħka:m if-farʕiyya wil- qa:nuniyya wil-qada:ʔiyya θa:bita/ θubu:tan  
la yaqbal/ wala gadal wala muna:qafa*

'Legislative, legal and procedural rules are fixed so as not to allow any scope for argument or discussion.'

She uses case marking in *θubu:tan* 'fixed', accusative. She also uses the MSA negative marker *la* in *la yaqbal*.

Now note the following example from programme 2 in the series 'Before you are held accountable', in which the male journalist uses the ECA plural demonstrative *do:l* and follows ECA structure by having the demonstrative after rather than before the noun it modifies, as in MSA.

(29) *il-fataya:t do:l*  
'These girls'

The MSA counterpart would be

(30) *ha:ʔula:ʔi al-fataya:t*  
'These girls'

In the MSA counterpart the demonstrative precedes the noun.

#### 4.8.2.3 Phonological features

As was said above, some lexical items are shared by both varieties and the only factor that causes them to be classified as ECA rather than MSA is that they are phonologically ECA. The vowel pattern may be different, or the realisation of consonants; see example (27) above.

Note also the following example from programme 2 in the series 'Before you are held accountable', in which the female director uses the MSA *q* instead of the ECA glottal stop.

(31) *al-faqr*  
'poverty'

In the following example from programme (2) in the series 'Home secrets', the vowel quality marks this word, spoken by the female journalist, as ECA rather than MSA.

(32) *fe:ʔ*  
'something'

The MSA counterpart would be

(33) *fayʔ*  
'something'



### 4.8.3 Detailed description of the data

*kala:m nawa:ʕim* ‘Women talk’: Four women from different parts of the Arab world discuss current issues in the Arab world and beyond. There is no presenter.

**Programme 1 broadcast November 2006**

**Topic: Religion and tolerance**

**Duration: 90 minutes**

Woman 1: Saudi; basically SCA

Woman 2: Lebanese; basically LCA

Woman 3: Egyptian; ECA

Woman 4: Syrian; Syrian Colloquial Arabic (SYCA)

**Programme 2 broadcast December 2006**

**Topic: Divorce rates in the Arab world**

**Duration: 90 minutes**

Woman 1: Saudi; SCA with insertions of MSA

Woman 2: Lebanese; LCA

Woman 3: Egyptian; ECA with insertions of MSA

Woman 4: Syrian; SYCA with insertions of MSA

*ma wara:? al-ʔahda:θ* ‘Beyond events’: Four men from different parts of the Arab world discuss current affairs. There is a male presenter.

**Programme broadcast December 2006**

**Topic: The economic influence of China on the world**

**Duration: 1 hour**

Male presenter: ECA

Male minister of foreign affairs: basically MSA

Male economic expert: ECA with insertions of MSA

Male businessman: ECA with insertions of MSA

*ħiwa:r ad-dustu:r* ‘The constitution dialogue’: Educated men and women from Egypt discuss changes to the Egyptian constitution. Sometimes there are three men and one woman, and sometimes two men and two women. There is a male presenter.

**Programme 1 broadcast October 2006**

**Topic: The changes in the Egyptian constitution**

**Duration: 90 minutes**

Male presenter: basically ECA

Female professor of law: mixture of MSA and ECA

Male professor of law: basically ECA

Male politician: basically ECA

**Programme 2 broadcast November 2006**

**Topic: Imposing emergency laws in Egypt**

**Duration: 90 minutes**

Female presenter: basically ECA

Female judge: basically MSA

*il-buyu:t ʔasra:r* ‘Home secrets’: Usually two men and two women from Egypt discuss family problems in Egypt. There is a female presenter.

**Programme 1 broadcast October 2006**

**Topic: Women who betray their husbands**

**Duration: 2 hours**

Female presenter: ECA with insertions of MSA

Male psychologist: ECA with insertions of MSA

Female psychologist: ECA with insertions of MSA

Female social worker: ECA with insertions of MSA

**Programme 2 broadcast December 2006**

**Topic: The new forms of marriage in the Arab world**

**Duration: 2 hours**

Female presenter: basically ECA

Female judge: MSA

Female journalist: mixture of MSA and ECA.

Male journalist: basically ECA

Male writer: mixture of MSA and ECA

*qabla ʔan tuḥa:sabu* ‘Before you are held accountable’: A group of two men and two women, usually from Egypt, discuss a current problem with religious implications. There is a female presenter.

**Programme 1 broadcast October 2006**

**Topic: Marriage and the treatment of women**

**Duration: 2 hours**

Female presenter: basically MSA

Male religious scholar: basically ECA

Female religious scholar: mixture of MSA and ECA

**Programme 2 broadcast December 2006**

**Topic: Street children**

**Duration: 2 hours**

Female presenter: ECA with insertions of MSA  
 Male professor of psychology: ECA with insertions of MSA  
 Male journalist: ECA with insertions of MSA  
 Female professor of sociology: ECA with insertions of MSA  
 Female director: ECA with insertions of MSA<sup>21</sup>

If we exclude the women who are not Egyptian, then we are left with sixteen Egyptian women and thirteen Egyptian men to compare and contrast for the purpose of this study. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 summarise the categories they use.

Although the tables suggest that there is a difference in the way men and women use MSA – in the programmes analysed, women use more MSA than men – because of the limited amount of data, I do not want to draw definite conclusions. However, it is clear that women do not use less MSA than men.

#### 4.8.3.1 *Factors examined*

In addition to the role that language form plays in projection of identity, which will be discussed in detail below, the following factors are also important in determining the code used by men and women in talk shows:

*Table 4.5 Male speakers (number: 13)*

Number of speakers	Code choice
0	MSA
0	MSA with insertions of ECA
1	Basically MSA
1	Mixture of MSA and ECA
5	Basically ECA
5	ECA with insertions of MSA
1	ECA

*Table 4.6 Female speakers (number: 16)*

Number of speakers	Code choice
1	MSA
0	MSA with insertions of ECA
2	Basically MSA
4	Mixture of MSA and ECA
2	Basically ECA
6	ECA with insertions of MSA
1	ECA (Egyptian colloquial Arabic)

- *Educational background*: When the presenter introduces the participants, he or she usually mentions their profession, and then whenever the participants speak, their professions and names are written on the screen. All participants have been educated to university level and beyond.
- *Intended audience*: The programmes are broadcast on the Arab satellite system. Thus the audience is Arabs everywhere, even outside the Arab world.
- *Subject matter*: The subject matter is important in the sense that sometimes women are expected to be experts in specific topics, such as marriage problems or street children. However, there is still a limit to the importance of subject matter, since, as will be clear in the data, in programmes that discuss a political issue, women can still be assertive. This is more dependent on how women perceive themselves, whether they perceive themselves as experts in the subject matter or not. This is when education also interacts with professional life and form of language.
- *The role of the presenter*: The presenters play a minimal role and only rarely interfere in the interaction. These are discussion programmes and usually it is up to the participants to take turns. The presenter starts by posing the question and seldom interferes after that.

#### 4.8.3.2 Data analysis

Eid (2007) posits that the media, especially the broadcasting media, has a large role to play in ‘negotiating the relationship between the two varieties’ (MSA and ECA). It

creates in between spaces that serve as excellent sites for the negotiation of identities. It does so by bringing public content into the privacy of the home and taking private content to the public view to audiences that are local and, when aired over satellite channels, global as well. (2007: 405)

This is true for the data presented in this study, in which the speakers also use code-switching to negotiate identity. Talk shows specifically are an opportunity for women to compete with men on a professional level and to redefine their identity according to context.

Note the following example taken from programme 2 in the series ‘Before you are held accountable’, which is broadcast on the religious channel Iqra? ‘Read’. The setting is a garden and, in addition to the female presenter, there are two men and two women. One man is a professor of psychology, the other is a journalist. One woman is a professor of sociology while the other is the director of a non-governmental organisation that takes care of street children. The topic for discussion is street children. Two participants, one man and one

woman, hold a PhD. I have chosen this excerpt because it occurs in the middle of the talk show, when speakers are supposed to be more relaxed about being on television.

I will use the following abbreviations to refer to the men and women:

Male professor of psychology: M-P

Male journalist: M-J

Female professor of sociology: F-P

Female director: F-D

- (34) **M-P:** *il-ḥubb axba:ru ḏe:h ṣandukum // bi-yitkallimu ṣan il-ḥubb //*  
 ‘How about love? Do they speak of love?’

**F-D:** *a:h tabṣan bi-yitkallimu ṣan il-ḥubb / fi: minhum yaṣni fi ḏiṭa:r al-zawa:g / tabṣan fil bida:ya b-tibḏa ḥassa ḏinni humwa illi ḥa-yintafilha / lakin il-maṣa:ṣir bardu / ma-btibḏa:-f mustaqirra / ya dukto:r ha:ṣim / liḏanni hiyya bi-tḥibbu taḥt ḏaḡṭ muṣayyan / wi waḏṣ muṣayyan / lamma b-yiṭlaṣ nadl wi yixli bi:ha / ha:ḏihi al-maṣa:ṣir bi-tatabaddal tama:man / fa yi:gi waḥid ta:ni / al-munqid/fa yinqidha min waḏṣ ḏa:xar / fa tḥibbu humwa / wa ha:kada /*

‘Yes of course they speak of love. Some of them speak of love within the frame of marriage. Of course at the beginning the girl feels that the man is her saviour. But also, Dr Hashim, her feelings are not stable, because she loves him under certain pressure and certain circumstances. When the man proves to be a scoundrel and jilts her, these feelings she had for him change completely. Then another man comes, who plays the role of the saviour who also saves her from another situation. So she falls for him and then it goes on like that.’

**M-J:** *le:h fi bint b-tihrab min it-tafakkuk il-ḏusari / wi fi:h bint bi-tistaḥmil //*

‘Why is there one girl who runs away from a disintegrated family and another who can put up with it?’

**F-P:** *ṣala ḥasab bardu if-faxṣiyya illi ḏitrabbit gumwa il-bint / fi ḏawwil sanawat-ha / yaṣni . . .*

‘This is also dependent on the girl’s acquired personality in her first years.’

**M-J:** *yaṣni bi-taṣtamid ṣala do:r il-ḏusra*

‘So it depends on the role of the family.’

**F-D:** *mifṣarṭ ḏinn yiku:n it-ṭifl ṭifl fa:riṣ / mumkin yiku:n min gumwa il-be:t.*

‘It is not necessary that the child lives in the street for him to be a street child; he can be living with his parents still.’

**M-J:** *fi ḥala:t kiti:ra giddan lil-tafakkuk / ḏawwalan mumkin il-be:t nafsu bardu . . .*

'There are different cases of disintegration. First maybe the home itself is also . . .'

**F-D:** *mumkin yibʔa gaww il-be:t ʔa:rid*

'The atmosphere at home may be repulsive.'

**M-J:** *fikrat iṣ-ṣala:ba in-nafsiyya/ yaʕni iṭ-ṭifl bi-yithammil walla ma-b-yithammil-fi/ fi ʔaṭfa:l ʕanduhum/ yaʕni fi haṣa:fa fil mawaḍi:ʕ di/ wi fi ʔaṭfa:l mumkin bi-yistaḥmilu/ wi yiqawmu/ ʔila ʔa:xiru/ / bas fi ha:ga tanya yimkin ʔaṣa:rit liha dukto:ra sahinnda/ wi hiyya fikrat il-ʔaqr/ yaʕni ʔistigla:l ha:za il-ʔaʔr il-mawgu:d ʕand il-ʔataya:t do:l . . .*

'The concept of psychological strength refers to whether the child can bear his circumstances or not. There are children . . . I mean there are children who are weak in that respect. Other children can put up with this and can struggle against it etc. but there is something else that perhaps Dr Shahinda referred to, which is the concept of poverty. I mean taking advantage of the poverty of these girls . . .'

**F-D:** *ʔana baʕʕarid ʕala ha:ða ik-kala:m/ maʕr ʔu:l ʕumraha balad ʔaʔi:ra.*

'I object to what you have just said. Egypt has always been a poor country.'

**M-J:** *ʔismaḥi li-bass akammil ig-gumla . . .*

'Just allow me to finish my sentence . . .'

**F-D:** *wi ʔu:l ʕumraha balad ʔaʔi:ra/ ʕumrina kunna bi-nismaʕ ʕan banatna fil-ʔa:riʕ/ /*

'And Egypt has always been a poor country. We never heard of our girls living in the streets.'

**M-J:** *wara:ʔ kull mustaḡill fi wa:hid bi-yistaḡillu/ da ʔabi:ʕi/ lakin ʔa:h fi taḡayyura:t haʕalit fi muḡtamaʕna ʔaswaʔ b-kti:r gidan min it-taḡayyura:t illi haʕalit zama:n/ wil- tafakkuk il-ʔusari/*

'Behind everyone who is exploited, there is someone who exploits them. This is natural. Yes there are changes that took place in our society, changes that are much worse than the ones that happened before and also the disintegration of families.'

**F-D:** *il-ʔaxras da b-yiʔaḡḡal bint ʕandaha ʔarbaʕ sini:n wi huwwa ma-b-yiʔaḡḡal-f le:h/ / yaʕni ʕayzi:n . . .*

Why does this mute man make a 4-year-old girl work for him while he does not work? So we want . . .'

**M-J:** *ʔiḥna b-nitkallim ʔan system ʔigtima:ʕi . . .*

'We are speaking about a social system . . .'

**F-P:** *-ma hiyya il-ʔusra mutafakkika/*

'But it is a disintegrated family.'

**F-D:** *min ʔigma:li ʔarbaʕ tala:f ʔifl/ ʕannafna ḥala:t il-ʔaqr ʔaqr/ ʔiliʕ il-ʔaʔr bas ʔarbaʕa fil-miyya/ al-ʔaqr ʔaqr ka-ʕa:mil wa:hid/*

*ma-fi:-fha:ga ʔismaha al-faqr faqat / il-ʕawa:mil il-ʔiqtiʕa:diyya / maʕa  
t-taʕli:m / il muʕamla is-sayyiʔa // ʕadatan lamma titfakkak il-ʔusra /  
ʕadatan il-tifl la bi-yuqbal hina / wa la bi-yuqbal hina //*

‘We have a total of 4,000 children. We classified cases of poverty only. We found that poverty is only 4 per cent. Poverty is only one reason. It is not only about poverty. Economic factors in addition to education and abuse are important. Usually when the family is disintegrated, the child is not accepted by either of the parties.’

In this example, the interaction between the two men and women has several unexpected elements. The presenter was not really involved in the interaction at all and so it was up to the participants to take turns. While the dialogue goes back and forth between men and women seventeen times, women take control of the floor nine times while men take control of the floor eight times in the interaction. Two of the participants control the floor in particular, F-D and M-J, but still it is clear that the women in this example are no less assertive than the men. The interaction starts with M-P asking F-D a question about love and its importance for street girls. F-D considers herself the expert out of all the participants since she is the director of an organisation that deals directly with street children. She gives her answer. It is then up to the participants to direct the interaction. Next, another man, M-J, asks the second question and the interaction goes on. F-D is the only woman who asks a question and it is, in fact, a rhetorical one, when she wonders why a dumb man would make a 4-year-old girl work for him. Thus, men ask two questions while women only make statements, as F-D does at the end of this example, when she gives numerical evidence of cases of poverty among girls to support her argument.

The women in our example do not hedge. In fact F-D interrupts M-J and states clearly that she objects to what he has said. While M-J refers to F-P as ‘Dr Shahindah’, his title is never used by either of the women.

One has to bear in mind that these are all well-educated women, and judging from the way they dress they are also upper-middle-class women. They are still conservative in their dress. F-D wore a headscarf; F-P did not, but she was still wearing a long-sleeved dress.

All the speakers in this part use ECA with insertions of MSA. Counting the MSA and ECA features used by both men and women reveal no differences between them in this talk show. Let us consider in detail some MSA and ECA features, whether phonological, morpho-syntactic or lexical. If we consider the use of the MSA phonological variable *q*, we find there is no clear difference in its use between men and women in the above example.

Note that there are words that cannot be pronounced with a glottal stop, for example *il-ʔiqtiʕa:diyya* ‘economic’ which is used by F-D. F-D uses *q* five times and uses the glottal stop twice, in *faʔr* ‘poverty’ and *faʔi:ra* ‘poor’. M-J

does not only use *q*. He uses it once in *il-faqr* ‘poverty’ and then uses the glottal stop for the same word.

Throughout the data there is no tendency for women to stick to the glottal stop while avoiding *q*. In fact the *q* is used 116 times by the women and 98 times by the men in positions which permit either the MSA *q* sound or the ECA glottal stop. This may indicate that women in talk shows use more MSA features than men. However, such a postulation needs more data.

F-D uses MSA demonstratives, as in:

- (35) *ha:ða ik-kala:m*  
 dem det-talk  
 ‘what you have just said’

She also uses MSA negation with an MSA passive verb and an ECA aspect marker, the *b-*, as in

- (36) *ʕadatan iṭ-ṭiḥl la bi-yuqbal hina/ wa la bi-yuqbal*  
 Usually det-child neg asp-msg- here/and neg asp-msg-pass-  
 pass-accept pass-accept  
*hina*  
 here

‘Usually the child is not accepted by either of the parties’.

The form of language used by F-D is a marked choice, as Myers-Scotton (1998) calls it, that emphasises F-D’s identity. It is marked because it occurs in a context in which ECA demonstratives were used:

- (37) *il-fataya:t do:l*  
 det-girls dem-pl

F-D considers herself the expert of all the participants and, as is clear in the content of what she says, she thinks that she is more knowledgeable than the man. Her use of MSA demonstratives highlights her disagreement with M-J’s claim that poverty is the cause of the increase in the number of street children. She interrupts him and states that she objects to what he says, using the MSA demonstrative system to do so. Further, when stating facts about the reasons why some children become street children, she uses the MSA negative system as well as the MSA passive form, albeit with the ECA *b-*prefix (see example (34)). The ECA counterpart would be

- (38) *iṭ-ṭiḥl miḥ bi-yiṭʔabal hina wa la hina*  
 The-child neg asp-msg-pass-accept here and neg here  
 ‘the child is not accepted by either of the parties’



The choice of MSA features in the woman's speech is related to the identity she projects on herself, which is her identity as a social reformist and a director of a non-governmental organisation for street children.

What is also worth mentioning is that M-J uses the English word 'system' while neither of the women switches to English at all, a point that will be elaborated on later.

Now note the following example from programme 2 in the series 'Home secrets', in which a female judge starts speaking in MSA to the audience as well as the participants. She wants to make a point that 'secret marriages' and 'temporary marriages', although they may be widespread in the Arab world, in fact go against religion and humanity. Note that she is wearing not just a headscarf but also gloves, which are symbols of ultra-conservative Islamic dress.

- (39) *nahnu fi zaman/ furiḍa ḥala l-marʔa ʔan tubtadal/ wa yuḡtaṣab  
gasadaha/ wa nahnu gami:ḥan nabḥaθ/ min an-na:ḥiya al-farḥiyya/  
walla min an-naḥiya iq-qa:nuniyya/ al-aḥka:m if-farḥiyya wil-  
qa:nuniyya wil-qada:ʔiyya θa:bita/ θubu:tan la yaqbal wa la gadal wa la  
muna:qafa/*

'We live at a time when women are expected to be abused, when women's bodies are raped, while we are all still investigating whether this is allowed according to jurisprudence or law. Legislative, legal and procedural rules are fixed so as not to allow any scope for argument or discussion.'

The female judge in this example only very rarely does not use MSA rather than ECA, although the interaction that was previously taking place was not in MSA. She does, however, use MSA morpho-syntactic features such as negation, as in

- (40) *la yaqbal                      wa    la gadal                      wa    la muna:qafa*  
neg 3msg-accept    and    neg argument    and    neg discussion  
'not to allow any scope for argument or discussion'  
in contrast to the ECA:

- (41) *mif bi-yiʔbal                      wa    la gadal                      wa    la munaʔfa*  
not asp-3msg accept    and    neg argument    and    neg discussion  
'not to allow any scope for argument or discussion'

She also consistently uses the *q* phonological variable and never the glottal stop. Even the pronoun she starts with is an MSA pronoun, *nahnu*, as opposed to the ECA equivalent, *ʔiḥna*, 'we'.

The fact that the interaction that was previously taking place between the female journalist and the male journalist was not in MSA is significant in this

example. Unlike the female judge, the female journalist's code is categorised as a mixture of MSA and ECA, the male journalist speaks basically ECA and the male writer speaks a mixture of MSA and ECA. The negotiated manner of speaking in the programme is not MSA. Thus the female judge's use of MSA represents again what Myers-Scotton (1998) calls a marked choice, a choice not expected by the participants or the audience (see Chapter 2). This example can also be explained in terms of indexicality, which was discussed in Chapter 2 and will be defined again here for the sake of clarity; indexicality is a relation of associations through which utterances are understood. For example, if a specific code or form of language presupposes a 'certain social context, then use of that form may create the perception of such context where it did not exist before' (Woolard 2004: 88). If a code is associated with the authority of courtrooms and this code is then used in a different context, then it will denote authority. The language of the speaker would then be considered an authoritative language (Silverstein 1998: 267 cited in Woolard 2004: 88). This is exactly the case in the example of the female judge. By using MSA, a language associated with authority of several kinds – religious, legal/governmental – as well as education, the female judge lays claim to all MSA indexes. These indexes can help shape her projection of identity as well. By using MSA the woman is assigning herself the elevated status of an authority on the subject matter and a religious scholar as well as a legal expert. If one examines the content of what she says, one will notice that she is stating facts and giving powerful conclusions. MSA gives her postulations an air of authority. She is also assigning herself the role of the commentator on the frame of events, the all-knowledgeable, sophisticated, educated woman.

This is exactly what happens in parliament in Egypt when a member of parliament speaks MSA rather than ECA. By using a code different from the one expected and used thus far by other members, which is usually a mixture of MSA and ECA, the speaker is also appealing to a specific part of his or her identity and laying claims to all MSA indexes.

Compare the above example to the following one, which is an address by a male member of the Egyptian parliament, given in January 1999 in the People's Assembly (Majlis al-Sha'b). The speaker voices his opinion on the sanctions imposed on Iraq.

The speaker removes himself, as it were, from his surroundings and party affiliation, and says that he wants to speak as an Arab and an Egyptian. He asks the members of parliament as well as the head of parliament to remember the famous slogan of Muṣṭafá Kāmil (1874–1908), the Egyptian national hero, who said that one should never make concessions about the rights of one's country. The speaker wants to highlight the importance of supporting the Iraqis, because they are suffering harsh penalties as a result of sanctions which, in his view, are quite unfair.

- (42) *b-šifati ʔalmuwa:ʔin sa:mih ʕafu:r ʕuḏwi maglis if-faʕb/ ʔallaḏi yantami: ʔila faʕbi miʕr wa ʔila l-ʔumma l-ʕarabiyya/ wa ʔargu ʔan taḥḏif ʔayyat ʔintima:ʔ hizbi li ʔaw liḡayri fil-ḥadi:θ ʕan ḥaḏihi l-ʔadiyya/ siya:dat ir-raʔi:s kullama rattabtu ḥadi:θan fi ha:ða l-mawḏu:ʕ ḏa:ʕa minni/ faqat/ ʔiḷtaʕaqa fi ḏihni ʔalʔa:n qa:lat/ wa maqu:lat/al-waʔani al-kabi:r muʕtafa ka:mil/ ʕindama qa:l/ ʔinna man yatasa:maḥa fi ḥuqu:qi bila:dihi wa law marratin wa:ḥida/ yaʕi:f ʔabad id-ḏahr muzaʕzaʕ il-ʕaʕi:da/ saqi:mu l-wiḡda:n*

‘I speak as the citizen Sāmih ʿĀshūr, the member of parliament, who belongs to the Egyptian people, and to the Arab nation, and please disregard my affiliation to any political party, and disregard the affiliation of others, when discussing this issue. Speaker, whenever I prepare a speech about this topic, I lack the words. There is only one thing that still sticks in my mind right now, and that is the saying of the great national hero, Mustafa Kamil, when he said, “whoever concedes the rights of his country to someone even once, lives ever after faltering in his beliefs, and will always remain weak to the core”.’

Note that the speaker himself says that he does not speak as a member of parliament belonging to a specific party, but as an Egyptian and an Arab. Therefore, he wants people to perceive him as such, with no regard to his political affiliations.

At the beginning, the speaker does not refer to himself by saying ‘I am Sāmih ʿĀshūr’; rather, he starts with ‘as the citizen Sāmih ʿĀshūr, the member of parliament, who belongs to the Egyptian people, and to the Arab nation’.

In this speech, the parliamentarian could speak ECA or a mixture of MSA and ECA, and this does happen in parliament in Egypt (cf. Bassiouney 2006), but he attempts to stick to MSA. The female judge in example (39) likewise does not refer to her own personal opinion, but starts with the all-inclusive ‘we’ and then starts postulating about women’s plight in our time.

In examples (39) and (42), the use of code is not an arbitrary one. It is a result of the role the female judge and the male member of parliament project on themselves by using all MSA indexes. He projects on himself the role of ‘the archetypal Egyptian’, or ‘the archetypal Arab’. He is no longer speaking as an individual member of parliament, but rather as a kind of ‘abstract voice’ speaking for the historical record. She projects on herself the identity of the authoritative figure. They both use a code that reflects their identity. Thus, the code used is not related to the gender of the speaker but to the projection of identity on the part of the speaker.

Returning to the discussion of programme 2 in the ‘Home secrets’ series, the reply to the female judge does not come from one of the men present but

from another woman, the famous Egyptian journalist Iqbāl Barakah. She does not use MSA only, as the female judge does, although she still uses MSA features. Her utterance is categorised as a mixture of MSA and ECA.

- (43) **Female journalist:** *il-muġtamaħ il-ħarabi yuħa:mił al-marħa ka-ħe:ʔ /  
fa ħe:ʔ ʔabi:ħi ʔinnaha tataħammal fi yo:m min il-ʔayya:m ʔila silħa tuba:ħ  
wa tuħtara // il-qawani:n sabta / di muħkilitna //*  
'Arab society treats woman as a thing. So it is quite natural that one day  
women become goods to be bought and sold. Indeed laws are fixed and  
that is our problem.'

There are ECA features such as demonstratives, as in *di muħkilitna* 'that is our problem'. Also, the vowel in *ħe:ʔ* is the ECA *e:* rather than the MSA *ai*. However, the verb is in MSA: *yuħa:mił* 'to treat'; the ECA counterpart would be *bi-yiħa:mił*. Once more the switching between ECA and MSA is used to draw attention to what is being said. The MSA verb emphasises the point made by the female journalist that women are treated as goods in Arab society. In fact, all the verbs in this extract are in MSA: *yuħa:mił* 'to treat', *tataħammal* 'to become', *tuba:ħ* 'to be sold' and *tuħtara* 'to be bought'. The last two verbs are in the MSA passive form. After she states her facts clearly, she ends her postulation with an ECA demonstrative phrase:

- (44) *di muħkilitna*  
dem problem-ours  
'that is our problem'

ECA here is the marked code since it is juxtaposed with the MSA verbs. Code-switching between MSA and ECA serves to get her message through more effectively.

The male journalist is then asked by the presenter to give his opinion. He uses less MSA than either of the women. In fact, by counting MSA and ECA features, one can deduce that he uses a variety which is categorised as basically ECA.

- (45) **Male journalist:** *ʔana ba-tkallim ħan iz-zo:g / taħyib ma l-sitt ħiyya  
ig-guzʔ it-ta:ni / il-wagh it-ta:ni lil-ħumla . . .*  
'I am speaking about the husband. But women are also the other half.  
They are the other side of the coin.'

He uses ECA features like the aspectual marker *b* in *ba-tkallim*, and ECA lexical items, as in *sitt* for 'woman' instead of the MSA *marħa*.

The man is then interrupted by the female journalist, who starts defending the woman whose problem is being discussed.

- (46) **Female journalist:** *maḥīd ʔusta:ð fil gamʕa*  
'He [the husband] is a university professor.'

The female journalist observes that the husband who deceived his wife was in fact a professor, so he has to take all the blame, and thus it was easy for him to deceive a girl and marry her secretly.

The male journalist then answers:

- (47) **Male journalist:** *ʔihna ʕandina na:s ma-tʕallimit-f wi lakin ʕandaha mabdaʔ*  
'There are people who have no education whatsoever but who have principles.'

The male journalist wants to stress that deception is not related to level of education. He uses ECA negation in *ma-tʕallimit-f* 'who have no education'.

Again, this example shows that both men and women manipulate MSA and use it as a symbol of their identity, authority and expertise. MSA is also sometimes juxtaposed with ECA to have the most marked effect possible on the audience. In a study conducted by Bassiouney (2005–9) in which thirty advertisements from an Egyptian TV channel were analysed, it was concluded that the use of MSA is not directly related to the gender of the speaker but rather to the nature of the product and the target demographic. Although commercial language is special in nature, it is still important to note the linguistic forms used by men and women in relation to the diglossic situation in Egypt and other Arab countries.

#### 4.8.3.3 *Identity and code choice*

Human identity is defined by Lakoff (2006: 142) as

a continual work in progress, constructed and altered by the totality of life experience. While much of the work in support of this belief concentrates on the larger aspects of identity – especially gender, ethnicity, and sexual preferences – in fact human identity involves many other categories. Identity is constructed in complex ways, more or less consciously and overtly.

Lakoff points to the variability of identity at different stages of one's life and in different contexts. One's identity is made up of more than one part; a mother can also be a professor, a wife, an administrator, a politician, a friend, an Egyptian, a Muslim, an Arab, and so forth. As Lakoff says, an individual is both a member of a 'cohesive and coherent group' and an individual (2006:

142). Bastos and Oliveira (2006: 188) emphasise the fact that identity is both 'fixed' and 'continuous', in the sense that individuals perceive themselves differently in various situations or contexts. Identity is also manifested through language use, as is the case in the data analysed.

When discussing the use of code choice by women, linguists tend to concentrate on the disadvantages of women in the public sphere, while ignoring how code choice can be used as a means of attaining power by women and asserting their identity. Cameron (2005: 496) discusses how women are marginalised globally in public spheres and silenced in public contexts or denied access to the 'language literacies and speech styles' needed to enter the public domain. Sadiqi (2006: 647), when discussing language and gender in the Arab world, postulates that women had to struggle to be able to enter the public arena. While this may be true, her other statements are too general. She claims that although literate women have a 'less detached attitude' towards MSA, they, like illiterate women, are not encouraged to be in the public sphere and use MSA less than men. She also postulates that MSA is the 'male domain', since it is the language of the public sphere and the institution.

The data presented in this study reveals that this may not be the case in all contexts and for all Arab women. When women are in the public sphere, which occurs frequently in Egypt and especially in the media, they use the opportunity to establish their status and identity, and MSA is one of the tools they use to define and clarify these.

In addition, according to Cameron (2005: 139), when people, whether men or women, are interacting with one another they are also adopting particular 'subject positions' and assigning positions to others. Thus, when a woman is talking she is also assigning herself a position such as teacher, expert, professional and so forth. She is also assigning positions to the others she talks to; she may choose to express solidarity with them, claim distance from them or even condescend to them. The definition of subject positions is similar to that of identity given by Bean and Johnstone (2004), who contend that identity is formed by our experiences and set of memories and, more importantly, by the projection of our experiences and memories on the way we express ourselves. If having an identity requires 'self expression', then individuals have to resort to all their linguistic resources to express their identity (2004: 237). The linguistic resources available to women in the programmes analysed include code choice and code-switching. Bolonyai (2005: 16–17), in a study of bilingual girls, shows how they intentionally and strategically use their linguistic resources to exhibit their power. They use code choice to position themselves in a dominant position. This can be done by switching to English to show their expertise and knowledge. Switching to English is used as a control mechanism and a power display. Switching is also a means of asserting their superior identity. Again, this is exactly what women do when they switch to MSA in the programs analysed.

Finally, I will discuss in more detail the second point that the study makes which is that in talk shows Egyptian women can be as assertive as men, if not more so.

#### 4.8.3.4 *Interruption and assertiveness*

Interruption is different from overlap. Interruption is defined as simultaneous talk that involves the violation of rules of turn-taking. It may also convey lack of care on the part of the interrupter for the face of the other participant. It usually takes place in the middle of a clause or sentence rather than at the end. Overlap, on the other hand, is not considered a violation of the turn-taking system, and could be used to support an argument, as a transition device, or to show involvement. It is not usually a contradiction of what has been said before, and it takes place at the end of a clause rather than in the middle of it (Cheng 2003: 34; see also Tannen 1994; Romaine 1998). While interruption can be considered a face-threatening device, overlap is usually a supportive device that denotes solidarity. Note also that the notion of interruption presupposes an idealised world in which turn-taking always takes place at the end of a clause, which is not always the case in actual conversations (Romaine 1998; Tannen 1994).

In example (34), as noted earlier, the presenter was not really involved in the interaction at all and so it was up to the participants to take turns. While the dialogue goes back and forth between men and women seventeen times, women control the interaction nine times and men only eight times. There are two who specifically control the floor, F-D and M-J, but it is still clear that women in this example are not less assertive than men. This is true for all my data.

##### 4.8.3.4.1 *Difference between overlap and interruption*

The following are two examples of overlap:

(48) **F-P:** *ʕala ʕasab bardu if-faxʕiyya illi ʔitrabbit gumma il-bint / fi ʔamwil sanawat-ha / yaʕni . . .*

‘This is also dependent on the girl’s acquired personality in her first years. I mean . . .’

**M-J:** *yaʕni bi-taʕtamid ʕala do:r il-ʔusra*

‘So it depends on the role of the family.’

This is an example of an overlap rather than an interruption. M-J uses overlap to support and clarify what is said by F-P. There is no contradiction and he speaks after the sentence filler *yaʕni* ‘I mean’. Note also that the speaker pauses after *yaʕni*. Thus, he does not interrupt F-P in the middle of a clause.

(49) **M-J:** *fi həla:t kiti:ra gidan lil-tafakkuk/ ʔammalan mumkin il-be:t nafsu bardu . . .*

‘There are different cases of disintegration. First maybe the home itself is also . . .’

**F-D:** *mumkin yibʔa gaww il-be:t ʔa:rid*

‘The atmosphere at home may be repulsive.’

This is another example of an overlap. M-J pauses after *bardu* ‘also’, and F-D clarifies and summarises his point, without any threat to his face.

The following are two examples of interruption:

(50) **M-J:** *fikrat iṣ-ṣala:ba in-nafsiyya/ yaʕni iṭ-ṭiḥ bi-yiṭhammil walla ma-b-yiṭhammil-fi/fi ʔatfa:l ʕanduhum/ yaʕni fi haʕa:fa fil mawaḍi:ʕ di/ wi fi ʔatfa:l mumkin bi-yiṣtaḥmilu/ wi yiḡawmu/ ʔila ʔa:xiru// bas fi ha:ga tanya yimkin ʔaʕa:rit liha dukto:ra sahinnda/ wi hiyya fikrat il-faqr/ yaʕni ʔistiḡla:l ha:za il-faʔr il-mawgu:d ʕand il-fataya:t do:l . . .*

‘The concept of psychological strength refers to whether the child can bear his circumstances or not. There are children . . . I mean there are children who are weak in that respect. Other children can put up with this and can struggle against it etc. but there is something else that perhaps Dr Shahinda referred to, which is the concept of poverty. I mean taking advantage of the poverty of these girls . . . [This is the first part of a clause; the speaker is interrupted before he finishes the sentence.]’

**F-D:** *ʔana ba-ʕṭarid ʕala ha:ða ik-kala:m/ maʕr ʔu:l ʕumraha balad faʔi:ra.*

‘I object to what you have just said. Egypt has always been a poor country.’

**M-J:** *ʔismaḥi li-bass akammil ig-gumla . . .*

‘Just allow me to finish my sentence . . . [This should be modified by an adjectival demonstrative *di* this, which the speaker could not say because he was interrupted again.]’

**F-D:** *wi ʔu:l ʕumraha balad faʔi:ra/ ʕumrina kunna bi-nismaʕ ʕan banatna fil-fa:riʕ//*

‘And Egypt has always been a poor country. We never heard of our girls living in the streets.’

M-J is interrupted by F-D twice in the middle of the sentence and she states clearly that she objects to his claims. First, M-J realises he is being interrupted and he asks her to allow him to finish his sentence. However, F-D interrupts him again and continues with her argument that she does not agree with him. F-D’s assertiveness is clear in her interruptions and her general postulations about Egypt.



- (51) **F-D:** *il-ḡaxras da b-yifaḡḡal bint ḡandaha ḡarbaḡ sini:n wi humwa ma-b-yiḡtaḡal-f le:h // yaḡni ḡayzi:n . . .*  
 Why does this dumb man make a 4-year-old girl work for him while he does not work? So we want . . .'  
**M-J:** *ḡihna b-nitkallim ḡan system ḡigtima:ḡi . . .*  
 'We are speaking about a social system . . .'

In this example, M-J interrupts F-D again in the middle of the clause, by reminding her of the aim of the conversation that he thinks that F-D may have digressed from.

Note the following example from programme 1 in the series 'The constitution dialogue', in which there is only one woman and three men. The woman interrupts the man when she does not like what he is saying, and asserts her identity by reminding him that she is a professor of law and knows exactly what she is talking about. Her assertive way is defined by her interruption and by the man's restating that he already knows her occupation.

- (52) *ḡismah li- / ḡana dokto:ra fil-qanu:n*  
 Allow me/ I professor in law  
 'Excuse me, I am a professor of law.'

*ḡismah li-* is not used in this context politely but as a device of defiance. The man does indeed back down and shows his solidarity by saying:

- (53) *laḡa l-ḡafu ya dokto:ra.*  
 No forgiveness voc professor  
 'Yes of course, forgive me, professor.'

By using her professional title he is also emphasising her status and acknowledging her power.

In the last example below, from programme 1 in the series 'Before you are held accountable', which discusses different forms of marriage in the Arab world, a male religious scholar seeks help from the female presenter because he was interrupted twice by a female religious scholar.

- (54) **Male religious scholar:** *hiyya bi-tḡaḡiḡni: dilwaḡti/miḡḡa:rif akammil kala:mi/ ḡe:r raḡyi al-farḡ . . .*  
 'She is interrupting me. I cannot finish what I am saying. This is different from the opinion of legislative law . . .' [first part of a clause]

- (55) **Female religious scholar:** *argu:k tira:ḡiḡ al-qara:r al-ḡa:dir ḡan maglis al-buḡu:ḡ al-islā:miyya fil-azhar/ al-laḡi: ḡursila li wiza:rit al-ḡadl/ tarak li-ḡuli: al-amr min man yatawallu:na al-qara:r fi miḡr*

*al-batti fi ha:ða al-amr/ al-ra?yi al-laði yahza bi-ağlabiyya laysa xaða?  
 ġala l-mustawa al-farġi: /*

'Please revise the decision of the research syndicate at Al-Azhar University, which was sent to the ministry of justice. The decision gave members of government the authority to decide the best way of dealing with the law. If a suggestion is endorsed by the majority then it cannot be wrong in legislative terms.'

I want to note that words such as *argu:k* 'please' and *ġismah li-* 'allow me' when used in Egypt in contexts such as talk shows are not considered polite terms but rather detaching and challenging ones. On the other hand, the expression *al-ġafu* 'forgive me' used by the male politician demonstrates negative politeness, as defined earlier in this chapter. Table 4.7 shows the total number of interruptions and overlaps initiated by men and women in all the data analysed in my study.

As in the example of Moroccan women bargaining, Egyptian women on talk shows do not appeal to solidarity but rather to power. They are indeed assertive.

I have not analysed interruption and assertiveness in detail here but instead wanted to give the reader a feel of the linguistic situation. I also wanted to argue that women and men are not two independent or homogeneous entities. They interact on a daily basis and when they do, it is not always gender that is the governing factor.

#### 4.8.4 Conclusion

In this study I argue that, first, there is a direct relation between the code used by speakers and the projection of identity, which is manifested clearly in the examples analysed. Therefore, it is not possible to measure the frequency of MSA features in the speech of women in the public sphere without understanding which part of their identity they are calling on. This is true of both men and women. The women in the programmes are as educated and as exposed to MSA as the men and they do not have any problem in using MSA.

*Table 4.7 Number of interruptions and overlaps initiated by women and men*

	Men	Women
Speakers	13	16
Interruption initiated by	27	33
Overlap initiated by	48	58

Second, code-switching is used by both men and women as a linguistic device to leave the utmost effect possible on the audience. Thus the speaker resorts to switching when doing so minimises the costs and maximises the rewards, since, as Myers-Scotton claims (1993: 110; 2006), this is the main aim of the speaker in most cases. Assertiveness goes hand in hand with the projection of identity on the part of the speaker.

The diglossic situation in Egypt can be used by women to show their authority and expertise and to appear emphatic and assertive. Once more I want to emphasise that in this study I do not aim at making generalisations, but rather at questioning them. Although talk shows are a special kind of data, they still represent women in the public sphere.

#### 4.9 THE SYMBOLIC USE OF LANGUAGE

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The symbolic significance of language has been and will be discussed throughout the book. In fact, most acts of language choice by both men and women are a symbolic act of some sort. If, for example, women are seen in a culture as a symbol of tradition and the transmitters of history, then they may want to preserve this role by using a specific variety, and not necessarily the most prestigious one.<sup>22</sup> Miller (2004) posits that in established Arab cities where the old urban vernacular has been replaced by a new one, it is older women who retain linguistic features of the old dialect. Still, in other situations of language contact and change, young women tend to acquire features faster than older women. Eckert (1998) states that one cannot make a generalisation like the one that posits that women are more or less conservative than men; it is only that women use ‘symbolic resources’ more than men to ‘establish membership and status’ (1998: 73). It could also be that women evaluate and use the symbolic resources differently.

An interesting example of the symbolic use of language is that by women in the Thonga community in South Africa; they are more respected in traditional Thonga culture than in Zulu culture. It is thus not surprising that they use the less prestigious language, Thonga, as a way of rebelling against the loss of power and respect which is associated with Zulu for them. Men, on the other hand, use the more prestigious Zulu language (Herbert 2002: 321–4).

In a study conducted by Hoffman (2006) about Berber language use by women, it is women who have the role of maintaining Berber and preserving it. Before discussing Hoffman’s study in detail, I will first give some background information about the linguistic situation in Morocco, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 5 but also needs to be outlined here.

Shown in Table 4.8 are the languages/varieties used in Morocco and their associations according to Sadiqi (2003a: 218–29).

Table 4.8 *Languages and varieties used in Morocco and their gender associations*

MSA	Moroccan colloquial Arabic	Berber varieties	French
The language of the high institution and usually associated with <i>men</i> rather than women because of the contexts in which it is used, and in which men play a prominent role.	The language associated with both <i>men and women</i> . It is used in the public and private domains. It is used in the media, in trade transactions, in education, in television soap operas and in films.	The language associated with <i>women</i> . There are more monolingual women who speak Berber varieties only than men. This may be due to the high illiteracy rate of women compared to men, to the use of Berber by mothers to their children, and to its association with home, folk culture and personal identity for Berbers in general. Men still use Berber but they are mostly bilingual in Berber languages and Moroccan Arabic. However, the contexts in which Berber languages are used are associated more with the private sphere, home and nostalgia than with the public one.	The language associated with <i>men and women</i> . It is a language linked to financial gain and economic opportunities. Note that urban upper- and middle-class men associate French with business and administration, while urban upper-middle class women associate it with everyday use and socialisation.

Sadiqi divides the use of language between men and women according to domains and contexts. It is appropriate in one particular context to use a specific variety or language and in another context to use a different one.

According to Hoffman, at a time when political and economic factors shape women's linguistic practices, it is still rural Berber women who carry the burden of speaking the language and remaining monolingual. If the language is to continue, it falls to women to pass it on because they are monolingual caregivers. The Tashelhit language community of south-western Morocco was specifically examined. Tashelhit Berber speakers reside in the Anti-Atlas mountains and Sous valley. Note that in public it is urban Berber men, who

are usually bilingual in Arabic (Standard and colloquial) and Berber languages, who are the prominent figures in the Amazigh rights movement for valorising and preserving the language (Demnati 2001, cited in Hoffman 2006: 146). The reasons why these women are practically monolingual and do not speak any Arabic, even though this affects their access to resources, is because of the closer relation they have to the land. In the Anti-Atlas mountains, women are the agriculturalists and men are considered unfit to farm but more suited for clean city work (2006: 156). Note that although men are not attached to the land they are still attached to the language, since it serves as a symbol of belonging to a tribe and a community.

Hoffman discusses the example of a study done on Mexican Nahuatl women by Hill and Hill (1986; Hill 1987), in which it was demonstrated that women use their heritage language more than men and are expected to do so by both men and women. The same is true for the Berber women analysed. They use fewer Arabic loan words and borrowings than men even when they are familiar with Arabic, especially when counting and identifying colours, two domains where Arabic prevails with males. These women are 'romanticised' by men and considered the carriers of heritage. Their language is seen as pure. They use high pitch and loud volume index, which is seen as denoting femaleness, confidence, boldness, assertiveness and bravado (2006: 158, 159). These are all features that are supposed to be lacking in Arab women. Such features are used in popular music, as performed by Fatima Tabaamrant, where high pitch indexes and a roughness in women are admired. Although females in that community are seen as being authentic, they are also known for having very poor schooling, and being completely detached from the Arabic-speaking community, which may be economically superior.

In a similar vein, the following study conducted by Walters is an example of a study that reveals how language can be used as one of the symbolic resources for women. Walters (1996b), in his paper 'Gender, identity, and the political economy of language', studies a diglossic community and a bilingual one simultaneously. He studied foreign wives coming from England, Canada or the USA married to Tunisian men and living in Tunisia. These wives have integrated themselves into a new community. To some extent their status in this community is predetermined by certain factors, such as them being native speakers of English and their husbands' position in this community, as well as their in-laws' positions. However, there is still room for these women to shape and modify their status. The language used for communication can serve as one of the symbolic means of modifying a status.

The women have three if not four options. There is the option of not learning any new language and communicating in English, which is not practical. There is the option of learning MSA, and there is also the option of using French, which is supposed to be the language of educated Arabs in Tunisia, thus a more prestigious language than TCA; or they can use the Tunisian col-

loquial dialect, which is in practice the best instrumental language available to them for their daily lives. By learning TCA they can do their shopping, communicate with their in-laws and get involved in Tunisian culture in different ways and probably to different degrees. The women generally spoke French well. Some also knew some TCA, in response to the linguistic demands and possibilities of daily personal and professional life in ways that are profoundly linked to their class positions and family situations as well as their status as educated native speakers of English. French, on the other hand, was associated with economic market forces and economic pressure, since French could enable them to find jobs, or perhaps because for them French is more related to English and thus easier to learn – French is a Romance language written in Roman script, unlike Arabic (MSA and TCA), which is a Semitic language. Besides, there are no sufficient teaching facilities for Tunisian Arabic, unlike, for example, SA, which, as was said earlier, may be another option for these women. The interesting thing about this study is that these women are expected to learn Tunisian Arabic to interact with family and friends, but some still prefer French as a symbolic means of keeping their distance and not getting involved in family conflicts. French also serves as a symbol of their power and prestige. One of the goals of the study was to highlight the differences in outcome despite the similarities in the social positions of these women.

Hoffman claims that women in general, as both individuals and members of groups, either initiate language change, by adopting an instrumental language and abandoning their ancestral one, as occurred in Gal's study of Austria (1978a), or decide to take on the role of authentic symbols of heritage. They become so not just through language but also through their dress codes, cooking and songs. The situation Hoffman describes is similar to that of female Peruvian Quechua speakers. These women can keep their hold and control over their status in their communities by maintaining the language (cf. Harvey 1994: 55).

It is worth noting that women's use of language may be symbolic in some cases, but women themselves could be regarded as a symbol, and this is reflected in language. For example, in literature, poetry and songs, Egypt is presented as a woman whose honour men have to fight to reclaim or preserve (Baron 2005: 47). The city of Beirut is portrayed as a woman in Nizār Qabbānī's poem 'Bayrūt sitt al-dunyā' 'Beirut, mistress of the world'. Related to this, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2004: 167) suggest that women are usually appointed to jobs that enhance a company's symbolic image, such as those of a secretary, flight attendant or receptionist. Being regarded as a symbol themselves implies that women are expected also to preserve the symbol by different means, and some of these means are related to language use and maintenance.

So far, all these studies have concentrated on women. Indeed, as will become

clear in Chapter 5, language is a powerful symbol for both men and women. For example, Eisikovits (1987) analysed the speech of working-class male adolescents in Sydney, and found that there is a change in their language when talking to close friends of the same age and when talking to the interviewer. With the interviewer they use even more non-standard forms intentionally as a symbol of their independence and anger at the social norms. They talk 'with defiance and bravado' (1987: 56–114).

To conclude, I will highlight the points discussed:

- The association of women with tradition, is not absolute but can change, in the same way as women's role in a specific community is subject to change.
- The linguistic choices available to women are also not absolute but are limited by a number of factors, such as their access to a language or variety, the context and domain in which they can use this language or variety, and their ability to learn a different language or variety (as is the case with the Anglophone wives of Tunisian men discussed above).
- Language can be used as a symbolic resource for both men and women, although women have been studied more than men in relation to language.

#### 4.10 GENDER UNIVERSALS RE-EXAMINED

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If we re-examine the gender universals discussed by Holmes (1998), then indeed we will find that in the Arab world, as is the case in the west and indeed in all cultures of the world, women are still subordinate to men in one way or another, and this fact is reflected in language use. However, it is wrong to assume that women do not fight directly or indirectly in all cultures to assert their power, perhaps sometimes in an unexpected way.

Kharraki's (2001) study about Moroccan women bargaining and being less polite than men challenges one language universal. Likewise, data presented on Egyptian women and men in talk shows exemplifies how women can interrupt, challenge and control the floor as much as men if not more. Again, this challenges another language universal.

There are numerous ways in which women in the Arab world can invoke power. One of them is age. Eckert (2003: 369) also alludes to the fact that gender has to be studied in relation to age. Arab women in general gain status by aging. Abu-Lughod (1987) mentioned, for example, that Bedouin women in the western desert in Egypt tend to show their faces more and veil less when they have higher status or when they are older. A mother's status is much higher than a young woman's. The formidable power of mothers in the Arab world is reflected in language to a great extent. Mothers, by praying for or cursing their children, are thought to be able to give happiness or

inflict misery. This is done through language. A mother's prayers for her son, for example, are believed to have a powerful effect, and the opposite is likewise true. To give an example, a 1960s Egyptian film called *al-Shumū' al-sawdā'* ('Black Candles') asserts the linguistic power of mothers. The film is about a poet who is blind as the result of an accident. He cannot save his girlfriend from capital punishment because his blindness prevents him from finding evidence that would prove her innocence. In a moment of despair, the blind poet tells his mother desperately and tearfully that this is the first time in his life that he feels disabled and weak. He breaks down and starts cursing his fate. At that point the mother is moved, and looking into the sky she says:

- (56) *'ya rabb/ daṣma min ḡalb ṣumru ma faqad il- ḡamal wala il-ḡima:n bi:k'*  
 Voc God/ prayer from heart never neg lost the hope nor the-faith  
 in-you  
 'Oh God. This is a prayer from a heart that never lost hope or belief in you'.

Two minutes later in the film, the poet looks at his hands and shouts, 'I can see! I can see my hand!' Although this may sound absurd to a westerner, most Egyptians do not find the events absurd at all, but very believable. In a quarrel between a mother and her children, a mother can always issue the threat of cursing her children, which is almost as effective as issuing them a threat of death. Thus words spoken by a mother are powerful and must be taken seriously.

In the classic Egyptian novel *al-Watad* ('The Tent Peg'), by Khayrī Shalabī (1986), we have a powerful rural, illiterate mother who holds the family together. Even though the husband is alive, he is never at the forefront; decisions are taken mainly by the mother. The mother's power is reflected through her language choice. Since in literature a writer can redefine reality with impunity, in the last chapter of the novel the uneducated peasant mother, Fāṭimah, speaks in MSA. The children reply to her in ECA, although we know that this could not have happened in reality. Because it would be almost impossible for an uneducated peasant mother on her deathbed to start speaking pure MSA, Egyptian readers also take this use of MSA to be indicative of the power mothers have; recall the discussion of the association of MSA with authority. Similarly, the son's reply is always in ECA since he does not have any power over the mother. Note the following example in which the eldest son tries to placate the mother by telling her not to take what his young brother said seriously:

- (57) صلي على النبي يا حاجة بقى..سيبك منه هو يعني الكلام عليه جمر ك؟  
*ṣalli ḡala in-nabi: ya ḡagga baḡa/ si:bik minnu/*  
 Pray for the-prophet voc ḡagga be/ leave-you from-him



*huwwa yaʕni ik-kala:m ʕale:h gumruk/*  
 he mean the-talk on-him customs

'Invoke God's blessing on the Prophet, hajja, please do not think of what he said. He is just talking nonsense. His words do not count.'

The elder son tries to calm his mother by asking her to invoke God's blessing on the Prophet and not to take heed of what her younger son said in moments of anger. He speaks in ECA. By asking her to pray to the Prophet he takes the initiative in the reconciliation that the mother seems to refuse by replying in MSA.

It is noteworthy that the son does not address his mother as 'mother', but as *ḥagga*, although she has not made the *ḥadž* 'pilgrimage', which brings us back to the power and status affiliated to terms of address. In contrast to the 'mister master' situation that we discussed in section 4.5, here it is the son who acknowledges his mother's power and status, which she gained by age and which makes her not just a mother but a *ḥagga*. The relation is in fact very formal, and it is the son who cares about preserving her face and not vice versa.

The mother then starts telling her children her life story and relates her achievements; this is all done in MSA.

- (58) لقد دخلت هذه الدار وهي مجرد جدران. كانوا لا يوافقون على زواج أبيكم مني.. و كنت-  
 وحيدة أبوي.. ولم أكن فلاحاً. فزرعتهما أشجاراً و خضروات.. و قال جدكم لأبيكم كيف  
 تنزوج بنت أرملة لا عائلة لها؟

*laqad daxaltu ha:ða ad-da:r wa hiya mugarrad gudra:n/*  
 Already enter- this the-house and she only walls  
 1sg-perf

*ka:nu: la: yuma:fiq:n ʕala zama:g ʔabi:kum minni:/*  
 be-3mpl- neg 3mpl-agree on marriage father-yours from-me  
 perf

*wa kuntu wahi:dat ʔabamayyi/*  
 and be-1sg-perf lonely parents-mine

*wa lam ʔakun falla:ħa/ fazaraʕtuhuma: ʔaʕga:ran wa xuḍrawa:t*  
 and neg 1sg-be peasant/ plant-1sg-they trees-acc and vegetables

*wa qa:la gaddukum li-ʔabi:kum/ kayfa*  
 and say-3msg-perf grandfather- to-father-your-pl how  
 your-pl

*tatazawwag bint ʔarmala la: ʕa:ʔila laħa:/*  
 2msg-marry girl widow neg family to-her

'I had come to your grandfather's house when it was just walls. They did not approve of my marriage to your father. I was an only child and I was no peasant then. Since then, I have planted trees and vegetables. Your grandfather then asked your father how he can marry a mere widow with no family.'

This is an example of the hidden power of women in Egypt. Women may compensate for the loss of power in some contexts by asserting their power in others, for example with their children. Again, although this is a piece of fiction, it is one that tries to mirror society and a countryside community, in which the mother runs the household and presumably, though not realistically, speaks MSA.

In different contexts women may have more power than men. As the studies above show, in Morocco women seem to be more assertive when bargaining than men. For example, in Egypt a woman with her male driver has more power and can be more assertive than her husband. So while with a husband the women may or may not abide by all the universals discussed above, such as hedging, using tag questions, interrupting less, caring about face etc., this may not be the case with a son, a subordinate man or a vendor. With what women consider their social inferiors they manage face differently. More studies are definitely needed to examine the language of women in different contexts. Also, in some parts of the Arab world there is a hierarchy that cannot be ignored which may depend on tribe, class, education and so on.

Another way in which women can reclaim their power is by reversing old sayings to their benefit. Hachimi (2001) gives the example of Moroccan women who are now aware of the sexist implications of folk wisdom in Morocco. They reverse the meaning of old sayings. For example, *klma dlkyalat* 'women's word', which is an expression that is used to mean that a woman's promise cannot be taken seriously, is now used by women in Morocco to emphasise that a promise will be carried out beyond doubt.

Indeed, language universals are culture- or community-specific to a great extent, in the same way as politeness strategies and face-threatening strategies are also both culture- or community-specific and context-specific.

I will conclude this section with a quotation by Kapchan (1996: 2), who conducted an anthropological study on women who work in the market in Beni Mellal, a provincial capital in Morocco with a population of 350,000. Kapchan concluded that women use the same linguistic strategies to gain power and status in the market as men. She posits about one of the women who sell goods in the market:

She speaks of the cure of the viscera. She ingests her product on the spot to demonstrate its safety and efficacy, and offers her audiences samples. She swears by God, invokes the authority of the written word, and encourages her audience to put their belief in the herbs and to leave the rest, the responsibility to her. Her presence in the Suq is anomalous. She is a mother and breadwinner, aggressive and crafty in the skills of the marketplace. She speaks to men as well as to women forthrightly and with authority, using public genres of speech.

#### 4.11 CONCLUSION

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Analysts studying the relation between language and gender should begin with the assumption that gender will rarely stand alone but will interact in complex ways with other social variables, both fixed and flexible, such as class, education, ethnicity etc. Likewise, they should assume that the range of behaviours engaged in by women and men are not independent – no more Mars and Venus – but overlap and are highly contextualised.

In comparing and contrasting sources and methods used to study gender by linguists, it has been concluded that the sources used by linguists in the Arab world are varied to some degree (from obituaries to women in the market), but much research remains to be done. For example, we need more studies that examine job interviews, like the one that examines verbal interactions between men and women using recordings of several job interviews in Dutch companies (Bogaers 1998). Studies that concentrate on the media and how women are represented there linguistically are also needed.

When it comes to the methods used in studying language and gender, one finds that linguists studying the Arab world use the same techniques as their western counterparts: they concentrate on quantitative studies, they use social correlates and statistics, and finally they also try to overcome the observer's paradox (cf. Coates 1993 for an overview of some western studies on gender). However, the linguists discussed above, as well as others studying gender in the western world, could not overcome the observer's paradox completely. As Haeri (1992: 106) posits, 'Investigating interactions between Iconic values based on sex differences and social structure is an inherently difficult task, and the data that would be required to examine completely the issue are not available.'

In addition, linguists studying language and gender need to expand their horizons and include more studies that examine gender in relation to code-switching, like, for example, the study done by Walters (1996b) in Tunisia, and indeed the diglossic situation should be considered more in studies done on the Arab world. Further, pragmatic studies that examine the language of men and women in relation to politeness are needed. For example, Keating (1998) studied women's roles in constructing status hierarchies, by examining honorific language in Pohnpei, Micronesia. Similar studies need to be done on the Arab world; although Arabic does not have true honorifics, it has other means of showing status and hierarchies.

It was also concluded in this chapter that there are two main approaches to studying gender from a linguistic perspective. The binary approach to gender assumes that men and women, because of the way they are brought up and treated in their community, are two different groups and as such there are differences in their linguistic performances. The construction approach assumes that men and women together form and are formed by a community, which in

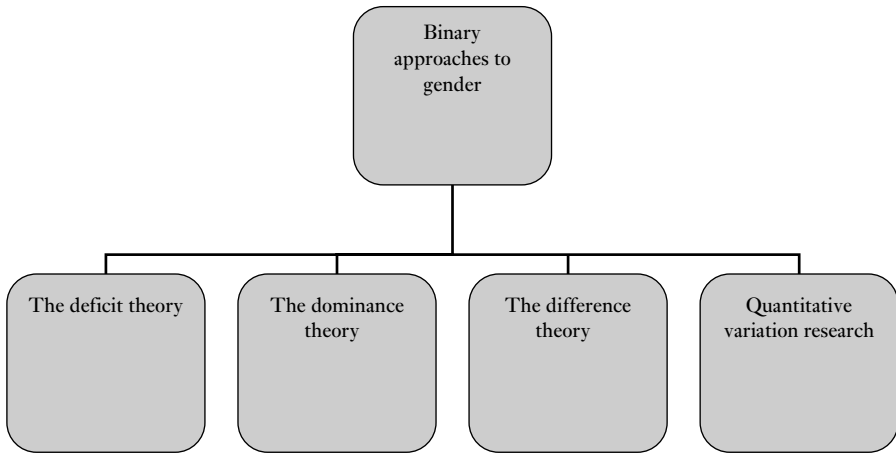


Chart 4.1 Binary approaches to gender studies

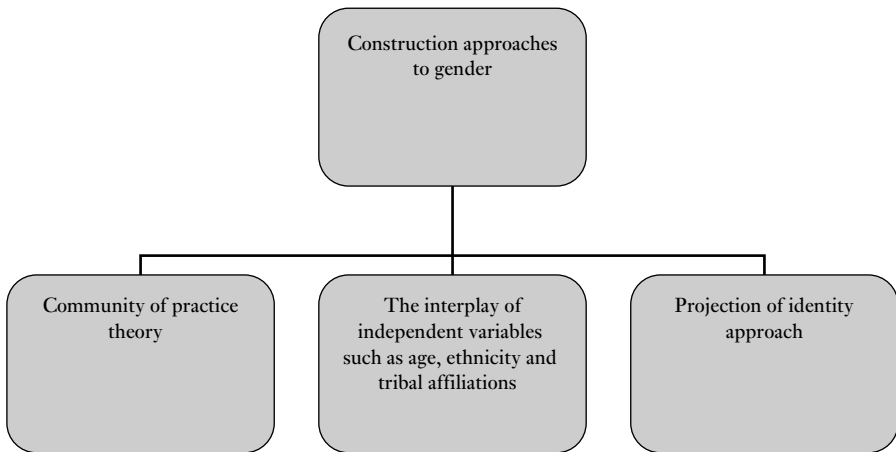


Chart 4.2 Construction approaches to gender studies

turn is constructed and modified by independent fixed and flexible variables. Individuals, whether men or women, within this community project an identity on themselves which is usually reflected in their linguistic performance. These two approaches are summarised in Charts 4.1 and 4.2

The myth of men and women as two altogether different entities exists because we nourish it. Reality is different but indeed also shaped by the myth (cf. Cameron 2008).

When discussing politeness, names and terms of address, and women as narrators, it was clear that extra-linguistic independent variables, both fixed and flexible, can help explain the sociolinguistic performance of both men and women. Evidence from data from talk shows as well as evidence from different studies that concentrate on the performance of women in the Arab

world reveal the intricate nature of concepts such as politeness and variation in language use.

The social status of women continues to change, especially in the Arabic world, as the result of the exposure of women to the outside world, education, work and so on (cf. Haeri 1996a; Kapchan 1996; Daher 1999; Sadiqi 2003a).

## NOTES

1. Source: World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ny.gdp.pcap.cd>; last accessed 12 May 2019. Countries like Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates depend largely on a huge number of imported workers, some from elsewhere in the Arab world and some from poorer developing countries.
2. The 1952 revolution will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.
3. Baron (2005) highlights the problem of translating terms such as honour, *faraf*, from Arabic. The term 'honour' may entail high rank, nobility, distinction, dignity etc. Arabs use the term 'honour' to refer to national honour. For example, it is common for a country to be seen metaphorically as a woman whose honour has to be preserved by its citizens.
4. Whether it was the norm at the beginning of the twentieth century for women to address their husbands as mister + first name is difficult to prove. In old Egyptian films of the 1930s and 1940s, women are divided into those who use a term of address when addressing their husband and those who do not. Men are also divided into those who use a term of address with or without the wife's first name and those who do not. There are examples of men using terms such as: *ḥagga* 'one who does the pilgrimage', *ʔumm* 'mother' + first child's name and *ha:nim* 'lady' with no first name attached to it. See also note 6 below.
5. It was established earlier that women in the Arab world are not powerless and there are different kinds of power. However, the example from Mahfouz is indeed exaggerated and shows an extreme case of tyranny on the part of men.
6. In Egyptian films of the 1930s and 1940s, aristocrats never addressed their wives by their first names but as *ha:nim* 'lady' or the like. See note 4 above.
7. It is worth noting that witchcraft and magic is more common in African Arab countries than Asian Arab ones. Thus, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia and Sudan specifically rely on these forces and devise ways of dealing with them more than Gulf countries do. This may be related to the African identity of these countries more than their Arab one.
8. Pre-Islamic poetry usually starts with predictable themes, such as a man praising his tribe or his sword, which is a symbol of his strength, pride and honour. In addition, a poet usually recalls the glorious past with nostalgia and feels sad for the loss of home and family.
9. See Chapter 3 for a discussion of communities, language variation and religion.
10. Unrequited love is one of the most prevalent themes of Arabic popular music.
11. David (in Arabic, *damu:d*) would be the name used. Although Muslims could refer to David too, since he is mentioned in the Qur'an as one of the Prophets, Jews possibly refer to him more frequently.
12. It is difficult for someone who is not a Bedouin to have an insider status. She, however, shares specific characteristics with the Bedouins, such as her Arab origin and her religion. She also had been familiar with the culture of Bedouins early on when she travelled with her father. Being an insider in a Bedouin society is a complex issue (cf. Al-Torki and El-Solh 1988).
13. Both Abu-Lughod and Haeri were women and both were culturally Muslim.

14. Since this community practises polygamy, a senior wife is usually the oldest and first wife of the man and is usually given more status than other wives.
15. Examples of this form are *yīṭlaṣ* 'to go out', 'to climb the stairs', *yīṣrab* 'to drink', *yīṣtaḥ* 'to open'.
16. In all the above studies a standard language, whether German, Spanish or English, is basically equivalent to the most prestigious variety in Arab countries, that is, Cairene Arabic in Egypt, Damascene Arabic in Syria etc. In fact, in the Arab world there is only one standard, MSA, as opposed to the different vernaculars.
17. Note that this is a study of language change and not just of variation.
18. Studies that concentrate on the lexical variation between men and women include Hurreiz (1978), which compares and contrasts the use of specific expressions by men and women in formal and informal situations in Khartoum. Morpho-syntactic studies include Jabeur's study (1987) of diminutives in the urban dialect of Rades. In addition, Owens and Bani Yasin (1987), in their study of the Bani Yasin tribe of Jordan, examined the use of concord in the speech of men and women. Phonetic, phonological and prosodic features have been studied by a number of linguists. For example, the consonant *q* used in Arabic and its realisations have been studied by Kanakri (1984) in relation to Jordanian Arabic. Jabeur (1987) in his study of Rades also examined the realisation of *q* as *q* in the urban dialect and as *g* in the rural one.
19. For a full description of the phenomenon see Fleisch (1971).
20. This study does not analyse inter-dialectal communication, communication between people who speak different dialects in the Arab world. This is indeed a topic worth a study of its own.
21. Note that the speakers do not necessarily accommodate their speech to that of the presenters. Thus, the accommodation theory (Giles et al. 1987), though relevant in any kind of communication, does not play a major role in this study.
22. It is worth noting that women will not necessarily accept the role assigned to them by a community. There may be a difference between what women really do with language and what they are expected to do.

# Language policy and politics

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Standard Arabic speaking:

They have accused me of bareness in the prime of my youth.

I would that I were barren, so that I should not suffer the words  
of my enemies.

I have encompassed the book of God in word and meaning. And  
have not fallen short in any of its verses and exaltations.

I am the sea; in its depths pearls are hidden.  
Have they asked the diver for my shells?

I see the people of the west full of power and might.  
And many a people have risen to power through the power of  
their language.

Hāfiz Ibrāhīm (1871–1932)

In his poem about Arabic, by which he meant SA, Hāfiz Ibrāhīm sums up the feelings of the majority of Arab intellectuals about the language. Arab governments in their struggle for freedom from colonising powers often appealed to language as a shield for their identity.<sup>1</sup> It is indeed true that the power of language reflects the power of its people. Still, the struggle is not always fair, nor is it always fruitful. In February 2007, the Arab League (AL) held a conference to discuss the future of SA with emphasis on teaching it to children. The conference was the collaborative work of many parties: the Arab Council of Childhood and Development, the AL, the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organisation, UNESCO, the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development and the Islamic Organisation for Education, Science

and Culture (ISESCO). The reporter of the event for *al-Ahram Weekly* wrote, “‘The Arab Child’s Language in the Age of Globalisation”, a three-day conference held at the Arab League last week, focused on the role of language in shaping identity and how to promote its unity among future generations’ (Abdel Moneim 2007). Indeed, the conference echoed powerful words written by Ḥāfiz Ibrāhīm (above) almost a century earlier.

Note that throughout this chapter the distinction between MSA and CA will not be maintained and both will be referred to as SA. This is because the chapter deals mainly with ideologies related to identity, politics and language policy, and since native speakers do not make this distinction it would be both confusing and imprecise to make it in this chapter specifically.

## 5.1 THE POWER OF LANGUAGE

Language can be used as an instrument for communication, but it can also be used as a symbol of one’s identity. If we just think of language as a means of communication then we underestimate its power. Language policies may reflect a conflict within a country or may trigger one. Thomason (2001) mentions the fact that many a time an armed conflict is caused by language policies. For example, in 1976 there were anti-apartheid riots in Soweto, a township outside Johannesburg, in South Africa. The riots were triggered by a government decision to enforce the law that required the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in some schools. In Sri Lanka there were also riots triggered by the conflict about the use of Sinhalese and the use of Tamil. According to Thomason, ‘Language serves as a powerful symbol for discontented groups’ (2001: 47).<sup>2</sup>

This symbolic significance of language can help explain why advocates for SA, which is not the spoken dialect of any Arab country, struggled to maintain it amidst colonisation, modern technology and globalisation. Yet the path of SA advocates was not always smooth, and the differences among different Arab countries in their attitudes towards it are as different as the history and environment of each country.

To be able to fully appreciate the discussion on language policy in the Arab world, one has to turn to political science, sociology, psychology, anthropology and history as well as sociolinguistics. However, this chapter aims to give a snapshot of different language policies in the Arab world, implemented ones and even unimplemented ones, and the ever-evolving relation between language, ideology, nation and state in the Arab world. The chapter starts, in section 5.2, with a definition of language policy. Section 5.3 examines the general concept of nation and juxtaposes it with that of state. Then the relation between the Arab nation and language is discussed. Because both ideologies and policies in the Arab world have been shaped by the history of colonisation



in the area, mainly British and French colonisation, in section 5.5 I compare and contrast French and British patterns of colonisation and their impact on ideology and policies. Some countries are examined in detail; Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, Israel and the Palestinian territories. The linguistic situation in Libya and the Gulf countries is also referred to (section 5.6), and in section 5.7 there is also a discussion of Arabic language academies and their main objectives. Section 5.8 provides a case study of two interviews with the former president of Yemen and the current president of Syria. Both countries are still going through violent political turmoil, and the relation between SA and politics is highlighted in this section. Section 5.9 concentrates on the concept of linguistic rights with reference to the Arab world, and finally English and globalisation are discussed in section 5.10, before the conclusion to this chapter.

Note that, as was mentioned in Chapter 1, Arab countries are diglossic. This will again add more complexity to the language policies adopted in the Arab world. The languages in competition for official status may include a colloquial, SA, a foreign language and/or a language spoken by a significant minority such as Berbers in Morocco. However, in the twenty-three countries in which Arabic is the sole or joint official language, it is SA that has this status rather than any of the vernaculars.

## 5.2 WHAT IS LANGUAGE POLICY?

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I will start the discussion of language policy with a quotation from Schiffman (1996) which sums up beautifully the main components of language policies in the Arab world in particular and in the world at large.

Language policy is primarily a social construct. It may consist of various elements of an explicit nature – juridical, judicial, administrative, constitutional and/or legal language may be extant in some jurisdictions, but whether or not a polity has such explicit text, policy as a culture construct rests primarily on other conceptual elements – belief systems, attitudes, myths – the whole complex that we are referring to as linguistic culture, which is the sum totality of ideas, values, beliefs, attitudes, prejudices, religious stricture, and all the other cultural ‘baggage’ that speakers bring to their dealings with language from their background. (1996: 276)

To illustrate Schiffman’s definition, consider these two anecdotal incidents, one mentioned by Spolsky (2004) and the other by a Syrian acquaintance of mine. Spolsky (2004: 1) starts the first chapter in his book about language policy with the story of a 56-year-old Turkish woman who was refused a

heart transplant by a doctor in a clinic in Hanover, Germany with the claim that her lack of German, which is common among some Turkish immigrants in Germany, would act as an impediment to her recovery process. The clinic supported the doctor's decision by explaining that because the woman did not speak German, she might not understand the doctor's orders, and might thus take the wrong medicine. As Spolsky argues, doctors and clinics make language policy 'when they decide how to deal with language diversity'. The doctor, because of his 'linguistic culture', was in fact implementing a policy in which Turkish immigrants have to learn German, and are expected to do so.

When discussing the role of SA in education in Syria, a Syrian acquaintance spoke about how crucial SA is in Syria and how vigorously schools promote it. He then recalled his childhood years in primary education in Damascus in the 1980s when his maths teacher lowered his grade by two marks although he had answered all the questions correctly. When he asked why this was the case, the teacher then answered that he had made one mistake in SA by giving a noun the wrong case marking. Although this was a maths exam and not an Arabic one, and although the student did not even make a spelling mistake but a grammatical one, and a very common one at that, his grade was lowered by the teacher. The teacher was again implementing a policy here, by deciding to highlight the importance of SA. These two anecdotes suggest that policy, as Schiffman posits, is a cultural construct. It is the sum of beliefs, attitudes, values and even misconceptions at times that individuals have accumulated from their community.

However, language policy may also 'consist of various elements of an explicit nature – juridical, judicial, administrative, constitutional and/or legal'. Language policy usually refers to 'a set of planned interventions supported and enforced by law and implemented by a government agency' (Spolsky 2004: 5). The key factor in language policy is the power and legitimacy to enforce a policy. Power in that case refers to both political power and economic power. Language policies always try to push forward an official language.

An official language is usually the language used in government offices in official contexts and documents, and the constitution clearly states that it is official. As Wright (2004: 243) puts it, it is a language with 'muscles'; it is supported by the institution and by a legal written document; it is something *de jure*. A national language, on the other hand, is the language of cultural and social unity. It could be used as a symbol to unite and identify a nation or a group of people (Holmes 1992: 52). It does not necessarily have to have an official status.

Factors related directly to language policy are language ideologies, language practices and language planning. The three factors will be defined below.

### 5.2.1 Language ideologies

The term ‘language ideologies’ refers to the belief system that is prevalent in a specific community about language and language use. Ideologies are perhaps the ‘cultural constructs’ that Schiffman refers to in the quote above. These beliefs influence language practices and motivate them. As was clear from the two anecdotes above, ideologies are crucial for the implementation of a policy. They usually form the basis for language planning processes and, in fact, can also form the basis for modifying language policies (Spolsky 2004: 14). Although in most countries there is more than one ideology, one ideology is usually dominant. Spolsky posits that ‘language ideology is language policy with the manager left out, what people think should be done. Language practices on the other hand, are what people actually do’ (2004: 15). Where people use a language is important in its maintenance. Thus, there are domains for language use such as home, workplace, places of religious worship, government offices, schools and so on (Spolsky 2004:43). Language practices are sustained in these domains.

The difference between practice and ideology is significant in the Arab world especially. In 2008, for example, Māzin al-Mubarāk, a scholar of SA and a member of the Language Academy in Syria, called for a reinforcement of the status of SA, and for an effort to be made to eradicate gradually the use of the colloquial in Syria. The plan to rid Syria of all colloquials, according to him, included awareness programmes for the whole family to teach parents how to deal with challenges of introducing SA at home with their children; making sure newspapers have a section with full case marking for children to read and learn from; improving the SA of TV and radio presenters and newsreaders; increasing the number of songs, plays and films in SA as opposed to those in colloquial; and encouraging children’s competitions for writing poetry, novels and short stories in SA by offering prizes. Al-Mubarāk even went as far as suggesting that both the public and private sectors in Syria should start refusing work presented to them in colloquial even if this work involved soap operas, advertisements or signposts. Al-Mubarāk’s ideology may be in line with the political agenda of Syria as well as a belief in the slogan ‘one nation, one language’, which will be discussed in section 5.3. However, his ideology is to a great extent a symbolic one which is almost impossible to implement, given that the colloquial is the spoken language used by Syrians in most domains including home, group interaction, schools (if not an SA class), and in most soap operas and songs.

On a similar note, at the conference referred to at the beginning of this chapter, which took place in February 2007 and was concerned with the future of SA, a reporter stated the following:

ISESCO Secretary-General Abdel Aziz Al-Twigrii spoke of ‘language pollution’, the condition whereby the influence of foreign languages

– those of economically predominant countries – corrupts Arabic, especially among children. One study released at the conference found that the language of advertising and the commercial world has a corrupting effect – with the use of colloquial and foreign words written in Arabic script. Another, carried out on Libyan children, found that dialect and foreign expressions were far preferable among them than SA. This can undermine the language in use for 15 centuries and leave Arabs exposed to ‘cultural invasion’; it is a mistake to let dialect prevail at the expense of the Arabic tongue. (Abdel Moneim 2007)

The last postulation in the above quotation – ‘it is a mistake to let dialect prevail at the expense of the Arabic tongue’ – is indeed significant. Dialect, meaning the colloquial Arabic of Arab countries, is considered a corrupted version of SA. SA is the ‘Arabic tongue’, the real language; dialects are not Arabic. The postulation ignores the fact that dialects are in fact the spoken languages in all Arab countries while SA is not the spoken dialect of any of the Arab countries mentioned. Ideology is again tied closely to politics. Perhaps ideology in both the Syrian case discussed above and the conference reported here do not adhere to reality. However, an ideology is significant even if it is a ‘romantic notion’ like the one mentioned here: that SA can prevail and be the daily language used by all Arabs. As Hill and Mannheim (1992: 382) argue, language ideology may remind us that cultural concepts analysed by linguists are usually subjective and contentious. Language ideologies especially are used as political, religious or social weapons in conflicts, as will become clear throughout this chapter (cf. Shieffelin et al. 1998).

Related to language ideologies is the symbolic function of language as opposed to the its instrumental function. Suleiman (2003: 174) discusses the power of the symbol. As stated earlier, the fact that SA has survived for so long even though it is not a spoken language may have to do with its power as a symbol. For example, Algeria tried to impose SA as a symbol of its identity. French in Algeria was associated with the colonial power and the seven-year war to gain independence. To assert its identity Algeria imposed SA. On the other hand, French had been an instrumental language for almost a century; France had been in Algeria since 1830 and Algeria was considered part of France. French had been imposed and used then to play the Arabs against the Berbers. It was the language used in government offices and schools and as a means of communication. The proper role of ‘Arabic’ had been among the issues in the struggle for independence long before the war began. Its declaration as an official language was almost purely symbolic – no texts and few teachers, as will become clear when discussing Algeria below. Part of Arabic’s symbolic import was also the Arab Muslim identity of a country with a significant Berber minority.

Language policies have to take into consideration both functions of

language, the symbolic and instrumental, otherwise the policy will be lacking. This is not an easy task, however, especially with the instrumental function that English is gaining worldwide. Note that according to Wright (2004) a language policy will not work if it clashes with feelings of identity and ties with the community.

Economic factors are also related to language ideologies. Governments can try to impose languages as much as they like, but unless their plans reflect the economic reality, they will not be appealing to the people. A language plan that does not include French in Morocco, as Morocco's main economic dealings are with the west, and especially France, will not reflect the economic reality.

Before concluding this section about ideology, I want to refer to a concept that will recur whenever one examines language policies, and which is related directly to ideology: the concept of language attitude. Walters (2006b: 651) posits that 'language attitudes are psychological states related in complex ways to larger abstract language ideologies'. Because of this, it is difficult to elicit the real attitude of people in a straightforward questionnaire. There are a number of methodological problems related to attitude, one of which is the representativeness of the data collected. For example, in the next sections some language attitude surveys will be mentioned which are mostly carried out on university students or high school students; neither group represents the majority of the population in Arab countries or necessarily the attitude of the masses of the population. Another methodological problem is that people who answer these questionnaires may answer from a prescriptive perspective: what they think they should do as opposed to what they actually do. The anecdote in Chapter 1 in which Ferguson met a scholar who claimed he only spoke SA, but then answered the phone in colloquial is a case in point (cf. Walters 2006b for a full discussion of methodological problems). As Walters puts it, for a methodology to be effective, the researcher has to be trained in psychology. However, such surveys are still useful as guidelines for a prevalent ideology or signs of group discontent with a specific policy.

### 5.2.2 Language practices

Language practices were juxtaposed with language ideologies in the last section. Practices refer to the habitual selection that individuals make from their linguistic repertoire (Spolsky 2004: 9). Thus, faced with three words that mean 'computer' in Egypt, *al-ḥa:sib al-ʔa:li:*, *ḥasu:b* and *kompīyu:tar*, Egyptians will use *kompīyu:tar*. By doing so, they are consciously or unconsciously selecting a lexical item that will directly affect language policy. The sum of all lexical, morphological, syntactic and phonological patterns used by individuals comprises their language practices.

Language practices are sometimes more significant than language policies. If a policy works against language practices, there is no guarantee that it will

be successful. For a policy to be successful, it has to lay claim to both language practices and language ideologies. As said earlier, individuals in a community, their assumptions about language and their linguistic habits make a policy even when there is no written one (Spolsky 2004: 9).

### 5.2.3 Language planning

Language planning refers to the efforts to manage, modify or influence the habitual practice of individuals as part of a community. There are two kinds of language planning: status planning and corpus planning. Status planning refers to the process of selecting a language or variety for use. Corpus planning is the process by which the language or variety selected is codified, that is, choices are made to standardise spelling, grammar, lexicon etc. Spolsky (2004) gives the example of Serbians who wanted to codify their language by making sure Croatian elements were omitted and replaced by Serbian ones.

In multilingual countries, several languages compete to gain the status of an official language. But in practical terms assigning a language an official status is a costly task. It means that the government has to provide services and information in this language. In Canada, for example, a number of minorities would like their languages to gain the official status French has. These languages include Italian and Chinese. To plan for an official language (status planning), the planners have to bear in mind the function the language will have. They have to agree on the form of language that will be codified, and then they have to codify it, thus securing its grammar and vocabulary (corpus planning). Finally, they have to make sure that the language will be accepted and the attitude of the people using it will be positive (cf. Lambert 1999; Spolsky 2004).

Corpus planning is a complicated issue and if there is more than one language involved in the process, then the task is even more complicated. Lambert (1999) discusses the need for teaching materials and teachers trained in the languages concerned and in language teaching pedagogy. Then there is the problem of the selection of which language to teach at each educational level. This is usually subject to fierce political negotiation. There is also the need to layer the languages used in schools and provide instruction in different languages at different levels of the education system. Finally there is the issue of adult learning and designing a curriculum to fit adult needs (Lambert 1999: 21).

Thomason (2001) gives an example of how policy can be different from planning. In 1920 the state of Nebraska declared that English was its official language, at a time when German was used as the medium of education for some students. Because of anti-German feelings at the time of World War I, the state created this law. It was in fact never implemented.

To conclude this section, I would like to point out again that a policy does

not have to be written to be implemented and that a policy is not necessarily clear to all members of a community. For example, in the USA there is an implicit disagreement as to which policy is used. Some may argue that the USA adopts a monolingual policy since there is low level of recognition of any language other than English. Others may argue that the USA encourages multilingualism since there is legal official support of other languages. There is neither a written policy in the USA nor an agreement about which policy is being implemented (Spolsky 2004).

### 5.3 NATION AND STATE

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Guibernau (2007: 11) defines a nation as 'a human group conscious of forming a community, sharing a common culture, attached to a clearly demarcated territory, having a common past and a common project for the future, and claiming the right to rule itself'. Guibernau's definition is perhaps difficult to quantify since a perception of what constitutes a common culture, a common collective perspective of the future and a common feeling of autonomy is to a great extent subjective. Terms like 'culture' are also difficult to define. Would the culture of Kuwait have enough things in common with that of Tunisia? Or would Djibouti share a culture with Syria? It could be that Arab countries, for example, share some underlying psychological perception of values and beliefs. In the preceding chapter, values such as honour and modesty were discussed as underlying values that distinguish Arabs from westerners.

I do not aim to examine thoroughly what a nation is, but rather to give the reader an idea of how a nation could be defined. One of the major factors in defining a nation seems to be the psychological dimension of belonging to a community. A nation is also attached geographically to a specific territory and may have a specific religion. A nation may also have its own way of perceiving itself in relation to history, which may or may not be a true perception; a nation will have its own myths (Grosby 2005). Note also that a national identity may remain buried for years and can then be resurrected at times of crises or major historical turning points (Guibernau 2007).<sup>3</sup>

A nation as opposed to a state does not necessarily have clear borders nor the legitimacy that a state may have. 'The state may be loosely defined as a structure that, through institutions, exercises sovereignty over a territory using laws that relate the individuals within that territory to one another as members of the state' (Grosby 2005: 22). A state may also have citizens from different nations. For example, Britain is a state with different nations such as the Welsh nation and the Scottish nation (Guibernau 2007).

### 5.3.1 The relation between nation and language

It is assumed that the emphasis on language as a defining factor of a national identity has started to bloom during the nineteenth century with the work of the German philosophers Herder and Fichte and the French philosopher Renan. Germans related language to a shared cultural heritage. Further, one of the bases of the French revolution was a shared cultural contract between citizens and a nation built on a homogeneous oral and written language that united this nation (cf. Miller 2003; Spolsky 2004; Wright 2004). However, according to Grosby (2005: 70), the relation between nationalism and language is much older than that. He gives the following two examples: in the Israelite tradition there is evidence that suggests that differences in language were understood as indicating distinctions between native Israelites and foreigners. Similarly, in 1312 in Poland, there was a supposedly German-led revolt of Kracow against Lokietek. Although the revolt was not successful and was put down, anti-German sentiments developed. The instigators were then brought to trial, and their guilt was determined by whether or not they could correctly pronounce such Polish words as *soczewica* 'lentil', *kolo* 'wheel' and *mlyn* 'mill'. Anyone who mispronounced any of these words was judged to be either German or Czech and hence found guilty.

### 5.3.2 The Arab nation

The Arabic word *ḡumma* is equivalent to 'nation', while *watan* refers to a 'country' as opposed to a nation. A common usage of *ḡumma* is to refer to *al-ḡumma al-ṣarabiyya* 'the Arabic nation' and *al-ḡumma al-ḡisla:miyya* 'the Islamic nation'. The latter, as will be discussed below, is a universal term rather than one particular to a specific community with a shared culture and history.

In the Arab world, as is the case in the west, a nation can also be defined in terms of different factors, including but not limited to language, religion, geographical environment, historical background, colonial history, values etc. Linguists and intellectuals disagree as to which of these factors is the most essential. In fact, each factor is manipulated politically at different stages in history. For example, the Syrian nationalist Anṭūn Sa'ādah (d. 1949) held the view that the environment plays the most essential role in shaping the national character (cf. Suleiman 2003: 219).

However, in the twentieth century, the relation between the Arab nation and SA has been at the forefront in government constitutions, in language academies, among Arab intellectuals and in the media more broadly. National unity was assumed to be achieved through linguistic unity and thus multilingualism was perceived as a threat to national unity (Miller 2003: 3). According to Suleiman (2003) there are writers who emphasise the relation between



nationalism and language. Consider, for example, the work which Ibrāhīm al-Māzinī (1889–1949) published in 1937 (cited in Suleiman 2003: 198), in which he argued that language is a factor that defines a nation. Similarly, al-Anṣārī and al-Anṣārī, in their book *al-‘Urūbah fī muqābil al-‘awlamah* (‘Arabness in the face of globalisation’) (2002) emphasise the relation between the Arabic language and the Arab nation. They posit the following:

What differentiates the Arab world or the Arab nation from all other nations and states in the world is language. Statistics show that Arabic is the third biggest language, not in terms of its speakers, but in terms of the countries that adopt it as its official language. Arabic comes after English and French. However, countries that use French or English as their official language are scattered all over the world, while countries that adopt Arabic as their official language comprise one geographical entity that stretches from the ocean to the gulf (2002:37).

Note that in ancient times the only true ‘Arab’ was the Bedouin Arab, and kinship and lineage as much as language were important means of identification (Miller 2003: 3). Miller also contends that in pre-modern states there was no correlation between language and nation; the elite of a country could be speaking a different language from the commoners. In the Ottoman period, for example, it was religious affiliation rather than language that defined the nation. However, I think it is worth mentioning at this stage that the relation between nation and language must have started earlier than the modern period in the Arab world. The fact that the elite spoke a different language is not a criterion for judgement since the elite in some Arab countries even nowadays may still frequently speak a language other than Arabic, even if they know Arabic, as is probably the case in some Gulf countries, and in Egypt,<sup>4</sup> Morocco and Algeria, and the belief in the slogan ‘One nation, one language’ is still held by many. People could speak one language while thinking they speak another; consider again the anecdote mentioned by Ferguson in Chapter 1 and the case of the Syrian scholar Māzin al-Mubarāk mentioned earlier in this chapter. As said previously, common beliefs about what constitutes a nation are not necessarily realistic. A nation could be built on language ideology rather than language practice, as long as the ideology is a vessel for forming a sense of belonging between members of a specific community. There is, as previously stated, a psychological component to national identity. However, I do agree with Miller that an Arab is now defined differently from how he or she was defined in the early Islamic period.

The Arabs’ perception of the Arab nation is very complicated and would merit a book by itself (cf. Suleiman 2003). Some Arabs perceive themselves as belonging to a nation because they have a common colonial history, they occupy a specific geographical space, they share nostalgia for a glorious past

and they speak 'Arabic'. The Arab nation is not a political entity but an ideological one, in same way as the idea of 'one nation, one language' is also sometimes only ideological. In a survey conducted by Egyptian professor Muhsin Khidr (2006) to examine feelings of Arabness among Egyptian university graduate students from different fields of study, the professor presented a questionnaire to 270 students in medicine, science, humanities and business about whether they thought there would ever be a unified Arab nation and, if this did indeed happen, what this nation would look like. More than half the students gave optimistic answers such as:

- One day there will be a unified Arab nation with no borders.
- This unified nation will have the same education system, and the same governmental system.

Some students went as far as saying that this nation, once united, should coordinate its architectural infrastructure and paint all houses in the same colours.

It is noteworthy that Egyptians' perception of their Arabness is highly complex and correlates with different political and historical changes.

The Arab nation is represented by the AL. When compared to the EU, the AL as an ideological construct seems at first different in some respects. Both Guibernau (2007) and Ricento (2006: 55) contend that the EU comprises countries with different perceptions of history, different languages and a different way of looking at the universe. Consider, for example, the differences between Greece and Sweden. However, the EU is relatively functional as a political and economic power. The AL is different since it comprises the Arab nation. The AL defines itself on its website as an association of countries whose peoples are Arabic speaking. Its objectives are to strengthen relations among the member states, coordinate their policies and promote their interests. Guibernau (2007: 115) describes the EU as having a non-emotional identity. I would describe the AL as having an ideological emotional identity first and foremost, and this is not a political statement but a sociolinguistic one, as will become clear in the discussions below.

Nationalism in general has a bad reputation and has been accused, sometimes rightly, of a number of atrocities over history and a number of cases of intolerance. The murder of innocent civilians in the Balkans, in Kashmir or in Kurdistan are all examples of actions by governments or people who were not ready to compromise their concept of a nation (Grosby 2005: 116). On the linguistic level, the Arab nation has been accused of promoting linguistic intolerance (cf. Miller 2003). Although Arabic is associated with Islam, and although politics in some countries is associated with Islamic radical movements, the Islamic nation is a universal one where kinship, language, and territory are surpassed (Grosby 2005). The Arab nation as an ideology is built on a number of factors, prominent among which is language. Religion is not

a main component since not all Arabs are Muslims, and even Muslim Arabs are not all Sunnis. Diversity, whether economic, cultural or historical, is still dominant in the Arab world, and language seems like the safest haven for nationalists. Note that the harshest linguistic policies towards minorities have come from secular states; Turkey is a case in point (Miller 2003: 4). Linguistic rights will be discussed in detail in section 5.9. However, in the next section I will first list countries with Arabic as the official language.

#### 5.4 COUNTRIES WITH SA AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

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At the time when the first edition of this book was written, there were only four countries, Comoros, Chad, Djibouti and Somalia, in which other languages were recognised as official languages in addition to Arabic. For all other countries SA was the sole official language. This situation has changed dramatically over the past decade, as a result of sweeping political changes in the world which have prompted governments in the region to be more inclusive (although some of these changes were also less inclusive). For example, in Israel, Arabic lost its official status in 2016 and Hebrew is currently the only official language.

Table 5.1 provides an up-to-date list of the status of Arabic and other languages in the countries concerned.

Governments in some countries, such as Morocco and Algeria, have moved to recognise widely spoken languages as official (Tamazight in these two examples). In Sudan, English gained official status along with Arabic, even though it is not the first language of any part of the population. Elsewhere, the status of Arabic has been demoted altogether, as in South Sudan, for example, where Arabic was recognised in the Interim Constitution of 2005 as a national language, while the 2011 Constitution omitted any reference to Arabic at all. Likewise, the Nation State Law of 2018 in Israel reduced the status of Arabic from that of official language to a language with ‘special status’.

#### 5.5 FRENCH VERSUS BRITISH PATTERNS OF COLONISATION AND THEIR RELATION TO LANGUAGE POLICIES

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By the beginning of the twentieth century the majority of Arab countries were under either the British or the French mandate. In 1916 Britain and France negotiated the Sykes-Picot agreement in which most of the Arab world, excluding Saudi Arabia and North Yemen, were divided between France and Britain. France controlled the Mediterranean coast of North Africa and what

*Table 5.1 Countries where Arabic is a language with official status*

Country	Official language	Other languages	Immigrant languages
Algeria	Arabic (national and official), Tamazight (national and official since 2016)*	French, Hassaniyya, Berber languages (Chenoua, Kabyle, Tachawit, Tashelhit, Tagargrent, Tamahaq, Tamazight, Tarifit, Taznatit, Tumzabt), Korandje	English, Kidal Tamasheq, Spanish, Tadaksahak
Bahrain	Arabic	English, Gujarati, Farsi	Kerinci (25,000), Korean (1,200), Malayalam (6,600), Northern Kurdish (44,600), Tagalog (39,500), Tamil (6,000), Telugu (6,000), Urdu (53,600)
Chad	French, Arabic	Ngambay, Naba, Musey, Mundang, Masana, Maba, Kanuri, Fulfulde, Dazaga, and many others	American Sign Language
Comoros	Arabic, French, Shikomor (Chauvet 2015)	Comorian (Mwali, Ndzwani, Ngazidja), Malagasy	
Djibouti	French, Arabic	Afar, Somali	Amharic (2,700), Hindi (600), Omani Spoken Arabic (72,000), Tigrigna (600)
Egypt	Arabic	Armenian, Bedawiyet, Coptic, French, Mattokki, Nobiin, Siwi	Adyghe, Amharic (5,000), Greek, North Levantine Spoken Arabic (93,400), Sudanese Spoken Arabic (1,680,000), Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken Arabic (93,400)
Eritrea	Tigrinya, Arabic, English	Afar, Arabic, Bedawiet, Bilen, Kunama, Nara, Saho, Tigré, Tigrigna	Amharic, Kanuri
Iraq	Arabic, Kurdish	Arabic, Kurdish, Adyghe, Azerbaijani, Persian, Turkmen, Assyrian Neo-Aramaic, Armenian, Chaldean Neo-Aramaic, Macho	Egyptian Spoken Arabic (401,000), Turkish (2,700), Turoyo (3,000)
Israel	Hebrew, Arabic ('special status' since 2016)	Hebrew, Standard Arabic	Bulgarian, Czech, Egyptian Spoken Arabic (25,000), French (40,000), Greek (3,300), Iranian Persian, Italian (7,250), Levantine Bedawi Spoken Arabic (50,000), Malayalam (8,000), Marathi (8,000), North Levantine Spoken Arabic (350,000), Northern Uzbek, Russian Sign Language (1,000), Spanish (130,000), Standard German (250,000), Turkish (30,000), Western Yiddish

Table 5.1 (continued)

Country	Official language	Other languages	Immigrant languages
Jordan	Arabic	Adyghe, Chechen, Domari, Kabardian, Armenian	Greek, Mesopotamian Spoken Arabic (760,000)
Kuwait	Arabic	Mehri	Egyptian Spoken Arabic (288,000), Najdi Spoken Arabic (428,000), Northern Kurdish, South Levantine Spoken Arabic (144,000)
Lebanon	Arabic	English, French, Armenian, Kurdish, Domari	Assyrian Neo-Aramaic (1,200), Chaldean Neo-Aramaic (30,000), Egyptian Spoken Arabic (102,000), Greek (3,350), Italian (3,350), Mesopotamian Spoken Arabic (20,900), Spanish (19,600), Turkish (3,040), Turoyo (29,300)
Libya	Arabic	Awjilah, Ghadamès, Nafusi, Sawknah, Siwi, Tamahq/ Tahaggart, Tedaga	
Mauritania	Arabic (official), Wolof, Pulaar, Soninke (national languages)	French (de facto national working language), Hassaniyya	
Morocco	Arabic, Tamazight	French, Tarifit, Tashelhit, Hassaniyyah, Spanish	
Oman	Arabic	English, Persian, Swahili, Luwati, Balochi, Mehri, Shehri, Harsusi	Bengali (190,000), Eastern Punjabi (37,300), Egyptian Spoken Arabic (71,200), Hindi (14,800), Malayalam (212,000), Sindhi (25,400), Sinhala (33,900), Somali, South Levantine Spoken Arabic (17,000), Sudanese Spoken Arabic (18,600), Tagalog (89,900), Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken Arabic (15,400), Tamil (12,200), Urdu (69,500)
Qatar	Arabic	Persian	Egyptian Spoken Arabic (51,700), English (38,100), French (7,690), Hijazi Spoken Arabic (25,200), Malayalam (71,600), Najdi Spoken Arabic (51,700), North Levantine Spoken Arabic (509,000), Sinhala (51,700), South Levantine Spoken Arabic (345,000), Southern Balochi (51,700), Sudanese Spoken Arabic (51,700), Tagalog (115,000), Tamil (25,200), Urdu (163,000), Western Armenian (7,690)
UAE	Arabic	English, Balochi, Pashto, Persian	Bengali (337,000), Eastern Punjabi (201,000), Egyptian Spoken Arabic (284,000), Libyan Spoken Arabic (45,500), Malayalam (1,060,000), Omani Spoken Arabic (303,000), Rohingya (50,000),

Saudi Arabia	Arabic	Jibballi, Mehri	Sindhi (102,000), Sinhala (121,000), Somali (94,800), Southern Pashto (144,000), Sudanese Spoken Arabic (74,000), Swahili (5,300), Tagalog (303,000), Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken Arabic (56,900), Telugu (455,000), Western Punjabi Bengali (15,000), Egyptian Spoken Arabic (300,000), Kabardian (17,000), North Levantine Spoken Arabic (189,000), Omani Spoken Arabic (68,000), Rohingya (500,000), Sanaani Spoken Arabic (250,000), Somali (34,000), South Levantine Spoken Arabic (227,000), Southern Balochi (10,300), Sudanese Spoken Arabic (86,000), Swahili (205,000), Tagalog (460,000), Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken Arabic (500,000), Turkish (17,000), Urdu (382,000), Uyghur (5,920)
South Sudan	English, and all 'indigenous languages' are recognised as 'national' languages.	Arabic, Bari, Zande, Dinka, Jur Modo, Moru, Nuer and many others	
Sudan	Arabic (national and official), English (official since 2005)	Hausa, Koalib, Lumun, Aman, Bedawiet, Fur, Bornu, and a large number of other local languages	
Syria	Arabic	Adyghe, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Kurdish, Turkmen, Ossetic, Turoyo	Abkhaz (5,000), Chaldean Neo-Aramaic (5,860), Chechen (4,770), Egyptian Spoken Arabic (75,800), French (10,900), Iranian Persian (53,900), South Levantine Spoken Arabic (36,000)
Tunisia	Arabic	French, Shilha, Tachawit	Algerian Saharan Spoken Arabic (68,000), Algerian Spoken Arabic (268,000), English (1,500), Ghadamès (3,100), Italian (1,100), Libyan Spoken Arabic (293,000), Maltese (3,400), North Levantine Spoken Arabic (23,000)
Western Sahara	Arabic (national and official)	Moroccan Spoken Arabic, Hassaniyya Arabic	
Yemen	Arabic	Mehri, Rāziḥi, Soqotri	Egyptian Spoken Arabic (10,000), Hindi (402,000), Omani Spoken Arabic (134,000), Somali (402,000), Sudanese Spoken Arabic (349,000)

Source: *Ethnologue*, <https://www.ethnologue.com>, last accessed 4 April 2019

\* Constitutional revision, 6 March 2016; published in *Journal officiel de la République algérienne démocratique et populaire* 55(14), 7 March 2016, <https://www.joradp.dz/FTP/jo-francais/2016/F2016014.pdf>, last accessed 4 April 2019

is now Syria and Lebanon, while Britain controlled Iraq, Transjordan, Egypt and Sudan (Mansfield 2003).

Most of the structures of these countries were established during the colonial period, and were shaped to correlate with British and French systems. Thus the education systems, government, politics and economics, and even the architecture, were influenced by either Britain or France. The indigenous Arab linguistic, religious and cultural traditions were downplayed and ignored by the colonising power (cf. Findlow 2001; Shaaban 2006: 694).

After independence Arab countries followed a policy of Arabisation. SA was a symbol of an identity that had been suppressed for years. For a great number of Arab intellectuals, immediately after independence SA was the language of independence, tradition and a glorious past, and even the language in which a sound moral system could be explained and maintained (cf. Sa'di 1993).

However, the use of foreign languages, French and English specifically, is still prevalent in the Arab world, even more so than at the time of colonisation, for different reasons. Some of these reasons are related to economic needs and market forces, as is the case with countries that depend on tourism for their hard currency, such as Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt, or countries that depend on France as their main trading market, such as Morocco. Although most of the reasons why parents in the Arab world are keen on teaching their children a foreign language and learning one themselves are to a great extent utilitarian (Shaaban 2006), there are still symbolic connotations of the use of French in North Africa, for example. As will be discussed in the next section, Berbers in Algeria, after efforts made towards complete Arabisation that did not take account of Berber languages, made a point of using French as a symbol of their objection to Arabisation policies, and because for some of them French is associated with open-mindedness and rationality (see the subsection on Algeria below).

Before proceeding to compare and contrast French and British patterns of colonisation and how these were reflected in language use and language policies, it is important to mention that with regard to language policies and the relation between politics, history and language, scholars as well as politicians and even people from different countries may find it difficult to be objective. One writes from a specific background and with a specific ideology. As Spolsky mentions in the preface of his book on language policy, 'it is hard to conceive of a scholar who is strictly neutral' (Spolsky 2004: ix). Suleiman (2004) likewise starts his book by claiming that he writes with both a Palestinian and a British identity and that language is part and parcel of one's identity. It is not surprising, then, that one can find scholars who discuss language policy in Algeria from very different perspectives and who reach very different conclusions. Thus, while Holt (1994) may claim that the Arabisation policy in Algeria was successful to some extent, Benrabah (2007a) claims that

it was a disaster at all levels. This example illustrates the complexity of the issues at hand. This complexity cannot be dealt with in detail in one chapter, but is referred to throughout.

### 5.5.1 French patterns of colonisation

French in France is not just perceived as a language of a particular nation; it is an instrument that reflects universal values of rationalism and clarity of expression (Holt 1994). The aim of French colonisation was to assimilate the colonised people (Chumbow and Bobda 1996). Thus the colonies were known as African French territories of France overseas. France tried to eradicate SA from all its North African holdings by making French the official language in all public domains, including administration, public life and education (Alexandre 1963). Being civilised entailed learning French and it was only the elites who did so.

However, the linguistic and political situation was different in Syria and Lebanon, who were under French mandate from 1916 until 1946. French was not the sole official language, but both SA and French were declared official languages, although in practice, French dominated in education and administration (Shaaban and Ghaith 1999).

#### 5.5.1.1 *North Africa*

Spolsky posits that:

The proclamation of national monolingualism, on the principle of 'one nation, one state, one language' in a language other than that of the previous colonial power, was and remains an obvious method of asserting real independence. A number of nations tried to do this. (1994: 133)

Again in this statement the relationship between politics and policies is highlighted. However, the backlash of colonisation, which according to Spolsky is always the declaration that each nation has only one language, does not reflect reality. North African countries (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) provide examples of this.

In 1950 France's colonial holdings in North Africa were still untouched and constituted the largest single Francophone area in the world. A number of years later France's control over the three countries ended (Morocco and Tunisia in 1956; Algeria in 1962), although the presence of French was still strong. French had been the only official language of the three countries, in both educational and administrative environments. Even religion, which might have given people the chance to use SA, was suppressed (Sirles 1999:



118). Thus these countries were left to fend for themselves after independence and forge a language policy as independent nation-states.

#### 5.5.1.1.1 *Algeria*

**Languages used in Algeria:** SA, Algerian Colloquial Arabic, Berber languages/dialects (see Table 5.1) and French

**Biggest minority:** Berbers 15–25 per cent

**Colonisation:** 1830–1962

**Official languages:**

French

1963 Arabic

2016 Arabic and Tamazight

The postulation that ‘Through language people can be controlled and political power exercised’ (Miller 2003: 3), finds no truer evidence than in the case of Algeria. France tried ruthlessly and meticulously to eradicate SA there. Algeria, in return, after independence tried ruthlessly and meticulously to eradicate French and resurrect SA. This task met some huge challenges, and because of the intricate relation between language, religion, political affiliations; ethnic identity – Berber versus Arab – and socioeconomic factors, the opinions of scholars about the language situation in Algeria are diverse and not devoid of a political stand.

In this section I illustrate the relation between ideology and practice in Algeria trying in the meantime not to take any particular stand.

#### ALGERIA BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

Algeria was under French rule for 132 years (1830–1962). According to Holt, ‘one hundred and thirty years of language and educational policy determined by an outside power have evidently left deep scars’ (1994: 25; see also Kaplan and Baldauf 2007). The attitude of the French when they colonised Algeria was to turn it into part of France on the other side of the Mediterranean (Stora 2001).

France’s policy in the early years of colonisation was to suppress the indigenous culture rather than replace it with a French one. France attacked the structure of society; the French depended on military pacification of the Algerians and tried to break up important families and tribes. They also played the Berbers and Arabs against each other.<sup>5</sup> The French seemed as if they mainly wanted to marginalise Algerians rather than assimilate them; their policy was based on exclusion rather than inclusion. This exclusion was based not on race but on language and religion. On the social and religious level, they made the Muslim judicial system subordinate to the French one (Holt 1994: 34).

In 1848 Algeria formally became part of France (cf. Stora 2001: 6), with

French as the official language. To achieve their aim of eradicating SA, the French took hold of the religious endowments which provided the financial base for education and closed all Qur'anic schools, allowing education only in French ones. Education was related to religion and usually run by Muslim religious institutions in which one of the means of learning SA for children was memorising the Qur'an. Thus the old education system in Algeria collapsed.

When one examines the level of literacy before and after colonisation, the result is somewhat shocking. According to Gordon (1978) the level of Arabic literacy at the onset of colonisation was 40–50 per cent. This is definitely high for the time, given that the teaching methods were very basic and printing was not in use. According to Holt, things deteriorated so quickly that when the French left Algeria, 90 per cent of Algerians were illiterate (Holt 1994: 28–9).

In 1847 Alexis de Toqueville summed up the plight inflicted on Algerians by the French as follows:

Muslim society in Africa was not uncivilised; it was merely a backward and imperfect civilisation. There existed within it a large number of pious foundations, whose object was to provide for the needs of charity or for public instruction. We laid our hands on these revenues everywhere, partly diverting them from their former uses; we reduced the charitable establishments and let the schools decay, we disbanded the seminaries . . . Around us knowledge has been extinguished, and recruitment of men of religion and men of law has ceased. That is to say we have made Muslim society much more miserable, more disorganised, more ignorant, and more barbarous than it had been before knowing us. (2001: 140–1)

If we put aside the judgemental comments about Algerians, we are left with a description of the dire situation inflicted by France on Algeria, especially that pertaining to religion, education and literacy. Perhaps such a description is also useful in explaining the growing importance of religion in Algeria as a reaction to French policies.

In the first half of the twentieth century Algerians began to develop a sense of nationalism which circulated around SA, and which came as a reaction to France's political, social and educational policies. The majority of Algerians spoke colloquial Algerian Arabic and/or Berber. The Algerians took refuge in their religion and history and found a great tradition in Islam, literary works and SA. Religion and personal identity became connected to SA. Although by then Algerians were mostly illiterate, they were still exposed to SA through Muslim scholars and Qur'anic recitations. Algerians began their struggle early and before their independence. In 1931, seven years before Arabic was decreed a foreign language by France, the Algerians formed the Algerian Association,

which became the strongest defender of Arab and Muslim culture and a major provider of education in Arabic.

In 1931 Aḥmad Tawfīq al-Madanī's book *Kitāb al-Ḥazā'ir* ('The Book of Algeria') was published, in which he declared: 'Islam is our religion, Arabic our language and Algeria our fatherland' (al-Madanī 1931). French was considered by the nationalists a symbol of colonisation and oppression.

In 1933 preachers were banned from preaching in SA in mosques. Then Algerians began setting up a system of private schools. Religion became a symbol of national unity which included Berbers and Arabs (Holt 1994). Nevertheless, Arabic was officially decreed a foreign language in 1938 (Tigziri 2004).

France's policy helped eradicate Arabic but failed to eradicate national identity and to establish French as a national language. What really helped establish French was contact between the French-speaking population from France living in Algeria and the Algerians. The two factors that played a major role in establishing French were, according to Holt (1994), immigration and urbanisation. From 1914 to 1954, 2 million Algerians lived in France. A vast quantity of French lexis entered colloquial Algerian Arabic during this period (for example, 'firmlī' and 'infirmiere'). In addition there were more than 1 million French, Italian and Maltese people living in Algeria. Algerians had to interact with them, and the language of interaction was usually French (Sirles 1999).

#### ALGERIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE

After 132 years of anti-colonial and strong nationalistic feelings piling up, and after seven years of a bloody war with the French, Algeria gained its independence from France in 1962. Algeria suffered the most severe effects of colonisation linguistically, and yet it is still the country in the Maghreb that sought most ardently to pursue Arabisation. Algeria was left with 10 per cent literacy in Arabic and/or French. Yet according to Sirles (1999) more than half of the Algerians spoke French, and more than three times as many were as literate in French as in Arabic. However, Benrabah (2007a) gives different figures for literacy in French specifically. According to Benrabah, Algerians literate in SA numbered around 300,000 out of a population of 10 million. However, 1 million (10 per cent) of the population were literate in French and 6 million (60 per cent) were able to speak French (cf. Gallagher 1964: 148; Gordon 1978: 151; Benrabah 2007a: 230).

According to Mostari (2004), after independence Algeria was committed to the policy of Arabisation. Arabisation was encouraged by Algerian nationalists and political leaders who were trying to carve a niche for themselves amidst a French-speaking elite (Mostari 2004: 26). In September 1962 Ben Bella became the president of the Democratic Republic of Algeria, and the constitution of the country was set in October of 1963. The preamble of that constitution (dated 10 September 1963) stated that:

Islam and the Arabic language have been efficient means of resistance against the attempts of the colonial regimes to de-personalize the Algerian people. Algeria needs to affirm that Arabic is its national and official language, and that it draws its main spiritual force from Islam; and yet, the Republic guarantees to all that their views and beliefs shall be respected, and that all shall be free in their religious worship. (Tigziri 2004: 291)

However, as will be made clear below, Arabisation was faced with big obstacles.

In the mid-1960s the then Algerian president Houari Boumedienne<sup>6</sup> pushed for a programme of complete Arabisation (Djité 1992: 21). Because after the war most foreigners left, there was a shortage of teachers. Algeria requested 12,000 teachers from France but got only 4,000. SA was introduced for seven hours per week in primary schools. But there was still the major problem of a lack of teachers. In 1964, 1,000 Egyptian teachers were brought in. Because of strong nationalist movements among the Egyptian teachers that perhaps not all Algerians shared, and because of traditional methods of teaching, the outcome of bringing teachers from Egypt was less than perfect. Benrabah claims that the colloquial Egyptian Arabic that the Egyptian teachers spoke was difficult for Algerians to comprehend. Benrabah goes as far as claiming that 'the Egyptian educators proved to be major channels for importing Islamist ideology into Algerian public life' (Benrabah 2007a: 230).

By September 1967 the minister of education, Taleb Ibrahimi, had introduced complete Arabisation of grade two in primary education. Note that the system of education corresponded to the French system, in which students spend five years in primary education, four years in middle school and three years in secondary education (Benrabah 2007a: 231).

In 1968 a law was passed declaring that civil servants were required to demonstrate ability in SA. Within three years Arabic courses were set up within the various ministries. Yet in 1975 all ministries were still carrying out their work in French.

Arabic became the official language. Islam became the state religion in 1976. However, French remained the language of higher education and administration (Holt 1994). By 1979, French had been introduced at fourth grade and English as a secondary mandatory foreign language at eighth grade (Benrabah 2007a: 232). All the time unofficial private French/Arabic bilingual schools, not endorsed by the government, were still functioning, especially in Algiers (cf. Benrabah 2007a).

According to Sirles (1999), this forced Arabisation in education was disastrous. It produced half a generation of Algerians who went through an ill-trained, understaffed system of Arabic-language education during these early years. However, French was then no longer the language of colonisation, so the number of Algerians receiving education in French grew.

During the following years, from 1979 onward, a large part of cultural life was Arabised, including primary and secondary education and many humanities faculties at universities. Broadcasts on radio, television stations, public signs and the judicial system were Arabised too. Still, the centre of power remained French.

The next president of Algeria, Chaldi Bendjedid (in office 1979–92), declared the further expansion of Arabic. In 1980 he appointed a militant Arabist to head the nation's higher council of national language, and in 1984 he called for the establishment of an Arabic language academy in the country (Sirles 1999).

The graduates of Arabised degree programmes expected jobs, but did not find any (Holt 1994: 38). By the mid-1980s people realised the discrepancy between language policy and linguistic reality. Algeria managed to change primary and secondary school curricula even in technical areas and the sciences (Mostari 2004; Benrabah 2005, 2007a). It also achieved success in requiring sound competence in Arabic as a condition for government employment. But the private sector was different, so graduates of government universities could not find jobs. Students in Arabised universities staged a two-month strike demanding employment. The minister of the interior issued a directive to employers to end their discrimination against Arabised students, stating that credentials and not language should be the basis of employment. 'Employers began hiring token Arabised students on the condition that they also spoke fluent French' (Saad 1992: 137).

In 1990 there were demonstrations at the University of Science and Technology at Bab Ezzouar. Students who were not competent in French due to their public education system were demanding the immediate Arabisation of the entire curriculum. Political leaders sided with them but no change really happened. Still, French newspapers were in circulation more than Arabic ones (Sirles 1999). In 1991 a tough law stated that Algeria would be completely Arabised by 1997, and a law was issued stating that anyone who signed a document written in any language other than Arabic will pay a fine of about 40 to 200 dollars (Benrabah 2005: 425).

The partial success of Arabisation created demands the state could not or would not meet (Holt 1994). The question of language now appeared in political debates, and SA was used in nationalist and Islamist movements as a source of authenticity and identity. Politics once more played a role. If Islamic fundamentalists were to get the upper hand in government then Arabisation would be pursued with even more zeal. If, on the other hand, strong economic and financial resources took control, then French would be back with even more force than before (Sirles 1999).

In 1999 the then Algerian president Abdelaziz Bouteflika (in office 1999–2019) admitted that Algerian culture was plural and was using French publicly. He then received a letter of warning from members of the council for Arabic

language, warning him against 'public use of French and the Francophone lobby in the presidency' (Benrabah 2005: 382).

#### THE PRESENT-DAY SITUATION

Currently schools teach all subjects including science, maths and technical subjects in Arabic. French is a foreign language taught at second grade for approximately five hours a week (Cherfaoui 2004: 2; cf. Tamim 2006). At university level, medicine, engineering and all technical subjects are taught in French, which is a major problem for students who are not trained to use French. Humanities subjects, such as philosophy, history and geography, are taught in Arabic. Social sciences, such as business administration, economics and political science, are taught in both Arabic and French. In mid-2005, the minister of higher education declared that 80 per cent of university first-year students failed their final exams because of linguistic incompetence (Allal 2005: 13; Maïz and Rouadja 2005: 13). The minister declared that government schools did not equip students with the linguistic competence to study in French.

In an attitude survey conducted by Benrabah (2007a) during April–May 2004, in which 1,040 Algerian secondary school students were given a questionnaire to answer, 55.3 per cent wrote that they preferred learning French to SA; only 37.6 per cent preferred SA and 1.3 per cent preferred Tamazight. Benrabah (2007a) found in another survey that 75 per cent of Algerians supported the idea of teaching scientific subjects in French in schools. The results of these surveys are related to the function of French as an instrumental language with economic importance. However, the informants used are still few and do not represent the majority of Algerians. The problem with surveys that examine attitudes is one of thoroughness first and foremost, and then one of deducing a true result from the informants, who may be under some pressure or imagine that they are under some pressure, especially in a country such as Algeria in which speaking a language may be perceived as making a political statement (see section 5.2.1 and cf. Walters 2006b).

#### BERBERS IN ALGERIA

In Algeria there is more than one language/dialect of Berber, namely Chaouia, Tamazight (Kabyle) and Taznatit. Of all the Berbers in Algeria, Kabylis in the north-west of the country are the most prominent group (Mostari 2004).

There was a stronger than expected backlash after independence from the Berber-speaking tribes who, as we have said, make up about 25 per cent of the population. They began an armed struggle against the authorities in 1962–3 after forming the Socialist Forces Front (FFS), which was opposed to Arabisation policies in Algeria (Mahé 2001: 442). Taleb Ibrahim, who was minister of education in 1967, informally allowed Moulad Mammeri, a

Berber/Kabylian writer and academic, to restore the chair of Berber studies at Algiers University. However, this was not enough recognition of the Berbers' linguistic rights, which were ignored after independence. Berbers began a linguistic resistance movement by banning their children from speaking (colloquial) Arabic at home and making a point of speaking French in shops, cafés and restaurants (cf. Kahlouche 2004: 106; Mahé 2001: 471). For the Berbers, SA was unable to deliver a democratic secular ideal. Berbers demanded recognition and freedom of expression. More unrest broke out in 1988, which was again suppressed by the government (Tigziri 2004).

According to Tigrizi (2004), President Chadli Bendjedid adopted a new constitution on 13 February 1989 which highlighted Algeria's political pluralism but did not take account of Berber rights. The preamble of that constitution read:

Algeria, as land of Islam, as integral part of the Maghreb, as Arab, Mediterranean and African country prides itself on the glory of its Revolution of November 1st, and on the respect which this country has acquired for itself through its commitment to the promotion of justice in the world. (Tigziri 2004: 293)

Once more, Algeria emphasised its Arab and Muslim identity.

However, strikes were on the rise from the 1990s (Mostari 2004). In 1999 President Bouteflika claimed that it was up to the Algerians to make Tamazight a national language but not an official one. In 2003 Tamazight was declared a national language. In 2004 the president described it as a dividing factor (Lewis 2004). He then declared openly in 2005 that there would be only one official language and not two. Tamazight was adopted as a national language by the National Assembly on 8 April 2003 (Benrabah 2007a). In 2004 Abderrazak Dourari became head of the institute for the planning of Tamazight. Since 2005, Tamazight has been introduced in the first three years in middle school for three hours a week (Benrabah 2007b: 77).

Benrabah (2007a: 226) claims that the enforcement of SA as the only official language is the main cause of the rise of fanaticism, civil war, unemployment and the failed education system. He adds that the regime in Algeria is 'an authoritarian regime allergic to pluralism whether cultural, political or linguistic' (2007a: 248), because the regime seems to prefer one subgroup over all others. Benrabah's claims make his political stand clear and do not just reflect a linguistic stand. As was said earlier, it is indeed difficult to remain neutral when discussing such an issue.

It would be simplistic to think that multilingualism will solve all problems in Algeria, including unemployment, poverty, fanaticism and political frustration (see section 5.9). In the case of Algeria the linguistic situation reflects political tension rather than creating it. It is easier for intellectuals to be

outspoken about linguistic diversity, a safe topic compared to other political ones. In order to understand the complexity of the situation one has to realise that diversity and conflicts were perhaps to a great extent part of Algeria before independence too.<sup>7</sup>

For example, Sa‘dī, a Berber himself, claims that France implanted sectarianism in Lebanon and has been trying to do the same thing in Algeria. According to him, it is France that supports the Berber movement financially, and its aim is to destroy Algerian unity and make sure that French language will prevail at the expense of SA. By playing SA against Berber, France makes French the saviour and the most neutral language of the three (Sa‘dī 1993: 205). Sa‘dī’s claims show that there is division among Berbers themselves and that the situation is not solely a linguistic one, but in fact is mainly viewed as a political one.

In recent years, there have been significant developments to strengthen the position of Berber languages in Algeria. The most important of these is arguably the constitutional amendment of March 2016, in which Tamazight was introduced as a national and official language. According to the new text of Chapter 1, Article 4 of the Algerian constitution, the Algerian state now ‘works to promote’ the Tamazight language ‘in all its linguistic varieties which are in use throughout its territory’. The text further calls for the establishment of an Algerian Academy for the Tamazight Language, in order to support the implementation of Tamazight as an official language.<sup>8</sup> This is a radical departure from earlier policies, and it is surely no coincidence that this change came at a time when the political power of the government was challenged, in the wake of the Arab Spring.

To conclude this section, I would like to posit that an ideal policy will reflect not only the multilingualism of a community, but also the political and economic realities of a community. In a similar vein, Algerian writer Amīn al-Zāwī claimed that Algeria should start thinking of French as ‘a prize of war’ which can serve as a gateway to modernity (al-Zāwī 2006).

Still, SA is important for Algeria since it can act as a unifying factor and one that relates Algeria to its past and its neighbours. Even before independence Arabic was a symbol of identity and a political tool to confront colonisation, sometimes without a practical programme to implement its spread.

The problems of education faced in Algeria are first and foremost problems of lack of resources. Government education in the Arab world at large is far from perfect because of this. The fact that schools in Algeria fail to produce students who have mastered SA is not because SA is impossible to master and not because the diglossic situation renders people inhibited, but because the methods are lacking and there is little money spent on teaching in government schools. Private education is always another alternative, as in most of the Arab world. However, the problem with Algeria specifically and North African countries in general is the linguistic discrepancy between schools



and universities. The fact that schools teach science and maths in Arabic and universities suddenly teach technical subjects in French is indeed a problem peculiar to North Africa.

#### 5.5.1.1.2 Morocco

**Languages used in Morocco:** SA, Moroccan Colloquial Arabic, Berber languages/dialects (Tashelhit, Tamazight, Tarifit), French, Spanish

**Biggest minority:** Berbers 45 per cent

**Colonisation:** 1912–56

**Official languages:**

1912 French

1956 Arabic

2011 Arabic and Tamazight

Morocco is a country with Arab-speaking and Berber-speaking populations. According to Ennaji (2002), Berbers make up 40 per cent of the population; Faiq (1999) states that Berbers make up 45 per cent of the population. In present-day Morocco the Berber languages/dialects, French, SA, Spanish and at least five varieties of Moroccan Arabic are used. The main conflict in language policies is between the roles assigned to SA, Berber and French, although Spanish is important in areas that were occupied by Spain in the north and the Moroccan Sahara (Ennaji 2002).

Again, as in Algeria, in Morocco we also encounter the problem of the discrepancy between language used as an instrument and language used as a symbol. Morocco is another country in which French constitutes the ‘elite language’, and this has an effect on Arabisation.

#### A HISTORY OF THE FRENCH COLONISATION OF MOROCCO

French colonisation started in Morocco in 1912. In fact, as will become clear later, France was following the principle held by most colonisers, including England: divide and rule. For example, the decree known as *le Dahir berbère*, relating to the recognition of a separate justice system for the Berber tribes, and passed in 1930, was widely seen as a measure to divide Morocco into two parts: a Berber one and an Arab one. The decree was met with opposition from both sides (Ennaji 2002: 71).

French was then imposed as the medium of instruction in schools, government, administration and the media. SA was used only in religious and traditional activities (Ennaji 2002). According to Gill (1999: 124), the French had the intention neither of educating the whole population nor of modernising them.

Note that French colonisation in Morocco lasted only forty-four years. Morocco gained its independence in 1956. This period of colonisation is

relatively short compared to Tunisia's, which lasted seventy-five years, or Algeria's, which lasted 132 years.

Morocco was also different from Algeria in the quantity of the French colonial population living there. There was only a small French colonial population of around 350,000 (Belal and Agourram 1970: 142) among a 'native' population of around 5 million (Houtsma et al. 1913–36: VI/590, 'Morocco'). This colonial population was concentrated on the coasts of Morocco along the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. While the great majority of Algerians and Tunisians lived along the coasts, the majority of Moroccans at that time did not. Moroccans were scattered throughout the country and not concentrated in specific areas. Moreover, many major cities, such as Fez, Meknès and Marrakesh, are not on the coast. Therefore, there was very little contact and interaction between Moroccans and their colonisers. Thus it comes as no surprise that after independence, the first official population count in 1960 showed that only one in fourteen Moroccan Muslims could speak French; only 6 per cent were literate in French and twice as many were literate in Arabic. It was reported that proficiency in spoken colloquial Arabic was about 80 per cent, indicating that a good portion of Berbers had mastered spoken colloquial Arabic (Sirles 1999: 120).

#### THE SITUATION AFTER INDEPENDENCE

During the twenty years following independence the country's political leadership made decisions and later reversed them (Sirles 1999). The two main reasons for this change were a lack of teaching materials and resources and a shortage of trained teachers. There was also the fear that Arabisation would lead to a rise in Islamic fundamentalism similar to what happened in Algeria (Shaaban 2006).

Ḥammūd (2000) divides Morocco's Arabisation policy into five stages. In the first stage, from 1958 to 1967, Arabisation was launched, but French still played an essential role. Sirles (1999) declares that all members of the major cabinet of the first government of post-dependence Morocco, except the defence and interior ministers, had not been educated in France at university level. In spite of that, Morocco's new minister of education, Muḥammad al-Fāsī, started the process of Arabisation in 1957 by Arabising subjects at primary school level. To do so, he had to bring teachers from the Middle East, mainly from Egypt. This is because, as in Algeria, Morocco was not prepared for this process; it did not have enough teachers trained in SA (Ennaji 2002). Again, as with Algeria, there were problems with the colloquial Arabic the teachers used, which was incomprehensible for some Moroccans. In addition, the Egyptians' Nasserist politics orientation was a problem. The government then changed its policy two years later with regard to introducing SA in primary education (Sirles 1985: 202–55 *passim*).

In 1966 the new minister of education, Mohamed Benhima, declared that

Arabisation in Morocco had failed to improve the standards of education, the general level of students' achievement and their knowledge of SA and/or French. He posited that French should be kept for instrumental purposes to meet the needs of modernity, science and technology. This policy was met with negative reactions from different groups. At that point in time Morocco was in a critical situation: the nationalist, pan-Arabist *Istiqlāl* party was calling for Arabisation. There had been Berber riots for three years (1957–60) calling for the official recognition of Berber (Faiq 1999). A spokesman for the only Moroccan trade union stated in the press in 1966 that due to the faltering of Arabisation, public education would be limited to the elite (Ennaji 2002).

Basically, Morocco found itself caught between two conflicting policies: universalisation and Moroccanisation. Universalisation means expanding education to more students, which increases the need for more teachers. Moroccanisation means using Moroccans rather than foreigners as teachers. Since most Moroccan teachers and educators were educated in France, the process of Arabisation was doomed at that stage (Sirles 1999: 120).

The second stage was from 1968 to 1972, and during this period the government managed to complete Arabisation for the elementary cycle (Ḥammūd 2000; Ennaji 2002). In the 1970s the new minister of education, Azzeddine Laraki, gave a new impetus to Arabisation. He aimed to implement Arabisation completely in education and administration.

The third stage lasted from 1973 to 1977. During that stage social studies in secondary schools were all Arabised. During the fourth stage, from 1978 to 1980, there were efforts to Arabise all secondary school subjects. The fifth stage, which began in 1981 and is ongoing, has seen the Arabisation of all secondary school subjects including science subjects and maths.

#### FRENCH IN MOROCCO

The socioeconomic environment encourages the usage of French rather than SA. Morocco, for example, trades mainly with France. King Hassan II himself reflected these conflicting feelings towards Arabisation. He was praising Arabisation at the same time that he was establishing political and economic ties with France. There was also the feeling that French was the elite's language; the leaders continued to send their children to French schools. This made Arabic seem as if it were the language of the masses, not that of the upper classes or the elites (Sirles 1985: 236–7).

Note that just like English in Egypt, as will be made clear below, French gained more status even though right after independence it was spoken only by one in fourteen Moroccans, as mentioned earlier. The reasons for this are economic, political and geographical in nature. According to Sirles (1999), although Morocco is part of the Arab world, it followed a different policy in its economic and political development. Its policies were quite independent of those of other Arab countries. For example, its largest export commodity,

phosphates, is exported mainly to France and the USA. It is also a country that depends on tourism to a great extent.

Migration was also crucial in the increase of the French presence in Morocco. Urbanisation eventually led to contact with French. At the end of French rule more than two-thirds of the population lived in towns and villages under 5,000 in population; then millions migrated to coastal cities where there was a strong French influence. For example, Casablanca increased in population from less than 1 million to more than 2.3 million in the twenty years after independence (Sirles 1999: 127).

#### THE PRESENT-DAY SITUATION

As in Algeria, university-level education has still not been Arabised in Morocco. French is still the medium of instruction in the schools of medicine, engineering and science (Ennaji 2002: 75; see also Shaaban 2006). Ennaji argues that the reason why French is still dominant today in these schools is that all reference books in these subjects are either in French or in English. There is a lack of teachers who are trained to teach these subjects in SA.

The linguistic discrepancy between school and university led to frustration in the young generation. For example, there have been student strikes at the University of Fez since 1990–1 when the first Arabised science students reached university level and could not deal with French textbooks. Many of them eventually decided to change to the faculty of arts to study Islamic studies or French because they could not take scientific courses in French. In the academic year 1998–9 students at the faculty of science and technology boycotted exams for one term because they were unable to assimilate course material in French in time for exams (Ennaji 2002: 77; see also Marley 2004).

Currently French is taught from third grade in public schools in Morocco. However there are also government-supervised private bilingual schools in which French is taught side by side with SA, and maths and science are taught in French while the history of Morocco and civics are taught in SA. There is also a third kind of school which does not comply with government standards. In these private schools French is the main language of instruction and Arabic is taught as a second language or even a third one, after English. These are usually the schools where the elites send their children.

English is also entering the picture, with the opening of American schools in Morocco which again do not comply with the government standards and where SA is again a second or third language. In 1995 the American-accredited Al-Akhawayn University opened in Ifrane (Shaaban 2006). As in Egypt, the Gulf countries and Tunisia, English in Morocco is thus arriving at full force.

In present-day Morocco there are at least two conflicting attitudes towards Arabisation, without even taking account of the Berbers' attitude: that of the 'Arabisants' and that of the 'Francisants'. The Arabisants are usually Arabic-educated intellectuals, politicians, lawyers and teachers educated in

the Middle East, mainly at Al-Azhar University. For them Arabic education is essential because Islam and Arabic have been used as a weapon to confront colonisation (cf. Bensadoun 2007). The right-wing Istiqlāl party exemplifies this attitude. Ennaji also believes that ‘the Muslim fundamentalists go even further to claim that only classical Arabic is worth teaching and learning because it reflects Muslim tradition, beliefs and values’ (Ennaji 2002: 75). The Franciscans are usually the French-educated elite. They may hold positions in higher education, public administration and the private sector. They prefer French and SA to monolingual Morocco with only SA. They think bilingualism can provide Arabic with new terminology that can be translated or transferred to Arabic, and thus can in its own way reinforce Arabisation. Note that some also prefer French to learning SA altogether.

In two questionnaires by Ennaji (2002) in which attitudes towards SA and French of 112 university students at the Institute of Technology in Fez and nineteen of their teachers were elicited, it was suggested that the majority of students are not in favour of Arabisation. The reason they gave is that it is difficult to master SA or to use it for science and technology. They also preferred bilingualism, because they felt there are two domains that need two languages: French should be used for science and technology, and Arabic for the humanities and literature. For them French could be used as a ‘tool’ for meeting the needs of the modern age and might enable them to move forward economically and socially (Ennaji 2002: 83). Note, however, that choosing science students specifically is bound to yield this predictable result, since, as is clear throughout the section on North Africa, it is students of science who suffer the discrepancy between school and university. In addition, 28 per cent of the students were bilingual Berberophones. The problematic issues encountered with language attitude surveys in general are also encountered in this survey.

Ennaji (2002: 83) contends that ‘the linguistic rivalry is emerging as a hidden struggle for cultural identity and the revival of Arab-Muslim values and beliefs’. Thus, Arabic is emerging with a new motive in mind, and a new status. Sirles (1999) posits that the Arabisation policy may create a new group of leaders and businesspeople who depend on Arabic rather than French to conduct their transactions. However, Sirles argues that what goes against this is Moroccan dependence on the west for most of its trade and hard currency. It is quite apparent that all these policies do not consider the importance of Berber, nor do they try to incorporate it into any plan. Nonetheless, the status of Berber and the way that Morocco deals with it are worth studying too.

#### THE STATUS OF BERBER AND LANGUAGE POLICY

Berbers were bilinguals before and after colonisation. As far as Berbers are concerned, Arabic Morocco was preceded by centuries of Berber Morocco. The constant call for Arabisation since independence in 1956 has antagonised

the Berber speakers and emphasised feelings of identity among them (cf. Faiq 1999; Thomason 2001). The status of the Berber dialects/languages in Morocco shows a clear case of the discrepancy that can occur between language policies and real linguistic situations. The policies in Morocco until very recently did not take account of Berber dialects or seek to standardise them. Thus, the preamble of the 1996 constitution states: '*Le Royaume du Maroc, Etat musulman souverain, dont la langue officielle est l'arabe, constitue une partie du Grand Maghreb Arabe*' ('The kingdom of Morocco, a sovereign Muslim state, of which the official language is Arabic, forms part of the greater Arab Maghreb').<sup>9</sup> The policy was that the purity of Arabic is something to be preserved. It is the language of the country and its religion. Again, this policy in essence ignored the multilingualism that existed in Morocco long ago, even before the French colonisation in 1912 (cf. Ennaji 2002; Thomason 2001).

In 1994 the king of Morocco decreed that Berber dialects would be taught at least in primary education. Plans had been drawn up and associations were being established for that purpose. In the same year, Moroccan television started a daily broadcast of a ten-minute news bulletin in each of the three Berber dialects: Tashelhit, Tamazight and Tarifit (Faiq 1999). In 2003 Tamazight was introduced in 300 elementary schools all over the country. This may be taken as a sign that, as Marley (2004) posited, Morocco was addressing the multilingual situation without merely limiting its struggle to implementing SA. However, for some years after that, Berber languages were still not recognised in the constitution (Errihani 2006). The official recognition of Tamazight as an official language came in 2011, as part of a constitutional revision in the wake of the Arab Spring.

Even though relations between Arabs and Berbers in Morocco were not always harmonious, they were able to exist together for centuries, although Berber languages/dialects had been undermined. If we think of language as a symbol of identity then there must be a reason why the language issue did not cause conflict in Morocco. This is in fact because the allegiance of some Berbers is to the tribe and Islam before the state. The king of Morocco cleverly manipulates this allegiance. By calling himself *ami:r al-mu?mini:n* 'the commander of the faithful', a classical Islamic title, he derives his legitimacy from Islam and from being a *sharīf* (that is, a descendant of the Prophet). He refers to a large community that surpasses ethnicity (Faiq 1999).

Morocco has been struggling with its multilingualism for the more than sixty years since its independence. Thomason describes the language situation in Morocco by stating:

Morocco, a country long regarded by the outside world as a coherent and tolerant one, is going through a period of great flux . . . it is apparent that the Berbers of Morocco have embarked . . . on a process

of historicising their territory and territorializing their history.  
(Thomason 2001: 151)

It is worth mentioning however, that Berbers did not use the Arabic script to write their dialects/languages, which were mainly oral. Although the Arabic script was used among Tashelhit speakers, Berbers decided to use the Tifinagh script to codify their language. This script had previously been used only in emblems and short texts like epigraphs (Aissati and Kurvers 2008). Berber languages/dialects are now emphasised as a symbol of a distinct identity, and using Arabic script may be a threat to this identity (see section 5.5.2.2 for a similar phenomenon in Sudan).

Note also that in a survey conducted by Marley (2004) in which 159 secondary school students were asked to rate their attitude towards bilingualism, SA and Tamazight, 84 per cent of the students preferred bilingualism in French and SA to monolingualism in SA, and only 10.1 per cent found it useful to learn Tamazight. However, Marley argues that this is because the survey was conducted in Khouribga – which is an area with no Berbers.

As noted above, Tamazight was declared an official language along with Arabic in Article 5, Section 1 of the amended constitution of 2011, following the revolutions in other parts of the Arab world. It is important to note that the new text explicitly defines Tamazight as the ‘common heritage of all Moroccans without exception’. This kind of inclusive language is exceptional, and serves to underscore the national unity of the population.

#### 5.5.1.1.3 *Tunisia*

**Languages used in Tunisia:** SA, Tunisian Colloquial Arabic, Jerba and French

**Biggest minority:** Berbers 1 per cent

**Colonisation:** 1881–1956

**Official languages:**

French 1881

Arabic 1956

Tunisia was occupied by France for seventy-five years. Berbers in Tunisia, unlike those in Morocco, constitute only 1 per cent of the population. They do not have any political representation (Faiq 1999).

#### TUNISIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE

After independence, literacy rates in French and Arabic were in rough parity, and about 40 per cent could speak French (Gallagher 1964: 134). In fact, Arabisation would have been easier in Tunisia than in Algeria because its Berber population was very scattered and small, and their presence was not seen as an impediment to the Arabisation process (Sirles 1999: 120). Arabisation,

at least at the beginning, was not a political issue in Tunisia, unlike in Algeria. For many years, President Habib Bourguiba stressed biculturalism and strong ties with France and the west.

Competence in French is still considered prestigious in Tunisia. Language attitude surveys in Tunisia of French–Arabic bilinguals show that they prefer French newspapers and journals (Sirles 1999; see also Daoud 2007).

Bourguiba, at the beginning of his presidency, was a strong supporter of Arabisation, and then he changed his attitude and favoured French. Although Arabisation was gradual, the policy was not always consistent. The teaching of French was delayed to the fourth grade and then brought back to second grade and then delayed to third grade.

In 1999 the Tunisian government declared that all administration would be Arabised by the year 2000. There was also a call to Arabise computer software and databases in all public institutions.

Arabisation of science, mathematics and technical education up to ninth grade was achieved in 1997 (Daoud 2002). Scientific and technical subjects in secondary school and university are still in French. It is worth mentioning that Tunisia was reputed to be highly successful in training teachers and producing Arabic textbooks (Shaaban 2006).

Tunisia is still struggling with different ideologies. In 1996 there were large demonstrations calling for the ousting of the education minister and the changing of the university curriculum towards more Arabic (Sirles 1999).

Over the last thirty years Arabic has become more dominant than French in Tunisia. It is now used in government documents, official forms and letters, and shop signs. However, French is still dominant in banking documents, insurance documents and medical documents. Wholesale and retail shops still issue receipts in French. Thus, although the 1980s generation has grown up with more Arabic around, especially in education, French is still playing a major role in Tunisia, perhaps a role that is only threatened by the spread of English (Daoud 2007: 275).

Again in Tunisia, as is the case in other countries in the Arab world, politics plays the major role in language policies. Sirles (1999: 122) posits that ‘politics appear to play the central role in the future of Tunisian language planning’. There are challenges from the religious movement that Tunisia has to face and that could change its policies.

#### *5.5.1.1.4 Conclusion to language policy in North Africa*

According to Gill (1999), Arabic has a symbolic significance and French an instrumental significance. Arabic – SA in this case – is associated with Islam, nostalgia and the glorious past, and is also a unifying factor, while French and to a great extent now English are the languages of technology and science. As long as French still holds social prestige, as it does in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, then it will survive. Berber languages/dialects are now gaining status,



although Hoffmann (1995) highlights the possible consequences of the rise of regional languages, as in the case of Catalan in Spain. The speakers of these indigenous languages, who were long suppressed, may establish oppressive tactics against non-speakers. However, there are a number of North African scholars who argue that what can help Morocco's language policies is an acknowledgement and appreciation of language diversity (cf. Ennaji 2002: 84). The system should be inclusive rather than exclusive. SA does not exclude French, vernacular or Berber languages/dialects.

Each country is different when it comes to the linguistic situation, the past, the environment, the history and length of colonisation, and the ethnic groups and their sizes. Therefore, any language policy should take all of these factors into account. For example, while Morocco is 45 per cent Berber, Tunisia is only 1 per cent Berber. The situation in Tunisia is thus different. Nevertheless, as long as the west controls the economic and technological world, policies of Arabisation are challenged and Arabic is sometimes perceived as if it is at odds with the modern world. Gill (1999: 134) posits that language policies in North Africa are sometimes at odds with the socioeconomic reality. In the absence of an economic outlet, language policy should accompany socioeconomic change rather than create it. There will be more discussion and comparisons of North African countries at the end of the section on French patterns of colonisation, when both Syria and Lebanon have been discussed.

#### 5.5.1.2 *Syria and Lebanon*

As stated earlier, following the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916, Syria and Lebanon became part of the French mandate. France was already notorious in Syria because of its policies in North Africa. Thus Syrians demonstrated hostility towards the French. Although anti-Turkish feelings were on the rise in Syria, most Syrians did not perceive their salvation in France. However, according to Mansfield (2003: 156), only the Maronites in Mount Lebanon thought of France as a protector. The British government at that time regarded France's control over Syria as 'excessive' (Mansfield 2003:181). In 1919 a General Syrian Congress, meeting in Damascus, demanded the recognition of Syria's independence but failed to achieve its aim. In the same year Syria launched a futile attack on French positions on the Lebanon border. With North African and Senegalese soldiers, and with tanks and planes, France seized Damascus on July 1919.

In 1920 General Gouraud issued the decree of 31 August in which he declared the creation of '*le Grand Liban*' (Mansfield 2003: 182), which consisted of Mount Lebanon, the Biqā' plain to the east, and the coastal towns of Tripoli to the north and Sidon and Tyre to the south. The majority of the inhabitants of Lebanon were then Christians (see Chapter 3).

### 5.5.1.2.1 *Syria*

**Languages used in Syria:** SA, Syrian Colloquial Arabic, Kurdish, Armenian, Azeri and Assyrian

**Colonisation:** 1916–46

**Official languages:**

1916 French and Arabic

1946 Arabic

Syria's population is composed of several ethnic groups, including Arabs, Druze, Kurds and Armenians. There are also several different religious groups in Syria, namely Sunni Muslims (around 74 per cent of the population), Alawis, Ismailis and Shia Muslims (around 9–15 per cent), Christians (around 10 per cent) and Druze (3 per cent), as well as a dwindling Jewish community.

During the French mandate in Syria (1916–46), Syria was regarded by France as a focus of Arab nationalism (Mansfield 2003: 182). The situation in Syria was more like that in Egypt than that of North Africa. Although SA was suppressed in Syria and both administration and education were officially conducted in French, this did not have the same effect on Syria or Lebanon for a number of reasons. First, the position of Arabic in both Syria and Lebanon was strong because of the missionary schools that had opened at the end of the nineteenth century. These missionary schools, which represented different churches in the west, taught SA in addition to their own language. For example, the Catholic school taught French and Italian in addition to SA, while the Presbyterian and Anglican schools taught English in addition to SA.

Second, the Syrian Arab Science Academy was established in 1919, with the goal of providing SA with the technical terms needed for modernisation (Shaaban 2006: 699), the same year that the general congress demanded the recognition of Syria's independence. Third, the geographical location of Syria enabled it to interact more with neighbouring Arab countries, and its relatively short colonial history helped Syrians and Lebanese retain their knowledge of SA. In fact, Syria gained its independence from France almost six years before Egypt gained full independence from the British occupation. Because of all the above reasons, France's position in Syria was not as strong as its position in its North African territories. As was said earlier, Britain was reluctant to allow France to seize Syria. In 1930 the French government agreed on a constitution that made Syria a parliamentary republic with France retaining control over security and foreign affairs.

During the French mandate the University of Damascus was established (1923), with its teaching mainly in Arabic. Syria proclaimed its independence and declared SA the sole official language in 1946. After independence, a feeling of patriotism and nationalism was on the increase. There was also Syria's desire to regain territory split off by the French. SA became dominant; it was the symbol of unity. Although there are Kurds in Syria, who constitute

10 per cent of the population, their language is not on the agenda of language policies there. For example, Syria replaced Kurdish placenames with Arabic ones (Spolsky 2004). In that sense the ruling Syrian government is similar to the governments of Morocco and Algeria, since they suppressed other languages (in their case Berber languages) in favour of one official, unifying language.<sup>10</sup>

The government in Syria managed to Arabise all university subjects including science, maths and technical subjects such as engineering and medicine (Shaaban 2006). According to Miller, Arabisation in science is more advanced in Syria than in any other country (Miller 2003). However in Syria, as in most Arab countries, English is gaining status as a global language (Shaaban 2006).

#### SA AND POLITICS IN SYRIA

The reasons why Arabisation in Syria has been a thorough and efficient process in both schools and universities are related to the political ideologies of the Syrian government. The ruling Baath party adopts a secular socialist policy. This party belongs to the Shiite sect of the Alawis. According to Kedar, Alawis' Islamic credentials are not held in high esteem by the Orthodox Muslims of the Sunni majority (Kedar 1999: 142). The Alawis, though a minority in Syria, are thus ruling Sunnis, the majority, and other religious groups and sects, and have been ruling Syria for more than four decades. The party's ideology has been to emphasise the 'Arabness' of all Syrians. The president has been and is called *qa:ʔid al-ʔumma* 'leader of the nation'. Kedar also notes that Syria's official name is al-Jumhūrīyah al-ʿArabīyah al-Sūrīyah 'the Arab Republic of Syria' – the Arab element is stated prior to the Syrian one. The Syrian press describes Syria as *qiblat al-ʕuru:bah* 'the direction to which all Arabs should direct their faces for prayers'. The Syrian government has fostered the image of Syria as a strong opponent to western hegemony and ideologies, and the Syrian press has also blamed the other Arab states for betraying the cause of the nation (Kedar 1999).

##### 5.5.1.2.2 Lebanon

**Languages used in Lebanon:** SA, Lebanese Colloquial Arabic,

English, French, Armenian, Kurdish, Domari

**Colonisation:** 1916–46

**Official languages:**

1916 Arabic and French

1946 Arabic

According to Mansfield (2003: 202), a substantial part of the population of Lebanon after the partition of Syria and Lebanon rejected French control, at least on an emotional level, and regarded themselves as part of an Arab nation. The sectarian political system imposed by the French – the president was to

be a Maronite, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim and the president of the Chamber of Deputies a Shiite (cf. Mansfield 2003) – was weakening feelings of national identity within Lebanon but not eradicating them.

The education system at the time of the French mandate remained in the hands of missionary schools, and higher education was exclusively provided by the Jesuit Université Saint-Joseph (est. 1875), or the American University of Beirut (AUB, est. 1866), a Presbyterian institution. The Université Saint-Joseph taught – and still teaches – in French, while the AUB used Arabic for a short while in all subjects, even in medicine, but now uses mainly English (cf. Mansfield 2003; Shaaban 2006: 699).

Currently French is associated with the Christians in Lebanon, and English is associated with the Muslims. In a survey conducted by Shaaban and Ghaith (2002: 558) of students' perception of the ethnolinguistic vitality of SA, French and English, university students regarded French as 'symbol of sectarian conflicts'.

As in other parts of the Arab world, Lebanon's elite, whether Muslims or Christians, prefer private education to public. In private schools, maths, science and technical subjects are taught in French or English and humanities subjects are taught in SA. In addition to the AUB and Saint-Joseph, there is also the Beirut Arab University, co-founded in 1960 by the Lebanese Jam'iyyat al-Birr wa-al-Ihsān, and Alexandria University. The Lebanese university's close ties with Egypt are evident in the fact that its operations were moved to Alexandria during the civil war (1975–90), and its degrees are awarded jointly with Alexandria University. Technical subjects, science and maths at university level are taught in a mixture of SA and English, as in Egypt, while humanities and social sciences are taught in SA.

### 5.5.1.3 *Conclusion to French patterns of colonisation*

French colonisation began and ended at different times in different countries and had different effects. However, Tables 5.2–5.4 show that the education systems in countries colonised by France, perhaps with the exception of Syria, have been influenced largely by colonisation. Algeria, which was considered a province of France for 132 years and which France was not ready to give up without a seven-year struggle, has the largest sum of Arabic lessons in all the countries discussed. While even Syria teaches ten hours of Arabic in the first grade of primary education and two hours of English, Algeria starts with fourteen hours of Arabic and no French until second grade. Teaching SA in Algeria was a reaction to the long, severe involvement by the French in managing both the country and the linguistic situation. Both Tunisia and Morocco were protectorates of France and perhaps managed to overcome feelings of bitterness towards France. Note that when Morocco and Tunisia gained their independence there were more people who spoke and read French than in Algeria.



Table 5.3 Weekly hours per language in primary and secondary education: Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia

Year	Morocco <sup>a</sup>							Algeria <sup>b</sup>							Tunisia <sup>c</sup>							
	Enseignement fondamental				Enseignement secondaire (1+2 yrs)			Ecole primaire (5 yrs)		Collège (4 yrs)			Enseignement secondaire (3yrs)				Ens de base (9 yrs)			Ens secondaire (3 yrs)		
	Premier cycle (6 yrs)	Second cycle (3 yrs)	Ara 6		Ara		Ara		Ara		Ara		Ara		Ara		Ara		Ara		Ara	
Ara <sup>d</sup>	Fre	Ara	Fre	Ara	Fre	FL2	Ara	Fre	Ara	Fre	Tz	Eng	Ara	Fre	Eng	Ara	Fre	Eng	Ara	Fre	Eng	
1	11	-	6	6	5	5	4-5	14	-	5	5	3	3	3-5	4-5	2-3	11.5	-		4.5	3.5	3
2	11	-	6	6	2-5	4-5	3-6	12	3	5	5	3	3	4-5	3-4	3-4	11.5	-		4.5	3.5	3-4
3	6.5	8	6	6	1-5	4-5	3-6	11	4	5	5	3	3	3-7	3-4	3-4	10	9		0-5	2-4	3-4
4	6.5	8						8.3	5	5	4	-	5				10	9.5				
5	6	8						7	5								7	11.5				
6	6	8															7	11				
7																	5	4.5	2			
8																	5	4.5	2			
9																	5	5	2			

Notes:

<sup>a</sup> UNESCO (2007)

<sup>b</sup> Benrabah (2007b: 95-8)

<sup>c</sup> Daoud (2007: 268-9)

<sup>d</sup> Ara=Arabic; Fre=French; FL=Foreign Language; TZ=Tamazight.

Table 5.4 Weekly hours/periods per language in primary and secondary education: Lebanon and Syria

Year	Lebanon <sup>a</sup>									Syria <sup>b</sup>					
	Primary education (6 yrs)			Middle school (3 yrs)			Secondary school (3 yrs)			Basic education (9 yrs)			Secondary education (3 yrs)		
	Ara <sup>c</sup>	Fre/Eng		Ara	Fre/Eng	FL2	Ara	Fre/Eng	FL2	Ara	Eng	Fre	Ara	Eng	Fre
1	7	7		6	6	2	5	5	2	10	2	-	5	3	2
2	7	7		6	6	2	3-6	3-6	2	9	3	-	5-7	3-4	2-3
3	7	7		6	6	2	2-6	2-6	2	8	3	-	4-8	4-5	4-5
4	6	6								8	3	-			
5	6	6								7	3	-			
6	6	6								7	3	-			
7										6	3	2			
8										6	3	2			
9										6	3	3			

Notes:

<sup>a</sup> UNESCO (2007). Numbers represent periods of 45 minutes.

<sup>b</sup> Syria, Ministry of Education (2008). Numbers represent periods of unspecified length.

<sup>c</sup> Ara=Arabic; Fre=French; Eng=English; FL2=Second Foreign Language

In Morocco the difference in hours between Arabic and French is levelled out in the second cycle of primary education and in secondary education. The same is true for Tunisia and Algeria; in Tunisia, again, the difference in hours is levelled out between Arabic and French at the end of primary education and throughout secondary education. In Algeria, from the sixth year of school (*collège*), the difference between the two is levelled out. Algeria now teaches Tamazight as a second foreign language for three hours a week from the sixth year of school, for three years.

In Lebanon, French or English is the first foreign language taught to students from their first year of school. The number of hours devoted to French/English and Arabic is very similar starting from primary education. Note that, in Lebanon, schools adopt either French or English as the first foreign language depending on the region or the religious affiliation. In Syria, the first foreign language is in fact English and not French, which is usually taught for only two to three hours a week from the beginning. The hours of Arabic and English are not equal; while Arabic is taught for six to ten hours, English is taught for approximately three.

Of all the countries colonised by France, it is only Syria, and perhaps parts of Lebanon, that adopt English as the first foreign language and not French. This again shows that the political agenda of France in Syria and Lebanon was different from that in North African countries.

The political struggle in each country was and is different in nature and may take the form of an ethnic struggle for equal rights, as in the case of Berbers in Morocco and Algeria; a religious struggle – fundamentalists versus secularists in Algeria, and Christians versus Muslims in Lebanon; or even an ideological struggle, as in the case of Syria, with the political party ideology of pan-Arabism and political hegemony.

This section has examined how language policy interacts with extra-linguistic factors such as political struggles for independence, ethnicity, religion, and urbanisation (as is the case in Morocco) and economic forces. Although the outcome of colonisation is different in each country, the repercussions, whether political or linguistic, are still dominant.

### 5.5.2 British patterns of colonisation

The British, unlike the French, did not aim at assimilating their holdings in the Arab world, nor did they consider their Arab colonies part of Britain. Consider the following quotation from Lord Palmerston (d. 1865), British prime minister from 1855 to 1858 and 1859 to 1865, which summarises the attitude of at least a part of the British establishment before the colonisation of Egypt:



We do not want Egypt or wish it for ourselves, any more than any rational man with an estate in the north of England and a residence in the south would have wished to possess the inns on the north road. All he could want would have been that the inns should be well-kept, always accessible, and furnishing him, when he came, with mutton-chops and post-horses. (Ashley 1879: II/337–8)

Britain regarded Egypt as the ‘inns’ in the road rather than as a province or a territory overseas, and although English was declared an official language along with Arabic in Egypt, Sudan, the Palestinian territories and Israel, Britain lacked the zeal to implement its policy, and had no interest in the linguistic situation as such.

For the British, being civilised did not entail learning English specifically but learning and speaking a European language. Thus only a European language should be used and recognised as the language of education (Spolsky 2004). The British aimed at weakening SA by promoting the vernacular, as will become clear below. For the British, the diglossic situation was inhibiting and difficult to understand. Thus Britain tried hard to raise the status of the colloquial at the expense of SA. They believed that children should learn the language they speak, which in the Arab world would be the colloquial/vernacular. In fact, this was also their policy in India, where they used the vernacular of each area for primary education and English for secondary education (Spolsky 2004). However, Britain’s encouragement of the colloquials was not without a political aim too. In addition, Britain forged colonial policies that stressed the separateness of African and European identities.

#### *5.5.2.1 Egypt*

**Languages used in Egypt:** SA, ECA, Armenian, Bedawiyet, Coptic, French, Mattokki, Nobiin, Siwi, Adyghe, Amharic, Greek, English and French

**Colonisation:** 1882–1952

**Official languages:**

1882 Arabic and English

1952 Arabic

Egypt is different from North Africa when it comes to language policy and the position of SA. In the 1950s and 1960s Egypt took the lead in propagating both independence in the Arab world and SA. The idea of the Arab nation was very concrete in that period. Although the influence of English or French is not as strong as it was in North Africa, the British occupation did try to weaken SA.

#### 5.5.2.1.1 *Egypt before independence*

Egypt was occupied by Britain for seventy years, from 1882 to 1952. The British administration aimed to weaken Arabic from the beginning of the occupation (Shraybom-Shivtiel 1999). To do so they first introduced English and French as the required languages in the education system. Second, they elevated the status of ECA rather than SA by emphasising the distinctiveness of the Egyptian identity as opposed to the Arab identity. They were aiming to eradicate any Egyptian national aspirations and to tighten their grip on Egypt.

To achieve the first goal of establishing foreign languages as the medium of education, the British administration announced in 1888 that the language of instruction in all schools was to be either French or English. Their explanation for this was that Egypt was moving towards a European style of development and that this development is technological and scientific in nature. During this period Egypt's elite began to send their children to foreign schools, whether English, French or German, that is, schools in Egypt using these languages as the language of instruction. The demands for the revival of SA were met with harsh criticism of its weakness as a living language. Its grammar and vocabulary were thought to be fossilised. The methods of teaching SA were also criticised for being tedious and difficult. SA was seen as a language taught by repetition and memorisation and not fit for the contemporary needs of society (Shraybom-Shivtiel 1999).

At that time key figures in the British administration were calling for the use of ECA as a written language and also its use as the official language to be used in civil affairs. Lord Dufferin, special envoy of Her Majesty's government in Egypt and British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, when ordered to provide a plan for Egypt's reorganisation, devoted part of his report to the problems with Arabic and to expanding the colloquial. At that time, foreign orientalists in the Arab world showed a strong interest in the colloquial. The Swedish orientalist Carlo Landberg wrote about the Syrian dialect, while Louis-Jacques Bresnier (French) was interested in the Algerian dialect and J. Seldon Willmore (British) in 1901 wrote a grammatical analysis of Egyptian Arabic. Orientalists started opening schools to teach colloquial (Shraybom-Shivtiel 1999: 134). The Egyptians then seemed to be encouraging what the British were doing. During the initial period of British rule in Egypt, the Egyptians 'meekly and willingly accepted British guidance and supervision' (1999: 134).

At the same time that the British were seeking to weaken the role played by SA, Egyptian national identity was being revived and shaped by other factors. This identity was not, however, always associated with SA. According to Suleiman (2003: 175–6) several external factors helped shape this identity:

1. *The 1919 revolution, in which Muslims and Christians were united:*  
The Egyptian leader Sa'd Zaghlul (1860–1927) and his colleagues

were arrested by the British mandate on 8 March 1919 and exiled to Malta days after he demanded full independence for Egypt from the British. Women took off their veils to demonstrate side by side with men, Muslims and Copts. The revolt resulted in the death of 1,000 Egyptians and thirty-six British and Indian soldiers. A month later, in April 1919, on the recommendation of the new high commissioner, Lord Allenby, Sa'd Zaghlūl and his colleagues were released from detention and returned to Egypt. To Egyptians this was one of the first times that the British had complied with their demands, which enhanced their feelings of patriotism and confidence.

2. *The creation of a parliamentary democracy in 1922-3*: Britain declared Egypt independent in 1922 but with four stipulations – reservations that limited its sovereignty. In 1923 parliamentary democracy was established though most of the power was still in the hands of the British and the monarchy. Martial law was also lifted.
3. *The pride Egyptians felt in their past and pharaonic history as a result of the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen in 1922*: In the Valley of the Kings at Luxor, the British Egyptologist Howard Carter discovered the tomb of Tutankhamen with all treasures and the mummy untouched.
4. *The ending of the caliphate by the Turkish leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923*: After this, King Fu'ād of Egypt made a discreet attempt to become the leading Muslim figure and the caliph, but gave up when he was met with no encouragement (cf. Haag 2003: 280–3).

Egyptians felt a direct psychological and racial link between modern-day Egyptians and their pharaonic ancestors (Suleiman 2003: 176). They felt they were different from other Arabs with whom they shared a language (that language being SA). They also felt different from their co-religionists, mainly Muslims. They had the belief that 'Egypt's great powers of assimilation have enabled it to absorb waves of immigrants and to stamp their mental make-up with the indelible imprint of its character' (2003: 176).

Some intellectuals began to argue that Egyptian Arabic was the true language of Egyptians rather than SA, which is the language shared by all Arabs. For example, Nīqūlā Yūsuf raised the issue in 1929. He posited that Egypt has its own environment, which is very different from the Bedouin environment in which Arabic is spoken. Arabic, meaning SA, was for him a desert language not suitable for the modern needs of Egypt (Suleiman 2003: 178). Similarly, Salāmah Mūsā (1887–1958) 'declared that SA is a dead language which cannot compete with the colloquial as the true mother tongue of Egyptians' (Suleiman 2003: 182). Suleiman notes the fact that Mūsā declared this statement not in ECA, but in SA. Suleiman contends that in that sense Mūsā is similar to those who advocate the use of SA as a spoken language but who never use it themselves. Mūsā was convinced that Arabs were less advanced than Egyptians,

so there was no use in retaining their language. SA, according to Mūsá, was a poor language: artificial, difficult and backward. He proposed a solution using the Roman alphabet to write colloquial language. As far as science was concerned, this would enable Egyptians to borrow words from European languages and keep up with modern technology.

However, at that point there were still intellectuals who were well aware of the possible dangers associated with abandoning SA altogether. Some proposed modernising SA to make it more receptive to lexical borrowing from colloquial and other languages. One of the initiators of this move was Luṭfi al-Sayyid (1872–1963). He suggested creating a middle language between standard and colloquial. Others, such as the journalist ‘Abd Allāh al-Nadīm (1844–96), warned Egyptians against abandoning the standard. In his article ‘Language loss in surrendering the self’ he called upon Egyptians to hold on to Arabic instead of surrendering themselves to foreign languages. This was all at a time when the British were emphasising the importance of colloquial and foreign languages in schools (cf. Suleiman 2003: 174).

#### 5.5.2.1.2 *The beginning of the Arabic revival in Egypt*

According to Suleiman (2003), the attitude of Egyptians had changed by the late 1930s. Muḥammad ‘Allūbah, an Egyptian journalist, declared that Egypt was an Arab country because of the Arabic language. This change is reflected in the layout of his newspaper, *al-Siyāṣah al-Usbū‘īyah* (‘Weekly Politics’). The front page used to feature pharaonic decorations. The Islamic dates appeared only on the inside pages. In 1930 the pharaonic decorations were replaced by caricatures and the Islamic dates were on the front page (Husayn 1983 vol. 2: 172, cited in Suleiman 2003: 180).

In fact, even before the 1930s, there were calls for the revival of Arabic. At the time that Egyptians were reshaping their identity, a number of them began to realise the significance of SA. Shraybom-Shivteil (1999) postulates that by the beginning of the twentieth century, with the start of the process of liberation from foreign rule and the rise of nationalist aspirations, Egyptian intellectuals felt a need to deal with the issue of SA. There was a definite awareness that it was an issue. The first person to begin the change in language education policy was Sa‘d Zaghlūl, when he was minister of education between 1906 and 1910. He aimed at replacing English with Arabic as the language of instruction in schools even though Arabic then could not meet the needs of science. His aim of introducing it was a crucial first step that came amid nationalist calls for the revival of Arabic. The beginning of the century also witnessed the establishment of Fu‘ād I University in 1908 (later to become Cairo University). The committee decided unanimously that the official language of instruction would be Arabic.

The call to reform Arabic to meet modern needs came quite early in Egypt compared to other countries, and included calls to modify grammar, script and

spelling. There were also some radical ideas such as eliminating grammatical rules entirely, and getting rid of the dual system and the suffix of the feminine plural. King Fu'ād, although he himself did not know Arabic well, was very aware of its importance. He established the Arabic Language Academy in 1932. The king intervened personally in the reform of the language. He proposed the simplification of Arabic letters upon the recommendation of the British orientalist Denison Ross, who had new letters designed for use at the beginning of a sentence similar to capital letters in Latin orthography. These letters were called crown letters and they were designed to facilitate mastery in reading and writing (Shraybom-Shivtiel 1999: 136). This experiment failed. Despite all these efforts the situation did not change. As late as the 1940s foreign languages were still the primary means of instruction except in religious schools, which were under the supervision of al-Azhar University. Private schools excluded Arabic while public schools used it in a very limited manner, and they themselves were limited in number (Shraybom-Shivtiel 1999).

In the meantime, a key figure appeared in Egypt who had a great influence on the revival of Arabic. The writer Tāhā Ḥusayn (1889–1973) was himself educated at al-Azhar University. In his 1938 book *Mustaqbal al-thaqāfah fi Miṣr* ('The Future of Culture in Egypt'), he called for the establishment of Arabic in foreign schools – those schools that were run by non-Egyptians and not under government supervision (Shraybom-Shivtiel 1999). According to Suleiman (2003), Tāhā Ḥusayn believed in Egypt's national identity as built not on religion but on the political environment, the geographical environment and the historical environment. He, like Mūsá, looked to Europe as a model. He also believed in the significance of the modernisation of language. Yet he and Mūsá had different attitudes towards SA. Ḥusayn held the belief that 'Muslims (more accurately, Muslim rulers and elites) . . . understood that religion is one thing and politics is another, and that the first basis for establishing political unity is common interests' (1944: 21, quoted in Suleiman 2003: 191). He stressed the importance of language as the medium for thought and modernisation.

According to Ḥusayn, Egypt, which was known for moderation, should aim at integration with the west and not at assimilation. Therefore, one of the policies of the state should be to make sure that SA was taught in all private foreign schools in Egypt. He called for the elimination of all teaching of foreign language in the primary stage in state schools. He was aware that SA was a dreaded subject, and he thought this was so because of the concentration on grammar as a means of teaching (Suleiman 2003: 193).

Ḥusayn thought there was a difference between teaching about the language and teaching of the language. Thus, the parrot-like learning style used to study grammar and rhetoric was not valid. According to him, because language should have a creative role, SA had to be simplified without being

compromised. Ḥusayn remained throughout an ardent supporter of SA. This is because, according to him, if Egyptians ignored SA, they would cut themselves off from their past and their Arab literary heritage. He still had problems with al-Azhar, where he studied, because it was the sole authority in grammar teaching and teacher training. He even claimed that the Coptic church should make sure that it used good Arabic (meaning SA), since Arabic was part of Egypt's national identity, but was not limited to Egyptian national identity (Suleiman 2003: 194).

In the early 1940s Ḥusayn Haykal was appointed minister of education; private foreign schools were instructed to teach their pupils Arabic, Egyptian history and geography. Still, the primary language of instruction in these schools remained a foreign language. However, Shraybom-Shivtiel posits that 'the introduction of Arabic as a required language constituted a turning point in Egypt's national education system' (1999: 137).

#### 5.5.2.1.3 *Egypt after independence*

After the 1952 revolution,<sup>11</sup> Nasser had in mind the goal of making education accessible to everyone by offering free education to the whole population and making primary education compulsory. In addition, according to Shraybom-Shivtiel, 'Egypt, in its efforts to achieve national unity during the 1950s and 1960s, positioned literary Arabic (SA) at the core of its educational system and utilised it as the cornerstone in the development of the image of the young generation in the Arab World' (1999: 131). Nasser had the goal of helping other Arab countries achieve independence and emphasising similarities rather than differences among all Arab countries. SA was to play a major role as a unifying force in defining the Arab nation at that time.<sup>12</sup> Shraybom-Shivtiel (1999) argued that in order for Egypt at that time to achieve national unification, it had to emphasise joint heritage and modern political needs. A logical result of the 1952 revolution was a change in both the attitude and the approach towards Arabic. To enhance the pan-Arab movement and to build a nationalist feeling among the new generation of Egyptians, schools began teaching Islamic resources, classical Arabic literature and poetry. A new image of Egypt was being formed: that of Egypt as part of the Arab nation (Faksh 1980).

Nasser himself, when addressing the United Nations on 28 September 1960, said, 'We announce that we believe in a single Arab nation. The Arab nation was always united linguistically. And linguistic unity is unity of thought' (Dajānī 1973: 119–37). During this period, the idea held before the revolution that called for the simplification of SA grammar and spelling disappeared. Colloquial lost its status once more, and became the language of daily life only. In fact, SA was encouraged as the language of academics, intellectuals and educated people. The Arabic Language Academy worked hard in creating scientific terms in Arabic. Universities began teaching SA even in science

faculties. In 1960 the Egyptian minister of education, Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn, called on the Arabic Language Academy in Cairo to recommend that only SA be spoken at universities (Shraybom-Shivtiel 1999).<sup>13</sup>

According to Shraybom-Shivtiel, SA at that time, although not a spoken language, became the spoken language of the elite in some domains or contexts, such as lectures or formal gatherings, and was also used to discuss specific topics. It gained a new status for some intellectuals which replaced the status of foreign languages. If this were the aim of the revolution, then it was to a great extent achieved, since SA was not just the official language, but had also gained the status of a prestige language, which carries political significance.<sup>14</sup> Note that SA had been a discredited language during foreign rule (1999: 138).

However, the call for Egypt's identity to be distinct from that of the Arab world, and the importance of colloquial, may have been ignored for some time but they were never forgotten. Twenty years later, after Nasser's death in 1970 and the peace treaty with Israel in 1979, Egypt was ostracised by the rest of the Arab world. The feeling that Egyptians are different from Arabs was beginning to be fostered once more. According to Suleiman (2003), the writer Lūwis 'Awaḍ (1915–90) called for a distinct identity for Egyptians which should be reflected in their language. He called for this in a book published during the time of the presidency of Anwar Sadat (1970–81), when Egypt 'veered towards an "Egypt first" policy in response to the Arab boycott following its peace treaty with Israel in March 1979' (2003: 198). 'Awaḍ tried to separate the language factor from national identity and the political sphere. According to him, Egypt had been under colonising powers for about 4,000 years. These colonisers were different: Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Turks and British, to name a few. By returning to its pharaonic past, Egypt could regain its sense of creativity. This could be done by the creation of an Egyptian language. He even went so far as to say that the use of the glottal stop in Egyptian Arabic is caused by the racially bound physical constitution of the Egyptian vocal tract, a claim that is patently false (Suleiman 2003). In fact, this 'Egypt first' policy was also reflected in the education system in Egypt, starting from 1980 and continuing to the present day. Egyptian children were taught in their social studies classes that their affiliation is first to their country, Egypt, then to the nation, the Arab world, and finally to their religion, in most cases Islam (see 'Abd al-Kāfi 1991; Khidr 2006).

#### 5.5.2.1.4 *The present-day situation*

Currently there are two educational systems in Egypt: a public one and a private one (see Chart 5.1). The public one does not fill all labour-market jobs; there are two different markets for the public and the private systems. SA is taught more in the public schools, while the private system concentrates on foreign languages much more. The largest employer requiring moderate

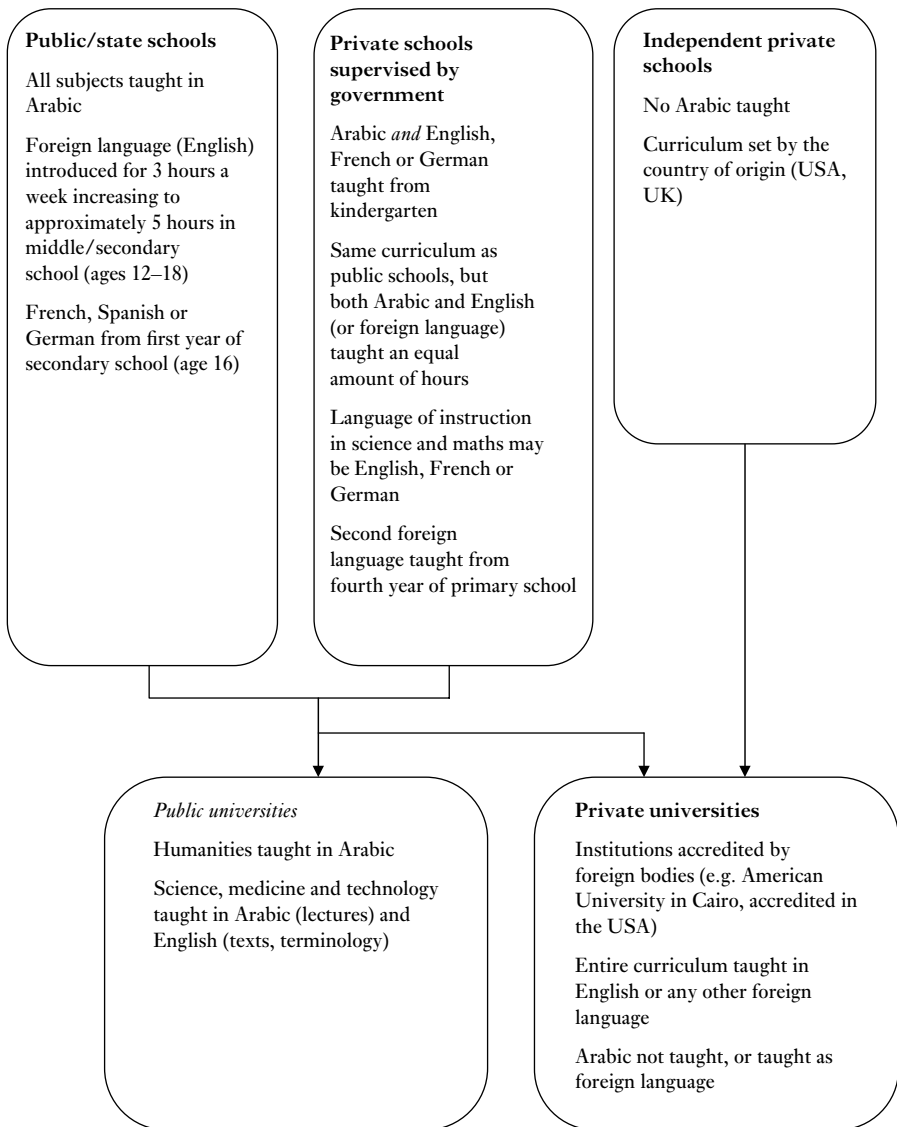


Chart 5.1 The education system in Egypt

to advanced knowledge of SA is the state. Government posts, such as those of Arabic teachers or those whose jobs involve reading and writing in SA, need knowledge of SA. However, even the degree of this knowledge required varies from one job to another. For example, working in a state hospital as a physician, nurse, director of public relations and secretary all require different levels of language skills (Haeri 1997).



Haeri (1997) poses the question of how much knowledge of SA is needed in jobs which by and large are more attractive and better paid than government jobs. By that she means jobs such as those of an owner of a small or large business: construction, boutique, pharmacy, television production, doctors in private clinics and hospitals, teachers in private schools who do not teach SA etc. She gives the example of a diplomat who has not mastered SA and depends on his secretary for writing official documents in SA. Haeri posits that the upper classes do not receive their education in SA. They may have knowledge of it, and they can use standard words in their speech depending on context as borrowed words. In that sense, Egypt is different from the USA, for example, where there are also two different systems of education that possibly aim at different labour markets, but where in both systems the standard language, English, is taught. According to Haeri, this situation in Egypt does not favour SA. Haeri says:

It appears that by and large members of the upper classes in Egypt are not the ones who know the official language the best or use it the most. In fact, speaking with a number of Egyptian sociologists and anthropologists, I was told that I should use the criterion of foreign language school attendance as central to my classification of speakers. (1996a: 162–3)<sup>15</sup>

Egypt is a country that is dependent on tourism to a great extent for its economic growth (Schaub 2000). It has been reported that the largest group of foreign tourists are in fact from the UK. According to the American University in Cairo (AUC) Career Advising and Placement Services office, the number one criterion for finding a decent job is being able to demonstrate proficiency in English (cf. Russell 1994: 147). In addition, since Sadat adopted the open-door economic policy, Egyptians have been very keen to learn English. The role of English in the Arab world will be discussed in detail in section 5.10. However, Chart 5.1 gives an idea of the organisation of the education system in Egypt.

It is noteworthy that al-Azhar, though criticised by Ḥusayn, has played a role in maintaining SA, and the Arabic Language Academy, which existed much earlier than other academies in the Arab world, must have played a role too. Egypt was under a different colonising force and suffered a different kind of discrimination against standard from the discrimination that North African countries have suffered. However, Shraybom-Shivtiel summarises the relation between policies and politics when he postulates that ‘the history of modern Arabic, therefore, serves as a microcosm of the development of Egypt’s socio-political image in the modern world’ (1999: 138).

### 5.5.2.2 *Sudan*

**Languages used in Sudan:** SA, Sudanese Colloquial Arabic, Hausa, Koalib, Lumun, Aman, Bedawiet, Fur, Bornu and a large number of other local languages. Before the secession of the South, Sudan was said to have the largest number of languages of all Arab countries (Mugaddam 2006).

**Ethnic make-up:** Arabs (approximately 70 per cent), Fur, Beja, Nuba, Fallata

**Religion:** Overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim (approximately 97 per cent), with a small Christian minority, and indigenous religions.

**Colonisation:** 1882–1952

**Official languages:**

1882 Arabic and English

1956 Arabic and English (both may be used in parliament)

1973 Arabic

1998 Arabic

2005 Arabic and English, indigenous languages

In an article which is more political than linguistic, Sharkey (2008) discussed language policies in Sudan, and how these policies reflect the unbalanced political power in the country between the northern and the southern parts. Back then, Sharkey posited that the current language policy might not be conducive to national unity but might in fact lead to divisions within Sudan (2008: 43). Indeed, the southern part of the country seceded from Sudan in 2011, to form the new Republic of South Sudan. There were many factors that led to this secession, but it is certain that ethnic and linguistic diversity played a role.

Yokwe (1984) had argued more than twenty years earlier that the language policy of Sudan does not take account of the southern languages. He claimed that 51 per cent of the Sudanese people speak Arabic as their mother tongue, 20 per cent speak Arabic as a second language, but only 5 per cent of southerners speak Arabic as a second language. According to him, there are 136 languages spoken in Sudan, 114 of which are Sudanese and the rest foreign, including English. Although in Khartoum 96 per cent of the population speak Sudanese Colloquial Arabic, in the south this is not the case. Among the languages spoken in the south are Acholi, Aja, Avokaya, Bai, Baka, Banda-Mbrès, Banda-Ndélé, Belanda Bor, Belanda Viri, Beli, Berta, Boguru, Bongo, Didinga, Dongotono, Feroqe, Gbaya, Gula, Indri, Kakwa, Lango, Lokoya, Lopit, Luwo, Mandari, Mangayat, Njalgulgule, Nuer, Shilluk, Suri, Tennes, Thuri, Toposa and Zande (see also Yokwe 1984: 153).<sup>16</sup> In the north the Coptic church uses SA, while the Roman Catholic church uses Sudanese Colloquial Arabic and the Anglican churches use colloquial Arabic if it is the language of the community they are in.

#### 5.5.2.2.1 *Before independence*

The British relied on Egyptian officers to govern Sudan from 1924 onward. The British also tried to block the spread of Arabic in the south by attempting a southern (or closed-district) policy in 1930–46. Under this policy Britain claimed that the Negroid Africans of the south were culturally and racially different from the northerners, who claim to be Arab. As a result, the southerners could either be separated from the northerners or be integrated into what was then British East Africa (corresponding roughly to the territory of present-day Kenya) (cf. Yokwe 1984; Miller 2003). On the other hand, the British did not have a plan for teaching the different languages of the south. Teaching in southern Sudan was left in the hands of missionaries and was done by these missionaries first in the different vernaculars and then in English at higher levels (Miller 2003). This system corresponds to the linguistic ideology of the British which was to teach in the child's vernacular mother tongue and then in English. Once more the British were not trying hard to promote English but to weaken SA. The rate of literacy in the south remained low compared to the north (Miller 2003).

The British policy in the south did not succeed in eradicating Arabic, which still served as a lingua franca, but it did succeed in creating an English-speaking Christian elite. In 1946 the closed district policy ended.

The 1955 Report of the International Education Commission on Secondary Education in the Sudan estimated that it was a 'waste of time and energy to teach the south their own vernaculars [i.e. their languages] in schools with no reading material available to them and no written literature, since in that case students could not pursue any reading after they left school'. The same fact was emphasised even after independence in a UNESCO report in 1963. The report added that even if Latin script were used for these languages, teaching them would still be a futile task (Yokwe 1984).

#### 5.5.2.2.2 *After independence*

Sudan gained its independence from British rule in 1956 and Arabic was declared the country's sole official language. According to Miller (2003: 11) there may have been an underlying ideology in the Sudanese government then that the Arabic language and culture are superior to the southern African culture. As early as 1963, an organisation called the Sudan African Closed Districts National Union sent a petition to the UN complaining that Arabic had replaced the vernacular languages which were taught at lower elementary schools. They argued that children should begin with their native language, not a foreign one – a position that was advanced strongly by the 1953 UNESCO declaration entitled *The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education*. In 1972, after the Addis Ababa agreement which put an end to the first civil war between the north and south, the regional government formulated a comprehensive policy which acknowledged the use of the spoken languages. In

rural areas the spoken languages were used in the first four years of school, and SA was introduced only orally.

Economic and political inequality, and religious, cultural and racial differences may be some of the reasons behind the conflict between the southern and northern parts of Sudan. However, for the southerners Arabic is associated with the north and with Islam (Miller 2003: 16).

The different languages used in Sudan, especially in the south, are the oral vehicle for folklore, traditions and local beliefs. These languages are used in communicating with family and friends. In the urban part of southern Sudan, Sudanese colloquial Arabic is used in the markets, schools and offices (see Mugaddam 2006). It also serves as a lingua franca. Although Arabic has a role in the towns in the south, it barely exists in the villages. As noted earlier, the local languages were used in the first four primary school years in the south. In the north, at all levels of education, English is used as a foreign language introduced at middle school and Arabic is the main language of instruction. There is no room for other local languages (Sharkey 2008). This emphasis on SA is because the government highlights Arab political unification which is based not on colour or religion but on language. According to Yokwe (1984) southerners have been resisting this policy since the nineteenth century. For many years, Sudan was struggling with the problem of acknowledging so many languages. Politicians, whether in the south or the north, often had to resort to Arabic since it was already the official language. As Yokwe (1984) puts it, southerners had to accept Arabic not necessarily as a symbol of submission, but as a practical solution.

#### 5.5.2.2.3 *The present-day situation*

In recent years, sweeping political changes have taken place in Sudan. After a long and violent conflict which ended in a referendum and the secession of the south, the new state of Southern Sudan was formed. In both parts of the former unified Sudan, past policies and practices influence the present-day situation. I will deal with each in turn.

In the north, the government is still committed to Arabisation. Elementary, middle and secondary schools have been completely Arabised, including scientific and technical subjects. In 1991, higher education was formally Arabised throughout Sudan, although English remains a compulsory core subject at Khartoum University.<sup>17</sup> Also in 1991, Sudan created the Higher Authority of Arabisation (HAA) in order to establish SA as the language of instruction at universities in scientific and technical areas. The HAA's mission was to coin terminological terms, to establish a SA scientific library and to encourage translation and scientific publications in SA (Shaaban 2006). This emphasis on the role of Arabic was also reflected in the constitution of 1998, which stated explicitly that Arabic was the official language of the country, while the development of local languages was merely 'permitted'.

The relation between the political conflict in Sudan and language ideologies is highlighted by scholars in the field who are either for or against Arabisation. Those against Arabisation claim that it was a catalyst in the civil wars in southern Sudan from the 1950s onward and the conflict in Darfur that erupted in 2003.

It is against this background that one must read the Interim National Constitution of the Republic of Sudan of 2005. Article 8 of this text asserts that all indigenous languages of Sudan are national languages, and that Arabic, as well as English, are official working languages of the government, and of higher education. It appears that there was an attempt to conjure a sense of national unity through the declarations of this interim constitution, though in practice it appears that only Arabic was actively promoted by the government in Khartoum.

We have already seen Sharkey's (2008: 28) prediction that having one language as the official language in the Sudan would not lead to unity but to resentment. She therefore called for the government's acknowledgement of the diversity within Sudan, including the linguistic diversity. Sharkey criticised the government's linguistic ideologies by positing that 'this Arabism is ideological, meanwhile, in the dictionary sense that it has inspired and justified a schema of actions or policies that are implicitly or explicitly adopted and maintained regardless of the course of events' (Sharkey 2008: 28).

For South Sudan, Sharkey reports that in spite of resentment against the north, Arabic – at least colloquial Arabic – is still spreading, especially in Darfur. This spread is not for political or ideological reasons, but for practical ones, such as contact, trade and market forces.

It is worth mentioning that southern Sudanese, like some Berber speakers in Morocco, decided to codify their language (corpus planning) in a script other than the Arabic one. In Morocco the Tifnagh script is used by some Berber speakers, and in South Sudan the Latin script was adopted, even though there were attempts made by Egyptian teachers in the middle of the twentieth century to teach southern Sudanese languages in Arabic script (cf. Sharkey 2008). This choice may be seen as symbolic of the southerners' rejection of the north and its language.

One should also add that in the constitution of the newly created Republic of South Sudan (2011), the question of language remains a difficult one. Article 6 of the constitution states that:

1. All indigenous languages of South Sudan are national languages and shall be respected, developed and promoted.
2. English shall be the official working language in the Republic of South Sudan, as well as the language of instruction at all levels of education.<sup>18</sup>

The exclusion of Arabic from the text represents a significant departure from the 2005 Interim Constitution, which had made English and Arabic official languages (see Henneberg 2016).

### 5.5.2.3 *Palestine and Israel*

At the beginning of this chapter, I mentioned the fact that language policies do not always go hand in hand with language planning. One of the crucial factors that influence language policies is language contact. In fact contact is more relevant than schools and curricula. This is the case in Israel and Palestine. While Arabs may not want to learn Hebrew in schools in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, they learn it from contact with Israelis, often, in fact, in prison (Spolsky and Shohamy 1999). In Israel economic factors also play a major role, so while Israeli Jews do not feel the need to learn Arabic, Israeli Arabs feel the need to learn Hebrew. In fact, the situation in both Israel and Palestine is crucial to our understanding of language policies because sometimes policies do not reflect reality and, in spite of political animosity, language contact leads eventually to language learning. I discuss the situation in Israel then that in The Palestinian Territories.

#### 5.5.2.3.1 *Language policy in Israel*

According to Spolsky (2004), the move to revive Hebrew in Palestine started in the 1890s. Hebrew began to be taught in the schools in towns such as Zikhron Yaakov and Petach Tikvah. From 1890 onwards a political campaign started in Britain to have Hebrew recognised as an official language. The codification of language was fast and efficient. Dictionaries were written, grammars codified and academies established. This is why Sirls (1999: 118) says that language policies apart from those of Hebrew can claim only modest success. In fact, Hebrew was recognised after World War I by the British mandate as an official language. It was used in the main public and private schools of the Jewish community, serving as a *lingua franca* among immigrants from many backgrounds. It was spread by a 'strong ideological campaign' (Spolsky 1994: 227). The British army entered Jerusalem in 1918, and prior to this date English and Arabic were the official languages. Britain added Hebrew as the official language and gave the Hebrew-speaking and Arabic-speaking communities responsibility over their own education systems, with little or no financial support. According to Spolsky and Shohamy (1999), the Hebrew speakers seized this opportunity and used it to support the spread of Hebrew. Although Arabs and Jews had separate school systems, there was language contact between them, mainly with the Jews learning Arabic (Amara 2003).

In 1948 Hebrew became the national language and dominated all other official languages. English was dropped from the list of official languages and only Hebrew and Arabic remained. Israeli Arabs continued to use their vernacular in speaking and SA in their schools, but also had to learn Hebrew formally in schools as a required subject and informally at home (Spolsky 1994: 228). However, 'official language use has maintained a *de facto* role for English, after Hebrew but before Arabic' (Spolsky 1994: 227; cf. Fishman et al. 1977). For

example, Spolsky says that 'if public notices are bilingual they tend to be more often in Hebrew and English than in Hebrew and Arabic' (1994: 227).

In a recent development, as part of the controversial Nation State Law of 2018 the status of Arabic in Israel was reduced to that of a 'language with a special status'. This change was criticised even in the Israeli press. The new law explicitly elevates the status of Hebrew over that of Arabic in a way that is not inconsistent with previous practice.

The promotion of Hebrew has always been central to Israel and its policies. With the creation of the state of Israel, Hebrew became the language of government, parliament, television and radio stations. There were, and still are, plenty of Hebrew courses for new immigrants. There is also an Arabic-language radio station, and the government television station broadcasts in Arabic for three and half hours daily. However, according to Spolsky and Shohamy (1999) English has more status and Arabic is somewhat discriminated against (1994: 228). Spolsky and Shohamy (1999: 119) posit that Israeli Arabs' main complaint is not that their language is not taught in schools, because it is in fact taught and they are also keen on learning both English and Hebrew, but that their language is not used on signposts and that there is no provision of Arabic subtitles and programmes on Israeli commercial television.

Spolsky and Shohamy (1999: 119) mentioned three court cases in their study. In the first, a group of Arabic speakers in Haifa requested that the city authorities add Arabic to signposts that are in Hebrew and English. In the second case, a local Arab developer had requested that the city authorities in upper Nazareth permit him to display advertising posters written in Arabic only, rather than enforcing a municipal code requiring that two-thirds of a poster be in Hebrew. In the third case, the ministry of public roads was asked to add Arabic to road signs. According to Spolsky and Shohamy (1999: 119), these three cases have clear political undertones; by asserting their linguistic rights, the Arab Israelis are trying to assert their identity (1994: 228). The court resolved the three cases without the need to resort to the constitution which states that Arabic is an official language. In the first case, the municipality agreed to add trilingual signs in Hebrew, English and Arabic to its plan over the next few years. In the second case the Arabic signs were permitted, and in the third case, the ministry agreed to make the changes.

It is noteworthy, however, that a large portion of the population is bilingual or multilingual. Among the languages spoken in Israel are different varieties of Arabic from North Africa, Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Yemen. Yiddish is also used among older immigrants of Eastern Europe and ultra-orthodox Jews who refuse to use Modern Hebrew. Among the other languages used are Russian, and the Jewish varieties of Amharic among Ethiopian Jews. To deal with the complicated language situation, the Israeli ministry of education supervises 2,500 vocational, agricultural and comprehensive schools, 2,000 with Hebrew

as the language of instruction and 500 with Arabic. In the Arabic-language school areas, Hebrew starts from the third grade and continues as a main subject until twelfth grade. A new Hebrew curriculum with emphasis on the communicative aspects of language rather than on literature and culture is being suggested (Amara 2007).

As for the Jewish schools with Hebrew as the language of education, the teaching and learning of Arabic are a problem. Spolsky contends that this is because of the diglossic situation, which makes it difficult to decide which variety to teach – standard or vernacular – and also because of the attitude towards Arabic (Spolsky 1994).

In June 1986 Yitzhak Navon, then minister of education – and himself fluent in Arabic – created a new policy of teaching Arabic as a compulsory subject in seventh to twelfth grade. SA was to be taught as a compulsory subject, with colloquial as an option, in the fourth grade. Whether or not these policies of teaching Arabic are successful depends on the political situation (Spolsky 1994: 232). Currently Arabic (meaning SA) is compulsory in Jewish schools for three hours a week, from grade seven to grade nine. It is optional for grades ten to twelve. However, according to Spolsky and Shohamy (1999) few students end up mastering Arabic, for a number of reasons. First, three hours a week is not enough to reach proficiency levels. Second, students are taught SA and not the spoken variety, and they are usually taught in Hebrew. Finally, a negative attitude toward the language does not usually help in the process of learning. For Jews in Israel Arabic is the language of neighbouring countries, a number of which are not on good terms with Israel, and the language of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank as well as Israeli Arabs. The small minority who master Arabic, according to Spolsky and Shohamy (1999:146), may either work for the intelligence service or become orientalists at the university.

However, Spolsky (1994) speculates that Arabic as a minority language will be maintained among Arabs because of neighbouring countries although among Jews it remains a marginal language. It may be a spoken vernacular at home among groups of immigrants, or a school subject, but it may remain no more than that. He contends that bilingualism in Israel is uneven, because while Arabs master Hebrew and even English sometimes, Israelis do not master Arabic.

This uneven bilingualism is significant since it shows that language reflects political power, ideologies and economic factors. In the case of Israel, only Israeli Arabs need to learn Hebrew, since it will help them develop their careers and participate more fully in the country in which they are citizens.

#### *5.5.2.3.2 Language policy in the Palestinian Territories*

Amara (2003) posits that the ideal policy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip would be one in which Arabic was maintained for relations with Arab countries



but the need for both Hebrew and English was also considered. He goes on to posit that since Israel is a reality Palestinians live with, then it is essential for them to learn its language. English will also be used for communication with the western world. Meanwhile, the end of Ottoman rule in Palestine in 1917 brought about changes in all areas, including language (Amara 2003: 319).

By 1948 Israel was established on most of Palestine's land except the West Bank, which was annexed to Jordan, and the Gaza Strip, which became the responsibility of Egypt (Amara 2003: 219). After 1948 the Jordanian curriculum was in force in the West Bank, and the Egyptian curriculum in the Gaza Strip. This was the case even during the Israeli occupation. From 1967 to 1994 Israel occupied these two areas. English then served as a lingua franca between Palestinians who did not know Hebrew and Israelis who spoke no Arabic. English was viewed as a neutral language (Al-Masri 1988). Note that some older Palestinians had learned Hebrew during the British mandate through contacts with Jews. The use of Hebrew in the West Bank and Gaza stopped after 1948, but after the 1967 occupation contact between the two was re-established. Hebrew began to be learned informally. It became the main language of business and trade between Israelis and Palestinians. For example, Palestinian workers in the Israeli labour market learned spoken but not written Hebrew. After the Intifada (the late 1993 Palestinian uprising against Israeli forces), Hebrew was in fact taught in prisons. Knowledge of Hebrew was instrumental and work-related. It was also being taught at private institutions (Amara 2003).

Then, when the Palestinian authorities took over both areas, there was a need for an independent Palestinian policy. Arabic became the official language of Palestine, and English was used as a second language because of its status as a global language. It is mainly used in institutions of higher education. The first Palestinian curriculum for general education in 1996 emphasised the status of English. There was a proposal to teach English from first grade in all government and private schools, which is now being implemented. English is taught for approximately three hours in the first years of school.

Amara argues that, although the attitude towards it is negative, Hebrew is needed as a functional language given the political situation (Amara 2003: 218). Hebrew is taught at universities in the Arabic departments, but not spoken Hebrew, only written (Hamed 1995, cited in Amara 2003: 224). The Palestinian workers who experienced life in Israel can speak Hebrew much better than students who studied it at university. There has been a proposal to teach Hebrew as a third language in schools, but it has never been implemented, French was also considered (Amara 2003).

#### 5.5.2.4 *Conclusion to British patterns of colonisation*

In the previous section, we examined four countries colonised by Britain: Egypt, Sudan, Israel and the Palestinian Territories. These countries suffer from different problems and have different political systems and different language policies and ideologies. In Egypt, perhaps more so than any other Arab country, the competition between SA and ECA has been highlighted by a number of intellectuals, some preferred the symbolic significance that the colloquial carries rather than that carried by SA. In August 2006 a Coptic Christian multi-millionaire launched a new private satellite Egyptian channel called O-TV. The channel's distinctive feature is its use of ECA for all domains, even news broadcasts, a domain associated exclusively with SA. As was expected, there were Egyptians who were in favour of the idea of using ECA in the news and who have claimed that this is the only channel that highlights Egypt's distinct identity. However, the fact that the channel is owned by a Coptic Christian and uses ECA was met with scepticism from others. Blogs started discussing the pros and cons of using ECA in the news for the first time in Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood website accused the channel of targeting an audience of rich, young Egyptians and of encouraging the breakdown of language in Egypt. Using ECA in the news was regarded as a conspiracy, and an impractical one at that, since it is hard to read the news in colloquial; in fact, it almost needs more effort to read the news in colloquial than in SA (Kamal 2008).<sup>19</sup> It is clear that the issue of ECA versus SA in Egypt is far from resolved.

The problem in Egypt that may have a direct effect on SA is the clear gap between the elite and the masses (Table 5.5). The elite send their children to private schools where they learn English, French or German, and the masses can only afford state schools, in which Arabic is the main language of instruction. With Egypt now moving into a capitalist system and privatising most of the companies owned by the government, knowledge of SA is downplayed and knowledge of English specifically is becoming a must. Since the government is basically failing to provide any jobs, the private sector will set the rules. Due to privatisation, a whole generation who were working for the government were forced into early retirement by the private companies that bought the companies where they used to work, with the result that a new generation will take over for which SA does not play a major role. A new phenomenon in Egypt is the great number of private universities that are opening up besides the AUC and the increase in private schools that are not supervised by the Egyptian ministry of education and in which SA is basically not taught at all. Thus, there is a new generation of Egyptians who are highly educated and who speak ECA but who are illiterate in SA because in their private schools SA is not taught at all. This seems the most pressing problem for Egypt today.

Sudan, on the other hand, suffers from an ethnic, religious and political

Table 5.5 *Weekly hours/periods per language in primary and secondary education: Egypt, Sudan and Palestinian Territories*

Year	Egypt <sup>a</sup>							Sudan <sup>b</sup>				Palestinian Territories <sup>c</sup>			
	Primary education (6 yrs)		Middle school (3 yrs)		Secondary school (3 yrs)			Basic education (8 yrs)		Secondary education (3 yrs)		Basic education (10 yrs)		Secondary education (2 yrs)	
	Ara <sup>d</sup>	FL1	Ara	FL1	Ara	FL1	FL2	Ara	Eng	Ara	Eng	Ara	Eng	Ara	Eng
1	12	3	7	5	6	6	3	10	-	4	4	8	3	5	5
2	12	3	7	5	4-8	4-8	3	9	-	4	4	8	3	5	5
3	12	3	7	5	4-8	4-8	3	9	-	4	4	8	3		
4	11	3						9	-			8	3		
5	11	3						9	3			7	4		
6	11	3						9	3			7	4		
7								9	7			7	4		
8								9	7			7	4		
9												7	4		
10												5	4		

*Notes:*

<sup>a</sup> UNESCO (2007). Numbers represent periods of 45 minutes.

<sup>b</sup> UNESCO (2007). Numbers represent periods of 40 minutes. The informal use of the spoken languages in rural areas is not shown.

<sup>c</sup> Palestinian National Authority, Ministry of Education (1998).

<sup>d</sup> Ara=Arabic; FL1=First foreign language; FL2=Second foreign language; Eng=English.

conflict that is reflected linguistically in the southerners' opposition to Arabic. The conflict in Sudan is mainly about the distribution of resources and power, but is also about projection of identity, and whether Sudan's identity is that of an Arab country or an African one, a Muslim country or a Christian/multi-religious one. While Sharkey (2008: 21–2) accuses the Sudanese government of imposing an Arab identity on Sudan only in order to become a member of the Arab League and get the help of Gulf countries, northern Sudanese intellectuals emphasise the Arab origin of Sudan.

In Israel and the Palestinian Territories, the status of Arabic is a reflection of an ongoing political conflict whose outcome, as Spolsky and Shohamy posit (1999), will play the major role in determining the direction of language policies in both Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Currently, according to Spolsky (2004), Arabic is regarded by Israeli Jews either as the language of the enemy or as the language of neighbouring countries who are not all at peace with Israel. And yet it is also the language of the biggest minority group in Israel, who interact and participate in different domains of life in Israel. As for the Palestinian Territories, Arabic is the language that connects them to their past and to their neighbours.

In all the above discussion, Britain's political role was prominent but its linguistic role was not. Nevertheless, English has gained a status in all the countries discussed above. English managed to forge its own role, as the language of the elite in Egypt, as the neutral lingua franca for Israelis and Palestinians, and as the safe haven for southern Sudanese instead of Arabic. Unlike France, Britain did not try to establish its language in the colonies discussed above: English established itself. This statement will be discussed in detail in section 5.10.

## 5.6 LANGUAGE POLICIES IN OTHER PARTS OF THE ARAB WORLD

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In section 5.5 I examined the relation between language ideology and language policies in North African countries, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Libya, although a North African country, is different from the countries we have analysed. It was occupied by Italy in 1911. At the time, Italy tried to impose Italian as the language of instruction in schools, but this policy was not successful for a number of reasons. First, there was strong local resistance most of the time. Thus there was no time for people to assimilate and learn the language. In addition, few Libyans attended the schools where Italian was the language of instruction. In fact, at that time few Libyans attended schools of any kind. After the 1969 revolution, a strong Arabisation policy began (Pereira 2007). SA became the language of instruction at all educational levels and at universities for humanities subjects.

Yet English is still taught in schools and used at universities in science and technology subjects in addition to SA (Spolsky 2004).

In the Gulf countries, the present linguistic situation is critical. Due to immigration to these oil countries, a vast number of language minorities exist. A great number of people in these countries are multilingual as a result of significant but marginalised foreign minorities. For example, in Bahrain, one-third of the population of almost 1.5 million is made up of foreigners. Although Arabic is the official language, there are large minority groups, such as the Persians. There are 50,000 speakers of Persian, 20,000 speakers of Philippine languages and 18,000 speakers of Urdu. Kuwait has a population of 2 million, over half of whom are foreigners. Oman has a population of around 3.5 million, a large proportion of which is again made up of foreign workers. In 2017, the population of Saudi Arabia was around 33 million, of which more than a third were non-nationals. Although there is a policy of indigenisation in labour, foreigners still constitute a large group in these countries (Spolsky 2004: 141).

One cannot speculate how and whether language policies in these countries will change because of the significant minorities present in them. But since we have shown that it is language contact and interaction that lead to the preservation and learning of a language, then one can predict that these countries will have to take account of their minorities, who are usually there to stay, despite the fact that they may be contract workers. My gut feeling is that English, in addition to Pidgin Arabic, will serve as a lingua franca in these countries and may act as an instrumental language, and as such will over time gain more status than Arabic, whether standard or colloquial.

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the government has decided to implement a law for the protection of SA. When Bilāl Budūr, the deputy minister of culture, was asked by journalists how an Arab country produces a law to protect its own language, he replied that Arabs have become a minority in the UAE, where at least ten languages are spoken, and in which Arabic is the fourth language spoken at the moment and English is the main lingua franca. The population of the UAE is made of 65 per cent non-Arab foreigners; the indigenous population makes up only 15 per cent. Sharjah has already imposed a law that requires all government offices to use Arabic for their oral and written transactions. The rest of the Emirates is still in the process of forming a similar law (Maḥāmidīyah 2007).

## 5.7 THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE ACADEMIES IN THE ARAB WORLD

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There are several language academies in the Arab world: the main ones are the Arab Academy of Damascus, established in 1919; the Arabic Language

Academy in Cairo, established in 1932; the Iraqi Academy, established in 1947; and the Arabic Language Academy of Jordan, established in 1976. There is also an Arabic Language Academy in Libya, Algeria, Mauritania, the Palestinian Territories, Sudan and Sharjah.

The idea of creating an Arabic language academy emerged first in Syria and then in Egypt at the beginning of the twentieth century and was inspired by the French Academy, which was founded in 1635. The goal of the latter was to prescribe rules for the French language in order to purify it and make it capable of treating the arts and sciences. Its current aim is to guard the French language by producing standardised grammars and dictionaries (Spolsky 2004: 64).

The main purposes of all the Arabic academies are the preservation of the Arabic language and the development of Arabic to meet the needs of modern society in all domains of human knowledge (Sawaie 2006 and 1986: 57). The academies are also responsible for the creation and standardisation of scientific terms (cf. Khalifa 1977) and the Arabisation of terms from other languages. Examples of this from the Arabic Language Academy in Cairo are the word for ‘telephone’, which is either *ha:tif* or *tilifu:n*, and the word for ‘bank’, which is either *bank* or *maşraf* (Sawaie 1986).

Each academy focuses on a different aspect in the process of preserving Arabic (meaning SA) and each one changes its focus over the years; the academy of Damascus started with the following goals (Sawaie 2006: 635):

1. the simplification of literary work to be accessible to the public
2. the establishment of a national public library
3. the coinage of technical and scientific terms
4. the publication of an Arabic journal
5. support for Arabic research and publications

In 2001 the academy realised the need to unify technical terms across the Arab world and to find methods of simplifying SA grammar. The academy also aimed at encouraging Syrians and Arabs more generally to use SA in all domains of life and at finding ways and means to curb the spread of dialects (Sawaie 2006). This last goal of the academy of Damascus is not shared as enthusiastically by the other academies. Although the ideology comes up in intellectual arguments in Egypt from time to time, it is not as dominant as it is in Syria, for political reasons (see discussion of Syria above).

The Cairo academy has the following goals (Sawaie 2006: 635):

1. the maintenance of Arabic (SA) by making sure it has new terminology for science and technology
2. the editing of classical texts and manuscripts
3. the compilation of dictionaries and the publishing of a journal

Note that membership in the Cairo academy is currently not restricted to Egyptians or even Arabs but is open to all scholars who excel in maintaining SA (Sawaie 2006).

The academies in Damascus and Iraq have been more concerned with aspects of historical linguistics and literature, while the academy in Cairo has been concerned with developing materials in SA morphology and grammar, and coinage of scientific and technological terms. All the academies have produced a yearly journal, although this has not always been regular because of economic and political difficulties (Sawaie 2006).

The academies base their words on *qiyās* ('analogical derivation'), which is the formation of words according to existing word patterns. This enables the academies to produce new terminology and new words from existing roots. For example, one of the forms approved by the Cairo academy in the 1930s was *fiṣa:la*, which denotes professions like *ṭiba:ṣah* 'printing', *ḍjira:ḥah* 'surgery' etc. Dictionaries are then produced with the new forms.

One problem with all these academies is that there is no guarantee that writers in particular and society in general will follow their recommendations, since the academies lack any authority. In March 2007 the chair of the Cairo academy, Fārūq Shūshah, stated in *Akhbār al-Adab*, the literary magazine of Egypt, that the role of the academy was diminishing because of its lack of authority. He proposed that the academy's recommendations should be imposed on all mass media in Egypt and should be declared compulsory by them. Whether this is possible or not is another question.

Another problem is the lack of coordination of activities between the different academies. Thus, each academy may coin a different term for the same concept. An example of this is the fact that during the political unity between Syria and Egypt from 1958 to 1961, the two countries' academies were united, but when the political unity broke up, the academies also broke up. Again, politics plays a major role in forming policies and influencing language. Members of the academies were aware of this problem; a call for the unification of all academies was established early on, in 1956, and again in 1971 when coordination between the academies in Egypt, Syria and Iraq was more prominent. In 1977 the Jordanian academy followed suit. Now, two members of each academy meet, headed by a president, to standardise forms and arrange conferences. For example, a conference on SA legal terminology took place in Damascus in 1972; there was one on SA oil terminology in Baghdad in 1973 and another on SA Arabic medical terminology in Tunis in 1992. The academies are currently still suffering from political disagreement and lack of resources and financial support. After the last war in Iraq, which began in 2003, it is still not clear whether the academy in Iraq will function again or not (cf. Sawaie 2006).

## 5.8 SA, POLITICS AND THE ACHING NATION: A CASE STUDY

Throughout this chapter the relation between SA and politics has been examined. In this section I give an example of the symbolic role of SA in defining a nation and serving political aims. I contrast two interviews with two Arab leaders: the Syrian president Bashshār al-Asad and his former Yemeni counterpart, ‘Alī ‘Abd Allāh Ṣālīh. The markedness theory as developed by Myers-Scotton (1998, 2006) will be used to explain the data, as well as the concept of indexicality as explained by Woolard (2004).

The first example I discuss is an extract from an interview held with the current president of Syria immediately after the Hezbollah–Israel war that took place in Lebanon in summer 2006 (broadcast on the Al-Jazeera channel). The role of Syria in supporting Hezbollah was discussed, but more importantly so was the role of Iran in the war. Iran is not an Arab country and yet it has a very close relationship with Syria, which is currently one of the ardent believers in the Arab nation and the slogan ‘one nation, one language’, which had nearly ceased to exist after the death of the Egyptian president Nasser in 1970.<sup>20</sup> The Syrian president, as mentioned previously, is referred to in the Syrian media as ‘the leader of the Arabs’. Syria has always emphasised the importance of SA in both its schools and its universities. Given that there are still both Christians and Jews in Syria as well as Muslims, it is indeed language that can be the unifying factor: Syria has only 70 per cent Sunni Muslims, 12 per cent Christians (mostly Orthodox and Greek Catholic) and 18 per cent other minority groups including Jews and Druze. This again helps us understand why Syrian intellectuals emphasise SA so much and have the ambition of SA replacing the colloquial one day. Arabic is the unifying factor in a country that does not emphasise its religious identity and has a political system that tends towards socialism (see section 5.5.1.2 above).

The president of Syria, whether in interviews or speeches, speaks in SA, unlike the president of Egypt, who switches between SA and ECA. Example (1) below is crucial not only because of the topic discussed, but also because the president, when interviewed by an Egyptian journalist who switches throughout the interview between SA and ECA, sticks to SA only. By doing so, as will become clear below, he lays claim to all the authoritative powers of SA and confirms his support for the Arab nation even if collaboration with Iran is necessary. Once more, SA becomes a symbol for the identity of Syria and the nation in general.

- (1) **Interviewer:** *ʔayna ʔi:ra:n min ha:za if-farq il-ʔawṣaʔ ig-gadi:d // farq ʔawṣaʔ gadi:d // il-la:ʕib ir-raʔi:si fi:h // amri:ka w- ʔisraʔi:l // zayyi ma kunna bi-nʔu:l // ʔam il-la:ʕib ir-raʔi:si fi:h ʔi:ra:n // ʔam il-ʕarab //*



‘What is the role of Iran in this new Middle East? Who is the main player in this new Middle East? Is it the USA and Israel as you mentioned? Or is it Iran? Or is it the Arabs?’

The question asked by the Egyptian journalist is not in SA. He uses ECA, as in *bi-nʔu:l*, which has the ECA aspectual marker *b-* as well as the ECA glottal stop rather than the SA *q*. The reply of the president, who is not reading, is in SA with case and mood markings. He also uses SA negation, demonstratives and syntactic structures.

The unmarked code in this interview is established by the interviewer as a mixed code of both SA and ECA. This is usually the code used in interviews in the media by interviewees who are not usually reading, even if the interviewer uses SA. When the president replies in a specially elevated variety of SA that many, including the journalist, would not be able to produce extemporaneously, he is in a sense appealing to all the connotations of SA, especially the legitimacy associated with it. SA is then a marked choice that has an effect on the audience (on markedness, see Chapter 2). Applying the indexicality concept as developed by Woolard (2004) to this interview, we find that each code presupposes and is associated with a social context: a mixture of SA and a colloquial by the interviewee is associated with political interviews, while SA is associated with public political speeches. If SA is then used in a different context, for example, in a political interview, the speaker who uses it lays claim to all the indexes of SA, including the authoritative ones.

- (2) **President:** *ma yuhimmuni huwa l-ʕarab/ tabʕan ʔisraʔi:l la:ʕib raʔi:si min xila:l ʕudwa:n/ il-wulaya:t il-muttaʔida la:ʕib raʔi:si/ min xila:l mamqiʕha ka quwwa ʕuzma:/ wa min xila:l daʕmaha al-ʕe:r maʔdu:d l-israʔi:l/ amma bi-nisba l-ʔi:ra:n fa hiya dawla fi haʔihi al-mantiqa mundu l-ʔazal/ mundu t-ta:ri:x// la:kin ʔana ʔuri:du ʔan ʔaqu:la/ ʔin ka:nat ʔi:ran la:ʕib raʔi:si/ al-muhimm/ ʔan nara ʔannana al-ʕa:ʔib ar-raʔi:si ka-ʕarab/ ʕan as-sa:ʔa as-siya:siyya fi mantiqatina/ ha:ʔihi hiya an-nuqʔa allati yaʕʕib ʔan nara:ha// ʔahamm/ min ʔan nuʔi:ʕ waqtana fil haʔi:ʔi/ ʔan ʔi:ra:n talʕab dawr yaʕʕib ʔan yakbur aw yaʕʕur/* ‘I am interested in the Arabs. Of course Israel is a crucial player because of its attacks as an enemy. The USA is a crucial player because of its role as a superpower and its unlimited support for Israel. As for Iran, it has been a country in this region for a long time, since the beginning of history. But I want to mention that if Iran is the main player we have to understand that we as Arabs are the main absentee in the political arena in our region. This is the point that we have to understand. This is more important than wasting our time wondering whether the role of Iran should be less or more.’

When declaring that his main interest is the Arabs, the president uses SA. For whatever role Iran plays, it is Arabs who are crucial to him and whom, at least in this public statement, he expresses his concern about. The contrast between him and the journalist is salient to the audience.

Note the sentence in example (3), in which the journalist uses the glottal stop and ECA structure:

- (3) *zayyi ma kunna bi-nʔu:l*  
 like that be-2pl-perf asp-2pl-say  
 ‘as you mentioned’

Now contrast example (3) with example (4), in which the president uses the SA *q*:

- (4) *la:kin ʔana ʔuri:du ʔan ʔaqu:la*  
 But I lsg-want-ind that lsg-say-sub  
 ‘But I want to mention that’

The Syrian president uses mood marking, as in:

- (5) *ʔana ʔuri:du ʔan ʔaqu:la*  
 I lsg-want-ind that lsg-say-sub  
 ‘I want to mention’

He also uses case marking, as in:

- (6) *fil- ʔadi:θi*  
 in-det-talk-gen  
 ‘in wondering’

However, the agenda of the Syrian president is very different from that of the Yemeni one, for example. While Syria derives its power from Nasser’s belief that the Arab world is united linguistically, the Yemeni president derives his legitimacy partially from his claim that Yemen, unlike its Gulf neighbours, is a democratic country. The president of Yemen projects an identity of a democratic ruler, and his words are aimed at a non-Yemeni audience first and foremost. In a similar context, the former Yemeni president, unlike the Syrian one, uses a number of features from his dialect and does not attempt to stick to SA.

Example (7) is taken from an interview with the former Yemeni president that took place in 2007 (on Al-Jazeera). The interviewer uses SA only and is formal in addressing the president; he addresses him with the formal ‘you’, for example, much as one would do in French or German. The issue for discussion

is the corruption that is prevalent in Yemen and whether or not the president has taken measures to curb it. The fact that the interviewer uses SA only is not a surprise, since interviewers usually prepare their questions beforehand and can read them out from a piece of paper in the interview, as is the case here. However, it is common in political interviews for the interviewee to use both an SA and a colloquial, since he or she will generally not have prepared the answers and will not be reading from a sheet of paper. By using a mixture of SA and colloquial Yemeni, the president is using an unmarked variety rather than a marked one. He, unlike the Syrian president, is not laying claim to the indexes of SA.

- (7) **Interviewer:** *sa-ʔuʕti:k baʕd al-amθila min da:xil al-ħizb al-ħa:kim nafsū / ʕala ma yabdu/ huna:k ʔazma fi l-balad/ ħatta al-ħizb al-ħa:kim yuʕtabar guzʔ min al-ʔazma/*

‘I will give you some examples of personnel in the ruling party itself. It seems there is a crisis in the country. Even the ruling party is considered part of the problem.’

**President:** *naħnu naʕtadd inni ha:ða al-balad balad dimugra:ti: / wa huwa samʕatun muđi:ʔa fi l-manʕiga/ hada maʕru:f/ wi ʔayyi balad dimugra:ti/ il-go:l fi:ha akθar mimma huwa ħagi:ga/ il-go:l fi:ha/ aw al-ħakyi fi:ha ʕakθar mimma ħiya ħagi:gi/ le:f/ liʔanni fi:ha dimugra:tiyya/ ʔiða balad ma-fi:ha dimugra:tiyya/ ma ħada yigdar yihki: ʕan il-fasa:d/*

‘We appreciate the fact that this country is a democratic one. It is a beacon of light in the region. This is a known fact. In any democratic country, some of what is being said is untrue. Some talk or some of the gossip is beyond the truthful. Why? Because there is democracy. If there is a country that does not have democracy, no one can speak about corruption.’

**Interviewer:** *bil-dabʕ*

‘Exactly.’

**President:** *ma ħada yigdar yihki: ʕan il-fasa:d/*

‘No one can speak about corruption.’

**Interviewer:** *ʕaħi:h*

‘True.’

**President:** *ʔihna . . . / ʕadad min il-muxa:lifi:n da:xil il-tahgi:ga:t/ wi fil niya:ba il- ʕa:mma/ niya:bit il-ʔamma:l il-ʕa:mma/ ʕayyib ma-tigdar-fi tidʕarrimhum aw tiʕlin ʕanhum/ ʔila fi ɔo:ʔ ma yagirrah il-gaɔa:ʔ// ma-tigdir-f/ lakin ʕadad min al-murtakibi:n da:xil il-niya:ba bil-ʕafara:t aw il-ʕifrina:t min muxtalaf muʔassasa:t id-dawla/ ha:da waħdih/*

‘We . . . A number of the perpetrators are under investigation, and before the general prosecutor, and the state finance bureau. Well,

you cannot hold them accountable, or report them, except in the light of that which the courts establish. You cannot, but some of the perpetrators are before the general prosecutor, tens, twenties of them from all the different institutions of the state. That is one.'

The former Yemeni president, unlike the Syrian one, uses only colloquial negation, as in *ma-tigdir-f* 'you cannot' (repeated) to defend himself against the interviewer's accusations of corruption in Yemen. The use of colloquial negation may be to add emphasis to the denial by the president of the existence of such corruption. The use of colloquial morpho-syntactic features is highlighted by the interviewer's use of SA morpho-syntactic features, such as the *sa-* future marker with the SA verb *sa-ḍuṣṣti:k* 'I will give you'. Phonologically, the president consistently uses the *g* realisation of the *q* variable, even in words such as *dimugra:ṭiyya* 'democracy', which is now used widely with the *q* and does not occur with a glottal stop in countries that use a glottal stop instead of the *q*, such as Egypt and Syria. He even starts with the colloquial pronoun *ḥihna* 'we', rather than the standard one, *naḥnu*.

The use of SA by the Syrian president is in line with the political and ideological agenda of Syria. It comes as no surprise that Syria is very keen on promoting SA in schools and universities, while Yemen does not show the same enthusiasm. An increasing number of private schools in Yemen now teach science and maths in English rather than Arabic. The emphasis on SA as a unifying factor is waning in Yemen. In fact, the president in this interview is to a great extent differentiating himself from his neighbouring Arab countries that are not democratic in nature. I am not implying that SA is not democratic; what I am trying to make clear is that in this interview, the emphasis by the president is not on the unity of the nation that speaks one language, but rather on distinguishing himself from the rest of the nation, which has a different political system. It would be surprising if he used SA, as the Syrian president did, since the topic is not 'we Arabs', but rather how 'we Yemenis' are democratic. The expected unmarked choice is what the president of Yemen uses: a mixture of SA and colloquial.

It is worth mentioning that although the topic of discussion is different, the setting of both interviews is similar.

To conclude this section, I have contrasted the two presidents to show that the political undertones of language choice are not to be ignored. While considering language policies in the Arab world, one has also to consider the political agenda of different countries. In the Arab world there may be an underlying ideology that 'we speak one language', but within the nation as such there are different political systems and different political ideologies, which are sometimes reflected in language choice.

## 5.9 LINGUISTIC RIGHTS AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

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Some linguists (Fishman 1969; Fishman et al. 1968; more recently Spolsky 2004: 58) distinguish three 'types' of nations. The first is monolingual, mono-ethnic and ethno-linguistically homogeneous nations with insignificant minorities. These are now rare, although Lambert (1999) lists Japan as belonging to this type. The problem with deciding whether a community is mono-ethnic or not lies in the decision whether a minority is significant or not – a decision that is surely subjective, and potentially politically motivated. For example, Berbers in Tunisia represent only 1 per cent of the population and may be considered by some as a non-significant minority and by others as a significant one.

The second type of nation in this scheme is that of 'dyadic' or 'triadic' nations, in which two or three ethno-linguistic groups live side by side and share almost equal linguistic power, such as in Belgium, Switzerland and Canada. The third type of nation is the 'mosaic' or multi-ethnic nation in which more than three linguistic groups exist. Nigeria and India are examples of this type. In fact, more than half the countries of the world have five or more ethnic groups. However, usually, as Grin (2005: 449) suggests, ethnically, culturally or linguistically different groups compete over both material and symbolic resources within a given social, economic and political sphere. One of the most thorny issues is linguistic rights and obtaining an official status for a language.

The Declaration on Cultural Diversity of UNESCO's general conference, which took place in Paris on 2 November 2001, states the following:

All persons should therefore be able to express themselves and to create and disseminate their work in the language of their choice, and particularly in their mother tongue; all persons should be entitled to quality education and training that fully respect their cultural identity; and all persons should be able to participate in the cultural life of their choice and conduct their own cultural practices, subject to respect for human rights and fundamental freedom.<sup>21</sup>

The actions that are recommended to achieve equal linguistic rights for everyone include protecting the linguistic heritage of different communities by encouraging and supporting linguistic diversity.

Having the right to use and express oneself in ones mother tongue is in fact a moral right but a costly one. As Grin posits, if a language policy is fair, it should include all languages of the major minority groups, and for this to happen, 'some members of society are likely to lose, while others win from the policy, and even if all win, some will win more than others' (Grin 2005: 455). For example, the estimated cost of the move from monolingualism to

bilingualism in the Basque Country and Guatemala was 4–5 per cent per capita of spending in the system (cf. Grin 2005: 454). The conflict between languages is also a conflict over resources and how they are used, for example whether for better schooling, housing or bilingual education (Grin 2005; see also Bassiouney 2014, 2019). This may explain why the results of attitude surveys in which informants, mainly students, in Algeria and Morocco were asked about the usefulness of learning Tamazight as opposed to SA or French, were usually unfavourable towards Tamazight (Marley 2005; Benrabah 2007a). Most of the areas the informants came from had few, if any, Berbers, and these informants did not see the need to learn an extra language even if it was spoken by a significant minority (see sections 5.5.1.1.1 and 5.5.1.1.2 on Algeria and Morocco respectively). This again throws light on the complexity of the relation between linguistic rights and actual policies.

In addition, as Wright (2004: 243) puts it, for a minority group to impose their language as an official language, or even make sure their language is used in education, they have to have some political weight, otherwise they are completely dependent on the majority of the people to respect their will. However, if the majority has a different ideology altogether, then this is not possible. Usually in multi-ethnic nations, there is uneven bilingualism, in which the minority group is bilingual in their language and that of the majority, while the majority group is monolingual. For a minority group to stick to learning only their mother tongue is almost like ostracising themselves. According to Wright, the price to pay in such cases is marginalisation within the state, which is usually too high a price.

Note that for Berbers, the southern Sudanese and Israeli Arabs, linguistic tolerance is correlated with political tolerance, cultural participation and more democratic involvement in the government. Language is again a symbol which is impregnated with meanings and connotations. Language reflects identity and values associated with this identity, whether these values are moralistic in nature or practical in nature: values such as equality, power, dominance and progress. However, the ideology of correlating multilingualism and linguistic tolerance with political systems remains a mere ideology with its own exaggerations, misconceptions, assumptions and myths.

Linguistic tolerance is never easy to achieve and assigning individuals their linguistic rights is not always straightforward, because of the reasons discussed above. In democratic countries such as Germany, Switzerland, the UK and Austria, to name but a few, minorities are still struggling for their linguistic rights.

Stevenson (2005: 157), when discussing minorities and linguistic rights in Austria, refers to the strict policy that Austria has with regard to the imposition of German. All migrants have to learn German within a certain amount of time, by taking specific courses; if they fail to complete the courses for three years, they have to pay a fine of 200 euros. If they do not complete the courses

within four years of entering Austria, their residence permit is not renewed. According to Wright (2004: 199), 'linguistic space is only opening up for territorial rather than migrant groups'. Wright gives the example of a law passed by the Labour government in the UK at the beginning of the new millennium, when there was worry among members of the government that immigrant children were not assimilating well. The new law stated that it was the duty of the immigrant to become competent in English.

Correlating linguistic rights with democracy may seem simplistic at times, as will be made clear in Chapter 6. It is more viable to correlate linguistic rights with political ideologies and projection of identity. SA provides the symbol that countries and governments need. It provides the symbol for those Arabs who want to belong – Sudanese, Algerians, Moroccans and Tunisians – and those who want to lead – Egyptians, Syrians and recently some Gulf countries.

Another important aspect of the relation between language policy and politics in the Arab world is the aspect of diglossia. Diglossia has been accused of hindering Arabisation processes, of causing an increase in illiteracy levels and even of promoting and sustaining non-democratic systems. McFerren (1984: 5) identified diglossia as the cause of the failure of Arabisation in North Africa: 'Diglossia remains the single greatest impediment to Arabisation in the Maghreb'. Similarly, the following is the conclusion to Haeri (2003a):

Beyond its use for religious purposes, most Egyptians find speaking and writing in classical Arabic difficult, especially given the dire state of pre-college education. The official language thus acts as an obstacle to their participation in the political realm. There is of course no suggestion here that this is the only reason for absence of democracy in Egypt. But the language situation makes a strong comment on the nature of politics in that country. There seem to be deeply entrenched political interests in having classical Arabic to be the sole official language. (Haeri 2003a: 151)

Note first that the call to use colloquial instead of SA in education has been promoted by colonising powers especially the British (see section 5.5.2.1 on Egypt). This call is associated in the minds of native speakers in general and intellectuals in particular with colonisation and orientalist thinking. When the call to use the colloquial instead of SA in writing and in school subjects comes from non-Arabs, the scepticism is even greater (cf. Walters 2006b). For Arabs such calls are considered a conspiracy to divide the Arab nation. It is SA that, as Walters puts it, 'is the glue holding the Arab culture and the Arab world together'. In a hypothetical world, if each Arab country started using its own colloquial in domains in which SA was used, then in fifty years all Arab countries would be detached from SA, and the common SA literature which was read by all Arabs would be incomprehensible for a young generation

instructed only in colloquial. Whether Arabs would still understand each other is difficult to predict. Possibly some of them might still be able to communicate since Arabic satellite channels are now broadcast worldwide with all dialects of the Arab world.

An incident that is of relevance to this discussion took place in 2000 in France. The French minister of education decided Arabic should be taught as an optional language in some secondary schools, given the great number of North Africans in France (estimated at 5 million). He decided the colloquial dialect of Morocco should be used. Nāṣir al-Anṣārī, then director of the Institut du monde arabe, sent a letter to the minister of education in France at the time, Jack Lang (minister 2000–2), in which he argued that teaching Moroccan colloquial Arabic instead of SA was not the best option for students. His letter argued the following: teaching Moroccan colloquial Arabic would not be fair to the other North Africans who do not belong to Morocco, such as Algerians and Tunisians, who have a different dialect, and who comprise a large portion of the North African minority. He also mentioned that since there are different dialects within Morocco, it would be problematic to choose one of them, even if it were the prestigious one, as for some it may not carry the same prestige. On the other hand, teaching SA would be of more benefit to the students on many levels. First, most of the primary education curriculum of Arab countries is similar in content. This would connect the minority group to their Arab roots and ensure that the students would have the same ability to understand news bulletins in SA, read literature in SA and write in SA. Al-Anṣārī asked the French minister to reconsider his decision in the light of all these arguments (al-Anṣārī and al-Anṣārī 2002: 40).

While al-Anṣārī was mild in his reaction, other Egyptian intellectuals were not. Egyptian scholar Yūsuf ‘Izz al-Dīn (2006) accused France of religious intolerance and posited that France’s policy with regard to teaching colloquial has a political dimension. Once more he emphasised that SA gathers Arabs together and colloquials divide them.

In addition, there is also the psychological aspect, which is difficult to ignore. Arabs do not consider their colloquial another language. It is still Arabic; whether it is ‘good’ Arabic or ‘bad’ Arabic that they speak is a moot point. The fact that they do not consider SA a different language is significant. For example, expressions such as *al-laḥga al-miṣriyya* ‘the Egyptian dialect’ or *al-ṣa:mmiyya al-miṣriyya* ‘Egyptian colloquial Arabic’ are used by intellectuals in Egypt to refer to ECA. However, the average Egyptian, when asked what he or she speaks would automatically reply ‘Arabic’. Children watch *Sinbad* translated into SA without complaining that the language is incomprehensible.

In addition, using two varieties, a standard one and a colloquial one, in different domains is not uncommon. Germany is also a diglossic community, and even if Hochdeutsch (Standard German) is spoken (while SA is not), some



Germans end up writing in Hochdeutsch, though they never speak it. What Haeri (2003a: 152) calls a 'highly uneasy relation to the self' that develops in Egyptian children because they grow up hearing that the language they speak is bad and has no grammar, is in fact an ability to adapt to and later even manipulate the linguistic situation. Egyptian children do not think in terms of bad and good, although this is difficult to prove without psychological data. Children are trained to think in terms of domains: in the same way as there is a public domain and a private domain, there is an SA domain and an ECA domain. Children could think in terms of good or bad if, for example, their parents forbid them to speak colloquial with them or in front of others. This does not happen in any Arab country that I know of, even if Arab scholars say otherwise. Given the cases studied in this book in which the diglossic situation provided an opportunity for speakers to project their identity and leave an effect on their audience, I would once more consider diglossia an asset rather than an impediment. As one can deduce from all the discussion above, diglossia is dragged into the conflict without the acknowledgement that it is itself linguistic diversity, and that by eliminating it, we are suppressing a linguistic richness in Arab societies.

## 5.10 ENGLISH AND GLOBALISATION

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When discussing language policies in Egypt, I mentioned the vast influence of the privatisation move that has taken place over the last twenty years in Egypt, resulting in parents rushing to teach their children English so that they can find jobs in the private sector, since the public sector now fails to provide the same jobs and security it used to provide. Walters (2006b: 660) discusses the influences of a globalised economy which is based on Anglo-American capitalism, and which has little to do with culture or politics and everything to do with economic/market forces on the linguistic situation in Arab countries.

Universities in which the medium of instruction is English are being established throughout the Arab world, including countries in which French played a major role, such as Morocco and Tunisia. Spolsky (2004: 87) posits that Tunisians are keen on learning English now even more than French. As Shaaban (2006: 703) puts it, 'although the Arabists insist on their children acquiring a good basis in Arabic, and the others insist on a good French education, both parties are espousing English as a language of education in Arab societies'.

When it comes to scholarship and technology, computer manuals, for example, are written in English, and scholars who want to be recognised internationally, even French scholars, have to publish in English. Even France with its systematic language policy cannot stand in the way of the spread of English within French society (Spolsky 2004). Crystal (1987: 358), more than

thirty years ago contended that ‘over two-thirds of the world’s scientists write in English, three quarters of the world’s email is written in English, of all the information in the world’s electronic retrieval systems 80% is stored in English’ (see also Luke et al. 2007). Arab societies are following what Fishman calls their ‘common sense needs and desires’, and these needs are not necessarily related to their colonial past (1996: 639). There are changes affecting the world at large, whether social, political or economic, and related directly to globalisation. Language is just another domain in which these changes are reflected (cf. Bourdieu 2001).

In fact, globalisation makes one wonder once more to what extent official language policies influence language practices. In fact, Britain has no constitution that states that English is the official language and the USA has nothing about language policy in its constitution (cf. Spolsky 2004: 223). Still English is dominant in both countries and is spreading to the whole world. Note that the fact that the policy is not written does not mean it is not implemented. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, a policy is implemented by members of a particular community even if it is not written, as long as there is tacit agreement as to what this policy is.

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## 5.II CONCLUSION

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I would like to conclude this chapter with the following comment by Wright (2004: 225): ‘Language is a robust marker of group membership and one that is not easily changed.’ Arabs are still struggling with how to define themselves, as a group and/or individually, and how to belong to a group and still project a different identity. Language is at the heart of this struggle. The instinct to belong is what nations are usually built on (Grosby 2005). However, as has been made clear throughout this chapter, Arab countries are as different as they are similar, and attitudes are as diverse as they are coherent: Arab Muslims, Arab Christians, Syrians, Egyptians, Lebanese, Algerians, to name but a few, are also struggling with the ideology of what they are ‘supposed to be’ and what they really are. It is not easy to separate the two and perhaps one should not attempt to do so, since both forge an identity.

The interplay between ethnicity, as in the case of Berbers or Southern Sudanese; religion, as in the case of Lebanese Christians and Lebanese Muslims; politics, as in the case of Arab-Israelis, and language is indeed complex and cannot be covered in one chapter. I aim merely to give a snapshot of language policy, ideology, practices and politics.

Most Arab countries except Iraq, where Kurdish has been acknowledged regionally for decades, have Arabic and only SA as their official language. This does not reflect the linguistic reality, but may have many political, ideological and symbolic undertones.

In this chapter I have discussed language policies in general and then examined the situation in some Arab countries in detail (sections 5.2–5.5). One of the factors essential to language policies is language contact. Fishman (1997: 194) argues that ‘endangered languages become such because of the lack of informal inter-generational transmission and informal daily life support, not because they are not being taught in schools’. If we examine the language planning process used by the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik in the first centuries of Islam<sup>22</sup>, we find that one of the reasons why Arabic spread so fast, replacing other languages, is that Arabs were in contact with the people they conquered; they built cities and settled in them. This is in effect urbanisation. In addition, the economic factors are important. Arabs at the time were in control of the economy of these countries. They eventually became advanced scientifically and economically. Wright (2004: 113) discusses how Arabic was used as a lingua franca to understand the scientific concepts developed in the age of the caliphates. Scholars from non-Arabic-speaking countries had to learn Arabic. Gill (1999) mentions that the success of a language is dependent on economic factors as well as the prestige associated with the language. At present, English, French, Spanish and to a lesser extent German are important for people in the Arab world. The status of English is rising fast, especially in countries where tourism provides a substantial amount of hard currency, such as Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

As for education in the Arab world, the discrepancy between high school and university level is a big problem. In many countries, especially North African ones, education in state high schools is mainly in Arabic, but science faculties use French as the medium of instruction. This can be an impediment for students. Arab countries will have to face this problem one day. Either Arabic has to catch up and be used more in science, which is not an easy task, or English and French will remain the languages of the elite and the educated in Arab countries. English has been referred to as ‘a killer language’ (cf. Fishman 2002). Fishman thinks this is not a precise term since it is people who give the language the status it has. If indeed English is a killer language, then where does that leave SA, a language that is not even spoken by anyone as a vernacular? Why did SA survive and confront colonisation, modern technology and the widespread use of English?

Indeed, religion has a vast role to play in the survival of SA. But there is also the romantic belief among users of Arabic and Muslims in the appeal and superiority of their language, as is evident in the poem cited at the beginning of this chapter. Schiffman (1996: 69) points to the perceived ‘sacredness of Arabic’, while the entry for ‘Koran’ in the *Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* summarises the traditional Muslim position neatly:

Muslims consider the Koran to be holy scripture only in the original Arabic of its revelation. The Koran, while it may be translated, is only

ritually valid in Arabic. This is connected with the notion of Arabic as a 'sacred'. Language itself is sacred, because of its miraculous power to communicate and to externalise thought. (Glassé 1989: 46)

For Muslims words are powerful; they are divine. Indeed, to fight a curse one has to use words, Arabic words mainly from the Qur'an. The *Encyclopedia* (1989: 46) adds that Arabic, though 'originally a desert nomadic dialect, has maintained a fresh directness that makes it a more suitable vehicle than many others'. He attributes this freshness to the relationship between words and their roots, and to the Qur'an's use of simple statements (cf. Wright 2004: 69). *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* further notes that:

Simple statements, which are the rule in the Koran, open, under the right conditions of receptivity, into astonishing and vast horizons; the world is reduced to ripples in consciousness. These and other qualities make Arabic an incomparable medium for dialogue between man and God in prayer. (1989: 47)

Wright argues that these attitudes towards Arabic (SA) affect language policy-making in the Arab world and the Islamic world in general (2004: 70). She contends that all language policies are culturally specific. To a great extent this is true, although again, it is difficult to define the term 'culture'. Culture in this sense is the shared historical and geographical background of a group of people who also have the same set of values and beliefs. These beliefs may or may not be religious ones.

The call to save MSA is still heard in all parts of the Arab world. In 2007 Dr Yūsuf 'Izz al-Dīn, the renowned professor and scholar, said in the Egyptian literary magazine *Akhhbār al-Adab* (Nūr 2007) that it is our duty as Arabs and patriots to confront the conspiracy against us to weaken SA. His words echo words spoken a century ago, but perhaps the mission to preserve SA and the struggle to save it are just at their onset.

## NOTES

1. Wright (2004: 224) discusses how communities suffering or who have suffered from colonisation consider language an 'identity marker'.
2. Suleiman (1999: 11) tries to examine how 'political conflict in the Middle East whether inter-ethnic or inter-nation is related to language policies'.
3. Around the second half of the twentieth century, when most of the Arab countries gained their independence, the idea of the Arab nation was at its zenith and Nasser, the then president of Egypt, was hailed as the leader of Arabs and of Arab unity (Haag 2005).
4. In the documentary film *Four Egyptian Women* (1996), an Egyptian professor who was then around fifty years old claimed that she only spoke French to her family and Arabic to the

- servants, and when she read the Qur'an for the first time, it was in French and not Arabic. It is also common for rich families in Egypt now to address their children in English and have nannies who only speak English at home.
5. Note that in 1830 the Jewish community of Algeria comprised some 25,000 people, most of whom were quite poor (see Stora 2001).
  6. President Boumedienne ruled for three decades of relative peace, although his regime was authoritarian. The diversity within Algeria was hidden under the surface and only came out again in 1989 (Stora 2001).
  7. In 1989 the underlying diversity started coming to the surface. New political movements became strong nationalist, liberal, radical, Islamist and even communist. In 1992 the military forces intervened to end an election that would have been won by opposition Islamists of the Front islamique du salut (FIS). Politicians do not agree as to whether it would have been better to let democracy take its course or to intervene (cf. Stora 2001).
  8. Constitutional revision, 6 March 2016, published in *Journal officiel de la République algérienne démocratique et populaire*, 55(14), 7 March 2016, <https://www.joradp.dz/FTP/jo-francais/2016/F2016014.pdf>; last accessed 14 April 2019. Interestingly, the official gazette of the Algerian government is published both in Arabic and in French.
  9. Source: Morocco. Ministry of Justice, *Constitution*, [http://www.justice.gov.ma/fr/legislation/legislation.aspx?ty=1&id\\_1=](http://www.justice.gov.ma/fr/legislation/legislation.aspx?ty=1&id_1=); last accessed 30 October 2008.
  10. In fact, apart from Iraq, where it is acknowledged regionally and has been for a long time, no country acknowledges Kurdish. Iraq acknowledges Kurdish in the Kurdish region; in Iraq, street names, for example, are written in both languages. This is not the case in other countries such as Syria, Armenia or Turkey (Spolsky 2004).
  11. Nasser with his Free Officers (army officers) started their bloodless coup on 26 July 1952 to get rid of the monarchy and the British presence in Egypt. The coup was welcomed by a great number of Egyptians who regarded it as a new beginning and an end to a corrupt era. King Farouk was ordered to abdicate in favour of his son and to leave Egypt. For a short time after his son was named king, before Egypt was declared a republic in 1953 (cf. Haag 2005).
  12. Nasser is described by Mansfield (2003: 278) as 'an Egyptian who developed a genuine belief in the movement to unite the Arabs, of which he saw Egypt as the natural leader'.
  13. This was not really implemented by students. However the ideology is very similar to that proposed by Māzin al-Mubārāk at the beginning of this chapter.
  14. This status that SA obtained at that time may explain why Ferguson, in his analysis of diglossia (1972), mentioned that SA is the language used in mosque sermons, university lectures and political speeches. This is not the case today, but since his article was first published in 1959, it may reflect the sentiment of the time. In addition, Badawi's levels may also reflect the attitude of Egyptians at the time (see Chapter 1 for his classifications).
  15. See Chart 5.1 to understand why Haeri is classifying speakers in this way.
  16. See Ethnologue, 'Sudan', [http://www.ethnologue.com/show\\_country.asp?name=sd](http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=sd); last accessed 30 October 2008.
  17. See University of Khartoum website, <http://www.uofk.edu/index.php?id=825>; last accessed 30 October 2008. 'The second phase of Arabicization was formally started in 1991. Arabic replaced English as medium of instruction in all Sudanese Universities and higher institutions of learning.'
  18. See <https://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/ss/ss013en.pdf>; last accessed 14 April 2019.
  19. See <http://www.ikhwanonline.com/Article.asp?ArtID=39000&SecID=294>; last accessed 1 November 2008.
  20. Part of the Nasserist ideology was the issue of who would lead the Arab world.

21. See UNESCO, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127160m.pdf>; last accessed 11 November 2008.
22. See Versteegh (2001) for a discussion of the process of Arabisation at the time of Islamic conquests.

# A critical approach to Arabic sociolinguistics

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The vanquished always tend to imitate their conquerors in their rituals, customs, beliefs and other affairs and habits.<sup>1</sup>

Ibn Khaldun (1377)

The quotation above, by Ibn Khaldun, the medieval pioneer of sociology and anthropology, is key to our understanding of critical sociolinguistics. The quotation situates our social habits and beliefs within a political, ideological framework. It also assumes that the distribution of power among different communities is not equal. The powerless look to the powerful for guidance on all levels. Being conquered is a social phenomenon as much as it is a political one. As has been made clear in a number of studies in sociolinguistics concerned with Arabic and colonisation, within the vanquished group there is a hierarchy of those who comply and those who revolt. However, the prevalent attitude of the vanquished is to imitate the powerful group. Perhaps this quote indirectly refers to what I term the ‘sociolinguist’s trap’. This trap is due to both power and ideologies, and cannot be understood except by analysing and understanding both power and ideology. To explain further, note that Milroy and Milroy (2012: 163) postulate that ‘language ideologies link the cultural world of the language user to macro-level social and political forces. This is of course the very link which sociolinguists attempt to create when they model sociolinguistic structure with reference to social categories’. The assumption is that the sociolinguist is devoid of his or her own macro-level political and social forces. This assumption is now questioned by sociolinguists themselves. If we consider the power of specific political groups as a detrimental factor in their ideologies as well as those of others, then we need to reconsider research based on the sociopolitical forces defining the linguists, and not just the object of study. This is a trap since it is indeed difficult to separate oneself from one’s political, social and cultural constructs. It is a trap because for decades

many linguists did not reflect on their own ideologies before studying those of others. This is true especially for those studying the Arab world.

Going back to the quotation above, one needs to acknowledge the dominance of western ideologies and scientific constructs in the study of sociolinguistics. It is still the case that linguists studying the Arab world rush to publish in English in international journals in order to get promoted or be acknowledged internationally. It is also the case that in North Africa – Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia – French is still the language of the elite as well as that of the past occupiers. In Egypt, anyone who can afford it will send their kids to American or British schools to learn English, even while calling for the preservation of Arabic. It is indeed time for sociolinguists to reflect on identity issues that pertain to others and to themselves, bearing in mind the discrepancy in power that is reflected in research as much as in politics and society.

## 6.1 CRITICAL SOCIOLINGUISTICS

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Critical sociolinguistics (CSL) is an approach that questions a number of concepts that we take for granted as both researchers and community members. The aim of this approach is to re-evaluate our ideas about both the role of language in society and the tools for studying it. While this approach did not come into existence with the Arabic-speaking world in mind, it does have a profound impact on how we evaluate previous research and how we conduct new work.

Heller et al. (2018) shed light on the terms ‘critical’, ‘ethnographic’ and ‘sociolinguistic’. Their definitions are worth mentioning here. By ‘critical’, they refer to issues related to power and inequality (2018: 1–2), and raise the questions of how resources are distributed and how importance is attributed to specific resources and for specific individuals. It is critical because it delves into how social organisations took shape and have consequences: how communities, states, nations, and political parties affect and mould our general understanding and linguistic choices.

Heller et al., as well as Mesthrie et al. (2009) and others, also argue that social categories are constructed and therefore the researcher starts with a cultural package.

The ethnographic part of doing research aims at exploring how social processes are created and maintained, and what they mean to people and why. Essentially the point of reference in research is the people, and what they think does count. In ethnographic studies the researcher should pay attention to the contexts and social conditions in which social processes are revealed. The aim of the researcher should be to describe and explain. Researchers use cases to give evidence for broader social processes.

‘Sociolinguistic’, according to Heller et al. (2018), is an ‘umbrella term’ that ‘covers all investigations into how language matters, socially, politically, and economically’ (2018: 1–2).



CSL attempts to challenge all given ‘bounded notions of language’ that are the product of a specific environment and background. For example, concepts of locality are now challenged by new media where there is clear recontextualisation and no clear special category (García et al. 2017: 10–11).

### 6.1.1 Problems with sociolinguistic research

Until now, sociolinguists have taken some facts for granted and ignored others. Below are three assumptions that will be discussed and exemplified, and two facts that were not tackled thoroughly in earlier research.

1. The assumption that the linguist is a neutral researcher devoid of his or her own cultural package, prejudices and ideologies.
2. The assumption that language and society are linked in a binary way in which social independent variables affect a static unified community and its usage of linguistic codes and variables, and in which there is a standard code and a non-standard one.
3. The assumption that the term ‘native speaker’ is a static description of a person’s ownership of a language, and usually only one language.
4. The need to address two components together: power and inequality. They need to be addressed reflexively in any sociolinguistic research.
5. The need to address sociolinguistics more globally, while realising that the focus of research has hitherto been on Anglo-American settings, and to some extent European settings, and then applying these theories to other settings. This also means acknowledging the dominance and hegemony of the western perspective and publication venues, as will be discussed below, and the minimisation of the role of the south in research.

The first assumption is an overarching one and affects all the other points. I will start the discussion with the binary approach that has controlled so much research in sociolinguistics. The focus of this chapter will be on the challenges facing methods of sociolinguistic research from a critical perspective. It will also highlight themes, concepts and theories that need to be addressed when conducting a study in sociolinguistics.

## 6.2 THE BINARY APPROACH TO SOCIOLINGUISTICS: A METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

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García et al. (2017: 3) contend that the concept of a standard language is a product of a prevalent cultural language ideology in a community, including an ideology of the researcher him- or herself. This cultural construct would

lead the researcher to think about sociolinguistic issues in binary terms, for example men vs women, or standard vs dialect. In this pattern, even the cultures themselves become products that are divided with clear boundaries. This binary division is related to language as a resource (Heller 2011) in the sense that, as with other resources, humans tend to homogenise and categorise it in order to better understand it, in the same way they categorise monetary systems, weights, measurements, and so on (García et al. 2017: 3).

García et al. (2017: 4) argue that in spite of the fact that early sociolinguists did beneficial work, they did not understand the full picture since they were describing unified, imagined communities, where language and culture were coherent and autonomous entities that existed in a binary relationship.

Note that cultures as well as codes are fluid and sometimes develop in unexpected ways. They cannot in most cases be clearly differentiated. However, it is indeed linguistic differentiation that individuals are concerned with when they talk about language variation and when they participate in it (Gal 2016).

As previously stated, there has been a wave of re-evaluation of previous research that was built on a binary scale and measured quantitatively. Some linguists, most of whom are mentioned below, have started to challenge the binary approach to sociolinguistic research (Schulthies 2015; García et al. 2017). This includes research that focuses on a standard variety and contrasts it with a 'non-standard' one, such as studies that contrast standard British English with different dialects. It also includes correlating an independent variable with a linguistic one, such as correlating gender, social class or ethnicity with a phonological variable. Finally, it also includes the separation of synchronic and diachronic variation even while studying both together. There are two reasons for questioning binary approaches. First, binary approaches do not provide a full picture of sociolinguistic variation as a social process. Second, gender, standard language, ethnicity and the like are all cultural constructs that were invented by linguists and other scholars who themselves are the product of a cultural framework, and this cultural framework has influenced the variables they use and conceptualise.

The binary standard remains the primary reference of earlier variationist research (Silverstein 2016: 58). However, it is indeed difficult to define a standard without resorting to culture and ideology. Milroy and Milroy (2012: 19) define the process of standardisation as 'an ideology' and standard language as 'an idea in the mind' or 'a set of abstract norms to which actual usage may conform to a greater or lesser extent'. The coherent, static fallacy of standardisation does not leave room for variation and change, nor for inconsistency and irregularities. A standard is usually equated with language as a whole. It is perceived as 'uniform' and legitimate. In the case of English, it is usually specific urban varieties that are considered the 'lawful manifestation of the language' (Milroy and Milroy 2012: 172). Other varieties are unlawful and

lack legitimacy. What people, including researchers, normalise and believe is the right way of talking is considered the standard (2012: 25).

To reiterate what was discussed in previous chapters, the term 'standard' in Arabic has been used in a different and inaccurate way to refer to SA (*fusha*) as opposed to the colloquial, and not to the normalised code of a specific community, as will be made clear in the discussion below. However, while a standard may exist in some communities it is sometimes difficult to recognise in others. For the sociolinguist the whole concept is loaded with indexes.

Silverstein argues that the concept of 'standard' as used by linguists is a by-product of a 'complex institutionalization of sociolinguistic authority' (2016: 53). To explain further, linguists are not immune to their own political, socioeconomic and historical context. They are the product of this context and their constructions are related to it. The same argument is made by Gal, who argues that in Labov's New York City study, linguistic variation was defined by the linguist and not by the speakers themselves, and this definition did not take into account their perceptions and ideologies, or the culturally dependent differences among individuals as types of people (Gal 2016: 114). In fact, the speakers' identities were 'defined' by the investigator with prepared surveys of age, education, gender and income. In addition to contesting 'standard' as a cultural construct, Silverstein (2016: 57) challenges methods used in variationist research, especially the early research. Silverstein contends that in early research, interviews were used in combination with minimal pairs, readings and recordings of people, all conducted in relation to a standard and to speakers' attention to and anxiety about a 'standard' register different from their normal one. In fact, he calls this process of data collection an 'ideologically driven stratification where some behavioural characteristic is considered the neutral, top-and-centre standard'. According to him, upper-middle-class linguistic code usually revolves around standard. Because of its established indexes that are the result of ideological stratification, a standard then becomes a register endowed with 'ideological neutrality' while all other registers are not neutral. In other words, the emphasis on attention to speech by earlier variationists may not be precise. It is not attention to speech or consciousness that speakers are concerned with, but rather how speakers situate and position themselves in relation to a standard, which signals their position in a wider sociolinguistic context (2016: 58). Silverstein also challenges concepts coined by linguists such as that of 'covert prestige' (Trudgill 1972). He argues that such terms are already loaded with the language ideology of the linguist. As he expresses it, it is as if 'we are surprised' when a speaker uses his or her own dialect or register which is not the standard.

Silverstein argues that what people actually do when they use linguistic variables is to 'perform their context-relevant identities via indexical semiosis' (2016: 63). Again, as was argued in Chapter 3, the importance of meaning and how it develops in different contexts is now the focus of a substantial body

of sociolinguistic research. Jaffe (2016: 86) similarly argues that linguistic habits are context-dependent and context-created; therefore they can only be understood by inferences about the semiotic significance of utterances and their associations – that is, there should be a focus on ideology.

CSL can indeed benefit from studies conducted about Arabic by sociolinguists. Many of those that have already been undertaken have challenged concepts taken for granted, and while most of these studies were not from a critical perspective, they did include critical aspects in their conclusions (see Silverstein 2016: 53 for challenges to the idea of standard).

I will start with the concept of diglossia and diglossic switching. These concepts were discussed in detail in Chapters 1 and 2.

After Ferguson's 1959 article on diglossia, Blanc (1960), Badawi (1973) and Meiseles (1980) thought that proposing intermediate levels between H and L would give a more accurate description of the situation in the Arab world. Thus, they recognised that people shift between H (SA) and L (colloquials), especially when speaking, but often they do not shift the whole way, resulting in levels which are neither fully SA nor fully colloquial. The very fact that these scholars indirectly rejected the binary fixed approach to diglossia and instead thought about the linguistic situation primarily as a continuum is worth contemplating. In Chapter 1 it was made clear that there are challenges in determining the boundaries between SA as a concept and different colloquials in different countries in the Arab world. The term 'vernacular' was problematic, and so was the term 'standard', given the diglossic nature of the linguistic situation in the Arab world. 'Standard' in this case does not refer to the prestigious spoken variety but to an idealised written code that is used in formal settings. An artificial and mostly arbitrary differentiation was made by linguists between standard and vernacular, and between standard and classical. When confronted with data from live conversations or the media, linguists (including myself) had to acknowledge the grey area in which speakers do not draw a strict line between standard and colloquial. In addition, the concept of one colloquial in each nation-state that can be representative is already problematic, as are the concepts of prestige, covert prestige and neutrality of specific codes. All of the categories devised by linguists, though essential, are not fixed. To a great extent, these categories assumed a coherent, static community in which all agree on terms and linguistic codes, but as was made clear in Chapters 2 and 3, this is not the case. Speakers of Arabic do not always make the distinction between classical Arabic and SA. Language attitudes and ideologies in the Arab world are unstable due to years of conditioning by colonial and political repression. Colloquial, for some thinkers, is a corrupted version of SA; for others, it is a spoken code. Colloquial is difficult to define. Is it ever totally different from SA? And if not, why do we have two distinct categories when analysing cases of code-switching?

To elaborate, researchers who examine code-switching between SA and

colloquial (Bassiouney 2006; Mejdell 2006; Boussofara 2003) all agree that the concept of one and only one dominant matrix code that controls bilingual utterances is not accurate. The research provides many examples of why this binary distinction between a matrix and an embedded, or a dominant, code, the native language and an embedded one does not work (see examples in Chapter 2). Examples of challenges to the concept of ML are discussed in Chapter 2. These challenges include phrases that do not conform to the ML hypothesis and in which system morphemes come from more than one code and also phrases that cannot be classified as belonging to one code over another. In the first edition of this book, I proposed that there is a composite ML in Egypt when code-switching occurs between SA and ECA. This composite does not presuppose or predict language death. The idea of a composite ML is perhaps similar in some way to that of translanguaging (see the paragraph below).

García and Wei (2014: 8) propose a more comprehensive view of code-switching in which the speakers play a more complex and active role in using their linguistic repertoire, which may include different languages, different varieties of the same language or different styles. This more thorough approach transcends clear and neat divisions between languages. It is called ‘translanguaging’ and was referred to in Chapter 2. More studies of Arabic in relation to this concept are sorely needed.

### 6.2.1 The inaccuracy of the binary approach to linguistic variation

The binary approach to linguistic variation has influenced research on Arabic, especially with its unique and sometimes difficult to classify diglossic situation. Haeri (2003b) adopts such a binary approach. In doing so, she is clearly influenced by her own social and cultural construct, as she equates the ideological, social and linguistic context of the UK and Egypt.<sup>2</sup> She discusses what is considered the ‘correct usage of English’ and claims that from inquiries she made to editors and writers in the *Guardian* as well as her reading the readers’ letters herself, it is clear that once a linguistic form is used by people and becomes common it is accepted as a correct form. Haeri then evaluates this attitude of the British and considers it ‘democratic’. She goes on to claim that this is ‘in contrast’ to the attitude of Arabic users and provides examples from editors in Egypt who claim that the Qur’an is their only reference when it comes to correct usage of Arabic, since it is the only authoritative text there is. She also (rightly) claims that SA or classical Arabic – since she does not make a distinction – is not the native language of any Arab, since each country has its own spoken varieties. Haeri compares SA and the different colloquials to Latin in Europe and poses the question of what would happen if Latin were the language used in the *Guardian*. In that case, she asks, who would be defining ‘correct’ usage?

Haeri alludes to political and religious power here, and proceeds to make

the argument that a ‘mother tongue’ must be ‘owned’ by its speakers. That is, SA or classical Arabic is not owned by any speakers and therefore it is a ‘sacred language’; all native speakers of Arabic are therefore only ‘custodians’ of SA, not ‘owners’. She refers to the situation in Egypt and claims that although Egyptians like their colloquial language they think it cannot replace SA or its domains. She refers to a story she heard in Egypt about schoolteachers reportedly referring to colloquial as ‘the language of the donkeys’ in order to discourage its use.

Haeri creates a dichotomy: not just custodians versus owners, classical and standard versus colloquial, but also between democracy and authority, between the divine and the modern, between Latin/classical/SA and colloquial. This dichotomy is loaded with cultural bias. The mere comparison between the linguistic situation in Egypt and the UK is not only assuming that the situation in the UK should serve as a template for other cultural and linguistic situations, but also that the two languages, English and Arabic, developed in a similar fashion. Putting aside her association of SA with religion and that of English with democracy, we need to examine first the idealisation of the linguistic situation in the UK, which does not reflect the linguistic reality in the UK.

Haeri claims that in the UK ‘once a usage becomes prevalent, it must be, and is, accepted as the correct one’. This is not, in fact, true. Aitchison (2001) discusses how English users lament the decay of their language and attempt to purify it by rejecting any change. Cameron (2012) also refers to the fact that she is always asked by laypeople to take a role, as a linguist, in purifying the English language. The concept of a legitimate normal form of language as a coherent and unified one is prevalent in the UK, as it is in other parts of the world. Milroy and Milroy (2012: 22) posit that standardisation is a concept that does not allow variation and change.

Before I consider the claim of Egyptians being custodians rather than owners, I would like to conclude the discussion on the use of language in the UK with another example from a newspaper (Goodall 2018). However, in this example, the writer discusses how British prime minister Boris Johnson can say something that is considered politically incorrect and get away with it because he says it in a ‘posh’ accent, while if the same claim were made by someone in a more ‘local’ accent it would not be accepted. Johnson is at an advantage not only because of his accent, but also because of his access to resources, mainly media outlets, which others may not have. In fact, according to the articles, it is not just Johnson who has this access, but his whole family. The article points to the inequality that exists in any community and to the legitimacy bestowed upon those who use a specific variety of English.

Goodall provides a glimpse of the power and inequality related to language in the UK – but also, as we know, all over the world – when he refers to the controversial assumptions made by Johnson concerning the burqa in the UK.

Some people took offence at comparing burqa wearers to bank robbers and letterboxes. However, according to Goodall, the power that Johnson enjoys lies not just in his position and access, but also in his dialect/code. Goodall argues that in spite of the fact that Johnson's comments are not spoken but written, the reader can imagine how he would have said them – according to Goodall, with 'his trademark elan and effete toffish bluster. How amusing, his defenders say and how very droll – whilst at the same commendable for bravely airing difficult but important issues'. Goodall goes on to argue that if the very same words were said in a less prestigious and authoritative accent, such as that of Essex or Yorkshire, they would denote ignorance and crudity, especially if said by someone less educated and rich. However, the situation is different in the case of Johnson because of his 'Bertie Wooster cut-glass accent and demeanour, because of his power'.

What Johnson, and indeed his family, own is not just a code of communication, but a code that is combined with another social resource: access to media outlets.

Goodall then shows how both Johnson's sister and father have access to media outlets and can voice their opinion while this is not the case with, for example, a working-class woman from the UK who wears the niqab.

Going back to Milroy and Milroy, they posit that standardisation is an ideology and a standard language is just an abstract perfect idea (2012: 19). Standardisation is 'a set of abstract norms to which actual usage may conform to a greater or lesser extent'. They argue that even Standard English has variation. They use the term 'guardians of the language' to refer to English speakers in the UK who aim at uniformity of language. Guardians are convinced there is only one 'right' way of using English. This is what Milroy and Milroy call linguistic normalisation (2012: 25). This pressure exerted by the guardians can partially explain why, in the UK and US, 'remote dialects' disappear quickly (2012: 24).

Milroy and Milroy contend that 'language ideologies link the cultural world of the language user to macro-level social and political forces. This is of course the very link which sociolinguists attempt to create when they model sociolinguistic structure with reference to social categories' (2012: 163). They point to the importance of language ideology. However, ideologies also interfere with researchers and may influence their results, even unintentionally. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, this is what I call the 'sociolinguist's trap'. For example, Milroy and Milroy point to the fact that there are some researchers who identify the standard, uniform code with the language as a whole; in these cases, other codes are no longer the 'lawful manifestation of the language' (2012: 172).

Thus, comparing the situation of Arabic to that of English and idealising the latter is not precise. It may in fact indicate the same process of constructing everything with reference to the powerful group. Besides, there is not

just one English with a uniform status. In the UK some dialects have more legitimacy than others.

Meanwhile, returning to the discussion of Egyptians as custodians and not owners of SA, it must first be acknowledged that SA can be used to legitimise a cause, as was the case during the Egyptian revolution of 2011. However, SA is one resource among many, and in itself was not enough to give Hosni Mubarak, former president of Egypt, legitimacy to stay in power. Mubarak's last three speeches were in SA, unlike his earlier speeches in which he code-switched between SA and ECA (see Chapter 2). By using SA in his last speeches he was appealing to its legitimacy; however, this legitimacy was part of the social makeup of Egypt and as such was not enough to establish him as 'more legitimate' than anyone else.

To explain further, Haeri (2003b) argues that Egyptians do not own SA since it is not spoken by any group but is regarded as a sacred language. She compares it to Latin in that regard. She adds that Egyptians do own their dialect (ECA), with its various codes, but it is not the acknowledged or prestigious dialect. Bassiouney (2014) discusses the different associations of SA and ECA in Egypt, and shows how SA has negative as well as positive associations, as does ECA. She gives the example of how Arabic teachers are portrayed in Egyptian films. This portrayal always depicts them as poor, socially vulnerable and miserable. They are manipulated by more powerful groups.

In the film *Ramadān Mabruk Abū al-'Alamayn Hammūdah* (2008), the Arabic teacher is outraged when one of his students, the son of the minister of the interior, uses the nominative case when the genitive is required. He sets out on his bicycle for the minister's house in order to complain, but is arrested by a squadron of bodyguards and badly beaten. Upon being discharged from hospital, he declares that if the minister of the interior wishes to decree that the nominative should be the only case used in Arabic, he just has to say so.

The Arabic teacher may be a guardian of SA, but his power is limited compared to the rich kids of the Egyptian elites, who do not even use ECA but English. In the movie, the conflict surrounding the linguistic repertoire of different characters is a clear reflection of prevalent ideologies and attitudes. The rich students code-switch between Cairene and English, the Egyptian government communicates in Cairene, and the Arabic teacher switches between ECA and SA. In addition, by comparing SA to Latin, Haeri shows the cultural assumptions that exist in the minds of British as well as American researchers and readers. This is a clear example of the danger of separating linguistic codes from other social factors and assuming that language is independent of access to power in a community.

In a number of studies cited in Chapter 3, it was shown how the conflict about identity and dialect is related to Egyptians' perception of their dialect as the most important one in the Arab world, and the expectation that it should be used by celebrities residing in Egypt (Bassiouney 2015). Reducing



or even discussing the dichotomy between SA and ECA without mention of the complicated richer competition between dialects within Egypt and the enregisterment process of establishing SCA (see Agha 2005 for a discussion of the term) as the neutral positive code as opposed to Upper Egyptian or delta dialects would be lacking (Bassiouney 2018).<sup>3</sup>

It is true that there are Egyptian intellectuals who may still talk about their own dialect as a corrupted version of SA. But this does not mean that the masses feel or think in this way. An example to support this idea is the use of SCA in the media in Egypt and the performance of SCA and other dialects by Egyptians and non-Egyptians.

Schulthies (2014) also challenges the binary between SA and colloquial, arguing:

Linguists who studied Arabic reproduced, amended and challenged these different classifications most often within a diglossic theoretical framework in which the transnational standard, known as MSA, or *fusha*, was contrasted with all these other local distinctions. In other words, linguists found a theoretical frame to reproduce another axis of differentiation. (2014: 62)

Schulthies' research challenges this differentiation and the assumption that it is always 'the standard versus everything else' (2014: 62). She suggests that linguists should focus more on what people actually do with language and how they utilise their repertoire. As she shows in her article, there is competition between dialects within the Arab world as well as a hierarchy of associations, and it is possible for people from the Maghreb to accommodate to the Mashreq to promote their careers.

### 6.2.2 The confusion surrounding standard in Arabic

As was discussed in Chapter 1, there has been a growing realisation since the mid-1980s that variation in Arabic is not merely (or even mainly) a question of H interference in L. According to Ibrahim (1986: 115), 'the identification of H as both the standard and the prestigious variety at one and the same time has led to problems of interpreting data and findings from Arabic sociolinguistic research'. This identification is the result of applying western research to the Arab world, without taking account of the different linguistic situation. In research into western speech communities, researchers have generally been able to assume that the standardised variety of a language, the one that has undergone the conscious process of standardisation, is also the variety accorded the most overt prestige. However, prestige as a concept is problematic. While in some Arab countries the neutral/standard/prestigious code is clear, in others this is not the case.

In Baghdad, according to Abu-Haidar's study of the Muslim and Christian dialects of Baghdad (1991: 92), the neutral prestigious standard is Muslim Baghdadi, even for Christians. In a study conducted by Bassiouney and Muehlhaeusler (2016), standard Cairene Arabic was discussed, as were the ideologies surrounding the construction of its neutrality. A further study by Bassiouney (2017) shows how the media juxtapose standard Cairene Arabic with other dialects in Egypt, endowing the former with neutrality, modernity, urbanisation and other positive traits, unlike the latter. Chambers (2009: 267) argues that standardisation is the product of an unequal distribution of power. A dialect becomes a standard or a norm because its speakers hold more power. This is, indeed, what has happened, and continues to happen, in Egypt. SCA carries 'power'. Again, what is meant by 'standard' here is different from what linguists perceived in the past.

However, this is not true for all Arabic-speaking countries. While SCA may be possible to define though not easy to describe, a standard Moroccan Arabic (SMA), for example, is not possible to define or describe because there is no one specific dialect that correlates with SMA.

Miller (2012) discusses many issues that lead us to question assumptions about what constitutes a prestigious code, or what is known in the western tradition as 'standard vs dialects'. She indirectly tackles the controversy over which code should represent Morocco in dubbed TV series. Her article deals with the dubbing of Mexican soap operas into Moroccan Arabic; in fact, into the Casawi or Casablanca variety of Moroccan Arabic. Miller highlights the role of the media in promoting a koine or reflecting a need for one. What is essential about this article is the conclusion that there is neither a clear standard/prestigious Moroccan Arabic nor a clear consensus of which variety or dialect deserves this title. This challenges a lot of predisposed attitudes of researchers towards the Arab world and indeed the world at large. Miller highlights the role of market force in linguistic choices by the producers and the propagators of one dialect over another.

Miller explains this controversy and its implications by discussing urbanisation and the effect of ideology and media. According to her, Morocco was later in urbanising than, for example, Egypt and Lebanon (2012: 175). With urbanisation comes language change. She estimates that in 1980 the level of urbanisation in Morocco was 38 per cent, compared to 59.8 per cent in Egypt and 60.0 per cent in Lebanon (2012: 175). Unlike Lebanon and Egypt, there was no one colloquial variant that gained prestige, equivalent to Cairene in Egypt (Bassiouney 2018), but the Moroccan elite utilised French to express their status. Furthermore, the media and film industry in Morocco was weak until 2000, with only two to five films produced per year. The comments of viewers quoted in newspapers included people asking how an old person could speak the street language of Casablanca. Some commentators pointed out that people from Casablanca would be happy, but not people from other cities,

who may even find Casawi difficult to understand because it has different lexical items (Miller 2012: 172).

Miller argues that there is currently a decline in old city dialects and an increase in mixed urban dialects of the central Atlantic coast. She raises the question of whether Casawi will become a national koine, ‘but the debate via the media indicates that the notion of “an adequate level of language” does not reach a public consensus’ (Miller 2012: 174). Caubet, in a number of recent studies, also refers to the essential role of *darija* ‘colloquial’ in the Moroccan media (2017a; 2017b).

An even more challenging situation is the one in some post-revolutionary countries, such as Libya. In Libya the prestigious dialect is challenged by revolutionaries, as is clear in D’Anna (2018). The study shows that there is no one clear code associated with prestige, as is the case in Egypt, especially given the political conflict in post-Ghaddafi Libya. D’Anna examines the Libyan soap opera *Dragunov* (2014), which is the name of ‘a Russian sniper rifle’ (2018: 324). The soap opera deals with the struggle for authentication and legitimisation during and after the Libyan revolution and war, through the relationships between different characters and a star-crossed love story between a man and a woman from two different political groups: the man is from the pro-Ghaddafi group and the woman is pro-revolution. The show is set in Tripoli and the events start at the beginning of the revolution. D’Anna studies fifteen episodes of forty minutes each, with a total of approximately 594 minutes. He uses both quantitative and qualitative data to examine the relation between characterisation and code choice in the show.

According to D’Anna, dialects in Libya can be roughly divided into Western Libyan Tripolitania, Fezzan and Eastern Libyan Cyrenaica, Misurata, Sebha, the Sirt region and the Hufra area. All of these dialect areas display Bedouin features (2018: 322).

D’Anna examines the use of demonstratives by different characters in the soap opera in order to classify the variations in dialect use (2018: 327). It should be noted that the soap opera is a performance, in the sense that linguistic resources and code choice are displayed by the performers for a specific purpose (see Bassiouney 2018; Schilling-Estes 1998). Table 6.1 summarises the differences in demonstratives according to location in Libya.

D’Anna mentions that pro-Ghaddafi characters in the soap opera tend to use Misurata demonstratives, with their dominant Bedouin features. These characters include Abeer (a female character who is an strong supporter of Ghaddafi) and Omar (the main male character, also a Ghaddafi supporter).

D’Anna argues that while it is not always mentioned where in Libya the characters originally come from, pro-regime characters, including Omar, always use Bedouin features that are not exclusive to a particular location within Libya. These characteristics do not indicate a particular town or dialect,

Table 6.1 *Demonstratives for near deixis in Tripoli, Misratah and Benghazi*

	Tripoli	Misratah	Benghazi
Masculine singular	<i>ha:da:</i>	<i>he:da:</i>	<i>hada:</i>
Feminine singular	<i>ha:di:</i>	<i>he:di:</i>	<i>hadi:</i>
Masculine plural	<i>ha:du:</i>	<i>hade:ma</i>	<i>hadowma</i>
Feminine plural			<i>hadeyma</i>

Source: after D'Anna (2018: 326)

but the elite of the regime in general (D'Anna 2018: 332). As D'Anna argues, 'coming from the Bedouin tribes of the hinterland and forming that Bedouin legitimacy upon which Ghaddafi built his revolutionary Libya, Omar does not reveal his native town but admits his tribal legacy' (2018: 332).

The main female character, Mona, does not use the same Bedouin features in her performance (D'Anna 2018: 336). D'Anna shows the complexity of usage of linguistic resources by positing that the Bedouin features chosen by the characters may not necessarily be related to where they come from but instead are associated with central Libyans. The use of this 'hybrid form' should perhaps be expected, given the local tensions in Libya (2018: 337).

The performance of dialectal features in *Dragunov* serves to authenticate an identity in some cases and as an identification category in others. This study may allude to a language change in progress, one that cannot be fully understood unless one has a clear understanding of the political context and the distribution of power in that context.

### 6.2.3 The correlation of independent variables to linguistic ones

In Chapter 3, sociolinguistic variables that affect language variation and change were challenged, and examples were given in which it was clear that linguists were affected by their own social constructs. The fact that independent variables are not a coherent entity is clear from the discussion in that chapter, which established that variables in the Arab world could not be studied equally because there are flexible ones and fixed ones, at least in terms of perception. Variables such as gender were challenged, including gender universals. Variables such as religion, though singled out in many cases by linguists as a main component in language change, do not always act in this way. It is no coincidence that those who studied communities in the Arab world and divided them linguistically according to religion were not necessarily from the areas they studied, but from western countries. This is another example of the influence of the cultural baggage carried by scholars in their methods of study. Variables such as religion, ethnicity and gender are in fact mainly created by western linguists (Mesthrie et al. 2009). The role of

ideologies in creating indexes, stance taking, performed speech and media was also examined in Chapter 3.

To give an example, Germanos and Miller (2015) denounce studies that correlate linguistic variables in the Arab world with religion. They argue that researchers' evaluation of the linguistic situation in the Arab world is to some extent subjective and dependent on the orientations of the researcher. They add that the synchronic grammatical descriptions of researchers tend to emphasise differences and autonomy between communities, by imposing upon speakers labels such as 'Christian Arabic of Baghdad': 'such labels may be misleading in the sense that they implicitly postulate that a given social group (here a religious group) is necessarily characterized by a specific variety or language' (2015: 91). These researchers either ignore similarities between what they label a dialect associated with a specific religious group (Jewish Moroccan Arabic, for example) and other dialects in the region, or neglect differences between different groups of the same religion. They posit that 'this is why dialectal studies have often been accused of developing an essentialist approach and of rigidifying social and linguistic boundaries' (2015: 91).

Germanos and Miller rightly criticise variationists conducting studies in the Arab world for hand-picking variants and assuming they are sufficient as evidence of linguistic differences between communities. They tend to draw broad conclusions based on these hand-picked variables, while in the process they may be ignoring other important phonological, syntactic or semantic variables (2015: 91). Without mentioning CSL, Germanos and Miller clearly draw attention to the ideological leanings of the researcher. They argue that the differences selected by these researchers are governed first and foremost by the social, political and historical environment of the researcher.

Germanos and Miller also contend that 'both dialectologists and variationist sociolinguists have, for long, rather neglected the speaker's perception concerning the social values of variation as well as the importance of the context of interaction'. Issues such as language contact as a result of migration were not discussed thoroughly by researchers, as in the cases of the Druze in the Hawran region and of Jewish communities in North Africa. They postulate that what researchers labelled as religious communities with distinct dialects are in fact relocated communities that came into contact with others (2015: 92). They further note:

Differences between Muslim varieties and JA [Arabic varieties spoken by Jewish groups] have been found, at various degrees, in all investigated North-African cities. They are/were usually observed on all linguistic levels (phonology, morpho-syntax, and lexicon), as may be seen when comparing a selection of the many features that distinguish between the old urban Muslim dialect [MF] and the old Jewish dialect spoken in the city of Fes . . . [These dialects] are classified as old urban

sedentary dialects. These dialects appeared during the first wave of Arabization. In North African dialectology, they are also known as pre-Hilali dialects and are therefore opposed to the Hilali varieties that were brought by Beni Hilal groups through the 12th and 13th centuries. (2015: 87)

However, they also point out that ‘it is almost impossible to establish a set of specific North African Jewish features. Jewish dialects varied from one city to another and were often closer to non-Jewish neighbouring dialect than to one another (2015: 88).’

They adduce the particular example of the merger of the phonemes *f* and *s* in North African JA dialects, but point out that the evidence is very ambiguous: Whereas in Morocco, speakers of JA realised *f* as *s*, the opposite is true for JA speakers in Tunis. Moreover, the merger of *f* and *s* was also attested in the speech of older Muslim women of Fez, but not in the JA speakers from Constantine, Oran and Tripoli (2015: 88).

Germanos and Miller continue to refer to other studies, such as that by Gralla (2002) on the dialect of the Syrian city of Nabk, where no dialectal differentiation was observed between Muslims and Christians, while age and gender did appear to play a role in variation. Similarly, in the city of Nazareth, Havelova found ‘no difference between her Christian and Muslim informants in the distribution of two phonological variables (the realization of /q/ and the interdental series /θ/, /ð/, /ð<sup>h</sup>/)’ (Havelova 2002, cited in Germanos and Miller 2015: 90).

Based on their review of the literature, and the often contradictory conclusions with regard to variation, Germanos and Miller postulate that:

the delimitation (or lack of delimitation) between distinct varieties remains extremely subjective and varies according to the authors’ methodology and sensibility. Synchronic grammatical linguistics/dialectal descriptions have a tendency to emphasize the autonomy of the described variety, a trend reinforced by the use of labels like ‘Christian Arabic of Baghdad’, ‘le parler juif de Fes’, etc. (2015: 91)

Another challenge to our concepts is the division between urban and rural or the equation between one language and one culture. Both have been challenged in this book (see also Pennycook and Otsuji 2015: 178).

### 6.3 THE NATIVE SPEAKER

García et al. (2017: 3) raise doubts about the concept of the native speaker as an absolute category that is static and authentic. They argue that this concept is a

product of a European cultural ideology in which monolingual societies were encouraged. This European ideology was especially strengthened during the French revolution. She adds that missionaries travelling to Asia, the Americas and Africa propagated notions of unity of language as a symbol of unity of nationhood in the areas where they worked and settled. These ideologies did not reflect the 'fluid' multilingual nature of the communities they described. European scholars, in an attempt to understand these different contexts in terms that were familiar to them, often ended up imposing their terminologies and categorisations. In particular, they held on to the notion that languages have clear boundaries, that standard varieties exist, and that communities may be unified and coherent because of a unified, coherent linguistic standard. In such perceptions language is fixed, as are the ethnolinguistic groups discussed (2017: 3). The native speaker ideology authenticates specific groups of speakers and gives them the right to evaluate other speakers and to decide whether their code is legitimate or not (García and Wei 2014: 6).

Note that language was not the only thing that was perceived as a static category in such cases. Other perceptions of these ethnolinguistic communities were prevalent in which culture as a whole was also binary and fixed (2014: 2–3).

However, García and Wei, and others, ask whether we can really divide speakers in such a way. Even the concept of the native speaker is ideologically loaded and not static. Diglossia adds an even more complicated dimension. As was discussed earlier, SA is not spoken by any community. Speakers exposed to SA in their daily lives may be more 'native', so to speak, than illiterates, but what is our criterion for evaluating their utterances or their code-switching? Translanguaging allows for fluidity in that case. Again, while acknowledging SA and the colloquials, linguists need to move beyond the binary approach to a more holistic one where speakers code-switch to use the different resources they have and where these different resources are not clearly divided in their minds. The diglossic linguistic situation gives the linguistic reality a novel dimension. There is always the question of which dialect or code is the 'native Arabic' one. 'Native' is always associated with 'authentic' and 'legitimate'. As discussed in Chapter 3, in the Arab world there may be competition not just between SA and dialects, but between different dialects across the Arab world. Hachimi (2013) argues that both speakers and listeners may be 'authorised to legitimate' the representations of speakers. To reiterate, in the following YouTube example from Chapter 3, the commentator adopts an evaluative stance in which he accuses Mashreqi speakers of laziness and unwillingness to understand Maghrebi speakers (Hachimi 2013: 286). He projects Moroccan Arabic as the legitimate native dialect of Moroccans. As was established earlier, he seems to be referring to all Moroccan dialects, without identifying one particular code.

- (1) العرب كسالى عندما يتعلق الأمر بالدارجة المغربية. إنها قمة الجهل والوقاحة عندما نسخر من لغة الشخص فما بالك بلغة شعب . كفى من التعالي والإنغلاق..وحصر العالم في الدات

...  
 'The Arabs are lazy when it comes to the Moroccan vernacular. It is the height of ignorance and insolence when we mock a person's language, let alone the language of a whole people. Enough arrogance, closed-mindedness and ethnocentrism' (posted by Marrakech1, from Morocco)

The commentator, by using standard Arabic, is already taking a sociolinguistic stance in which he displays his superiority, appealing to the authoritative, legitimising indexes of SA (Hachimi 2013: 286; see Bassiouney 2014). Schulthies alludes to the role of media in authenticating and legitimising dialects that were not previously recognised by all Arabs, such as Tunisian or Emirati (Schulthies 2014: 59).

In the study by Chun and Walters (2011), race and ideology intersect to legitimise and delegitimise. The performer Chung, a member of the Axis of Evil group, is of Korean and Vietnamese descent, but was born in Saudi Arabia and lived all his life in Amman, Jordan until he moved to Dubai in 2004. In fact, as Chun and Walters state, he is more at home in the Arab world than any of the other members of the group, who are of Arab descent but never really lived in the Arab world. However, as one might expect, Chung does not look Arab. He may speak fluent Arabic and may have lived all his life in an Arab city, but by his looks he is clearly of Asian descent, and being 'Asian' in the Gulf and Jordan is associated with specific occupations, mainly in the service sector. As Chung says in the show, his mother was mistaken for a housekeeper by a delivery man just because of her Asian features. The humour of Chung's performance would be lost to an audience who is not aware of the 'oriental' stereotype or its indexes. As Chun and Walters (2011: 251) argue, Chung uses his racial characteristics to reflect on ideologies of language and race in the Arab world.

The YouTube comments on Chung's Arabic performance throw light on the correlation between race and language. When commentators claim that Chung speaks Arabic better than they do, they position themselves as evaluators of Chung's linguistic skills. Although they bemoan their own lack of this skill, by taking this stance they are also authenticating their own 'Arabness' as equipped by a native speaker's intuition to judge the linguistic skills of others. They also speak about the object of evaluation, Chung, as if he is a non-Arab, and so his native-like performance is to be praised as not 'natural'. That is, they highlight their own authority and authenticity. Chung does not strike anyone as a native speaker of Arabic, simply because he does not look like one. He himself, in his performance, tells a story of being in an elevator and hearing Arabs comment on his hair. When he replies in Arabic, they are



not just embarrassed but surprised. Chung is not only racially different from their perspective, but also too multilingual to be an authentic native speaker. In Chapter 4 I referred to examples that show that Berber speakers who are perceived as ‘most authentic’ tend to be women from the mountain area, who do not master any other code. A native speaker is simply assumed to be monolingual, just as a native of a country is assumed to possess one passport. The football player Mesut Ozil, who was born in Germany of Turkish parents, was attacked for having a photo taken with Turkish president Recep Erdoğan, thus displaying another dimension of his identity, and one that is not solely German. His German identity was questioned, and the pressure forced him to quit the German national team. This assumption that one can only be one thing at a time is challenged in every instance in our world today. Chung speaks English, Arabic and probably Vietnamese. He still considers himself a native Arabic speaker, though Arabs may not necessarily feel the same. The discrepancy between the reality of multilingual speakers in the world at large and the Arab world in particular is largely ignored by educators and politicians.

Another example comes from *The Mash Report*, a British satirical TV programme broadcast on BBC Two.<sup>4</sup> An episode broadcast on 31 October 2018 ridicules the prevailing ideas related to the concept of a native speaker that correlate native speaker with race, religion and habits such as drinking alcohol. It also notes the general lack of tolerance for multilingualism by ridiculing the idea that the native speaker is necessarily monolingual.

(2) Introduced by Catherine Bohart

Professional Immigrant

A Brief Guide to Being a ‘Good Immigrant’

**Female speaker 1:** As an immigrant in Britain, sometimes it’s not enough to merely contribute to the economy or prop up the NHS.

It’s also your job to make British people feel more comfortable with your existence. So here’s my handy guide to being the kind of immigrant British people don’t mind so much. First of all, and I cannot recommend this highly enough: Be white . . . Really helps. And if that just isn’t possible, try to sound like this guy.

**Male speaker:** [in RP] Good day.

**Female speaker 1:** Ahir hasn’t chosen to be white, but he has gone and got himself a lovely little aristocratic accent.

**Male speaker:** Now, as Catherine pointed out, I did forget to choose to be white, which can be tricky. Catherine has loads of tiny brown bits on her, but they’re known as freckles and are associated with being cute, whereas I have one massive brown bit on me and that’s known as skin and is associated with being ‘See it; Say it; Sorted’.

**Female speaker 1:** It is best not to be associated with a group that’s

into terrorism in popular consciousness, though remember – times do change! Next, English HAS to be your only language. British people are suspicious of anyone who knows more than one language. And, in a way, why have you got a secret code that only you and your friends can understand? It's actually kind of childish, if you think about it. Next up, in Britain it's very important that you never be seen publicly sober. (Drink Alcohol) Am I right, Felicity?

**Female speaker 2:** [Australian accent] You're right there, mate! They practically forget us Aussies are even immigrants because we're white, we can only speak English and we fucking LOVE a drink.

**Female speaker 1:** Nothing says 'useful contribution to society' like ordering breakfast beers on a Tuesday.

[Both female speakers drink beer and say 'Cheers!']

Why ARE Australians mainly white?

Now, you CAN be religious but it's best to stick to Christianity or one that's so confusing as to appear benign.

**Male speaker 1:** For example, my family are Hindu, a belief system with a long and complex history which, in Britain, is mainly used to market things to vegans.

**Female speaker 1:** Great tips, Ahir! Looks like even solving British racism is being outsourced to India . . . am I right, guys?

**Male speaker:** I'm from East London.

**Female speaker 1:** Yeah, but where are you originally from?

**Male speaker:** West London.

**Female speaker 2:** Jaegerbomb?

[All laugh]

**Female speaker 1:** So remember . . .

Be white

Only speak English

Drink alcohol, and

Try not to be Muslim.

If you followed each of these points correctly, then congratulations!

You're being the kind of immigrant British people don't mind so much . . . Even you, Ahir.

**Male speaker:** I am British!

**Female speaker 1:** That's the spirit!

The male speaker is not considered British although he emphasises his local identity: he is a native of London. However, he does not look like a typical British man, according to the interviewer, i.e. he is not white. He could also, because of his colour and demeanour, pass as a Muslim, although he is not. That combined with his looks render him a foreigner. His fluent English is not enough to pass him as a native speaker.

This very same argument is mentioned by Jaffe (2016). She argues that white people as objects are indexed by an array of signs that include consuming certain kinds of goods, practices, places, political causes, values, attitudes, and a variety of social and epistemic stances. White people also take up public stances and position themselves with and in opposition to other social types (2016: 95).

Now compare this example with that of Chung in the study of Chun and Walters (2011). He was also not considered Arab, based on the presuppositions and assumptions about what Arabs look like.

Being an authentic native speaker may even, in some instances, be related to political ideologies. During the revolution of 2011, as was discussed earlier, some people claimed in the media that the protestors were not Egyptians. They were considered not Egyptian because, it was claimed, they did not speak Arabic in Tahrir Square but English. An even more convoluted explanation is given by the Egyptian actor Afaf Shuaib during the revolution of 2011. She claimed that the protestors spoke Arabic and looked like Egyptians but were not. She claimed that people who had the same dark colouring as Egyptians were being trained in London to speak ECA and protest in Tahrir Square. To her mind, a native speaker of Arabic is not only someone who looks Egyptian or speaks ECA but someone who has the same political beliefs as she does – that is, someone pro-regime (Bassiouney 2014: 314–16).

Uniformity is the key here to understanding the pitfalls of the native speaker concept. Native speakers talk in the same way, look the same, and have the same habits and the same political views. The idea of associating a foreign language with a group that we mistrust is prevalent and often develops in many communities, based on the concept that an authentic native speaker speaks one language.

In the 2014 Egyptian movie *Lā mu'ākhzah* ('Excuse my French'), Hany, an upper-class Egyptian Christian boy, loses his father, who apparently was in debt and lost all his wealth before he died. The boy is forced to go to an Egyptian government school. In his upper-class environment, Hani did not realise that being a Christian could lead to discrimination. Once he starts to mingle with a less privileged class he becomes less secure about his religious identity, and not sure whether it has a place in his school. After he is bullied because of his religion, his mother decides to emigrate to Canada. He and his mother are interviewed in the Canadian embassy by a fellow Egyptian woman.

The scene in the embassy is linguistically revealing. The interview takes place in English. The interviewer asks point-blank if the mother or son have been the subject of discrimination in Egypt, but the son replies with an outright no. The son, feeling uncomfortable with the interviewer's questions, asks directly, in Arabic:

Hani: Are you Egyptian?

Interviewer: Yes.

Hani: So why do you speak to us in English and not Arabic?

Interviewer: It's my job.

Hani appears irritated by the whole situation and corrects the interviewer's English in a clear challenge to her stance. His choice of Arabic, in this case the Cairene dialect of ECA, is to authenticate his own Egyptian identity, in which Arabic is the spoken language. By correcting her he sends an indirect message that you can never perfect someone else's code, which to Hani is the equivalent of someone's homeland. Hani, like most Arabs, associates identity and legitimacy with language. When his Egyptian identity is under threat he is on the defence, and he decides eventually to fight at home rather than leave as a victim of discrimination. In this example, English has negative indexes and Arabic is the legitimate code – not SA, but rather the Cairene dialect that he is familiar with and that has been established as a neutral variety of Arabic.

It may just be a movie, but it is the product of years of enregisterment in which English is associated with oppressive colonial powers but is also the key to success and economic power. The situation is complex, but what is apparent is that we need to rethink our terms and our methods and always regard language as the weft and warp of struggles over resources and power, and part of the inequality surrounding us.

For educators the 'native speaker' is mostly taken for granted and there is only one way of teaching a language, one way of writing, one pronunciation and so on. However, in the world at large and the Arab world in particular, being a native speaker is now less uniform and more resistant to generalisations. Anne Nebel (2017) explores Qatar as a site of linguistic superdiversity and the implications on academic writing in English-medium higher education in that country. Specifically, she discusses linguistic diversity in Doha, which in addition to the national university has American, Canadian, British, Dutch and French institutions of education (2017: 28).

Nebel states that Qatar's population is about 2.2 million, while expats in Qatar comprise 1.5 million out of these 2.2 million. The workforce in Qatar is 95 per cent foreign. However, she has trouble defining what is foreign in this case and what is native. 'Foreign' in Qatar means a lack of access to the same resources as Qataris in terms of citizenship for themselves and their children, but the superdiversity that manifests itself in the city of Doha leaks into institutions of higher education (2017: 28–9) and also challenges the conventional means of defining the native speaker.

Nebel argues that 'native speaker' is a defining term in writing courses in which there is a 'first-language writer' and a 'second-language writer'. According to Nebel, these ideological constructs of the multilingual learner only restrict our full picture, in which the linguistic situation is fluid and

non-binary. She argues that in order to understand the linguistic situation in Doha, one needs to apply the work of scholars such as Blommaert (2013: 30) on superdiversity and linguistic landscape. The superdiversity manifested in Doha creates new environments that include migrants with different cultural backgrounds. These new linguistic situations cannot be defined using conventional means; they need to consider the continual movement and migration of people: 'Complex new social formations need new ways of understanding' (2013a: 31). Among these new social formations are students in higher education – an aggregate of people who are geographically, socioeconomically and linguistically diverse (2013a: 31).

Nebel states that in the US, composition students are divided into native speakers and second-language learners. This simplistic division cannot be applied in Doha since it ignores the 'complexities of students' language and cultural experiences' (2013a: 32). Our conventional definition of a native speaker of English equates with a monolingual English user whose intuition about structure and language in general is never doubted and whose mastery of speaking and writing in English is always consistent with the principles defining English teaching and learning. This native speaker also shares a set of 'values', 'experiences' and 'knowledge' about English. As Nebel argues, US writing classrooms ignore the other languages students bring to the classroom, and do not utilise the 'metalinguistic knowledge' or the 'linguistic repertoire' that these students bring to the classroom (2013a: 32).

Nebel examines students in first-year composition courses in US universities in Doha, who, according to her, comprise an example of the post-migrant era. They are themselves 'navigators of their polycentric translational and translanguaging world (2013a: 32; see also Canagarajah 2012: 32). In the classrooms in Doha that she examines, there are no monolingual native English speakers, and thus no native-speaker 'norms' and conventions (2013a: 33). She provides the example of a student in these classes who grew up speaking French with his mother, a regional dialect of Arabic with his father and siblings, SA in elementary school, and both French and English in high school. This student is in this composition class at a US English-language university in a country that is not his native country. It is impossible to place this learner into the category of either first-language or second-language learner of English. Nebel wonders what category of writer he is and what rules apply to such a student. Another example is a half-Egyptian, half-Spanish student who has been in English-language school since kindergarten but speaks Spanish and Arabic at home. Again, would this student be considered a second-language learner of English (2013a: 33)?

These are but two examples of the complexity of applying conventional methods and terms to superdiverse communities. Furthermore, they assume that there are still coherent monolingual communities in the world, or at least in the Arab world, that can be studied with the culturally loaded concept

of native speaker and the assumptions it entails. As Nebel argues, citing Blommaert and Rampton (2012: 1), languages are now denaturalised, few speakers operate in one discrete linguistic form and static categories cannot persist in the face of these new challenges (2017: 35).

The challenge in teaching or even understanding multilingual speakers is that, as Nebel posits, ‘we still seem to be “locked” into a predominantly American culture of theorizing and doing composition studies, where the categories of L1, L2, native speaker, and so on continue to constrain both our thinking and our impact’ (2017: 37).

So far we have referred to the social-construct approach without delving into details about its ideas and methods. In the next section I will shed more light on it and relate it directly to CSL.

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#### 6.4 POWER, LEGITIMACY AND THE SOCIAL APPROACH TO LANGUAGE

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The social-construction approach to language was discussed in Chapter 3 and will be summarised here briefly again for the sake of clarity. In this approach, language is a resource that, like all other resources in a society, is distributed unequally (Gal 1989; Fairclough 2001; Heller 2011). Linguistic resources are not separate from social order in a community, but in fact have a proactive role: to produce, construct and reflect this order, in addition to being interwoven in the social order in the first place. Heller posits that within the process of social construction, linguistic resources acquire semiotic values, which are related to how we interpret meaning. ‘It is always someone’s notion of what counts, and someone’s ability to control access both to resources and to the definition of their value, which ultimately make a difference to people’s lives’ (Heller 2007: 14).

Mesthrie et al. (2009) argue that society and language are so assimilated that they cannot always be separated into two variables. And in fact, when language is studied as an independent variable, it does not necessarily represent the truth behind what actually happens in a society. It can ‘misrepresent or distort’ the important relations in a community (2009: 310). The aim of critical sociolinguistics is to understand and analyse how language constructs and ‘sustains’ inequality in different societies and across different nations and states.

Gal (2016: 117) also argues that different ways of speaking are considered as resources that are attached to ‘cultural categories’, ‘stereotypes’ of persona, of ‘place’, ‘time’ and ‘activity’. These categories may or may not be expressed verbally. Stereotypes often remain unspoken.

Throughout this book, we have examined the role of language in society and how language affects and is affected by different communities and different political and social events. Language was established as a means of

communication, a resource and an identification category. It has also become clear that language sheds light on inequalities, social challenges, political ideologies, historical events and power relations. We have seen the multifaceted identities that speakers have and the complexity of how a speaker's identity is established.

Mesthrie et al. (2009: 342) argue that in our world communication has become more flexible and therefore more difficult to grasp and understand fully. People's positions have become 'multidimensional', and what we face every day is not an encounter between equals but unequal encounters that may be reflected in different ways, including use of pronouns, names, terms of address and, last but not least, linguistic variation: phonological, morpho-syntactic, semantic and on the discourse level (2009: 311).

García et al. (2017: 5) point out that critical sociolinguistics, or post-structuralist sociolinguistics, now focuses on the reasons and the means by which speakers perform 'language practices' in a context that is both 'complex' and 'unpredictable'. Makoni adds that 'we must begin by regarding languages as linguistic human work. Language from such a perspective . . . consists of products that are the consequence of deliberate human intervention and manipulation of social contexts' (2017: 370). Language as a social practice is produced in a non-static context that is socio-historical, economic and political in nature. In this context power encounters are of utmost importance (García et al. 2017: 6).

The study of language ideologies helps linguists better understand which aspects of linguistic forms are stigmatised and why. Do they index a linguistic code used by a weak minority? Do they index a code associated with poverty and ignorance? And so on and so forth. CSL is concerned with how linguistic forms acquire indexes, and thus become associated with types of people. It is also concerned with how speakers can 'racialise' identities, as in the quotation at the beginning of Chapter 3 in which the boy had to change his way of speaking because the people in the village are ostracised and, in an indirect way, racialised in that community. To racialise the people of a community is to impose on them specific categories and assume they represent them; recall the examples from Chun and Walters (2011) and *The Mash Report*.

I would like to refer to some questions posed by Heller et al. (2018), and then pose my own, similar questions that pertain to Arabic. Heller et al. are aware of the changing times we live in, in which inequality is emphasised and promoted and in which the far right, with its exclusionary racial discourse, is gaining leverage in so many parts of the world. However, this is also a time of awakening in the field of sociolinguistics. For a decade or more, sociolinguists have been reflecting on their field and on themselves and realising that they are just a product of a cultural construct, but they have also come to realise that their role is not in fact to understand and interpret the relation between society and language in western, mainly Anglo-European terms, but rather to

reflect on the inequalities around them and the power that some groups have over others, as well as the struggles in which language is not just a tool but a resource. Heller et al. pose questions in their book such as: why do people on buses in countries such as Australia and Canada tell people to ‘speak white’? Is white a language or a way of life? And in that case how do people associate a colour with a way of speaking, and how complicated is this racial-nationalistic-political view of the world? On the other hand, as Heller et al. point out, people do work hard to ‘lose’ an accent. As linguists we know perfectly well that, as Silverstein argues, neutralising specific dialects and codes is an ideological socio-political-historical process — that is, it is an artificial process, not a ‘natural’ way of talking that we should all aim at. Other similar questions include: Why do courts in Europe hire linguists to determine the nationality of refugees? Why are there always debates about which languages to teach and which to ignore (2018: 1), and even more disturbing questions, such as why did residential schools in North America and Scandinavia in the twentieth century forbid indigenous children from using their languages?

CSL may help answer some of these questions and in some cases may explain the context. However, here are three more cases that are worth contemplating and that pertain to Arabic specifically.

1. In December 2016, YouTube star Adam Saleh claimed that he was kicked off a Delta flight because he spoke Arabic. The story had two sides, of course, but whether it is true or not, the claim itself is significant.<sup>5</sup> Arabic as a whole is regarded as an index of a threat that needs immediate defensive action. Whether this index is shared by both parties, Adam Saleh on the one hand and Delta Airlines and its passengers on the other, is indeed important. Saleh was undoubtedly aware of the fear, uncertainty and perceived inferiority surrounding Arabic. Which kind of Arabic did Saleh speak? Would this have made a difference for a listener who probably does not know the difference between varieties of Arabic? How did the listener recognise the speech as Arabic? Are there specific Arabic lexical items that everyone recognises – items that are repeated in the media and enregistered in the minds of listeners in the west, such as ‘*Allahu akbar*’? What is clear is that it is not Arabic as a means of communication that is being discussed here, nor is it Arabic variations, but the mere associations of a code. It is certainly not just an incident for a linguist to relate independent variables to dependent variables, but a call to consider discourses of power and hegemony, of fear and mistrust, and of historical and political frameworks.
2. Another example worth contemplating is the status of Arabic in Israel. As we saw in Chapter 5, Arabic does not have the same status as Hebrew as an official language in Israel. The push to remove Arabic as an official



language in Israel is significant on many levels. Adi Arbel, who represents the Institute for Zionist Strategies and is a strong proponent of the bill, says, 'The approach that is at the basis of the law, which I think is justified, is that bilingualism of the state is really a significant expression of binationalism.'<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, Mendel, an Israeli linguist, argues that this bill is 'part of the new Israeli nationalistic, to say the least, policies that do not see the Arab citizens of Israel as equals or as citizens'. Compare this attitude to that of the football coach who attacked the Turkish-German player for not displaying an exclusively German national identity.

3. After the 2010 and 2011 revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, on 17 June 2011 the king of Morocco declared that he would amend the constitution and add Tamazight to Arabic as an official language in Morocco. He was ready to be inclusive and share resources, but more importantly, yield power to a group that believes themselves to be discriminated against.

To give a broader example, Bassiouney (2019) addresses issues pertaining to linguistic forms and functions in relation to political conflicts in three African countries. She also addresses the role of linguistic performance in conflicts, as well as those of talk about language and access to linguistic codes as devices used during dormant or active conflicts. The article uses data from Egypt, Libya and Tunisia. The political situation of each of these three countries is different; while there was an actual civil war in Libya, there were revolutions in 2010 in Tunisia and 2011 in Egypt. However, all three witnessed upheavals, and during these upheavals linguistic forms and codes played a crucial role as symbols of power and tools of domination. The article concentrates on media and public discourse, drawing on the work conducted on these places and assessing the relation between language and conflict. It synthesises studies that deal with linguistic codes employed during political conflicts in the three countries. Based on this data and the studies that accompany it, the article offers a fresh perspective on the essential relation between language as a social construct and war as a conflict over resources. It also builds a framework and an approach that can be useful in analysing other conflict situations from a linguistic perspective, showing the role played by language as a social construct. Data analysed in this article includes signs, presidents' speeches, TV series, poetry, TV talk shows and Twitter. This approach was developed by Bassiouney (2014) based on the work of Milroy and Milroy (2012), as well as on the social constructionist approach to language. It argues that languages, codes and varieties, just like political systems, can go through a process of legitimisation and delegitimisation. Milroy and Milroy (2012) call the process of language legitimisation 'an overtly prescriptive process'. In this process there is complete identification between a language as such and a standard form of this language, so that other codes are not regarded as viable or 'lawful' (2012: 172).

Linguistic unrest, as defined by Bassiouney (2014), is the struggle that involves access to, and distribution of, linguistic resources to reflect or construct an identity as well as to authenticate it. As Schneider (2014: 132) argues, speakers position themselves in the social world through their linguistic choices, especially their performed ones, in order to produce authenticity and meanings, sometimes in ‘contradictory and multiple fashions’. This struggle has at its core issues pertaining to power relations and legitimacy. A performer’s linguistic repertoire is usually functionally driven and is sustained by a social system that distinguishes different codes and associates them with different social norms and values, for example local and non-local (Milroy and Milroy 2012: 103).

In her 2017 study Boussofara discusses the last three speeches of the former Tunisian president Ben Ali (2017: 12–35). Boussofara postulates that ‘the analysis captures the processes whereby Ben Ali loses his voice of authority and legitimacy even though he spoke, or so he thought, “bi-lughat kull tunisiyyin wa t-tunisiyyaat”, in the language of all Tunisians’. The study sheds light on how politicians use political speeches to cement their legitimacy and political dominance (2017: 12). Boussofara shows that, unlike his predecessor Bourguiba, Ben Ali never made full use of the linguistic resources available to him. While former president Bourguiba (ruled 1962–86) used SA, Tunisian Arabic, French and even English in his speeches, sometimes code-switching between three or four of them in the same speech, Ben Ali stuck to SA throughout his twenty-three years in power. However, in his last speech, on 13 January 2011, one day before he fled the country, he used Tunisian Arabic for the first and last time to acknowledge that he understood the message of Tunisians and that he respected it. The data consists of three speeches by Ben Ali, lasting a total of twenty-eight minutes (2017: 15).

Boussofara argues that making full use of the linguistic resources available to him is not enough to save Ben Ali. Although he tries to appeal to Tunisians by using TA, he fails to convince them of his legitimacy. Boussofara argues that this is because ‘languages, words, and voices are never heard in isolation’ (2017: 23). Language, as argued throughout this book, is a coherent part of society and cannot stand alone, and according to Boussofara, Ben Ali’s switch to TA only emphasises that his role no longer exists and gives voice to a new Tunisia. By using TA he ‘gives legitimacy’ to a new era and to the pro-revolution Tunisians (2017: 24).

Bassiouney (2014) discusses the three speeches delivered by Mubarak over the eighteen days of the Egyptian revolution. She argues that in his last three speeches, unlike in his previous ones (see Bassiouney 2006), he speaks in SA, rather than ECA or a mixture of standard and colloquial. This marked choice to use SA rather than ECA was supposed to emphasise his legitimacy and claims to power. It is noteworthy, however, that Mubarak was known for using ECA in his speeches; he was even criticised and accused by some

intellectuals and opposition leaders of using ECA because he had not mastered SA.

Mubarak's choice cannot be understood in a vacuum. He is engaging in a dialogue with both Egyptians and the world at large. He is aware of the former Tunisian president's linguistic choice; he is also aware that the choice of colloquial did not save the Tunisian president. By choosing SA over colloquial he is not just differentiating himself from the Tunisian former president, he is also giving Egyptians a message that Egypt will not follow the path of Tunisia, a statement that was very common in pro-regime Egyptian media at the time. Again, the use of SA did not save Mubarak. However, his message was clear to Egyptians who understood the significance of his code choice. Egyptians joked at the time that as long as Mubarak used SA in his speeches – the authoritative language code – he would cling to power. Code choice was fundamental, not just to define identity, but to foretell the next political step that was to be taken by the regime. The content of Mubarak's three speeches was also important. Mubarak positioned himself as serving Egypt, rather than Egyptians. This was a linguistically and politically calculated choice on his part. He abstracted himself from Egyptians, who might not know what was good for them, and concentrated on a more important and sacred entity: 'Egypt'. When he referred to serving Egypt for thirty years, the protestors demanded that he now listen to what 'Egyptians' wanted. Egyptian identity was both emphasised and challenged, and linguistic resources were manipulated by all those involved in the conflict. SA did not save Mubarak's regime, and colloquial did not save Ben Ali's regime either. This underscores the postulation that language is part and parcel of social factors and power is manifested in many ways, not least of which are linguistic choices. Bassiouney (2014) refers to 'linguistic unrest', a term she has coined to explain the conflict over resources, including linguistic ones, that takes place during upheavals; questions of authenticity, legitimacy and political power are all part of this unrest. She argues that, during upheavals, 'whatever linguistic resources are deployed interact with other social processes, and are just as dynamic and varied. Times of change are also times of linguistic innovations and boldness; this can be seen in all three countries' (2019).

To reiterate, the value of a linguistic code depends on whether it can give access to political, economic and social power (see Bassiouney 2017; Hymes 1970; Gal 1989; Fairclough 2001; Heller 2011). In a similar vein, Fairclough (2009: 321) argues that discourse helps in the 'construction' of ideologies to maintain a social status quo. Heller also contends that within the process of social construction, linguistic resources acquire values which can be interpreted in different ways: 'it is always someone's notion of what counts, and someone's ability to control access both to resources and to the definition of their value, which ultimately make a difference to people's lives' (Heller 2007:

14). Public discourse, especially in the media, not only reiterates shared belief systems and ideologies, but also constructs and controls access to them. As was discussed in Chapter 3, in his evaluation of variation research, Silverstein (2016: 37–9) calls for a semiotically and ‘social anthropologically informed view of variation’ (2016: 37). He proposes that indexicality, and with it, enregisterment, provide the best framework for studying variation. Indexicality as a way of interpretation can potentially overcome the rigid binary approach to variation (standard vs dialect) as well as the dichotomy between synchronic and diachronic variation (see Silverstein 2016).

## 6.5 THE NEUTRAL LINGUIST

Throughout our discussion so far, we have touched on the fact that sociolinguists still need to work on getting out of their own sociolinguistic trap. According to Mesthrie et al. (2009: 312), one of the challenges facing our current approach to linguistic variation is that we tend to assume that people meet on an equal basis, whether researchers or community members. That is, the role of power has been touched upon in research but not regarded as the main dynamo behind discourse and language (2009: 311).

Foucault (in Albury 2017: 38) argues that knowledge is in fact a constructed concept and that truth is not predetermined. Knowledge is susceptible to a selection process – that is, we can choose some knowledge and marginalise other knowledge. By regulating ideas and ideologies we reach a selective truth. Albury argues that presupposed knowledge is normative knowledge that can sustain and recreate inequalities (2017: 46). On this view, one of the main roles of critical sociolinguistics is to challenge the dominant western view of sociolinguistic methods.

Albury discusses the role of folk linguistic methods in voicing people’s stances, legitimising their causes and widening their methods to include more ‘ontologies and epistemologies of language’ than those from the west (2017: 36).

García et al. (2017: 2) talk about the critical post-structuralist perspective on sociolinguistics. They draw attention to the dominance of white male Americans in the field of sociolinguistics at its onset, although they acknowledge the multidisciplinary nature of the field and the fact that it has been concerned with issues pertaining to social equality and social movements.

Gal’s ideological approach to language is to resist the temptation to think that the linguist knows best. A ‘view from nowhere’ allows investigators to determine what the important variables are. It forces analysts to listen to evaluations of speakers. All speakers, including linguists, orient themselves to the other with the help of presuppositions, a process called metacommunication (2016: 132).

In addition, Preston (1993: 182) questions what the linguist and the non-linguist know about language. According to Preston and Albury, it is essential that we as researchers reflect on our knowledge and attempt to understand how people perceive their language, dialects, registers and styles, and how they grasp the meanings of texts. We must understand how people's knowledge affects the decisions they make about which languages to learn and how they evaluate linguistic choices. This is essential in the real world, as most of the people who use language, make linguistic choices, code-switch, employ linguistic variation, create language policies and sustain them, and make critical decisions regarding linguistic codes are in fact not linguists (Albury 2017: 39). Thus, unless we understand how people actually perceive language in general, our research will be lacking in 'authenticity'.

## 6.6 PRINCIPLES OF METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES IN CRITICAL SOCIOLINGUISTICS

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Researchers first need to acknowledge their position as constructivists and to realise that reports by them and others about how society works are socially constructed by them and others before them (Heller et al. 2018: 30). This approach argues that meaning is 'situated' within a social, political and economic context. If we agree on this proposition, then we also agree that this renders research 'intrinsically political', in the sense that we ourselves, in our research, take for granted specific concepts (such as gender relations) that we have been conditioned to take for granted, because of our political, historical and social context. This generates what Heller et al. (2018: 30) call 'blind spots'. In order to mitigate their influence, we need to critically address our tools and variables, our implications and results, and the process of doing research.

One way of tackling blind spots is, of course, to discuss them with peers. More important, in my opinion, is to embrace people's stories about their linguistic choices before scientifically critiquing or studying them. In all communities there are tales, rituals and practices associated with linguistic codes. These need to be examined (Albury 2017: 40).

Heller et al. (2018) draw attention to the reflective nature of language. They posit that 'we are all situated somewhere in the conversation, and therefore in the field of relations of difference and inequality which characterize all discursive spaces' (2018: 31). That is, in collecting their data linguists need to be aware of contexts, inequalities and their own bias.

Scholars working on Arabic, especially early on, like other researchers at that time, did not particularly acknowledge their own cultural background in their research. There are a few exceptions who are pioneers in this respect, such as Suleiman, and Chun and Walters, and at least three studies

in which the linguists clearly mention their cultural baggage and attempt to address it.

Suleiman (2004) specifically mentions that he writes this book with his Palestinian background in mind and in Suleiman (2011), he focuses on himself as both a researcher and an Arab and makes the 'self' the object of inquiry. Suleiman is able to make some pertinent direct observations (mostly drawn from his experiences as a trainer for teachers of Arabic in Qatar), while discussing and illustrating language variation and the associations of standard Arabic at the same time. He recounts his interactions with a group of teachers whom he nicknames 'the awkward squad'. His characterisation of the group mixes descriptive elements with a personal evaluation of their motivations.

[They] often end up criticizing each other the harshest, driven in this regard by their having an axe to grind or by the desire to author acts of one-upmanship for social and professional display, or for public ratification of their expertise and group affirmation of their self-worth. (Suleiman 2011: 49)

Suleiman then proceeds with a linguistic analysis of his own interactions with this group. He notes, for instance, that the group was unwilling to criticise Suleiman when he intentionally abandoned case and mood marking when speaking in SA. He attributes their tolerance of an otherwise sanctioned language form to his own position of authority over them, as the professional trainer who will be writing a report on their performance. At the same time, Suleiman's own motivations are displayed: by choosing to speak SA rather than his own Palestinian dialect, Suleiman tries to project a particular attitude towards a shared cultural and linguistic heritage, as well as professional status (2011: 50). It is clear that his language choice is related to self-perception. He states:

I strongly feel that the state of being Palestinian is one of being an underdog in the Middle East . . . Speaking *fusha* [SA] on my part was, therefore, a way of standing up for a number of underdogs in the political and cultural life of the Arabic speaking world. It was also a way of dealing with my personal marginality . . . It was a mode of cultural and psychological resistance against marginality in my personal life and hegemony in the public sphere. (2011: 56)

Chun and Walters (2011), discussing race and authenticity, reflect on their own reading and interpretations.

Our reading is the product of our own understanding of race and language. In the course of reflecting and writing, our understandings

of Chung's performance have shifted considerably. But like Chung and his audiences, we offer our stances as part of a dynamic dialogue and negotiation — a particular interpretation that we trust will meet both alignment and critique. (2011: 270)

That is, they refer to the importance of dialogicality and the context of the researcher first, then the object of study.

## 6.7 WESTERN HEGEMONY OF THE FIELD OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS

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Scholars in sociolinguistics are now more aware of problems relating to methods of study and theories as well as choice of data, due to the control of a small network of scholars, mostly of Anglo-American origin, of the field. Access and resources are two key words in the construction approach to language; they were and still are dominated by the west. The west uses English, a powerful resource in academic publishing, and it controls access to prominent journals in the field. Anglo-American scholars, and western scholars more generally, are mostly the editors and reviewers of the most important sociolinguistics journals. As García et al. (2017: 8) argue, 'multilingualism has been theorized from the west, not the global south, because the west is the site where dominant knowledges have been produced'.

In his seminal article, Smakman (2015) touches upon essential factors in sociolinguistics research. He contends that the concept of west is not precise in itself and usually refers to Europe, US, New Zealand and Australia; this is, however, a rough description that fails to capture the subtle differences between communities within this chunk called the 'west'. Sociolinguistics as a field, along with books that introduce the field, is dominated by Anglo-Americans and western scholars. This is clear when one counts the contributions of scholars that do not belong to these categories in terms of journal articles. Although there are articles in international journals about Asia and Africa they are mostly written by western scholars.

I will now elaborate on these points made by Smakman with data. Smakman (2015: 18) claims that Europeans may have created and sustained the concept of standard in a language. In addition, the political developments in Europe, especially the development of nation-states, have fostered the concept of a prestige variety.

There have been copycat studies of the UK model in other European countries which have led to problems in capturing the real linguistic situations in countries such as Italy, for example. Mioni and Arnuzzo-Lanzweert (1979: 81) highlight the differences between dialects in Italy and those in the UK from a sociolinguistic perspective (cited in Smakman 2015: 18).

Discussing sociolinguistic variables in the US and UK within the same framework is also problematic (2015: 19). This has led linguists to ignore for a while the relation between language and ethnicity in the US. Even in Germany copycat studies were common: ‘in order to catch up with international sociolinguistic progress, sociolinguists in western Germany felt it necessary to latch on to the American system. In the process, the idea that Germany had its own sociolinguistic patterns was pushed to the background’ (2015: 19).

Smakman reveals the dominance of the Anglo-American model and, more generally, the English-speaking model. He has compiled lists of the editors of six important sociolinguistics journals and of twenty-one sociolinguists who have been productive for decades (Tables 6.2 and 6.3).

Smakman highlights the closed networks that dominate the field. He posits that ‘these scholars are also usually the authors of the sociolinguistics introductions . . . and most are native speakers of English. The same authors often write reviews of each other’s books and the back covers and, by doing so, form a network’ (2015: 21).

Smakman also points to the fact that, per capita, New Zealand and Australia are also dominant in terms of scholars and studies compared to of Asia and Africa. He mentions specifically the *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* and *Language*

*Table 6.2 Background of well-known sociolinguists*

Country of origin	Number of scholars
United States	8
United Kingdom	7
Canada	4
Germany	3
New Zealand	2
South Africa	2

*Source:* Smakman (2015: 21)

*Table 6.3 Editors of sociolinguistics journals, by affiliation*

Area where home university is based	Number of editors
United States & Canada	75
United Kingdom & Ireland	38
Mainland Europe	28
Asia	19
Australia & New Zealand	17
Africa	7
Central & South America	6

*Source:* Smakman (2015: 22)



*Variation and Change* (2015: 22). Editors of both journals are predominantly from North America. Reviewers and editors again form a network and choose which articles to publish. There is also a dominance of universities in Anglophone countries in the affiliation of authors who publish in these journals. Smakman argues that ‘the role of United States universities is striking; a third of all articles are from a university in the US’ (2015: 22). Interestingly, according to Smakman, authors usually come from an affluent background.

Nagy and Meyerhoff (2008: 9–10) echo Smakman’s sentiment in their studies in which they found that more attention is given to US linguistic contexts than multilingual contexts.

Western scholars dominate not only when talking about their own communities but also when talking about other communities, in Asia or Africa for example. ‘With the over-representation of researchers from the west, a logical conclusion is that the non-west is oftentimes researched by those not from the area itself’ (Smakman 2015: 31). What makes this article seminal is the wake-up call that the statistics in it give to sociolinguists. Smakman’s article makes one realise how much change is needed, how lacking research is and how undiversified researchers’ perspectives are.

In light of what Smakman makes clear in his article as well as the findings of others, such as Albury and Gracia, one can say bluntly that in order to advance, authors are required to have the advantage of the ‘three Ws’: to be white, wealthy and western.

To conclude this section, I cite García et al. who summarise the main gist of this chapter:

‘Critical poststructuralist sociolinguistics challenges us to constantly reflect on the power relations that have shaped our current ways of conceptualizing language and to imagine new and more inclusive ways of conceptualizing language’ (2017: 13).

## 6.8 CONCLUSION

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Meyerhoff and Stanford (2015) highlight points that may help future sociolinguists in their research. They argue that sociolinguists need to evaluate a number of categories and situations, all of which have been addressed in this chapter:

1. the multilingual reality of speakers (2015: 3)
2. the notion of standard vs vernacular, bearing in mind that ideologies about ‘standard’ may be a means of privilege or oppression (2015: 5)
3. the notion of the native speaker, which is a flexible status that can be lost or acquired by speakers; related to the native-speaker ideology are

authenticity and related perceptions that also need to be examined critically (2015: 9)

4. the need to apply a third-wave variation approach but with a more global perspective in mind, as well as the need to acknowledge the anglocentric nature of research in sociolinguistics (2015: 9)
5. in practical terms, the need for more cross-cultural collaboration (2015: 9)

In this chapter I have argued against a binary approach to linguistic variation, whether in relation to standards and dialects or to independent variables and linguistic ones. I have also argued against accepting and condoning theoretical templates and paradigms created by linguists who have their own social and cultural traps. I have challenged concepts such as the ‘native speaker’ and the ‘neutral linguist’. I have argued that the multilingual reality of speakers cannot be ignored or belittled. A social approach to language must look at language as a resource, access to which is not equal.

Finally, the recent revolutions in the Arab world, and the wave of migration to Europe and the US by refugees, will create a different reality for both the Arab world and the west. Linguists should be the first to embrace and discuss this reality.

The role of the sociolinguist does not have to stop at describing and bemoaning inequality. Instead, the linguist should have a more active role in the community he or she studies. Wolfram (2018: 558–72) presents several points that sociolinguists should be aware of when conducting their research. He contends that sociolinguists should try to promote equality, and should be extremely sensitive to hidden prejudices and stereotyping and not fall prey to them. Related to this is acknowledging their own limitations as sociolinguists and their own ignorance and blind spots, even after studying communities for a long time. Sociolinguists should engage with the public in a more active way to promote an education system that is fairer to all and to promote more linguistic awareness among members of different communities. Wolfram believes that until now sociolinguists have not been regarded by the public as social actors. This needs to change. One venue in which they can contribute particularly is the media, such as in documentaries about issues that they have studied.

## NOTES

1. Translation courtesy of Emad Abdel Latif.
2. It is important to note that this is an article in a newspaper, not a journal, and therefore the ideas expressed in it are aimed at a wider readership, not just linguists.
3. See Chapter 3 for more examples and explanations.
4. BBC2 (2018), ‘How to be an immigrant British people like’, *The Mash Report*, <http://youtu.be/rqOlky0bIVs>; last accessed 12 May 2019.

5. See <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/12/22/prankster-kicked-flight-speaking-arabic-delta-airlines-defends>; last accessed 12 May 2019.
6. See <https://www.thenational.ae/world/mena/israel-s-push-to-strip-arabic-of-its-official-language-status-1.747850>; last accessed 12 May 2019.

# General conclusion

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In this book, I have first shed light on the diglossic situation and the main groups of dialects in the Arab world. It was established at the beginning that the distinctions made by linguists between CA, MSA and the different vernaculars are not necessarily accepted by native speakers and in some cases not even trusted, as was shown in Chapter 5, in which there were native speakers who were sceptical about linguists and politicians, especially non-Arab ones, discussing their language and linguistic situation. The relation between language and ideology is very much at the forefront of the minds of native speakers. Arabic, in its entirety, is a major means by which people in the Arab world can endow themselves with a sense of belonging and manifest different facets of their identity.

When discussing structural constraints and discourse functions of both diglossic switching and code-switching, it was apparent that the diglossic situation is more complex than the bilingual one and that in most cases it is difficult to divide languages or codes as separate entities. In fact, when discussing code-switching, diglossic switching was also examined. When concentrating on quantitative variationist studies in the Arab world, levelling and diglossia were still relevant. MSA phonological variables such as the *q* were juxtaposed with dialectal ones in Egypt, Bahrain and Jordan, to name but a few. Diglossic switching had a discourse function for educated women in talk shows. It was also seen as a means of highlighting political affiliations and agendas in the case of the interviews with the Syrian and Yemeni presidents analysed in Chapter 5. Diglossia thus remains in the weft and warp of any sociolinguistic study in the Arab world. Studies that concentrate on dialects rather than MSA still refer to the diglossic situation and still compare and contrast MSA variables with dialectal ones. It is diglossia, or rather the conscious obsession with diglossia by native speakers of Arabic as well as linguists working on Arabic, which distinguishes the Arab world from the western one and distinguishes studies conducted about the Arab world from their western counterparts.

Linguists working on the Arab world also realised that a blind application of methods and theories constructed for the west would not work for the different Arab countries. However, the methods of collecting data used in the west were to a great extent adhered to by linguists working on the Arab world. The findings were different in a number of ways. First, the dynamics of change and variation in the Arab world are different because of the way communities are structured and maintained. Independent variables such as religion, ethnicity and class tend to be defined differently in relation to the Arab world. One essential factor that plays a major role in the study of variation and change in the Arab world is urbanisation, especially in countries such as Libya, Oman and Bahrain where urbanisation is both recent and rapid.

The interaction between gender and other independent factors is also examined in this book. Gender is not necessarily the main defining factor that influences change and variation. In the Arab world, men and women together form and are formed by a community, which in turn is shaped by independent fixed and flexible variables.

I started this book with the saying 'the earth speaks Arabic', which triggered a number of unanswered questions which this book has attempted to answer, at least partially. I end this book with the same phrase but with a different speculation about its connotations. There are two facts that render Arabic inclusive in many respects. The first is the non-distinction between CA, MSA and the colloquials by the mass of native speakers who may think they speak Arabic, perhaps bad Arabic, but still perceived by many as a corrupted version of the language of the Qur'an. An aggregate picture of Arabic is prevalent. The second fact that this book has tried to capture is the diversity of the Arab world, whether religious, historical, political, ethnic, social or economic. Tribes, religious groups, upheavals, rapid urbanisation, wars, civil wars, social and political changes, dislocation of large groups, ethnic minorities, varied ethno-geographic and historical backgrounds are all characteristics of the Arab world that are reflected directly or indirectly through language.

The Arab world is a place where individuals play different roles through language choice and code-switching. It is a place where intellectuals have at least two varieties available to them, and a place where people can add to the two varieties a different language altogether; a place where the struggle for independence and social justice has been going on hand in hand with a linguistic struggle to maintain and develop SA, and the struggle for democracy and civil rights has been going on hand in hand with the struggle to acknowledge other languages and not just SA. Language has been used as a political tool to the utmost.

The Arab world is also a changing place; some Arabs have been changing from pearl divers to oil traders and from Bedouins to city dwellers. It is changing from a place where older women were the carriers of tradition to one where younger women are setting the course of events and taking control of their linguistic choices.

I have aimed throughout this book to set the reader thinking about different linguistic issues pertaining to 'Arabic' in its entirety. By challenging and discussing different approaches to Arabic sociolinguistics and perhaps sociolinguistics in general, I have aspired to add freshness and vitality to the field. Both Arabic and Arabs will remain a fertile ground for investigation in sociolinguistics. There is still so much more that needs to be unfolded and examined.

This book throws light on research on Arabic sociolinguistics. However, it is also the first to address thoroughly the pitfalls of research in sociolinguistics in relation to Arabic. These were already addressed in studies of other languages; books that address critical sociolinguistics rarely refers to Arabic. It is highlighted throughout this book that research about sociolinguistics does not pay enough attention to Arabic or its speakers. It is noteworthy too that even the studies conducted on Arabic sociolinguistics are still concentrated in the Anglo-American or European sphere. Chapters 3 and 6 highlight the implicit role played by politics and power in variation research. It is argued that even linguists are not immune to the cultural and ideological assumptions that contextualise their research.

The first edition of this book was published in 2009 and was updated for this new edition in 2019. In the ten years in between, the Arab world has changed drastically, forcing the whole world to notice and acknowledge many facts: some linguistic, some political and many critical. Linguists are part of their own cultural and political upbringing, but it is no coincidence that they are now questioning the very methods and theories they once took for granted. They are also more aware of their shortcomings and their sometime inability to change abject linguistic situations. However the very fact of reflecting on our role as linguists may lead to better studies and a better role in our communities and the world at large.

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# Index

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Note: *italic* page numbers indicate tables

- 4-M model, 43–4, 45, 48, 50, 51  
  problems with 52–8, 88
- Abd-El-Jawad, 110, 127
- Abdel-Malek, Z., 73
- abstract vs concrete code-switching, 85
- Abu-Haidar, F., 19–20, 113–15, 156n, 188, 319
- Abu-Lughod, L., 166, 167, 176, 181–4, 185, 220
- Abu-Melhim, A. R., 73
- access, 191
- accommodation theory, 66, 73
- Addis Ababa agreement, 280
- affrication, 120–2
- Afrikaans, 229
- age  
  gender, 216, 220–1  
  language change, 123  
  national identity, 142  
  power, 220–1
- Agha, A., 134, 154
- Aitchison, J., 315
- AL (Arab League), 228, 239
- al-Anṣārī, N., 301
- al-Anṣārī, N. and M. al-Anṣārī  
  *al-‘Urūbah fī muqābil al-‘awlamah*  
  (‘Arabness in the face of globalisation’),  
  238
- al-Asad, B., 293–5
- al-Azhar University, Egypt, 274, 275, 278
- Al-Farazdaq, 180
- al-Fāsī, M., 255
- Al-Jallad, A., 4
- al-Khansā’, 180
- Al-Khateeb, M. A. A., 188
- al-Khubz al-ḥāfi* (‘For bread alone’) (Shukrī,  
  M.), 97
- al-Madanī, A. T.  
  *Kitāb al-Jazā‘ir* (‘The Book of Algeria’),  
  248
- Al-Malik, ‘Abd, 304
- al-Māzinī, I., 238
- al-Mubārāk, M., 232
- Al-Muhannadi, M., 188
- al-Nadīm, ‘A. A., 273
- al-Qa‘īd, Y., 10  
  *Qismat al-ghuramā’* (‘The debtor’s share’),  
  10
- Al-Rojaie, Y., 106, 120–2
- al-San‘ūsī, Sa‘ūd  
  *Bamboo Stalk*, 140
- al-Sayyid, L., 273
- al-Shumū‘ al-sawdā’* (‘Black Candles’) (film),  
  221
- al-Sibā‘ī, Y., novels of, 73
- al-Siyāṣah al-Uṣbū‘iyah* (‘Weekly Politics’)  
  (newspaper), 273
- al-‘Urūbah fī muqābil al-‘awlamah* (‘Arabness  
  in the face of globalisation’) (al-Anṣārī,  
  N. and M. al-Anṣārī), 238
- al-Watad* (‘The Tent Peg’) (Shalabī, K.),  
  221–3
- al-Zāwī, A., 253

- Alawis, 264  
 Albury, N. J., 337, 338  
 Alexandria, Egypt, 156n  
 Alexandrian Arabic, 116  
 Algeria, 233, 240, 241, 246  
   Arabisation, 244–5, 248–50  
   Berbers in, 251–4  
   constitution, 248–9, 252  
   education, 247, 249–51, 253–4, 265, 266–7, 269  
   French colonisation, 246–54, 265  
 Algerian Association, 247–8  
 Ali, B. (president), 335, 336  
 alignment, stance-taking, 137  
 allegiances, 163  
 alliances, 163  
 ‘Allūbah, M., 273  
 Amara, M. H., 285–6  
 America *see* USA  
 Ana (novella), 141  
 analogical derivation, 292  
 Androutsopoulos, J., 137  
 Anglo-American domination, 340, 341–2  
 Antón, M., 90  
 Arab Academy of Damascus, 290, 291, 292  
 Arab Idol (TV show), 146  
 Arab League (AL), 228–9  
 Arab Nation, the, 237–40  
 Arab world, the, 21, 107–8  
   Asians in, 138–40, 325–6, 328  
   diversity, 346  
   education, 304  
   gender and language variation, 188–92  
   language academies, 290–2  
   languages used, 241–3  
   prestige languages, 188, 304  
   social class, 123  
   women, 163–8  
 Arabian dialects, 21–2, 73  
 Arabic, 4, 26–7  
   hierarchies, 143  
   literature, 73–4  
   root and pattern system, 24  
   as a threat, 333  
   varieties of, 1–4, 15–17, 19–27  
   *see also* SA  
 Arabic Language Academy, Cairo, 274, 275, 278, 290–2  
 Arabic Language Academy of Jordan, 291, 292  
 Arabisants, the, 257–8  
 Arabisation, 117  
   Algeria, 244–5, 248–50  
   Morocco, 255–6, 257–8  
   Sudan, 281, 282  
   Syria, 264  
   Tunisia, 260–1  
 ‘Arabness in the face of globalisation’  
   (*al-‘Urūbah fī muqābil al-‘awlamah*)  
   (al-Anṣārī, N. and M. al-Anṣārī), 238  
 Arbel, A., 334  
 ‘Ashūr, S., 208  
 aspectual markers  
   in MSA/ECA switching, 45–6, 47–8, 54, 60  
   *see also* *b*-prefix  
 assertiveness, 192–3, 212–16  
 Atatürk, M. K., 272  
 attitude studies, 251, 258, 265, 299, 314  
 audience  
   expectations, 71–2  
   political speech, 75, 78, 80  
 Auer, P. and A. Di Luzio, 65  
 Austen, J.  
   *Persuasion*, 161, 191  
 Austria, 18–7, 299–300  
 authentication (of linguistic Arabness), 143  
 authenticity, 144, 338  
 authoritative language, 207–9  
 authority as function of code-switching, 64, 87  
 ‘Awaḍ, L., 276  
 Awlād ‘Alī tribe, 181–2  
 Axis of Evil comedy group, 138–40  
  
*b*-prefix  
   in MSA/ECA switching, 45–6, 47–8, 49, 53, 54, 60  
 Baath party, 264  
 Badawi, S. A., 15–17, 313  
 Baghdad, Iraq  
   Christianity in, 113  
   dialects, 19–20, 113–14  
   gender, 156n  
   neutral prestigious standard, 319  
   religion, 113  
 Bahrain, 112, 115, 241, 290  
 Bamboo Stalk (al-San‘ūsī, Sa‘ūd), 140  
 Barakah, I., 209

- Bassiouney, R., 93, 137, 147–53, 210, 317, 319, 334–6
- Bassiouney, R. and M. Muehlhaeusler, 319
- Bastos, L. C. and M. Oliveira, 211
- Bateson, M. C., 13
- Bauman, R., 154
- Bayn al-Qasrayn* ‘Palace Walk’ (Mahfūz, N.), 173–4
- ‘Bayrūt sitt al-dunyā’ ‘Beirut, mistress of the world’ (Qabbānī, N.), 219
- Bean, J. M. and B. Johnstone, 211
- Bedouin and sedentary dialects, 20–1, 109–10, 117, 118
- levelling, 128
- in Libya, 119–20, 320
- in Tripoli, 119–20
- Bedouins, 238
- gender, 181–4
- moral system, 167–8
- poetry, 181–4
- stories, 184
- terms of address, 176
- veiling, 168, 220
- ‘Before you are held accountable’ (*qabla ?an tuḥa:sabu*) (talk show), 193, 195–6, 197, 199–200, 202–4, 212–15
- Behery, D., 151, 152, 153
- Beirut, Lebanon, 219
- language change, 123–4
- ‘Beirut, mistress of the world’ (‘Bayrūt sitt al-dunyā’) (Qabbānī, N.), 219
- Belazi, H. E. et al., 37–8
- Belfast, N. Ireland, 101–2
- Bella, B., 248
- Bendjedid, C., 250, 252
- Benhima, M., 255–6
- Beni Mellal, Morocco, 223
- Benrabah, M., 244–5, 248, 251, 252
- Bentahila, A. and E. E. Davies, 36, 37, 41
- Berbers
- in Algeria, 251–4
- /Dutch code-switching, 92–3
- /English code-switching, 92–3
- gender, 216–18
- /Moroccan Arabic code-switching, 92–3
- in Morocco, 254, 256, 258–60
- Berk-Seligson, S., 35
- Bethlehem, Palestine, 116
- ‘Beyond events’ (*ma wara: ? al-?aḥḍa:θ*) (talk show), 193, 198
- bilingual switching vs diglossic switching, 56
- bilingualism, 30, 31, 90–3, 299
- gender, 186–7
- Israel, 285, 334
- Morocco, 258, 260
- binary approaches, 310–23
- binary variation, 146, 153, 154
- ‘Black Candles’ (*al-Shumū ‘ al-sawdā’*) (film), 221
- Black English vernacular, 104
- code-switching, 67–8
- Blanc, H., 114, 115, 116, 117
- diglossia, 15, 16–17, 313
- levelling, 125
- blind spots, 338
- Blom, J.-P. and J. J. Gumperz, 31, 61–2
- Blommaert, J., 132
- Bolonyai, A., 58–9, 211
- ‘Book of Algeria, The’ (*Kitāb al-Jazā ‘ir*) (al-Madanī, A. T.), 248
- borrowing, 37
- Boumans, L., 37, 41
- Boumedienne, H., 249
- boundaries, 66
- Bourguiba, H. (president), 261, 335
- Boussofara-Omar, N., 44, 54–5, 60, 88
- Bouteflika, A., 250–1, 252
- Bresnier, L.-J., 271
- bridges (late system morphemes), 43
- Britain, 108
- colonisation, 240, 244, 269–89
- immigration, 300, 325–6
- language inequality, 315–16
- linguistic variation and acceptance, 314, 315
- native speakers, 325–6
- Britto, F., 12
- Brown, P. and A. Gilman, 168
- Brown, P. and S. C. Levinson, 169, 173
- Budūr, B., 290
- Būraydah, Saudi Arabia, 120, 121–2
- Bush, G. W. (president), 138, 139
- CA (Classical Arabic), 16
- vs MSA, 12–13
- Cairene Arabic, 3, 116, 117, 118, 119, 319
- gender, 156n, 190–1
- as prestige language, 188
- vs Sa‘idi Arabic, 150–2
- social class, 156n, 191

- Cairo, Egypt, 105, 116, 150  
 gender, 190–1  
 homogeneity, 118  
 social class, 123
- ‘Cairo Trilogy’ (Mahfūz, N.), 173
- Cameron, D., 162, 211, 315
- Canada, 235
- capitalism, 302
- Carter, Howard, 272
- Casablanca, Morocco, 117, 141–3
- Casawi dialect, 141–3, 319–20
- case, 196
- case marking, 197  
 in MSA/ECA switching 43, 50  
 political speech, 77, 81
- Caubet, D., 143
- CB (Christian Baghdadi Arabic), 19–20,  
 113–15
- Ceuta, Spain, 90–1
- Chad, 240, 247
- Chambers, J. K., 319
- change in footing, 65
- Cheshire, J., 186
- Christian Baghdadi Arabic (CB), 19–20,  
 113–15
- Christianity, 111, 124, 156n
- Chun, E. and K. Walters, 138–40, 325, 328,  
 332, 339–40
- Chung, W., 138–40, 325–6, 328
- Classical Arabic (CA) *see* CA
- Cleveland, R. L., 109
- Clyne, M. G., 35
- CMC (computer-mediated communication),  
 87, 91–2
- Coates, J., 158
- code choices, 71–2, 74–87, 211–12, 216  
 speaker’s role, 86
- code-mixing, 32–3
- code-switching, 30–3, 94, 314  
 4-M model, 43–4  
 accommodation theory, 66  
 bilingualism, 90–3  
 borrowing, 37  
 code-mixing, 32–3  
 composite, 59  
 crossing, 87  
 definitions, 31–3, 39, 65  
 diglossic switching, 31, 33, 56  
 discourse functions of, 61–73  
 ethnographic research methods, 88, 93, 94  
 functions of, 66  
 gender, 216  
 government principle, 36–9, 56  
 holistic approach, 87–93  
 identity, 212, 216  
 identity performance, 87  
 individual creativity, 65–6  
 internet, the, 91  
 islands, 40–1, 57–8  
 markedness theory, 66, 67–72  
 market forces, 90–1  
 maxims, 72  
 media, 201  
 motivations for, 61–73, 90–4  
 Myer-Scotton’s model of a matrix  
 language, 39–44  
 post-structuralist approach to identity, 87  
 purposes, 62–3  
 refusal, 66  
 SA and colloquial, 313–14  
 social arena theory, 66, 67  
 social construct approach to variation,  
 87–8, 90–3  
 sociolinguistic approach, 94  
 structural constraints, 33–44, 94  
 translanguaging, 88–90  
 two constraints theory, 34–6, 56  
 two grammatical systems, 88–9  
 as universal phenomenon, 66  
*see also* diglossic switching
- Collins, J., 135
- colloquial language, 296–7, 300–1, 313  
 Egypt, 315  
 vs SA, 313–14, 315, 317  
 vs standard, 313
- colloquial morpho-syntactic features
- colloquial negation, 297
- ‘colloquial of the basically educated’ language  
 level, 16
- ‘colloquial of the cultured’ language level, 16
- ‘colloquial of the illiterates’ language level,  
 16
- colonisation, 300, 308  
 of Algeria, 246–54  
 Britain, 240, 244, 269–89  
 of Egypt, 270–8  
 France, 240–69  
 of Israel, 283–5  
 Italy, 289  
 of Lebanon, 264–5

- colonisation (*cont.*)  
 of Libya, 289  
 of Morocco, 254–60  
 of North Africa, 245–62  
 of Palestine, 285–6  
 of Sudan, 279–82  
 of Syria, 262–4  
 of Tunisia, 260–1
- communication, 332
- communicative competence, 30, 68  
 markedness, 71–2
- community of practice theory, 103, 110, 163
- Comoros, 240, 241
- complementiser (CP), 39, 40–1
- composite matrix language, 58–60
- computer-mediated communication (CMC), 87, 91–2
- concrete vs abstract code-switching, 85
- ‘constitution dialogue, The’ (*hima:r ad-dustu:r*) (talk show), 193, 198–9, 214
- ‘contemporary classical’ language level, 16
- content morphemes, 39–40, 41, 43, 45–60  
 in MSA/ECA switching 46–58, 88
- convergence, 66
- conversational code-switching, 65
- Copts, 107, 111
- copycat studies, 340–1
- corpus planning, 235, 282
- costs, 71
- Cotter, Colleen, 137
- Coulmas, F., 89
- Coupland, N., 154
- CP (complementiser), 39, 40–1
- creolised dialects, 126–7
- critical, definition of, 309
- critical sociolinguistics (CSL) *see* CSL
- crossing, 87
- Crystal, D., 302–3
- CSL (critical sociolinguistics), 309–10  
 challenging the binary approach, 310–23  
 methodological approaches, 338–40  
 native speakers, 323–31  
 neutral linguist, the 337–8  
 power, legitimacy and the social approach, 331–7  
 research problems, 310  
 western hegemony, 337, 340–2
- cultural constraints, of linguists 310–11, 312
- cultural stereotypes, 134
- culture, 163, 236, 305
- Daher, J., 105, 156n, 188, 189–90
- Dahir berbère, le*, 254
- Damascene Arabic, 105, 117, 118, 189–90
- D’Anna, L., 320
- data  
 analysis, 87  
 collection, 104–5, 133, 155n  
 media, 154
- Davies, E. E. and A. Bentahila, 106–7
- deauthentication (of linguistic Arabness), 143
- ‘debtor’s share, The’ (*Qismat al-ghuramā*) (al- Qa’id, Y.), 10
- Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 298
- decreolising change, 126
- deference maxim, 72
- deficit theory, 160–1
- definite articles  
 in MSA/ECA switching, 47, 51, 52, 54, 57
- Delta Airlines, 333
- demonstratives  
 dialectal varieties, 26  
 in ECA, 44  
 in MSA/ECA switching, 45–6, 47, 50, 51, 54, 60  
 in political speech, 81–2
- Detroit, USA, 187
- Deucher, M., 169
- dialectology, 5
- dialects, 2–3, 19–27, 233  
 Baghdadi, 19–20  
 Bedouin and sedentary, 20–1  
 death, 115  
 Jewish, 115–16  
 Jordan, 109–10  
 literature, 74  
 perception of own use, 14, 90  
 regional, 21–7  
 vs standard, 319  
 standardisation, 126
- difference theory, 162–3
- differentiation, 154–5
- diglossia, 10–15, 301–2, 313, 345  
 al-Sibā’ī, Y., 73  
 code-switching, 31, 33, 56, 94  
 definition, 28n
- Educated Spoken Arabic, 17–19
- language change, 124
- language policy, 300
- levels theories, 15–17

- native speakers, 324–5  
*see also* diglossic switching  
 diglossic switching, 31, 33, 94, 95n, 313  
 vs bilingual switching, 56  
 code-switching, 31, 33, 56  
 discourse functions, 73–87  
 motivations for, 73–87, 94  
 structural constraints, 44–61, 94  
*see also* code-switching  
 diglossic variables, 124  
 diphthongs, 100–1  
 DiSciullo, A. M. et al., 36–7  
 discontinuous passive morphemes, 48–9, 50, 53, 60  
 discourse, 132, 192  
*Discourse Strategies* (Gumperz, J. J.), 65  
 divergence, speech, 66  
 diversity, 164–6; *see also* gender  
 Djibouti, 240, 241  
 Doha, Qatar, 329–30  
 domains of speech events, 15  
 dominance theory, 161–2  
 dominant language, 39; *see also* ML  
 Dorian, N., 114, 115  
 Dorleijn M. and J. Nortier, 91–2  
 Dourari, A., 252  
*Dragunov* (soap opera), 320–1  
 Druze, 116  
 Du Bois, J., 136–7  
 dubbing, 141–2  
 Dubois B. and I. Crouch, 161  
 Dufferin, Lord, 271  
 Dutch  
   /Berber code-switching, 92–3  
   /English code-switching, 92–3  
   /Moroccan Arabic code-switching, 41, 92–3  
 dyadic nations, 298  
  
 Eades, D., 118–19  
 early system morphemes, 43, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55  
 ECA (Egyptian Colloquial Arabic), 10, 22–7, 28n, 301, 317  
   vs colloquial Yemeni, 296–7  
   colonisation, effect of, 271  
   demonstratives, 44  
   /English code switching in song, 70–1  
   identity, 329  
   /Jordanian diglossic switching, 73  
  
 media, 201  
 MSA: distinguishing for data analysis, 193–7: symbolic power of mothers, 221–3  
 vs MSA: gender, 184–5, 205–7, 210:  
   lexical features, 195–6: morpho-syntactic features, 196–7: phonological features, 197: political discourse, 207–9: journalism, 209–10  
 /MSA switching, 44–60, 73–4, 88: in political speeches, 75–87  
 negation, 54, 55–6  
 non-Egyptian celebrities, 147–53  
 vs SA, 272–3, 317: in Egypt, 287:  
   presidential interviews, 293–5, 335–6  
 Eckert, P., 103, 123, 133–4, 187, 216, 220  
 Eckert, P. and S. McConnell-Ginet, 163, 219  
 economic diversity, 165  
 economic factors, 304  
 Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA) *see* ESA  
 education  
   Algeria, 247, 249–51, 253–4, 265, 266–7, 269  
   in the Arab world, 304  
   ‘educated’ Arabs, 18  
   Egypt, 271, 273–7, 287, 288  
   in English, 301  
   France, 301  
   gender, 164–5, 190, 191  
   Israel, 283, 284–5  
   language change, 124  
   language of, 16, 304  
   Lebanon, 265, 268, 269  
   Libya, 289–90  
   Morocco, 255–6, 257–8, 266–7, 269  
   native speakers, 329–30  
   Palestine, 286, 288  
   Qatar, 329–30  
   Sudan, 280–1, 288  
   Syria, 263, 265, 268, 269, 297  
   Tunisia, 261, 266–7, 269  
   USA, 330  
   Yemen, 297  
 Edwards, J. R., 107  
 Egypt, 270  
   Arab revival, 273–5  
   Arabness, 239  
   aristocracy, 166–7  
   Bedouins in 167–8  
   British colonisation, 270–8

- Egypt (*cont.*)
- Christianity in, 112
  - colloquial language, 315
  - coup, 306n
  - culture, 147, 149
  - as custodians of SA, 315, 317–18
  - dialects, 3, 21–2, 74, 117–18, 119, 150–2, 271, 318–19
  - diglossic switching, 44–60, 73, 302
  - economy, 165
  - education, 271, 273–7, 287, 288
  - employment, 276–7, 287, 302
  - English, 278, 287, 289, 302, 309, 328–9
  - ethnicity, 107
  - film, 221
  - gender, 177, 184–5, 188, 190–1, 192–3
  - identity, 271–2, 273, 274, 275, 276, 328–9, 336
  - language contact, 147–53
  - language policy, 270–8
  - languages used, 241
  - levelling, 128
  - literacy, 164
  - literature 73–4, 221–3
  - magic 178–9
  - media, 150
  - names, 177–9
  - native speakers, 328
  - obituaries, 177–8
  - parliament, 207–8
  - political conflict, 334
  - political discourse, 74–87, 207–9
  - prestige dialect, 19, 188
  - religion, 178–9
  - revolution, 271–2, 328, 335–6
  - SCA in, 317
  - soap operas, 28n
  - social class, 123, 130–1, 166–7, 172
  - talk shows, 192–210, 220
  - terms of address, 174–5, 176–7
  - titles, 177–8
  - tourism, 278
  - urbanisation, 117
  - veiling, 166–7
  - women writers, 184–5
  - women's loss of names, 177
  - see also* Bedouins
- Egyptian Arabic Cairene, 19
- Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA) *see* ECA
- Eid, M., 44, 177–8, 184–5, 201
- Eisikovits, E., 220
- EL (embedded language), 39, 40; *see also* ML
- El Hassan, S., 44
- EL islands, 40–1
- El-Kholy, H., 162
- embedded language (EL) *see* EL
- Emirates, the *see* UAE
- employment, 250
- English
- accents, 316
  - in Arab World, 244
  - /Berber code-switching, 92–3
  - Black English vernacular, 104
  - /Black English vernacular code-switching, 67–8
  - as control mechanism, 211
  - correct form, 314, 315–16
  - dominance, 309, 341
  - /ECA code-switching in song, 70–1
  - /Dutch code-switching, 92–3
  - in Egypt, 278, 287, 289, 302, 309, 328–9
  - in France, 302–3
  - /German code-switching, 35
  - globalisation, 302–3
  - /Hungarian code-switching, 58–9
  - immigrants in UK, 300
  - inequalities, 315–16
  - /Iraqi Arabic code-switching, 38–9
  - in Israel, 283–4, 289
  - /Jordanian diglossic switching, 73
  - as killer language, 304
  - /Lebanese or Palestinian Arabic code-switching, 42
  - as marked variety, 69
  - /Moroccan Arabic code-switching, 42, 63–4, 92–3
  - in Morocco, 257
  - native speakers, 325–6, 330
  - in Palestine, 286, 289
  - /Panjabi code-switching, 34, 37
  - /Saudi Colloquial Arabic code-switching, 62–3
  - /Shona code-switching, 70
  - social class, 315–16
  - /Spanish code-switching, 34, 35
  - standardisation, 310–11, 315–16
  - in Sudan, 280, 281, 289
  - /Swahili code-switching, 40, 68–9
  - /Tamil code-switching, 37
  - /Tok Pisin code-switching, 35

- in Tunisia, 302  
   western hegemony, 340  
 Ennaji, M., 254, 257, 258  
 enregistered forms, 135, 136  
 equivalence constraint, 34  
 Eritrea, 241  
 ESA (Educated Spoken Arabic), 17–19, 56  
 Eskilstuna, Sweden, 187  
 ethnicity, 106–10  
 ethnographic, definition of, 309  
 Europe, 340  
 European ideology, 324  
 European Union (EU), 239  
 evaluation, stance-taking, 137  
 ‘Excuse my French’ (*Lā mu’ākhzah*) (film), 328  
 exploratory choice maxim, 72  
  
 face, 169, 170, 172  
 factuality as function of code-switching, 64  
 Fairclough, N., 132, 336  
 Fallahi dialect, 109  
 Fasold, R., 12  
 Ferguson, C., 4, 11–15  
 film, 221  
 first-order indexes, 135  
 Fishman, J. A., 15, 27n, 107, 303, 304  
 fixed independent variables, 130  
 flexible independent variables, 130  
 ‘For bread alone’ (*al-Khubz al-hāfi*) (Shukrī, M.), 97  
 Foucault, M., 337  
 frame, change in, 65  
 France  
   colonisation, 240–69  
   education, 301  
   English, 302–3  
   national identity, 237  
 Franciscans, the, 257, 258  
 free morpheme constraint, 34  
 Freed, A. F., 161  
 French, 142, 219  
   Algeria, 233, 246–51, 253  
   in Arab World, 244  
   /Arabic code-switching, 37  
   as elite language, 309  
   gender, 218–19  
   Moroccan Arabic code-switching, 35–6, 41, 42  
   Morocco, 217, 234, 254–5, 256–8  
   Tunisia, 218–19, 260–1  
   /Tunisian Arabic code-switching, 37–8  
 French Academy, 291  
 Friedrich, P., 167  
 Fu’ād (king), 272, 274  
 ‘Future of Culture in Egypt, The’ (*Mustaqbal al-thaqāfah fi Miṣr*) (Husayn, T.), 274  
  
 Gaddafi, M. (president), 120  
 Gal, S., 150, 154, 331  
   language ideology, 135–6, 337  
   variation and gender, 186  
   variation research, 132–3, 134, 312  
 García, O. and L. Wei, 88–9, 314, 324  
 García, O. et al., 310–11, 323–4, 332, 337, 340, 342  
 Gardner-Chloros, P., 88, 93  
 Gaza Strip, 286  
 gender, 158–9, 224–6  
   affrication, 121  
   assertiveness, 212–16  
   Baghdad, 156n  
   binary approach, 224–5  
   Cairene Arabic, 156n, 191  
   code choice, 211–12  
   community of practice theory, 163  
   construction approach, 224–5  
   deficit theory, 160–1  
   difference theory, 162–3  
   distribution in talk show study, 200  
   dominance theory, 161–2  
   economy, 165  
   education, 164–5  
   hedges, 162  
   identity, 187, 191, 192, 201, 205–6, 210–12, 215–19  
   interruption, 162, 212–16  
   language change/variation, 131, 185–92  
   loss of names, 177–8  
   overlap, 215  
   poetry, 180–4, 185  
   politeness, 168–72  
   prestige languages, 188, 191, 192  
   power, 160, 161–2, 168–4, 176, 178–9, 184, 212, 220–3  
   social class, 186–8, 191  
   solidarity, 162, 168–9  
   stories, 184–5  
   symbolic use of language, 216–20  
   talk shows, 192–210, 212–16



- gender (*cont.*)  
 terms of address, 173–9  
 turn-taking, 204, 212  
 universals, 162–3, 220, 223  
 women in the Arab world, 163–8  
*see also* women
- ‘Gender, identity, and the political economy  
 of language’ (Walters, K.), 218
- gender universals, 162–3
- General Syrian Congress, 262
- German  
 in Austria, 299–300  
 /English code-switching, 35
- Germanic languages, 27
- Germanos, M., 123–4
- Germanos, M. and C. Miller, 322–3
- Germany  
 copycat studies, 341  
 diglossia in, 301–2  
 language policy, 231  
 national identity, 237
- Ghidhdhāmī, A. M., 161
- Gibson, M., 126, 127
- Giles, H. et al., 66
- Gill, H., 254, 261, 304
- globalisation, 302–3
- glottal stop  
 dialects, 22  
 Egypt, 276  
 gender, 189–90, 205
- Goffman, E., 64–5
- Goodall, L., 315–16
- Gordon, D. C., 247
- government principle, 36–9
- Gralla, S., 323
- Grand liban, le*, 262
- greetings, 123–4
- Grin, F., 298
- Grosby, S., 237
- Guibernau, M., 236, 239
- Gulf area dialects, 21
- Gulf countries, language policy, 290
- Gumperz, J. J., 4, 31–2, 33, 61–3, 65–6, 68,  
 104  
*Discourse Strategies*, 65
- H (high) variety, 11–17, 19–20, 313, 318
- Hachimi, A., 143–5, 176, 223, 324
- Haeri, N., 124, 156n, 224, 300, 302, 317  
 binary approach to variation, 314–15
- employment and SA, 278
- phonological variation in women in Cairo,  
 123, 190, 197
- social class, 123, 128
- sociolinguistic variation in Cairo, 105
- Hāfīz, ‘A., 148–9
- Ḥammūd, S., 255
- Hassan II (king), 256
- Havelova, A., 190, 323
- Haykal, H., 275
- Hebrew, 240, 283–4, 286  
 /Spanish code-switching, 35
- hedges, 162
- Heller, M. S., 66, 132, 331, 336
- Heller, M. S. et al., 309, 332–3, 338
- Hemnesberget, Norway, 31, 62
- ‘heritage classical’ language level, 16
- Hezbollah–Israel war, 293
- Higher Authority of Arabisation (HAA),  
 281
- hijab, the, 166–7
- Hilali dialects, 323
- Hill, J. and B. Mannheim, 233
- Hill, J. H. and K. C. Hill, 218
- Ḥīt, Iraq, 115
- ḥima:r ad-dustu:r* (‘The constitution  
 dialogue’) (talk show), 193, 198–9, 214
- Hochdeutsch, 301–2
- Hoffman, K., 216–18, 219, 262
- Holmes, J., 158, 162, 163, 220
- Holmes, J. and M. Meyerhoff, 158
- Holmquist, J. C., 186
- Holt, M., 244, 246, 247, 248
- ‘Home secrets’ (*il-buyu:t ʔasra:r*) (talk show),  
 193, 196–7, 199, 206–7, 208–10
- homogeneity, 118
- honour, 167, 168, 176–7, 184
- Hungarian/English code-switching, 58–9
- Hurreiz, S. H., 156n, 188
- Ḥusayn, K al-D., 276
- Ḥusayn, Ṭ., 274–5  
*Mustaqbal al-thaqāfah fi Miṣr* (‘The  
 Future of Culture in Egypt’), 274
- Hussein, King of Jordan, 108–9
- hybrid dialects, 119, 127
- Ibn Aḥmad, K., 5
- Ibrāhīm, H., 228
- Ibrahim, M. H., 19, 127, 318
- Ibrahimi, T., 249, 251

- ICA (Iraqi Colloquial Arabic), 22, 24–6  
 /English code-switching, 38–9
- identity, 210–11, 228–9, 299, 302, 335  
 allegiances, 163  
 alliances, 163  
 Arabic, 238–9, 303  
 asserting through language choice, 69  
 celebrities, 147  
 code choice, 86–7, 211–12, 215–16  
 code-switching, 72, 87, 90, 216: internet,  
 the and, 91–2  
 community of practice, 103  
 Egyptian, 271–2, 273, 274, 275, 276,  
 328–9, 336  
 gender, 187, 191, 192, 201, 205–6, 210–12,  
 215–19  
 Jordan, 109  
 linguistic differentiation, 155  
 Morocco, 141, 142  
 MSA use, 207  
 national, 236, 237–40, 244  
 native speakers, 325  
 negotiations, 72  
 Palestinians in Jordan, 109  
 projection, 209  
 reflexivity, 147–53  
 religion, 112–13  
 Sa‘idi, 150  
 social, 147  
 vs stance, 136  
 Standard Arabic, 142  
 Sudan, 289  
 as universal social arena, 67  
 women’s loss of names, 177–8
- Idrīs, Y., 185
- il-buyu:t ʔasra:r* (‘Home secrets’)  
 (talk show), 193, 196–7, 199, 206–7,  
 209–10
- immigration, 300, 325–6
- independence  
 Algeria, 248–51  
 Egypt, 272, 275–6  
 Morocco, 255–6  
 Sudan, 280–1  
 Syria, 263  
 Tunisia, 260–1
- independent variables, 98, 106–24, 128–31,  
 172, 321–3  
 fixed independent variables, 130  
 flexible independent variables, 130
- indexes, 133–6, 144  
 stance, 137
- indexicality, 72, 134–6, 207, 293, 294, 337
- inequalities, 315–16, 331, 332–3
- intelligibility, 143
- inter-dialectal contact, 125
- interruption, 212–16
- intersentential code-switching, 32
- interviewers, insiders and outsiders as,  
 104–5, 181–2
- interviews, 104–6
- intonation, 152, 188
- intra-word code-switching, 40, 49
- intrasentential code-switching, 32, 40
- Iran, 177, 293
- Iraq  
 Christianity in, 113  
 dialects, 21–2, 113–15  
 ethnicity, 107  
 languages used, 241  
 Shiites in, 112
- Iraqi Academy, 291, 292
- Iraqi Colloquial Arabic (ICA) *see* ICA
- Irbid, Jordan, 188
- Islam, 107, 111, 112, 116, 239  
 greetings, 124  
 Koran, 304–5  
 in Morocco, 258, 259  
 suppression by colonisation, 247
- islands in matrix language theory, 40–1,  
 57–8
- isoglosses, 118
- Israel, 286  
 Arabic in, 333–4  
 British colonisation, 283–5  
 dialects, 322–3  
 education, 283, 284–5  
 English, 283–4, 289  
 English as marked variety, 69  
 gender, 190  
 language policy, 283–5, 289, 333–4  
 languages used, 241, 284  
 national identity, 237  
 official language, 240  
 signs in, 284  
 stories, 184
- Istiqlāl party, 258
- Italy, 340  
 colonisation, 289
- ‘Izz al-Dīn, Y., 301, 305

- JA (Arabic varieties spoken by Jewish groups), 322–3
- Jabeur, M., 105–6
- Jacobites, 113
- Jaffe, A., 137, 147, 313, 328
- James, D. and J. Drakich, 186
- Johnson, Boris, 315–16
- Johnstone, B. et al., 135, 155
- Jordan, 19, 108–10
  - Christianity in, 112
  - dialects, 109–10, 156n
  - diglossic switching, 73
  - languages used, 242
  - Palestinians in, 109–10
- Jordanians, 107
- Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* (journal), 341
- journalism, 209–10
- Juba Arabic, 126–7
- Judaism, 111, 112
  - Jewish dialects, 116, 322–3
  - Karaite Jews, 115–16
  - Morocco, 180–1
- kala:m nama:Sim* ('Women talk') (talk show), 193, 198
- Kāmil, M., 207
- Kapchan, D., 223–4
- Karaite Jews, 115–16
- Karim, M., 152
- Keating, E., 224
- Kedar, M., 264
- Keenan, E., 170
- Khaldun, I., 308
- Khalili, C., 141
- Khan, G., 115–16
- Kharraki, A., 170–2, 220
- Khartoum, Sudan, 156n, 188
- Khartoum Arabic 127, 131
- Khidr, M., 239
- Kitāb al-fazā'ir* ('The Book of Algeria') (al-Madanī, A. T.), 248
- knowledge, 337
- koineisation, 125, 319, 320
- Koran, 304–5
- Korba, Tunisia, 188–9
- Kroch, A, 122–3
- Kulthūm, U., 148–9
- Kurds, 107, 263–4
- Kuwait, 165, 242, 290
- L (low) variety, 11–17, 313
  - prestige variety of, 19–20
- Lā mu'ākhzah* ('Excuse my French') (film), 328
- Labov, W., 5, 6, 67–8, 98, 99–101, 104, 187–8, 312
- Lacoste, V. et al., 155
- Lahlou, M., 41
- Lakoff, R. T., 160–1, 163, 210
  - 'Language and woman's place', 160
- Lambert, R. D., 235, 298
- Landberg, C., 271
- language, 331–2
  - as political statement, 2
  - endangerment, 304
  - levels of spoken, 16
  - national identity, 237
  - psychology of, 301–2
  - reflective nature of, 338
  - as a resource, 132, 311, 331–6
  - symbolic use of, 216–20, 233
- language academies, 290–2
- Language and Social Networks* (Milroy, L.), 79
- 'Language and woman's place' (Lakoff, R. T.), 160
- language attitude, 234
- language change/variation 97–9, 337
  - age, 123
  - Baghdad, 113–15
  - Beirut, 123–4
  - bilingualism, 186–7
  - binary variation, 146, 153, 154
  - diglossia, 124
  - economic factors, 186
  - education, 124
  - ethnicity, 106–10
  - fixed independent variables, 129–30
  - flexible independent variables, 129–30
  - gender, 131, 185–92
  - Karaite Jews, 115–16
  - levelling, 125–8
  - methodologies to measure, 104–6
  - political power, 117
  - quantitative studies, 106
  - religion, 111–17, 124
  - social class approach, 100–1
  - social class, 99–101, 122–3, 186–7
  - social networks approach, 101–3
  - stance, 137

- third wave approach, 103–4  
 urbanisation, 117–22  
*see also* social approaches to language change  
 language contact, 304  
 language death, 57  
 language dominance, 89–90  
 language ideologies, 89, 135–7, 232–4, 308, 310–13, 332  
   Bassiouny, R. study, 147–53  
   Chun, E. and K. Walters study, 138–40  
   Hachimi, A. study, 143–5  
   native speaker, 323–4  
   sociolinguist's trap, 308–9, 316  
 language inequality, 315–16  
 language legitimisation, 334  
 language planning, 235–6  
 language policy, 228–9, 230–1  
   Austria, 299–300  
   British colonisation, 240, 244, 269–89  
   culturally specific, 305  
   diglossia, 300  
   Egypt, 270–8  
   English and globalisation, 302–3  
   French colonisation, 240–69  
   Gulf countries, 290  
   Israel, 283–5  
   language academies, 290–2  
   language contact, 304  
   language ideologies, 232–4  
   language planning, 235–6  
   language practices, 232, 234–5  
   Lebanon, 264–5  
   Libya, 289–90  
   linguistic rights, 298–302  
   nation and state, 236–9  
   North Africa, 245–62  
   Palestine, 285–6  
   political rights, 299–301  
   politics, 293–7  
   riots, 229  
   Sudan, 279–82  
   Syria, 231, 263–4  
 language pollution, 233  
 language practices, 232, 234–5, 332  
 language universals, 162–3, 220, 223  
 language variation *see* language change  
*Language Variation and Change* (journal), 341–2  
 Laraki, A., 256  
 Larson, K., 192  
 late system morphemes, 43  
 Latin, 314, 317  
   script, 282  
 LCA (Lebanese Colloquial Arabic), 10, 22–7  
   /English code-switching, 42  
 Lebanese Colloquial Arabic (LCA) *see* LCA  
 Lebanon, 264  
   Christianity in, 112  
   dialects, 21, 22  
   education, 265, 268, 269  
   French colonisation, 264–5  
   language change, 123–4  
   language policy, 264–5  
   languages used, 242, 245  
 Levantine dialects, 22  
 levelling, 125–8  
 lexical features, ECA vs MSA, 195–6  
 Libya, 119–20, 233, 242, 289–90  
   demonstrative use, 320–1  
   dialects, 320  
   political conflict, 334  
   prestigious dialect, 320–1  
 linguistic categories, 313  
 linguistic codes, 132, 150  
 linguistic normalisation, 316  
 linguistic resources, 331–6  
 linguistic rights, 298–302  
 linguistic tolerance, 299  
 linguistic unrest, 335, 336  
 linguistic variables, 132–4, 321–3  
 linguistic variation, binary approach, 314–18  
 literacy, 164–5  
   in Algeria, 247, 248  
   in Morocco, 255  
   in Tunisia, 260  
 literature, 73–4  
   Egypt, 221–3  
   gender, 180–5  
   terms of address, 173–4  
   woman as symbol, 219  
*ma wara:ʔ al-ʔahda:θ* ('Beyond events')  
   (talk show), 193, 198  
 McCarus, E. N., 24  
 McConnell-Ginet, S., 173  
 McFerren, M., 300  
 Madagascar, 170

- Madani dialect, 109
- Maghreb dialects, 21–2  
vs Mashreq dialects, 143, 144–5, 324
- magic, 178–9
- Mahfūz, N. (Mahfouz, N.), 30, 74, 95n  
*Bayn al-Qaşrayn* ‘Palace Walk’ 173–4  
‘Cairo Trilogy’, 173
- Makoni, S. B., 332
- Malagasy, 170
- male speakers, 200
- Maltz, D. and R. Borker, 162
- Mammeri, M., 251–2
- Mansfield, P., 262, 264
- marked choice maxim, 72, 205, 207
- markedness theory, 66, 67–72, 293, 294  
communicative competence, 71–2
- market forces effect on linguistic choice,  
141–3, 186
- Marley, D., 259, 260
- Maronites, 110
- Martha’s Vineyard, USA, 100
- Mash Report, The* (TV show), 325–6, 332
- Mashreq dialects, 145, 146  
vs Maghreb dialects, 143, 144–5, 324
- matrix language (ML) *see* ML
- Mauritania, 242
- maximal projections, 43, 57–8
- Mazraani, N., 32, 73
- MB (Muslim Baghdadi Arabic), 20, 113–14,  
319
- media, 137, 143, 145, 149, 154  
changes in, 133  
code-switching, 201  
dialects, 144, 325  
Egypt, 287  
Israel, 284  
YouTube, 138–40
- Medjell, G., 14, 33, 44, 60, 73–4, 95n, 192
- Meiseles, G., 15, 17–18, 313
- Melilla, Spain, 90–1
- men, 220; *see also* gender
- Mendel, Y., 334
- Mesopotamian dialects, 21
- Mesthrie, R. et al., 309, 331, 332, 337
- metacommunication, 337
- metaphorical code-switching, 61–2, 64, 65
- metasemiotics, 154–5
- Mexico  
soap operas, 140–3
- Meyerhoff, M. and J. Stanford, 342–3
- migration, 322
- Miller, C., 116–17, 118, 119, 123, 124  
Arabisation in Syria, 264  
gender, 216  
language and nation, 238  
Moroccan Arabic 140–3, 319–20  
pidgin Arabic, 131  
Sudan, 280
- Milroy, J. and L. Milroy, 308, 311, 315, 316,  
334
- Milroy, L., 98, 99, 101–3, 104–5, 186  
*Language and Social Networks*, 79
- minority groups, 298, 299–300
- Mioni, A. M. and A. M. Arnuzzo-Lanzweert,  
340
- Mitchell, T. F., 17, 18, 56
- mixed forms, 44, 45
- mixed styles, 74
- ML (matrix language), 39–44  
composite, 58–60  
MSA/ECA switching, 45–60, 88  
problems with, 56–7, 88, 314
- ML islands, 40–1
- Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) *see* MSA
- Modernisation, gender, 190
- modesty, 167–8, 176–7, 184
- monolingual nations, 298
- Montreal, Canada, 66
- mood marking, 196
- Morpheme order principal, 43
- morphemes, 39–40, 43
- morpho-syntactic features  
colloquial vs SA, 297  
ECA vs MSA, 196–7
- morpho-syntactic overlap, 49
- Moroccan Arabic  
/Berber code-switching, 92–3  
bilingualism, 90–1  
colloquial, taught in France, 301  
dubbing, 146  
/Dutch code-switching, 41, 92–3  
/English code-switching, 42, 63–4, 92–3  
/French code-switching, 35–6, 41, 42  
as native dialect, 324–5  
in the Netherlands, 91–2  
*see also* SMA
- Moroccanisation, 256
- Morocco, 216–18, 254  
Casawi dialect, 141–3, 319–20  
constitution, 259, 334

- culture, 163  
 culture of magic, 179  
 dialects, 22, 141, 143–5  
 economy, 234  
 education, 255–6, 257–8, 266–7, 269  
 folk sayings, 223  
 French colonisation, 254–60, 265  
 gender, 170–2, 176, 188, 217, 220, 223  
 Judaism, 180–1  
 languages used, 217, 242  
 national identity, 142  
 official languages, 240  
 soap opera dubbing, 140–3, 319  
 social class, 172  
 songs, 180–1  
 television dubbing, 141–2, 319  
 terms of address, 176  
 Tifinagh script, 282  
 urbanisation, 142, 319–20  
 women in, 163–4, 179, 180–1  
 mosaic nations, 298  
 Mostari, H., 248  
 mother tongue, 89  
   perception of own use, 90  
 mothers, symbolic power of, 220–1  
 MSA (Modern Standard Arabic), 16, 188, 305  
   binary variation, 146  
   vs CA, 12–13  
   vs CB and MB, 113–14  
   vs dialects, 21–7  
 ECA: distinguishing for data analysis, 193–7:  
   symbolic power of mothers, 221–3  
 vs ECA: gender, 184–5, 205–7, 210: lexical  
   features, 195–6: morpho-syntactic  
   features, 196–7: phonological features,  
   197: political discourse, 207–9:  
   journalism, 209–10  
 /ECA switching, 44–60, 73–4, 88: in  
   political speeches, 75–87  
 vs ESA, 18  
 form and function, 201–2  
 gender, 184–5, 189–91, 192–3, 205–7, 211,  
   216  
 /Jordanian diglossic switching, 73  
 levelling, 125–6, 127  
 media, 201  
 Morocco, 217  
 prestige, 19–20  
 /TCA switching, 44, 54–5, 60, 88  
   teaching as the standard, 14  
   variables, 194  
 Mubarak, H. (president), 75–85, 317, 335–6  
 multi-ethnic nations, 298, 299  
 multilingual speakers, 330–1  
 Mūsá, S., 272–3  
 Muslim Baghdadi Arabic (MB), 20, 113–14,  
   319  
 Muslims *see* Islam  
*Mustaqbal al-thaqāfah fī Miṣr* ('The Future  
   of Culture in Egypt') (Husayn, T.),  
   274  
 Myers-Scotton, C., 31, 32, 37, 65–72, 74,  
   216  
   4-M model, 43–4  
   composite matrix language 58–9  
   islands, 40–1  
   marked choice maxim, 72, 205, 207  
   markedness theory, 66, 67–72  
   model of a matrix language, 39–44  
   *Social Motivations for Code-switching*, 30  
 Nabk, Syria, 323  
 Nabokov, V., 89  
 Nagy, N. and M. Meyerhoff, 342  
 Nahuatl women, Mexico, 218  
 Nairobi, Kenya, 68–9  
 Nait M'barek, M. and D. Sankoff, 35–6  
 Najdi Arabic, 120–1  
 names  
   loss of 177–8  
   power, 178–9  
 Nasser, G. A. (president), 85–7, 275  
 national identity, 236, 237–40, 244  
 national languages, 231  
 nationalism, 107, 141, 237–9  
   Algeria, 247  
 nations, 236–7, 298  
   Arab Nation, the, 237–40  
 native speakers, 89, 310, 323–31  
 Navon, Y., 285  
 Nazareth, Israel 190, 323  
 Nebel, A., 329–31  
 Nebraska, USA, 235  
 negation  
   colloquial, 297  
   dialectal varieties, 26  
   ECA, 54, 55–6  
 negative markers in MSA/ECA switching,  
   45–7, 50, 55

- negative politeness, 169
- negative structures in political speech, 77, 81–2
- Netherlands, 91–2
- neutral linguist, the 337–8
- neutral morphemes, 45
- neutral prestigious standard, 318–19
- New York City, USA, 101
- Nichols, P., 186
- Nielson, H. L., 18
- Nigeria, 187
- non-referential indexes, 135
- Nordberg, B. and E. Sundgren, 187
- North Africa
- Christianity in, 112
  - dialects, 21–2, 119, 143, 144–6
  - French colonisation, 245–62
  - language policy, 245–62
- Norway
- code-switching in, 31, 61–2
  - gender, 192
- Nouakchott, Mauritania, 117
- O’Barr, W. M. and B. K. Atkins, 161
- obituaries, 177–8
- observation, 133
- observer’s paradox, 104, 105, 189, 224
- Ochs, E., 103, 135, 136, 137
- official languages, 231, 235, 240, 298, 302
- oil, discovery of, 129
- Oman, 118–19, 164–5, 242, 290
- Omanis, 108
- Orient, the, 139
- Orthography, 142
- outsider late system morphemes, 43, 50, 51–2, 53, 54, 55
- overlap, 212–13, 215
- Owens, J., 107
- Owens J. and R. Bani-Yasin, 156n
- Ozil, M., 325
- ‘Palace Walk’ (*Bayn al-Qaşrayn*) (Maḥfūz, N.), 173–4
- palatalisation, 123, 190, 191
- Palestine
- education, 286, 288
  - English in, 286, 289
  - language policy, 285–6, 289
- Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), 109
- Palestinian Arabic, 110
- /English code-switching, 42
- Palestinians, 107
- Christianity, 112
  - in Jordan, 109–10
- Palmerston, Lord, 269–70
- Palva, H., 19, 20–1
- Panjabi/English code-switching, 34, 37
- Parkinson, D. B., 18, 174–5
- passive form, in MSA/ECA switching, 48, 49, 60
- pattern system, 24
- Peirce, C. S., 135
- People’s Assembly, Egypt, 207–8
- Pereira, C., 119–20
- performance, 137, 138–40, 154
- performed speech, 87, 133
- personal pronouns, dialectal varieties, 25
- persuasion, 87
- Persuasion* (Austen, J.), 161, 191
- pharyngealisation, 190
- Philadelphia, USA, 122–3
- phonological features
- ECA vs MSA, 197
- phonological variables, 101, 155n, 189–90
- pidgin Arabic, 131
- poetry, 180–4, 185
- woman as symbol, 219
- Pohnpei, Micronesia, 224
- Poland, 237
- politeness, 168–72; *see also* terms of
- address
  - political conflicts, 334
  - political discourse, 73–87, 207–9, 293–7, 315–16, 317, 334–6
  - political ideologies, 328
  - political rights, 299–301
  - positioning, stance-taking, 137
  - positive politeness, 169
  - post-structuralism, 337
  - power, 229–30, 308
  - age, 220–1
  - asserting through language choice, 69, 315–16
  - culture, 163
  - gender, 160, 161–2, 168–4, 176, 178–9, 184, 212, 220–3
  - identity, 212
  - language inequality, 315–16
  - names, 178–9

- relations *see* CSL  
 as universal social arena, 67  
 pre-Hilali dialects, 323  
 prepositions, dialectal varieties, 25,  
 26–7  
 prestige dialects 19, 120, 185–8, 304,  
 318–19, 340  
 gender, 188, 191, 192  
 levelling, 127  
 Libya, 320  
 Moroccan Arabic, 140–3, 319–20  
 vs standard, 19–20, 140–3, 188, 318–20  
 Preston, D., 338  
 private/public spheres, 184, 211  
 purity, 143, 144
- qabla ʔan tuḥa:sabu* ('Before you are held  
 accountable') (talk show), 193, 195–6,  
 197, 199–200, 202–4, 212–15
- Qabbāni, N.  
 'Bayrūt sitt al-dunyā' 'Beirut, mistress  
 of the world', 219
- Qaṣīm, Saudi Arabia, 106, 120–2
- Qatar, 165, 188, 242, 329–30
- Qismat al-ghuramā* ('The debtor's share')  
 (Yūsuf al-Qa'īd), 10
- quantitative studies, 106
- Quechua female speakers, Peru, 219
- Queen, R., 154
- Qur'an, 304–5
- race, 138–40, 280, 325–8, 333, 339–40  
 stereotypes, 138–9
- Rades, Tunisia, 105–6
- Ramadān Mabruk Abū al-'Alamayn  
 Hammūdah* (film), 317
- Reference Grammar of Arabic, A* (Ryding,  
 K. D.), 13
- referential indexes, 135
- reflexivity, 135–6, 147–53, 155
- regional dialects, 21–7, 127, 143
- register, 134
- relative pronouns in political speech, 77
- religion, 107, 111–17, 130, 304–5, 321  
 Arab nation, the, 239–40  
 conflict, 110  
 diversity, 166  
 greetings, 124  
 identity, 112–13  
 linguistic variables, 322
- magic, 178–9  
 Syria, 263, 264
- Republic of South Sudan, 240, 243, 279, 281,  
 282, 283
- researchers, 309  
 blind spots, 338  
 ideology, 310–11, 316, 317, 319, 322  
*see also* CSL
- respect, 187
- rewards, 71–2
- Ricento, T., 239
- riots, 229
- Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 120, 121
- role, 191
- Romaine, S., 37, 62, 65, 68, 187, 192
- Roman alphabet, 92–3
- root and pattern system, 24
- Rosenbaum, G. M., 74
- Rosenhouse, J., 184
- Ross, D., 274
- Rouchdy, A., 41–2
- Roux, A., 188
- Royal, A. M., 188
- rural dialects, 20, 117–18
- Ryan, C. R., 109
- Ryding, K. D., 13  
*Reference Grammar of Arabic, A*, 13
- SA (Standard Arabic), 22, 26–7, 145, 229,  
 300–1, 304–5  
 Arab League conference, 228–9, 232–3  
 Arab Nation, the, 237–8  
 Arabisation, 244  
 vs colloquial, 300–1, 313–14, 315, 317  
 correct form, 314  
 vs ECA, 272–3, 317: in Egypt, 287:  
 presidential interviews, 293–5, 335–6  
 Egypt, 274–8: as custodians, 315, 317–18  
 gender, 189–90  
 Israel, 283–5  
 national identity, 142, 237–8, 244  
 as official language, 240, 241–3  
 preserving, 291–2  
 as sacred, 304–5, 315, 317  
 Sudan, 281  
 Suleiman, Y., 339  
 as symbol, 300  
 Syria, 293–4, 293–5, 297  
 United Arab Emirates, 290  
 weakening, by British in Egypt, 271–3



- SA (Standard Arabic) (*cont.*)  
 Yemen, 293, 295–7  
 Sa‘adah, A.  
 Sa‘dī, ‘U., 253  
 Sadiqi, F., 158, 162, 163–4, 179, 211, 217  
 Sa‘idi Arabic, 149–53  
   vs Cairene Arabic, 150–2  
 Safi, S., 62  
 Şāfināz (Armenian/Russian belly dancer),  
   147–9  
 Salam, M., 141  
 Salami, L. O., 187  
 Saleh, A., 333  
 Şālih, ‘A. ‘A. A., 293, 295–7  
 Sallo, I. K., 38  
 Sankoff, D. and S. Poplack, 34–5  
 Sankoff, D. et al., 37  
 Saudi Arabia, 106, 290  
   dialects, 21  
   Ismailis in, 112  
   languages used, 243  
   Shiites in, 112  
   urbanisation 120–2  
 Saudi Colloquial Arabic (SCA) *see* SCA  
 Sayahi, L., 90–1  
 SCA (Saudi Colloquial Arabic), 22, 24–7  
   in Egypt, 317  
   /English code-switching, 62–3  
 Schiffman, H. R., 230, 304  
 Schneider, B., 335  
 Schulthies, B., 145–6, 318, 324  
 Scotton, C. M. and W. Ury, 66, 67  
 second-order indexes, 135  
 sedentary dialects, 20–1, 119  
 Sefriwi dialect, 181  
 Sefrou, Morocco, 180–1  
 Seldon Willmore, J., 271  
 Sellam, A., 171  
 semiotics, 154, 331  
 Serbia, 235  
 Shaaban, K. and G. Ghaith, 265  
 Shalabī, K.  
   *al-Watad* (‘The Tent Peg’), 221–3  
 shared morphemes, 57  
 Sharkey, H. J., 279, 282, 289  
 Shiites, 107, 111, 112  
   greetings, 124  
 Shona/English code-switching, 70  
 Shraybom-Shivteit, S., 273, 275, 276, 278  
 Shuaib, A., 328  
 Shukrī, M.  
   *al-Khubz al-hāfi* (‘For bread alone’), 97  
 Shūshah, F., 292  
 Silverstein, M., 134, 135, 312, 333, 336  
 Simḥa poni, 181  
 Sinhalese, 229  
 Sirles, C. A., 248, 249, 255, 256, 258, 261,  
   283  
 situational code-switching, 61–2, 63, 65  
 SMA (standard Moroccan Arabic), 319  
 Smakman, D., 340–2  
 social approaches to language change 131–4  
   Bassiouney, R. study, 147–53  
   binary variation, 146, 153, 154  
   Chun E. and K. Walters study, 138–40  
   differentiation, 154–5  
   Hachimi, A. study, 143–5  
   indexicality, 134–6  
   linguistic variables, 132–4, 190  
   meaning, 134–7, 154, 155  
   Miller, C. study, 140–3  
   Schulthies, B. study, 145–6  
   stance, 136–7  
   studies, 138–53  
   style, 133–4  
 social arena theory, 66, 67  
 social class, 99, 101, 128–9  
   Cairene Arabic, 156n, 191  
   English accents, 315–16  
   gender, 186–8, 191  
   language change, 99–101, 122–3, 186–8  
   mobility, 130–1  
   pharyngealisation/palatalisation, 190,  
     191  
   Philadelphia, USA, 122–3  
   politeness, 172  
   Sa‘idi Arabic, 149–50, 152–3  
   veiling, 166–7  
 social construct approach, 132, 331–7, 338  
 social identity, 147  
 social meaning, 134–7, 154, 155  
*Social Motivations for Code-switching* (Myers-  
   Scotton, C.), 30  
 social networks, 102–3, 181–2  
   language change, 101–3, 186–7  
 social variables, 132–4  
 Socialist Forces Front (FFS), 251  
 sociolinguistic journals, editors of, 341  
 sociolinguistic variables, 98, 99, 106–24,  
   321–3

- sociolinguistics, 4–6  
 definition of, 309  
 research problems, 310  
*see also* CSL
- sociolinguists, 4, 340–2  
 background, 341  
 research, 342–3  
*see also* CSL
- sociolinguist's trap, 308–9, 316
- solidarity, 162, 168–9
- Somalia, 240
- songs  
 code-switching in, 70–1  
 gender, 180–4, 218  
 woman as symbol, 219
- South Carolina, USA, 186
- South Sudan, Republic of, 240, 243, 279, 281, 282, 283
- Soweto, South Africa, 229
- Spain, 186
- Spanish  
 bilingualism, 90–1  
 /English code-switching, 34, 35  
 gender and language, 186  
 /Hebrew code-switching, 35
- speaker roles, 61, 64–5, 73, 74–85  
 code choice, 86
- speakers  
 positioning, 136–7
- speech, 331  
 categories, 134  
 performed, 87, 133  
 register, 134  
 spontaneous, 133  
 upper-class, 122–3
- speech communities, 99, 134
- speech divergence, 66
- speech events, 15, 61
- Spolsky, B., 230–1, 232, 235, 244, 245, 283–4, 285, 289, 302
- Spolsky, B. and E. Shohamy, 283, 284, 285, 289
- Spolsky, B. et al., 116
- spontaneity  
 media, 154  
 speech, 133
- Sri Lanka, 229
- stance, 136–8
- stance-taking, 133, 140, 144
- Stance Triangle, 136–7
- Standard Arabic (SA) *see* SA
- standard dialects, 126, 127  
 vs prestige dialects, 19–20, 140–3, 188
- standard languages, 310, 311–12, 313, 316, 340  
 vs colloquial, 313, 314–15  
 vs dialects, 319  
 neutral prestigious, 318–19
- standard Moroccan Arabic (SMA), 319
- standardisation, 311, 315, 316
- Star Academy* (TV show), 143
- States, 236
- status planning, 235
- stem affrication, 121
- stereotypes, 138–9, 149–50, 152, 331
- Stevenson, P., 299
- stigmatisation, 118
- Stillman, N. A. and Y. K. Stillman, 180–1
- style, 133–4  
 choices, 73–4
- subject positions, 211
- subtitling, 145–6
- Sudan, 131, 240, 243, 279  
 British colonisation, 279–82  
 constitution, 282  
 education, 280–1, 288  
 English in, 280, 281, 289  
 identity, 289  
 language policy, 279–82  
 languages spoken, 279, 281  
 levelling, 126–7
- Sudan African Closed Districts National Union, 280
- Suleiman, Y., 31, 69, 109–10, 233, 237, 244, 271–2, 273, 274, 276  
 cultural background, 338–9
- Sunnis, 107, 111, 112
- Swahili/English code-switching, 40, 68–9
- Sweden, 187
- Sydney, Australia, 220
- Sykes-Picot agreement (1916), 240, 262
- symbolic use of language, 216–20, 233, 299
- Syria, 109, 263, 293–4  
 Christianity in, 112  
 dialects, 21–2, 117  
 education, 263, 265, 268, 269, 297  
 French colonisation, 262–4, 265  
 language ideology, 232  
 language policy, 231, 263–4  
 languages used, 243, 245, 293–4, 297

- Syria (*cont.*)  
 presidential interview, 293–4, 297  
 urbanisation, 117
- Syro-Lebanese dialects, 21–2
- system morphemes, 39–40, 41, 45–60  
 in MSA/ECA switching 46–60, 88
- TA (Tunisian Arabic), 335
- Tabamrant, F., 218
- talk shows, 192–210, 212–16, 220
- Tamazight, 240, 252, 253, 259, 260, 334
- Tamil, 229  
 /English code-switching, 37
- Tannen, D., 162
- Tashelhit community, Morocco, 217–18
- TCA (Tunisian Colloquial Arabic), 22–7  
 /French code-switching, 37–8  
 gender, 218–19  
 /MSA switching, 44, 54–5, 60, 88
- teaching, 14, 16; *see also* education
- terms of address, 173–9
- The Plug In company, 141
- theoretical linguists, 4
- third wave approach to language change,  
 103–4
- Thomason, S. G., 229, 235, 259–60
- Thonga community, South Africa, 216
- Thorne, B. and N. Henley, 161
- Tifinagh script, 282
- Tigrizi, N., 252
- titles, 174, 177–8
- Tok Pisin/English code-switching, 35
- Tomiche, N., 116
- Toqueville, Alexis de, 247
- Trabelsi, C., 188
- tradition, 166
- transaction, as universal social arena, 67
- translanguaging, 88–90, 92, 314
- triadic nations, 298
- tribes, 110, 128–9, 130
- Tripoli, Libya, 119–20
- Trudgill, P., 99, 101, 114, 118, 187
- Tunisia, 260  
 code-switching in, 91  
 diglossic switching in, 44  
 education, 261, 266–7, 269  
 English, 302  
 French colonisation, 260–1, 265  
 gender, 189  
 independence, 260–1  
 language variation, 188, 189  
 languages used, 243  
 levelling, 126  
 political conflict, 334  
 veiling, 166  
 western female residents, 218–19
- Tunisian Arabic (TA), 335
- Tunisian Colloquial Arabic (TCA) *see* TCA
- Turkish, 92
- turn-taking, 204, 212
- Tutankhamen, 272
- two constraints theory, 34–6
- two grammatical systems, 88–9
- UAE (United Arab Emirates), 165, 242,  
 290
- UK *see* Britain
- UNESCO, 280, 298
- uniform structure principle, 51
- United Arab Emirates (UAE), 242, 290
- universal grammar, 33
- universal social arenas, 67
- universalisation, 256
- unmarked choice maxim, 72
- urban dialects, 20
- urbanisation, 117–22, 129, 142, 304  
 diversity, 165  
 gender, 190, 192  
 Morocco, 257, 319–20
- USA, 123, 178, 236, 330, 341
- Use of Vernacular Languages in Education,  
 The* (UNESCO), 280
- variables, sociolinguistic, 98, 99
- variationist research, 311–12
- veiling, 166–8
- verbs  
 dialectal varieties, 25–7  
 political speech, 76, 80
- vernacular Arabic, 17
- vernacular variants, 123, 313
- Versteegh, K., 21–2, 118, 125–7, 128
- virtuosity maxim, 72
- vowel raising, 189
- Wales, 186
- Walters, K., 15, 98, 124, 188–9, 218–19, 234,  
 300, 302  
 ‘Gender, identity, and the political  
 economy of language’, 218

- wars, 108–9, 129, 239, 293, 334  
 we/they dichotomy, 62, 64, 84  
 ‘Weekly Politics’ (*al-Siyāsah al-Uṣbū‘īyah*)  
     (newspaper), 273  
 Weinreich, U., 61  
 Wernberg-Moller, A., 63–4  
 west, the, 340  
 West Bank, 108–9, 286  
     Christianity in, 112  
 western hegemony, 337, 340–2  
 Western Sahara, 243  
 Woidich, M., 118  
 Wolfram, W., 343  
 women, 119, 158  
     addressing, 3  
     affrication, 121  
     in Arab World, 163–8  
     honour and modesty, 167–8, 176–7, 184  
     loss of names, 177–8  
     magic, 178–9  
     in Morocco, 164  
     narrators, 180–5  
     palatalisation, 123, 191  
     poetry, 180–4  
     songs, 180–4  
     speakers, 200  
     as symbols, 219  
     veiling, 166–8  
     *see also* gender  
 ‘Women talk’ (*kala:m nama:ṣim*) (talk show),  
     193, 198  
 Woolard, K. A., 72  
 Wright, S., 231, 234, 299, 300, 302, 304–5  
  
*Yahduth fī Miṣr* (TV show), 147–9  
 Yemen  
     dialects, 22  
     economy, 165  
     education, 297  
     languages used, 243, 293, 295–7  
     presidential interview, 293, 295–7  
 Yiddish, 284  
 Yokwe, E. M., 279, 281  
 youth movements, 142  
 YouTube, 138–40, 143  
 Yūsuf, N., 272  
  
 Zaghlūl, S., 271–2, 273  
 Ziamari, K., 42  
 Zulu language, 216