

The “White Dialect” of young Arabic speakers from Qassim (Saudi Arabia)

Published by
LOT phone: +31 20 525 2461
Binnengasthuisstraat 9
1012 ZA Amsterdam e-mail: lot@uva.nl
The Netherlands http://www.lotschool.nl

Cover illustration is a wooden door at *Souq Al-msukaf*, a traditional market in Unaizah city, Qassim region. *Souq Al-msukaf* is one of the locations where some of the old Qassimi Arabic speakers were interviewed for this dissertation. The photo was taken by Bushra Alkhamees.

ISBN: 978-94-6093-424-7
DOI: <https://dx.medra.org/10.48273/LOT0639>
NUR: 616

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Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van
de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van rector magnificus prof.dr.ir. H. Bijl,
volgens besluit van het college voor promoties
te verdedigen op woensdag 8 maart 2023
klokke 13:45 uur

door

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geboren te Al Mithnab, Saudi Arabia
in 1987

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TO MY MOTHER
MARYAM SULIMAN AL-SHAMSAN

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List of Abbreviations

Glosses

1	First person
2	Second person
3	Third person
CONJ	Conjunction
DEM	Demonstrative
DET	Determiner
DO	Direct Object
F	Feminine
FUT	Future marker
IMP	Imperative
M	Masculine
NEG	Negation
OBJ	Object
PRE	Preposition
PL	Plural
POS	Possessive
Q	Interrogative marker
REL	Relative marker
SG	Singular

Arabic Varieties

EA	Egyptian Arabic
ESA	Educated spoken Arabic
FA	Faifi Arabic
HA	Hijazi Arabic
KA	Kuwaiti Arabic
QA	Qassimi Arabic
RA	Riyadh Arabic
SA	Standard Arabic
WD	White Dialect

Acknowledgments

This dissertation would never have been accomplished without the support of my two supervisors. I am deeply indebted to my promotor Maarten Kossmann for all his patience, guidance, feedback and constant support. I am also deeply grateful for my co-promotor Dick Smakman for all his support and for providing me the opportunity to peruse a PhD at Leiden University.

Without the help of Katja Lubina and Jurgen Lingen, two great LUCL members, I would not have been able to complete my PhD. For me, they went above and beyond what was required. I cannot thank you enough for all of your help. I would also like to thank to my fellow PhD candidates and colleagues at the LUCL: Zohreh Shiamizadeh, Yunus Sulistyono, Han Hu, Chams Bernard, Kate Bellamy, and Hanna Fricke, Dadak Ndokobai, MY Priscilla Lam, Charlie Xu, Turan Hanci, Sarah Von Grebmer Zu Wolfsturn, Xinyi Wen, Jenneke van der Wal, with whom I share many fond memories. Special thanks go to Brenda Assendelft for helping me with the Dutch translation of my thesis summary. Outside the LUCL, I owe a debt of gratitude to Yra van Dijk for introducing me to the Dutch culture, to Yung Li, Gerald and Nazinin for their friendship and support, and to Menno Pronker, Hermen Visser, Ron de Jong, and Kick Moors for their superb courses and personal coaching on self-improvement.

Special thanks go to my parents for all their endless support. I am also thankful to my beautiful sisters: Hanan and Kholood, and for my five supportive brothers: Saleh, Ibrahim, Omar, Moath, and Osamah. A special thank you goes to my nieces: Saja, Ghena, Shatha, and Shahad, and to my lovely mother-in-law Modhy. I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my husband Suliman, thank you for your love, thank you for your encouragements, thank you for being by my side in my worst days. Naya, my sweet baby girl, you have made my life so much better.

I would like to thank my friends in Saudi Arabia who provided me with their support when I needed it: Ibtihaj Al-Kharraz, Norah Hamad, Reham Al-Mutairy, Amani Alkhamees, Dr. Talal Al- Shammari, Munif Al- Shammari, Muhammed Al-Mashooq. Thank you all for everything. Special thanks go to my friend Ahmad Bamahfwz for helping me with both Hijazi Arabic and Egyptian Arabic.

Lastly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Saudi Ministry of Education and for Qassim University for financially sponsoring my PhD journey at Leiden University. A special thank you goes to all my research participants who requested to keep their names anonymous.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Overview

This thesis is about speech habits by young people from the Qassim region in central Saudi Arabia. It focuses on the way they speak when addressing people who are not from their home region. This way of speaking is referred to by its users as *al-lahdžah al-beið'a:* in the Qassimi dialect of Arabic, or *al-lahdžah al-baid'a:?* in Standard Arabic, both meaning “White Dialect”. While this term is used more generally in Saudi Arabia, it may not always refer to the same type of entity (see section 7.2.2 for more discussion). In this thesis, the term “White Dialect” (WD) is used exclusively in the way it is used by the young Qassimi speakers that participated in this research.

The WD is not a dialect in the common linguistic sense, with relatively stable forms and a clear grounding in one or another group. It is defined by its intended audience, people who are not Qassimi Arabic speakers. According to the users themselves, its main function is to enhance comprehension by the listener, and to make the Qassimi background of the speaker less obvious (chapter 7). The term White Dialect is retained here, because it is the term used by the speakers themselves, and thus implies a certain awareness of it as a variety different from other varieties.

In order to study the WD, a corpus was established consisting of, in total, forty spoken social media posts addressing a non-Qassimi audience. This was considered a typical situation for the use of the WD by the participants themselves. These media posts were submitted to a linguistic analysis in order to establish their main linguistic characteristics (chapters 5, 6, and 8.3). In a sense, therefore, the WD described in this thesis is the WD of social media posts. For practical reasons (see 5.1.1), it was impossible to make recordings of face-to-face conversations with people from outside Qassim, so it is impossible to say if language use would be the same

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there as in the social media posts. From my own experience as a user of the Qassimi WD I would assume that the differences are not extremely large.

As the WD is one among several different codes used by young Qassimi Arabic speakers, it was deemed necessary also to take a look at their in-group code, used when speaking to intimate friends or family members from Qassim. For this purpose, paired recordings were made involving the same participants as those who produced the social media posts (chapter 4.2). Moreover, I also did paired interviews with older Qassimi speakers to provide further background to the younger people’s speech habits (chapter 4.1).

The analysis of the WD speech in the social media posts shows that it is characterised by large-scale intra- and inter-speaker variation (chapter 6). Instead of considering it a variety on its own, it is better to look at it as a strategy involving different strategic choices between different linguistic elements from the many different varieties available to the young Qassimi speakers: Qassimi Arabic (which is mostly suppressed, but not entirely so, see chapter 5), the Arabic of the capital Riyadh, and Standard Arabic, the official language of the country. Moreover, WD may also make use of materials from other Arabic varieties and English (chapters 6 and 8).

In the following, some basic notions of the language situation in Qassim and in Saudi Arabia will be provided. This will be followed by an introduction to the methods used in this thesis, and a thesis outline.

1.2 Qassimi Arabic

Qassimi Arabic (QA) is spoken mainly in Qassim Province, which is located in the Najd region in central Saudi Arabia. It is a sedentary dialect, as it is spoken only by the sedentary populations of Qassim Province known as *Hadhari* (Ingham, 1994). Al-Rojaie (2020b) notes that there is no statistical data on the total number of QA speakers, but estimates the number of speakers to lie between 500,000 and 600,000. This estimate is based on information provided by the Saudi Central Department of Statistics and Information (2010), which gives the population of the Qassim region as approximately 1 million, while taking into account that more than half of the

population of Qassim are sedentary people who, Al-Rojaie assumes, would mostly speak QA.

Al-Jumaah (2017) points out that QA is spoken mainly by the sedentary tribes of urban Qassim cities and small villages. He highlights four major cities where QA is spoken intensively—Buraydah, Unayzah, Arras, and Albukayriah—as well as other smaller towns such as Almithnab, Albadaya, Alkhabra, Riyadh Alkhabra, and Ashimasiyah. It is important to mention that Al-Jumaah (2016a) does not include in this classification the Qassim cities of Aljawa and Alasyah and the towns in the northeast area of Qassim. The reason for this is his finding that the speech of the inhabitants of these areas manifests certain features that are not found in the other places in Qassim. There are many Bedouin tribes living in the Qassim region who speak their own tribal dialects even though they live side-by-side with the sedentary inhabitants of the Qassim region in the same cities (Al-Jumaah, 2016a; Al-Ubudi, 1979). QA, as noted by Al-Rojaie (2020b), is also spoken outside Qassim Province in major Saudi cities such as Riyadh, Medina, Mecca, and Dammam by Qassimi people who migrated there.

Al-Rojaie (2020b) speculates that QA, in its current form, is probably a koine that resulted from contact between the different dialects of the sedentary tribes who settled in the Qassim region in the 13th–17th century, such as the Tay and the Tamim. Al-Rojaie also mentions that the modern Arabic dialect spoken in the Bedouin settlements in Qassim by tribes such as the Harb, Mutair, Rashidi, and Utaibah has not directly affected QA, as the speakers of these tribal dialects settled in the Qassim region in the early part of the 20th century, that is, “after QA evolved into its current form” (2020b, 12).

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Figure 1.1. Map of Saudi Arabia showing Qassim Province shaded in red¹.



1.3 The sociolinguistic situation in Qassim

The sociolinguistic situation in Saudi Arabia, as in most Arabic speaking countries, is very complex, characterised by diglossia and dialectal diversity. According to Ingham (2006), many languages besides Arabic are spoken in Saudi Arabia. In particular, non-Arabic-speaking immigrants form distinct linguistic communities; this situation is particularly widespread in the Hijaz region, which is the area with the largest immigrant population in the country. Standard Arabic (SA) is the official language of Saudi Arabia, but it is not the form of Arabic used in everyday spoken conversation.

¹ Adapted from: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Al_Qasim_in_Saudi_Arabia.svg. This image is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.

Instead, most Saudis use their tribal or regional dialects in daily conversations with friends and family. As in most Arabic-speaking countries, SA is used in religious sermons such as during the Friday prayers, and is the language used in formal situations and in written contexts such as textbooks, newspapers, and fiction (Bassiuney, 2006; Van Mol, 2003; Haeri, 2003). Even though SA is not used by young QA speakers in everyday conversations or in informal situations, it is partly present through code-mixing and quoting within their speech. Young QA speakers are exposed to SA from an early age through television, through religious sermons every Friday, in school, and in the media.

Native speakers of QA use this variety in their everyday, informal conversations. However, Riyadh Arabic (RA), one of the Najdi Arabic dialects spoken in the capital Riyadh, is sometimes used, either through code-mixing or within WD speech (as reported by some young QA speakers in the pilot study). RA is a dialect that is considered easy to switch to for almost all young QA speakers, as RA and QA are both Najdi dialects and share many features. Not all young QA speakers have the same level of proficiency in RA; however, the majority of them seem to speak it with a moderate to high level of proficiency. The level of proficiency depends on multiple factors, such as speakers' exposure to RA, whether they have relatives or friends in Riyadh city, or whether they have ever lived in Riyadh. Nowadays, Saudis are also exposed to RA through social media, where it is used extensively by influencers. In addition, some governmental announcements and advertisements from large businesses are composed in RA. Al-Fallu (2020) reports that governmental announcements that are directed to Saudi citizens are composed in a shared colloquial Arabic that all Saudis can understand, while announcements that are directed to all people living in Saudi Arabia (i.e. including residents from other Arabic-speaking countries) are in SA. Therefore, considering the linguistic features shared between QA and RA, along with the intensive daily exposure to RA through social media, advertisements, and some governmental announcements, young QA speakers may be fluent in RA even without having been in direct contact with speakers of this variety.

Young QA speakers are also exposed to other Arabic dialects from within and outside Saudi Arabia. Different tribal dialects are spoken in the Qassim region,

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and their speakers are in contact with QA speakers on an almost daily basis. Sedentary inhabitants of Qassim, who speak QA, and members of Bedouin tribes, who speak their own dialects, live, study and work side-by-side in the same cities. Within the Qassim region, QA speakers are also in contact with the varieties spoken by people from other Arabic-speaking countries who come to work in Saudi Arabia. These include Yemeni Arabic, Egyptian Arabic, Levantine Arabic, Sudanese Arabic and many other varieties. For some QA speakers such contact occurs on a daily basis, as the speakers of these other varieties work in a wide range of professions, including as doctors and university professors. Moreover, the speakers of these varieties typically migrate to Saudi Arabia along with their families, and their children integrate with Qassimi children in schools. Through the media, QA speakers are exposed to other Saudi dialects such as Hijazi Arabic (HA). In the past, exposure was limited to occasions when QA speakers travelled to the Hijaz region to visit the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina; however, nowadays, HA is used on social media by Hijazi influencers and in television programmes. Likewise, QA speakers are exposed to other varieties of Gulf Arabic, such as Kuwaiti Arabic (KA), via social media and television. Besides other varieties of Arabic, QA speakers are exposed to other languages; in particular, they are exposed to English, which has gone from being just the language of Western cinema and television to being the main language of university education in many subjects such as medicine, computer science, mathematics, and engineering. Al-Seghayer (2014) states that English nowadays enjoys a prominent status in Saudi Arabia, as it is the only foreign language taught and used in public and private schools, universities, and in many industrial and governmental institutions. The linguistic situation found in higher education institutions, such as Qassim University, is quite complex, usually involving a mix of Arabic and English. In a typical university classroom of applied sciences or medicine, the main language of teaching is English even though all the students are Saudi and native Arabic speakers. In particular, written materials, assignments and examinations are all in English. However, group discussions within the classroom are mostly in colloquial Arabic. Presentations are prepared in English, but mostly delivered in a mix of Arabic and English. As for the language of administration in Saudi universities, this is always SA. Lastly, it is

important to note that the students in Qassim universities are not all QA speakers: speakers of HA and Bedouin dialects are also enrolled in the same classes. Therefore, in a typical university classroom, the linguistic situation encompasses both English and a multitude of Arabic varieties.

1.4 Linguistic contact in Saudi Arabia

There is no dialect labelled “Saudi Arabic”. That is to say, Saudi Arabia does not have a national dialect; instead, every region or ethnicity speaks their own dialect. Even though SA is the official language in the country, it is restricted to certain formal domains. Even in the capital Riyadh where RA is the main dialect, other varieties such as QA, Bedouindialects, and southern dialects are widely spoken. Before the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was established, tribalism was the predominant form of community identity and political allegiance, especially among Bedouins (Cole, 2003; Maisel, 2014). Following the establishment of Saudi Arabia, sedentary tribes shifted their identity from the tribe to the region that they lived in, and their political affiliation shifted from the chief of the tribe to the state, namely the locus of Saudi political power (Al-Rojaie, 2020a). As a result, sedentary dialects in Saudi Arabia have become regional dialects.

Scholars have classified the dialects of Saudi Arabia according to two different sets of criteria: either a regional classification based on geographical location, or an ethnic classification based on the ethnicity of speakers. When using regional criteria, scholars have classified the Saudi dialects into four major groups: Najdi dialects spoken in the central areas, Eastern dialects, Hijazi dialects spoken in the western areas, and southwestern dialects (Prochazka, 1988; Palva, 2006; Versteegh, 2014). Using ethnic criteria, Saudi dialects have been categorised into two main groups: Bedouin tribal dialects and sedentary dialects. In the past, Bedouins were nomads, while sedentary people were settled in cities and villages. This distinction does no more accurately capture the current situation, as most Saudi populations have now settled in cities, towns, or villages. According to Al-Rojaie

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(2021), the term “Bedouin dialects” now relates to the Bedouin ethnicity of the speakers, and not to a nomadic lifestyle.

In a country that is rich with varieties, the contact among these varieties does not always provide mutual intelligibility. Before the rise of the internet and social media, Arabic speakers came into contact with each other’s varieties directly, through travel or meeting face-to-face. These types of contact were limited to those individuals who had such opportunities to meet speakers of other varieties, and even then, it was limited to the few Arabic dialects spoken by expats coming to Saudi for work, such as Egyptian Arabic. Arabic speakers could also be exposed to different varieties via television and radio. Following the spread of the internet, contact with other Arabic varieties appears to be unlimited and easily accessible. The dynamics of contact on social media platforms seem to be different from those of face-to-face contact; in particular, all spoken Arabic varieties can be connected on a single platform.

SA does not seem to be the preferred variety used online by the younger generation. Therefore, it is interesting to consider which variety is most used by Saudis on social media. Unfortunately, there is little scholarship investigating the contact between different Arabic varieties spoken on social media platforms. However, there are a few studies that investigate contact among Saudi dialects in general, such as Al-Essa (2009), which examines contact between two varieties of Arabic spoken in Saudi Arabia: the Najdi dialects and HA. Al-Essa investigated the linguistic change of the Najdi speakers who migrated to Jeddah² city with respect to the affrication of two sounds found in two Najdi dialects (QA and Hail Arabic), namely *k* > *ts* and *g* > *dz*. Al-Essa’s study showed that the Najdi immigrants in Hijaz are giving up the use of these two sounds.

In general, scholars who investigate linguistic change in varieties of Arabic spoken in Saudi Arabia tend to target the permanent changes in speakers’ native dialects, and only a few have focused on the temporary adjustments and changes that speakers make when they are put in a situation of contact with other Arabic varieties.

² Jeddah is one of the major (port) cities in the Hijaz, the western region of Saudi Arabia.

According to the responses of participants in Al-Rojaie's study (2020a), RA is considered by some Saudi nationals to symbolize the closest variety to the Saudi identity; these participants also reported that they use RA occasionally when they want to be understood by other Saudis. However, this is not the case for all Saudis. For example, Alfaifi (2020) mentions that Faifi Arabic³ speakers have a very low level of proficiency in RA compared to SA, which they learn in school and which they often use in their diglossic code-mixing.

The QA speakers in the current research reported that they do not use RA or QA when they speak to non-QA speakers; rather, they switch to what they call the WD. However, both QA and RA are Najdi dialects, and mutual intelligibility has never been a major issue between the two varieties. Therefore, the WD might be used for other reasons beyond mutual intelligibility.

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 The Pilot

In order to gain some preliminary insight in what is considered the White Dialects by the relevant speakers, and its relation to QA, a pilot study was conducted in order to design the methodology of the main investigation. The pilot study comprised interviews with five young female QA speakers and five young male QA speakers, all of whom were university students. Their responses were the point of departure for designing the methods used in this investigation. The main objectives of the pilot study were to get an idea where and when the WD is used, in order to find out how to collect WD data. In addition, the pilot study aimed to investigate the speakers' ideology of the WD. The data were collected via phone calls, of which audio recordings were made.

The participants reported that the main trigger for using the WD is the audience, as they mainly use it when they talk to non-QA speakers. They also added

³ Faifi Arabic is spoken by the Faifi tribe, who live in the southern region in Saudi Arabia.

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that they use the WD in situations where QA is too informal and Standard Arabic (SA) is too formal. When asked to describe the WD, participants provided a range of different answers; these answers revealed that speakers do not all share the same ideology about the WD, but they are, to some extent, on the same page regarding how it is formed. They reported that when using the WD, they attempt to sound less Qassimi and more like a general Arabic speaker. The participants also expressed that the linguistic features of QA that they mentioned might be associated with negative stereotypes of Qassimi people held by non-Qassimis. Two such stereotypices were often reported: the conservative religious character who is not welcoming to outsiders, and the arrogant rich Qassimi man who thinks that his ethnicity is the elite and the most prestigious in the country.

1.5.2 Research set-up

The data in this thesis were collected from two generations of speakers (referred to in this investigation as the “old” and the “young” QA speakers). The method of data collection for the older generation was based on the Friend-of-a-Friend Approach (Smakman 2018: 230) as used in many previous sociolinguistic studies: data were collected while the speakers were talking naturally to their friends and relatives about their childhood memories and their old traditions, and telling stories from their past.

As for the younger generation, the data were collected in three different stages. Even though the young QA speakers reported in the pilot study that audience is the main trigger for using the WD, it is possible that there are other factors that trigger the use of the WD by the young QA speakers. As a result, the methodology in this thesis is inspired by three different sociolinguistic approaches, in order to investigate the WD from different perspectives. The first approach is Labov’s Attention to Speech approach (1966), which is reflected in the first stage of data collection. The aim of the first stage was to elicit QA speech as used with members of the QA speech community, and also to investigate the effect of topic, gender, and the type of education a speaker had received as possible triggers for the use of the WD by young QA speakers. The second approach is Bell’s Audience Design (1984),

reflected in the second stage of data collection. The aim of this stage was to elicit WD speech while also investigating whether the type of audience affects the WD used by the young QA speakers. The third approach is Schilling-Estes' (2002) Speaker Design approach. This approach is reflected in the process of choosing participants: half of the young QA speakers in this study were individuals who had received a religious education, and the other half had received a normal general education. This is to explore the effect of religious education on participants' language use, as a stereotype relating to this theme emerged from the pilot study with young QA speakers (Section 1.5.2). All three approaches and the process of data collection are discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

1.6 Outline of the thesis

In this introductory chapter, I provide an overview of the thesis and summary of the pilot study conducted for this investigation (Section 1.1). This chapter also provides a description of the linguistic situation in Saudi Arabia and a brief description of the ethnic composition of the QA speaker community.

In Chapter 2, I provide a detailed description of the methodology used in this thesis and a full description of the participants and how they were selected for this research. Chapter 3 contains a general overview of QA. It also provides a brief description of the linguistic variables investigated in this study.

The data are analysed in four chapters (Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7). Chapter 4 reports a quantitative analysis of the QA speech of the young speakers when they speak to other QA speakers. It also highlights some of the differences between the QA used by the old and the young generations. Following that, Chapter 5 provides a quantitative analysis of the WD used by the young QA speakers with respect to the QA linguistic variants chosen for this investigation. Chapter 6 discusses the main features of the WD by using a code-mixing model.

Chapter 7 presents a thematic analysis of the open interview conducted with the young QA speakers, which taps into metadiscourse about WD. Chapter 7 also

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highlights the different perceptions of the WD held by its speakers, people in the media, and linguists.

Chapter 8 offers a discussion of the WD as a sociolinguistic phenomenon. This chapter provides a more fitting description for the WD, as the label “dialect” does not seem to fit this way of speaking. Moreover, Chapter 8 highlights the strategies used by speakers to formulate their WD speech. Lastly, Chapter 9 concludes the thesis by summarising the results and provides suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodology used in this research. The data were gathered from two generations of speakers: the old Qassimi Arabic (QA) speakers and the young QA speakers. Section (2.1) describes the data collection with members of the older generation. Section (2.2) describes the data collection with members of the older generation and provides an overview of the approaches adopted in this study for data collection.

The data were collected during a period of three months, specifically from September until November 2018. The data collection process was not the same for the two generations. The older speakers were recorded in a single session per speaker, while data were collected from the younger speakers in multiple stages. The data collected from the older generation are required only to provide a comparison between the QA of the older and the younger speakers. On the other hand, the data collection from the younger speakers serves multiple purposes: to obtain samples both of in-group QA speech and of what they call White Dialect (WD), the way of speaking they choose when talking to outsiders.

The data collected from the old generation targeted the speech of old QA speakers among each other in open interviews. As for the young generation, their data was collected in three stages during different sessions. Stage 1 is a pairs interview. This stage targeted the speech of young QA speakers when talking to other QA speakers. Stage 2 is the social media posts. The young generation participants were asked to provide audio or video posts that they posted or could post publicly on social media. Each participant was asked to provide 2 posts, one for a Saudi audience, and another for a general Arab audience. This second stage targeted the WD used by

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young QA speakers. Stage 3 is an open interview with all the young participants. The open interview was conducted to provide two types of data, the main linguistic variants to be investigated in this study, and speakers’ perception of what they call the WD. The data in Stage 1 and Stage 2 were analysed quantitatively, while in stage 3 the open interview was analysed qualitatively by using the thematic analysis approach developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) in which main themes are found from the participants’ answers in the open interview (Chapter 7). The data collected in this investigation can be seen in Table 2.1. A summary of the process of data collection in this investigation with regards to the participants and the length of the recording sessions can be seen in Table 2.2.

Table 2.1: The investigated data discussed in this chapter/ dissertation.

research data		methodology type	discussion in section	results in chapter
type	label			
linguistic analysis	old generation in-group speech	open interview	2.1.2	4
	young generation in-group speech	pair interview	2.2.3 stage1	4 & 5
	out-group speech (WD)	social media posts (audio or video)	2.2.3 stage2	5 & 6 & 8
thematic analysis	young QA speakers’ views of the WD	open interview	2.2.3 stage3	7
selection of QA variables	QA variables	open interview	2.2.3 stage3	overview 3 results 4&5

Table 2.2: An overview of the research participants and the recording sessions.

data related information	generation	
	older QA speakers	younger QA speakers
age range	60-85 years old	19-25 years old
number of participants	10 men	10 men
	10 women	10 women
number of data collection sessions	1 per participant	3 per participant
length of sessions	30-45 minutes	stage 1: 30-45 minutes stage 2: 8-15 minutes stage 3: unlimited

Two male research assistants were recruited to help in the data collection process with old and young male speakers, due to the strict Saudi norms regarding segregation between the two genders. Meanwhile, I collected the data from the female speakers myself without the need for any assistants.

2.1. PART 1: Old generation speech

2.1.1 Participants

The old generation sample consists of 10 men and 10 women who were 60-85 years old. They were all ethnically from Qassim and belonged to one of the sedentary tribes or to non-tribal families⁴. They all had Qassimi parents, and none of them had lived outside the Qassim region for a long period of time. They were chosen from different parts of society, including retired teachers, and farmers. The level of education is not a social factor that can be considered in the old generation group as it seems irrelevant. Formal education in schools was not accessible to many Qassimis 50 years ago,

⁴ No members of Qassimi Bedouin tribes were included in this study as they do not speak the same dialect as the sedentary tribes (Al-Motairi, 2015).

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especially women. thus, some of them received religious education and learned how to write and read at home, some were able to get formal school educations, while others are still illiterate.

Finding older participants of both genders for this investigation was not straightforward, due to two major challenges. First, social norms mean that it is unusual for members of the older generation to be visited by a young researcher whom they have never met, let alone one who is going to record them. I overcame this challenge by using my parents’ social network. The second challenge emerged from the segregation between men and women in Saudi society. It was difficult to collect data from the older male participants, as they did not want to engage in a conversation with a younger woman, even the daughter of a friend. I overcame this challenge by recruiting two male assistants to meet and record the older male participants on my behalf. For the purpose for anonymisation and privacy related issues, all the old participants were given codes:

OF1, OF2, OF3, OF4, OF5, OF6, OF7, OF8, OF9, OF10: are the old female speakers.
OM1, OM2, OM3, OM4, OM5, OM6, OM7, OM8, OM9, OM10: are the old male speakers.

Table 2.3: Old QA participants.

old female speakers	age	old male speakers	age
OF1	67	OM1	60
OF2	66	OM2	72
OF3	85	OM3	62
OF4	70	OM4	85
OF5	60	OM5	67
OF6	61	OM6	71
OF7	62	OM7	85
OF8	61	OM8	80
OF9	70	OM9	85
OF10	62	OM10	61

2.1.2 Data collection

The recording sessions were conducted in various locations, mostly at the participants' homes or farms. A few of them were recorded in *Souq Al-msukaf*⁵ in Unaizah city. The locations for conducting the recordings were chosen by the participants themselves.

The data from the older people was collected by means of a 30-45 minutes' recording open interviews for each participant. The environment for the recording sessions was informal: the participants were typically recorded individually over a cup of coffee. For example, with the older female speakers, I would serve Arabic coffee and dates to the participant while leaving the audio recorder on the table, and would ask her various questions about her life, her childhood, and the old Qassimi traditions. The male research assistants took on the same role with respect to the older male participants.

The old generation speech is mostly a mix of narration and dialogue. Participants tend to first talk about their life in the past and narrate old stories, and then pause temporarily for a dialogue with those around them. It is important to mention that the differences between narrative style and dialogue in the old QA speech are not the main focus for this study. Rather, the recorded speech of the older QA speakers is examined and analysed in relation to the selected linguistic variables in QA (see section 3.1).

2.2 PART 2: Young generation data

2.2.1 Participants

The young generation sample also comprised both male and female participants (10 women and 10 men) who were 19-25 years old. As with the older participants, all the

⁵ *Souq Al-msukaf* is a traditional market in Unaizah city in Qassim region. It is dedicated to the sale of traditional products and food from Qassim. It serves more than a shopping area, as people like to meet there for coffee and traditional Qassimi sweets.

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young participants were ethnically from Qassim and belonged to one of the sedentary tribes or to one of the non-tribal families. They all had Qassimi parents, and had never lived outside the Qassim region for a long period of time. They were all university students with a variety of majors. All the participants were chosen from my or my research assistants’ close personal networks, in order to maximise the potential for obtaining a sample of casual speech from the participants.

Since the type of education forms one of the social variables in the investigation of the young generation’s QA speech, five participants of each gender were speakers who had received special religious teaching before they became university students, while the other five had received a standard Saudi education. When selecting the five participants with a religious educational background, an important consideration was that they should also have the dress and personal appearance corresponding with the stereotypical image of a religious and conservative person in the Najdi culture⁶. That is to say, men should have beards and women should be dressed in long, covering clothing. The religious personality mostly corresponds with the personal appearance of a speaker, and the religious persona could have an effect on someone’s speech style (mentioned in section 1.5.2).

Finding young Qassimi participants who met the criteria was challenging for two reasons. First, a large number of Qassimi families have spent many years working outside their region, since the Qassim region did not offer sufficient job opportunities. It was thus difficult to find participants who had never lived outside the region for a long period of time. The second challenge was that all participants needed to be drawn from my or my research assistants’ close networks. In order to be sure of obtaining casual speech data within the timeframe of the fieldwork, it was essential that the data collection was conducted within the context of established, close relationships.

The process of selecting the female participants began by picking the five speakers who had received religious education (since these would be harder to find). I then asked these participants to suggest other members of the same social network

⁶ The culture of the central areas of Saudi Arabia.

whom they would like to have as their partners in the pair interviews. From these suggested interview partners, I selected the five participants who had received a normal education. This method of selecting the participants was also applied to the male group; that is, the male research assistants chose the participants from their own social networks following the same process as I applied for the female participant group. For the purpose for anonymisation and privacy related issues, all the young participants were given codes:

(FN1, FN2, FN3, FN4, FN5) are the five female participants who received normal education.

(FR1, FR2, FR3, FR4, FR5) are the five female participants who received religious education.

(MN1, MN2, MN3, MN4, MN5) are the five male participants who received normal education.

(MR1, MR2, MR3, MR4, MR5) are the five male participants who received religious education.

Table 2.4: Female participants.

participant code	age	major of study
FN1	20	special education
FN2	24	early childhood education
FN3	25	medicine
FN4	19	nursing
FN5	25	dentistry
FR1	20	business
FR2	24	computer science
FR3	23	laboratory
FR4	22	Islamic studies
FR5	20	psychology

Table 2.5: Male participants.

participant code	age	major of study
MN1	25	medicine
MN2	20	electronic engineering
MN3	24	medicine
MN4	19	Islamic studies
MN5	19	business
MR1	24	electronic engineering
MR2	24	religious studies
MR3	23	electronic engineering
MR4	22	business
MR5	20	Islamic studies

2.2.2 Approaches to data collection

This study aims to provide a linguistic description of the WD as well as a comparison between the QA and the WD used by the young speakers. To achieve that, it was necessary to obtain a sample of both QA and WD speech. Moreover, this data was also needed in order to address the other research questions, concerning when the QA speakers use the WD and why.

The data from the young QA speakers was collected in three stages: pair interviews, social media posts, and an open interview. The methodology of collecting the data in multiple stages was inspired by three different sociolinguistics approaches: Labov’s Attention to Speech approach (1966), Bell’s Audience Design approach (1984), and Schilling-Estes’ Speaker Design approach (2002). The rationale for adopting various style variation approaches in one study was that this should offer the means to fully address the various research questions posed in this study. Labov’s Attention to Speech approach focuses on an internal element in determining the switch between styles, while Bell’s Audience Design identifies an external element—the recipients—as the main cause for switching styles in speech; on the other hand,

Schilling-Estes points out that the speaker could be the cause for any stylistic variation. These three approaches are outlined in more detail below.

Even though the QA speakers in the pilot study (described in section 1.1.1) identified the audience as being the main cause for the use of the WD, I decided to look further into the factors triggering its use. For example, the WD could be a linguistic form that the QA speakers use when they are speaking in a formal context, not just when they meet an outsider. There is also a possibility that it is a form of intra-speaker variation that speakers use to demonstrate their individuality. It also could be triggered by a combination of these factors. In order to explore the range of possibilities, I decided to combine these approaches.

Labov's Attention to Speech approach

The Attention to Speech approach was designed by William Labov (1966) when he investigated linguistic variation and change in the Lower East Side in New York. According to Labov, one's speech varies based on the degree of attention to the way one talks and is mostly controlled by the formality of the context. Natural speech or casual style seems to occur in informal registers, while careful speech or standard style occurs in more formal contexts.

Labov (1972a, b) designed a sociolinguistic interview to collect natural speech. The Labovian sociolinguistic interview consisted of a conversation, a reading passage, a wordlist and a list of minimal pairs. The conversation part was designed to obtain data on patterns of both natural speech and slightly more careful speech. However, Labov reported (1966, 1984, 2001) that despite his creative methods in designing the conversation part to obtain natural speech, speakers used formal, careful speech. For that reason, Labov (2001) developed a further strategy, called the Decision Tree, as an attempt to isolate natural speech contexts from careful speech contexts. Labov stated that interviewees use careful speech in their direct responses when talking about their language or dialects, and in "soapbox" contexts (that is, contexts where a speaker is giving their opinion to a general indirect audience). As for natural speech, this is the style used mostly in narratives, in group conversations,

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when talking about children, or when the interviewee guides the dialogue. Milroy (1987) commented that Labov’s approach is more relevant for studying the effect of topic, rather than situation, as speakers may shift from careful speech to casual speech in a formal setting when they want to relate their speech to a personal or emotional experience.

Bell’s Audience Design

Bell’s study (1984) investigated news programmes on two New Zealand radio stations which were broadcasts from the same recording studio and with the same newsreaders. The first station, the National Radio, targeted an audience from a higher socioeconomic class. The other station targeted local listeners and had a broader range of audience members, including those from a lower socioeconomic class. Bell’s analysis showed that the newsreaders spoke differently based on the targeted radio audience, even though they were broadcasting on the same topics. According to Bell, this style shift concerns two attitudes: speakers either shift towards the speech style of their audience to show solidarity, or they shift away to distance themselves from the audience. In his (2001) article, Bell addressed the limitations of his Audience Model in a new study, and introduced the notion of Referee Design. Bell proposed that, with Referee Design, speakers do not shift towards the style of their direct audience; rather, they make creative use of other features from other styles that are beyond the speech styles of their direct audience.

Since the young QA speakers in the pilot study reported that they shift to the WD when they speak to someone outside their dialect, applying Bell’s approach in my investigation is essential to test if the audience is the main reason for the shift from QA towards the WD. This approach is applied in the second stage of data collection (Stage 2: social media posts).

Speaker Design approach

The Speaker Design approach (Schilling-Estes 2002) focuses on the speaker as the main cause of stylistic change. It approaches stylistic variation from a wider angle, as speakers' styles are shaped by internal factors as well as external factors such their attention to their language or their awareness of the audience. Schilling-Estes explains that the traditional models of and approaches to style-shifting fail to deal with the modern views of social interaction. She also adds that sociolinguists should investigate the speakers and their motives as the reason for style switching. According to Schilling-Estes, speakers shape their styles "proactively" in order to show their individual identities or to achieve a certain communicative function (Schilling-Estes, 2004).

In the pilot study, the speakers described two stereotypical characters: the conservative religious character who is not very welcoming of outsiders, and the arrogant Qassimi who thinks that his ethnicity is the elite and the most prestigious in the country. It is possible that the use of the WD is an attempt to escape these stereotypes. Due to time and budget limitations, the Speaker Design approach will be applied here to test only the first of these stereotypical characters, i.e. the conservative religious character. In order to achieve this, five participants in each group (male and female) were chosen based on their previous special religious education. In Saudi Arabia, there are two types of public schools: standard public schools, and religious schools which teach extra Qur'anic and Islamic lessons. People who have attended the religious schools tend to be more conservative than those who have attended public schools.

2.2.3 Stages of data collection

Stage 1: The pair interview

In order to gather QA speech as it occurs in everyday life in Qassim, I designed a pair interview that enabled participants to engage in naturalistic conversation. The main

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purpose of this interview was to gain a large enough sample of the speech of QA speakers when they talk to other members of their speech community. In each gender group, the 10 participants were divided into five pairs. This step was done during the process of selecting the participants. It was important that every pair should have a strong relationship; they were therefore paired as two siblings, two cousins, or two close friends. In this stage, the participants were informed that there would be no restrictions on their answers. Participants themselves decided where we would record the session. Most sessions were recorded at my home, but a few pairs asked to have the recording conducted at their homes, to make it more comfortable for them.

In the female group, the settings for the interview were very informal. To remove any kind of formality from the situation, Arabic coffee, dates, desserts and some pastries were served during the recording sessions. This is typical of a casual gathering among young women in the Qassimi culture. The audio recorder was positioned at the edge of the table and not directly in front of the participants, in order to ensure that the participants would not pay undue attention to the fact that they were being recorded. My role in the interview was limited to asking the questions, prompting the participants to speak more, and to making sure that both the two participants in each pair spoke for an equal or similar length of time overall. It is important to mention that the participants did not know the real purpose of this interview, believing instead that I was only interested in their opinions. Of course, they were informed later about the real purpose of the study.

The pair interview involved two main types of topic, covered in a recording session of two parts: the first part consisted only of personal topics, while the second part consisted of more general topics. The second part was recorded immediately after the first part, sometimes with 5-10 minutes' break between. The purpose of this division of subjects was to investigate the role of conversation topic in style switching. The recording session for each group of topics was to take no less than 15 minutes; in most cases, it took more than 25 minutes, and many interviews exceeded 35 minutes as I did not want to interrupt the natural flow of speech. The length of time spent on each topic differed depending on the participants. The purpose was not to cover all the questions listed for discussion, but to provoke the participants to speak about the

same type of topic for a certain period of time. In one of the recording sessions, the entire time elapsed with the participants only discussing two questions from each group of topics. Tables 2.6. and 2.7. show the five pairs in each gender group.

Table 2.6: The pairs in the female pair interview.

interview pairs		relationship
participant 1	Participant 2	
FN5	FR2	sisters
FR4	FR5	sisters
FN1	FN2	sisters
FR1	FR3	cousins and close friends
FN3	FN4	sisters

Table 2.7: The pairs in the male pair interview.

interview pairs		relationship
Participant 1	participant 2	
MN3	MN4	close friends
MN1	MR2	close friends
MN2	MR3	cousins
MR4	MR5	close friends
MN5	MR1	brothers

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Table 2.8: The topics discussed in the female participants’ pair interview.

first part (personal topics)	second part (formal topics)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the characteristics that you dislike in your sister (i.e., not the counterpart in the interview)? - Do you allow your parents to interfere in your life choices? - What are your dreams? - Describe yourself ten years from now. - Do you want to have an arranged marriage, or a ‘love story’ marriage? - What type of friends do you have? - Is there a recent incident that has affected you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the characteristics that you would like to change in Saudi society? - What do you think of the male guardianship of women in Saudi Arabia? - Do you support the Saudi feminist movement on Twitter? - What do you think of the educational system in Saudi Arabia? - Being religious and conservative: is it a personal choice or a social necessity

As for the male participants, the social settings were similar to that of the female group. Arabic coffee and dates were served during the recording sessions, to signal an informal social environment. Since the male research assistants are the ones who selected the male participants, they were also the ones who decided on the five pairs of participants, based on the social connections and strength of the relationships between the participants. As with the female group, male participants were paired with close friends or relatives, and the location for each recording session was again decided by the participants themselves.

Unlike in the female group, the research assistants for the male group took a leading role in the discussion. This was done because the male participants required significant prompting to keep talking. The research assistants were advised to provoke the male participants to talk as long as possible in a naturalistic way as they would in their daily life. This meant that they had to share their own opinions and take the lead in the discussion. This is not to say that their participation took time away from that of the participants; on the contrary, their comments and opinions provoked the participants to elaborate on their own answers and thus to speak more.

The topics discussed in the male pair interview were slightly different from those discussed with the female participants, as the two genders have different interests. The topics for the two parts in the recording sessions were selected with the help of the two male assistants, as they had better insight into which topics would stimulate the male participants to talk. In most of the interviews, specifically in the first part, the participants jumped between different topics and sometimes started to narrate stories about their past and their life experiences. However, according to the research assistants, this is how men usually discuss things in an informal male Qassimi social gathering.

Table 2.9: The topics discussed in the male participants' pair interview.

first part (personal topics)	second part (formal topics)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the worst characteristics in your best friend or cousin (i.e., his counterpart in the interview)? - Describe yourself in ten years. - Have you ever had an embarrassing moment? - What was the worst stage of education in your life? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the worst type of women in Saudi society? - What do you want to change in your society? - What do you think of the male guardianship of women in Saudi Arabia? - Being religious and conservative: is it a personal choice or a social necessity?

Stage 2: Video/audio social media posts for different audiences

In the pilot study, the QA speakers reported that they use the WD when they are talking to someone outside their dialect. The term “outside” here could refer to an outsider from a group that speaks a different dialect within Saudi Arabia, or an outsider from another Arabic-speaking country. Thus, both types of audience are tested in this investigation.

I initially designed two strategies of data collection, in order to stage a social setting in which the WD would be used: direct contact, in which the QA speakers would speak directly with an outsider, and indirect contact, in which I would use social media posts where the speakers address an indirect audience. However, the implementation of the direct contact strategy was not successful: the participants expressed their discomfort and unwillingness to have a conversation with people whom they had never met before.

The indirect data collection in this investigation was inspired by that used by Allan Bell (1984) to test style variation in the speech of newsreaders on two New Zealand radio stations, as described above. Radio newsreaders are similar to social media posters in that they both talk indirectly to an audience that they have never met, but that they have a general idea about. However, the privacy settings on some social media platforms enable users to restrict certain posts to a specific audience, which means that people are sometimes able to determine who sees or hears their posts. This possibility to restrict the posts to a certain audience can be found on some social media platforms.

In this stage, the participants were asked to provide two of their audio or video posts on social media: one for a Saudi audience, and another for Arabic speakers in general. The participants were also informed that their post might be reposted on my own social media account; this was to ensure that they would feel that they would be heard or seen by an actual audience. The choice between video or audio posts was left to the participants, as I aimed to receive posts similar to what they normally upload on their social media accounts. Most of the female participants preferred audio posts

rather than video, as it is the social norm in Qassimi culture that girls do not reveal their faces in public media. The posts were not restricted to a specific social media platform. The length of each post was 8–15 minutes. Some participants who are active on social media provided posts that they had already posted on their social media accounts, while others preferred to record new ones. The posts were received via WhatsApp or email. The posts dealt with a variety of topics, such as make-up reviews, daily Snapchat posts, cooking videos, video game reviews and religious advice. Since I asked for no less than eight minutes of material for each audience, I received some of the data as separate posts. For example, one of the male participants sent two short videos and one audio post, and asked me to repost them all on my social media accounts for the Saudi audience. His posts have a total length of 10 minutes. I did not restrict the participants to providing one continuous (eight-minute) video or audio recording for each audience, as I wanted them to send the kind of material they would usually post on social media.

Textual posts on social media are not included in this investigation, as some QA sounds, such as *ts* and *dz*, do not have letter representations in the Arabic writing system. They are written using the characters for their variant sounds in the dialect that do have letter representations. That is to say, *ts* is written as *k* and *dz* is written as *g*. Thus, QA speakers might write a different form from that which they use in their speech. For example, a speaker might write the word for ‘dog’ as *kalb* but pronounce it as *tsalb*. In conclusion, the sound that the speaker intends to represent cannot always be determined from their written text. It is important to note that some QA speakers write the sound *ts* with a combination of two letters, *t* and *s* (i.e., as *تـسـ*), but it is not very common.

Stage 3: Interviews for eliciting meta-commentary

Bearing in mind Labov’s Observer Paradox (1972b), the open interview had to be the last step in the data collection process, as it revealed the main purpose of the investigation to the participants. In other words, the participants did not know that I was investigating the WD and their QA speech until the open interview was

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conducted. I decided on an oral open interview rather than a written survey, in order to be able to ask for more details that a written survey would not provide. All the open interviews were audio recorded during a face-to-face meeting over a cup of coffee. The interview comprised seven core questions. The length of the recorded interviews varies, as some participants were direct, clear and quick in their answers while others elaborated and supported their answers with many examples. The location for conducting the open interview was again up to the participants to decide. Some were recorded at my house, or a cafe, while others were recorded in the participants’ homes.

The open interview was designed to gain insight into the awareness of the phenomenon that is referred to as the White Dialect. Specifically, the interviews delved into the following four themes with four aims in mind:

- 1- To determine the main linguistic variables to be investigated. The rationale behind this is that, if the WD is a way to avoid the main features of QA, then the QA speakers will avoid those features that they are aware of in their dialect, i.e., those referred to by Labov (1972a) as “markers”.
- 2- To gain insight into the speakers’ evaluation of the WD, and thus its position in the diglossic situation of QA.
- 3- To investigate the attitudes of the young QA speakers towards the WD.
- 4- To ascertain the reasons for the use of the WD by the young QA speakers.

The core questions in the open interview were as follows:

- How do you recognise Qassimi Arabic speakers when you hear them talking in the street?
- What are the characteristics of Qassimi Arabic?
- Do you use Qassimi Arabic when you travel outside Qassim?
- Do you use the White Dialect? If so, when, and why?
- Describe the White Dialect.

All 20 participants were asked the same questions, but some participants were asked a few more questions to obtain more details depending on their answers. As for the male group, the open interviews were conducted by the male research assistants. Since the research assistants were not knowledgeable regarding the type of information that I sought to gain through the open interview, I asked the research assistants to keep their mobile phones connected and on loudspeaker mode while they were recording the interviews. This allowed me to be remotely present in case I needed to ask for more details or elaborations on certain answers.

Ethical considerations

I have got informed consent by all the participants of this investigation. They were all fully aware during the recording sessions that they were being recorded for research purposes. However, participants were not informed about the real purpose of this investigation until after I finished recording all the sessions. The rational for not revealing the real purpose of this investigation before the recording sessions was that there is a possibility that speakers' awareness of the real purpose of this investigation might affect their linguistic choices and which may reflect on the results of this investigation.

Summary

The data needed for this investigation were collected in a period of three months. The data were gathered from two generations: old QA speakers and young QA speakers. Since the old QA data were only needed to gather natural old QA speech, I recorded one session per speaker. As for the young generation, speakers were recorded in three stages. In Stage 1, I conducted an open interview to collect natural QA speech. In Stage 2, in order to get WD speech, I requested my participants to provide me with two audio and video posts, one for a Saudi audience, and another for Arabs in general. In Stage 3, I conducted an open interview determine the main linguistic variants to be

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investigated in this study and to investigate young QA speakers’ perception of the WD.

It is important to distinguish between the open interview that was conducted in the two generations. For the old generation, the interview includes simple general questions about the participants’ life and culture which aimed to trigger the participants to produce more old natural QA speech. Thus, the questions themselves, similar to those asked in the young speakers’ pairs interview, i.e., they were not relevant to the data as the main purpose of these question was to keep the natural flow of the speech for a certain period of time. On the contrary, the questions in the young generation open interview are very crucial as the answers of these questions provided the main data for the thematic analysis in Chapter 7 as well as to determine the main QA markers for this investigation.

Another important thing to note is that the QA and the WD were collected in different communication modes. The QA data was collected in a dialogical with a direct audience, while the WD was collected in a monologue with indirect audience. Moreover, QA was collected as a simultaneous and unmonitored speech while the WD was gathered as a pre-recorded prepared speech.

Chapter 3

Qassimi Arabic: selected variables and literature overview

Introduction

This chapter provides a general overview of Qassimi Arabic (QA). It consists of two parts. The first part presents the QA linguistic variants that are investigated in this study. The second part discusses some issues encountered in previous research conducted on QA.

In the following, I will follow the analysis by Ingham (1994) when it comes to the phonetic inventory of Najdi Arabic, but since there is no single system of phonetic transcription in Arabic linguistics (Mejdell, 2006), IPA symbols (International Phonetic Alphabet) will be used to represent the QA consonants. As for the vowels, I used the vowel transcriptions as also used in transcribing Modern Standard Arabic (MSA): *a, a:, i, i:, u, u:*.

3.1 PART 1: The Linguistic features studied here

QA is rich with features that distinguish it from other varieties in the Najd region. The linguistic variants investigated in this study were indicated by the young participants themselves. In the open interview, particularly the last stage of the methodology, I asked the young QA speakers one of the two following questions:

- How to know a QA speaker when you hear him/her talking in the street?
- What are the characteristics of the QA?

The decision of making the participants suggest the linguistic variants in this investigation was made after finishing the pilot study conducted for this investigation.

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In the pilot study, many participants described the WD as their attempt to avoid sounding as Qassimis. When they were asked how they achieve that, they seemed to agree that they avoid QA vocabularies and “certain sounds” that are found only in their dialect. Based on their answers, I hypothesized that the speakers try to avoid especially the linguistic features that were mentioned by the participants as typical of QA during the pilot, since these features reflect their conscious knowledge about their dialect. This means that I concentrated on those linguistic features that would be “markers” and “stereotypes” in Labov’s (1972b) model – that it, variables that speakers are aware of – while leaving out indicators – variables that are observable for a linguist, but that speakers themselves are not aware of.

The total number of features put forward across participants was ten. Six of these were put forward by all participants. This study focuses on this subset of six features. They are enumerated below.

- 1- The QA affrication of **k* as *ts* in stems⁷
- 2- The QA affrication of **k* as an alveolar affricate *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix.
- 3- The QA affrication of **q* (via *g*) as an alveolar affricate *dz*.
- 4- The QA use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* elsewhere.
- 5- The QA use of the 3SG.F suffix pronoun *-h* instead of *-ha* elsewhere
- 6- The use of a dedicated 3PL form for feminine pronominal suffixes, where one finds gender-neutral forms elsewhere.

In addition, the following features were mentioned by several participants:

- 7- Extended duration of long vowels. (Mentioned by 5 participants)
- 8- Negation in nominal sentences *ma:nib-*. (Mentioned by 6 participants).
- 9- Nouns with a suffixal marking *-in*. (Mentioned by 3 participants)
- 10- The use of the prepositional phrase *buh* over its variant *fi:h* ‘in it’.
(Mentioned by 4 participants).

⁷ By “stem” I mean here a lexical item without its affixes. The notation with an asterisk refers to the way the sound is pronounced in Standard Arabic cognates to QA forms.

In the following, I provide a brief summary for each one of the first six QA linguistic variants. Each variant is provided with three examples: the QA example and its counterpart in Riyadh Arabic (RA) and Standard Arabic (SA) to show how the QA linguistic variants differ from or resemble their equivalents in the two other varieties. The reason for providing counterparts from RA and SA only is because these varieties are the only two varieties that all the Qassimi are constantly exposed to. SA is the formal Arabic used in school and on media, while RA is the main variety spoken in the capital Riyadh.

3.1.1 The affrication of *k* as *ts* in stems

The ancient Arabic phoneme **k* corresponds to two variants in QA: *k* and *ts*. The affrication of **k* as *ts* is a linguistic phenomenon traditionally known as *kaskasah* (Al-Aruk, 2015). It occurs mainly in two sedentary Najdi Arabic varieties: QA and Ha'il Arabic and in few other surrounding regions. It also occurs in some Bedouin dialects (Johnstone, 1963). This affrication occurs in QA in two positions: in the stem and in suffixes. An example where **k* is realized as *ts* in a stem is the verb **jakðib* ‘he lies’ which is realised as *jatsðib*. There is important variation between *k* and *ts* realizations of **k*. According to Alrasheed (2015, 30), the relationship between the two variants *ts* and *k* in the stem is “asymmetric”, i.e., when *ts* is substituted with *k*, the outcome is always acceptable to the QA speech community, whereas there are also words that always have *k* and where the pronunciation *ts* is definitely unacceptable. Alrasheed concluded that, synchronically speaking, neither the vowel quantity in a given word, nor the positing of the variant in a given syllable have an effect on the acceptability or non-acceptability of affrication. There were no doubt originally phonetic conditions to the affrication in stems, esp. that affrication appears when **k* it is proceeded or followed by *a(:)* or *i(i:)* (Prochazka, 1988, Ingham, 1994). However, as noted by Alrasheed (2015), this is no more the case synchronically. For instance, affrication is unacceptable in the words *kabt* ‘repression’ and *kita:b* ‘book’. Moreover, according to Ingham’s analysis, the affrication in the stem does not apply in cases where two words from the same origin have different meanings, such as *ka:n* ‘it was’ and *tsa:n*

‘if’. Al-Aruk (2015) posits that the reason for the limitation of *ts* in QA stems is that the variant *k* did not exist in old QA and that originally every **k* was affricated in the dialect. Cases where *k* occurs in the modern dialect would be due to borrowing from other languages and (Arabic) dialects, including SA. This would be the case of words like *kita:b* ‘book’ and *ku:rih* ‘ball’. Al-Aruk’s idea is also supported by Alrasheedi’s observation that the affrication of **k* as *ts* never occurs in loan words (2015, 32). However, dialect borrowing does not seem to be the only condition that prevents the affrication of *k* as *ts* as it is highly unlikely that *ka:n* ‘to be’ is a borrowing in QA.

It is important to note that recent investigations showed that younger speakers are gradually shifting towards the use of *k* over its variant *ts* in stems, as opposed to the 2SG.F suffix (e.g., Al-Rojaie, 2013; Al-Essa; 2009; Al-Azraqi, 2007).

3.1.2 The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix

In the 2SG.F, *ts* is found in the direct object suffix, as in *misakt-its* ‘I hold you (F)’, and in the possessive pronoun as in *beit-its* ‘your (F) home’. The two pronouns have the form *-ki* in SA. The 2SG.F suffix *-its* is in opposition with the 2SG.M suffix *-ik* (Al-Rojaie, 2013). The affrication in the suffix is therefore important in morphology as it marks the gender of the addressee. Different from the situation in stems, there is traditionally no variation in QA in the affrication in the 2SG.F suffix as this would lead to confusion with the 2SG.M form. It is important to note that in RA, *-ik* is used both with 2SG.M and 2SG.F reference, while it is only used for 2SG.M reference in QA.

Second person singular direct object feminine pronoun ‘I talked to you’

	2SG.F	2SG.M
QA	<i>kallamt-its</i> ~ <i>tsa:lamt-its</i>	<i>kallamt-ik</i> ~ <i>tsa:lamt-ik</i>
RA	<i>kallamt-ik</i>	<i>kallamt-ik</i>
SA	<i>kallamtu-ki</i>	<i>kallamtu-ka</i>

Second person singular possessive pronoun: ‘your book’

	2SG.F	2SG.M
QA	<i>kita:b-its</i>	<i>kita:b-ik</i>
RA	<i>kita:b-ik</i>	<i>kita:b-ik</i>
SA	<i>kita:bu-ki</i>	<i>kita:bu-ka</i>

3.1.3 The affrication of *q* or *g* as *dz*

The ancient Arabic **q* is realized as *q*, *g*, *?d* depending on the Arabic dialect. In QA, there is variation between *g* and an affricated variant *dz*. In addition, there are also words which have *q*. According to Alrasheedi (2015), there are no minimal pairs opposing *dz*, *g* and *q* (Alrasheedi, 2015).

According to Holes (1995), words with *q* in Najdi Arabic (including QA) are borrowed from SA and the sound has never been part of the core phonemic inventory of these varieties. He provides the example *?gra al-qur?ra:n* ‘Read the Quran!’ to demonstrate how the two variants *q* and *g* may occur in the same sentence. Words with *q* mostly denote religious concepts or those that are part of modern culture and thus new to the dialect, e.g., *qa:wam* ‘he struggled’ and *θaqa:fah* ‘culture’.

It is important to mention that *g* and *q* are found in all dialects of the Najd (Ingham, 1994). As for the variant *dz*, besides QA it is also found in the Ha’il dialect. According to Alrasheedi (2015), the affrication to *dz* is not determined by its position in a syllable. Young QA speakers only have a restricted number of common words where they use *dz*, such as *s'idz* ‘real’ or *t'iri:dz* ‘road’ (Al-Essa, 2009; Al-Rojaie, 2013).

3.1.4 The use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* as opposed to *-ni* elsewhere

The 1SG.DO suffix pronoun (*-ni:* in SA) is equivalent to the English object pronoun ‘me’. In the grammar books of Classical Arabic, a verb suffixed with this pronoun can

be realised in two forms: in full as *-ni:*, or as *-n* in pausal positions. Thus, the verb *Pakrama* ‘he blessed’ has two realizations when combined with the 1SG.DO suffix: *Pakrama-ni:* and *Pakrama-n*.

While both forms are used in SA and in Qur’anic Arabic (Al-Aruk, 2015), Arabic dialects have either *-ni:* or *-n*. Most Arabic dialects seem to have *-ni:*, but traditional QA only has *-n*. The use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun in QA, NA, and SA is shown in the following example: ‘he gave me’

QA	<i>sat'a:-n</i>
RA	<i>sat'a:-ni:</i>
SA	<i>sat'a:-ni: ~ sat'a:-ni</i>

3.1.5 The use of 3SG.F suffix pronouns without a final vowel

In SA, the 3SG.F suffix *-ha:* serves as an object pronoun, as in *na:daitu-ha:* ‘I called her’, and as the singular feminine possessive pronoun, as in *kita:bu-ha:* ‘her book’. In RA, the pronouns also has a final vowel *a* in the suffix *-aha* , e.g., *kita:b-aha* ‘her book’. In this dialect, the form *-ah* denotes the 3SG.M pronoun: *kita:ba-h* ‘his book’. In QA, the situation is different. Here the 3SG.F suffix is *-ah*, without a final vowel (Al-Shamsan, 2011), while the 3SG.M suffix is *-uh*. That is to say, the initial vowel of the suffix is the main indicator of the gender e.g. *kita:b-ah* ‘her book’ and *kita:b-uh* ‘his book’. The absence of a final *a* in the feminine suffix in QA may cause confusion for non-QA speakers. The situation for the third person object and possessive pronoun in, QA, RA, and SA is laid out in the following example:

Third person singular object pronoun: ‘I called her/him’

	3SG.F	3SG.M
QA	<i>na:deit-ah</i>	<i>na:deit-uh</i>
RA	<i>na:deit-aha</i>	<i>na:deit-ah</i>
SA	<i>na:daitu-ha</i>	<i>na:daitu-hu</i>

Third person singular possessive pronoun: ‘her/his house’

	3SG.F	3SG.M
QA	<i>beit-ah</i>	<i>beit-uh</i>
RA	<i>beit-aha</i>	<i>beit-ah</i>
SA	<i>baitu-ha:</i>	<i>baitu-hu</i>

3.1.6 The use of a dedicated 3PL feminine form in pronouns and verbal inflection

QA makes a distinction between masculine and feminine in the third-person plural pronouns and verbal inflection. At this point, QA has a similar system to SA, but is different from RA. In RA, there are no gender differences in the 2PL and 3PL suffix pronouns. The plural feminine suffix marker in QA is *-an* or *-hin*, while the plural masculine suffix marker is *-au* or *-hum* (Al-Jumaah, 2013; Al-Ubudi, 1979). In RA, the plural suffix pronoun is *-au* or *-hum* for both genders. The forms of the masculine and feminine plural pronouns in QA, RA, SA are laid out below:

3PL subject inflection: ‘they ate’

	3PL.F	3PL.M
QA	<i>akal-an</i>	<i>akal-au</i>
RA	<i>akal-au</i>	<i>akal-au</i>
SA	<i>?akal-na</i>	<i>?akal-u:</i>

3PL object pronoun: ‘he gives them’

	3PL.F	3PL.M
QA	<i>jiʕt̪i:-hin</i>	<i>jiʕt̪fi:-hum</i>
RA	<i>jiʕt̪i:-hum</i>	<i>jiʕt̪i:-hum</i>
SA	<i>juʕt̪i:-hinna</i>	<i>juʕt̪i:-hum</i>

3PL possessive pronoun: ‘their house’

	3PL.F	3PL.M
QA	<i>beit-ihiñ</i>	<i>beit-uhum</i>
RA	<i>beit-uhum</i>	<i>beit-uhum</i>
SA	<i>baitu-hunna</i>	<i>baitu-hum</i>

3.2 PART2: A critical assessment of previous research on Qassimi Arabic

QA has been described by Arabic linguists in the context of describing the spoken dialects in the Arabian Peninsula. Most of these descriptions seem to be incomplete and sometimes unreliable, due to three issues.

A first issue is one of terminology. QA is often referred to as a form of “Najdi Arabic” (e.g., in Johnstone, 1963 and Ingham, 1982). This issue applies in the case of almost all the spoken dialects in the Najd region, which seem to be treated as a dialect with many varieties. Linguistically, the term “Najdi” refers to the different varieties spoken in the Najd region which includes both Bedouins and sedentary dialects (Ingham, 1994). Ingham (1994) states that even though the Najdi dialects have some common features, they are linguistically different at many levels. Given that there is no one unified dialect known as Najdi Arabic, the decision to use the term “Najdi dialects” may arise from a desire to be more comprehensible to readers. However, it easily leads to confusion if researchers do not identify the region of the Najdi Arabic speaking area that they are investigating. This issue can be avoided if linguists writing

about a certain Najdi variety refer explicitly to the region in the title of their studies, as in Al-Rojaie's work on regional levelling in Najdi Arabic (2013). Another way to avoid this confusion is to refer to the variety within the work, such as in Alghmaiz's work (2013) when he states in the introduction that by Najdi Arabic, he refers to the Najdi variety spoken in the capital Riyadh, i.e., RA.

Treating Najdi Arabic varieties as a single dialect may also lead to confusion among researchers themselves, especially if they are not knowledgeable about the Najdi dialects and their differences. An example of this confusion can be clearly seen in a study conducted by Al-Azraqi (2007) to investigate the use of the sound *ts* in Najdi Arabic. Al-Azraqi collected her data from Buridah city in Qassim region, from the capital Riyadh and other cities in Saudi Arabia. She reported that the use of the sound *k* instead of its variant *ts* is more frequent in urban settlements like Riyadh and Dammam than in less urbanised settlements like Buridah. Her work and data are interesting and valuable, but her results regarding the affrication of *k* as *ts* in Riyadh city are problematic, because the sound *ts* is not a feature in RA (Al-Rojaie, 2013). This particular sound cannot be referred to as a Najdi Arabic sound because it does not exist in all the Najdi dialects: it is a phoneme found in QA, Ha'il Arabic, and in few surrounding Najdi areas and in Bedouin dialects. Moreover, Al-Azraqi fails to provide details about the ethnic background of her participants from Riyadh. Riyadh is a multi-ethnic city that has experienced a great influx of internal migrants. The presence of a small number of occurrences of the *ts* sound in the urban settlements may be due to its use by Qassimi immigrants, while the rest of the participants from Riyadh city may have originated from other ethnicities that do not have *ts* in their phonetic system. The lack of information about the possible migration background of the participants in Al-Azraqi's study makes her conclusion less reliable. A similar study was conducted by Al-Essa (2009), who investigated the effect of contact on the affrication of *k* as *ts* and *g* as *dz* by Najdi immigrants in Jeddah city. Similar to Al-Azraqi, Al-Essa refers to *ts* and *dz* as Najdi Arabic sounds. What makes her results more reliable than Al-Azraqi's is that even though she did not provide exact background information about her informants, she mentioned that she and her research assistants belong to the Najdi community in Jeddah city and they "closely

42 The “White Dialect” of young Arabic speakers from Qassim

match their subjects ethnically and linguistically”, which may suggest better awareness that the two sounds *ts* and *dz* do not exist in all the Najdi dialects, which is important when choosing informants.

The second issue with previous studies on QA is related to the exclusive focus on relating QA to SA or pre-Islamic Arabic in some works, like Al-Aruk (2015). While it is highly valuable to show the similarities between two forms of Arabic using historical descriptive or comparative methods, focusing only on the linguistic features that have old Arabic roots and neglecting features that cannot be found in ancient Arabic does not result in a sufficient description of QA. These studies have mostly been conducted by native speakers of QA. Some of the researchers are very subjective in their description, while others attempt to reveal how their dialect is more prestigious than the other Arabic varieties due to its similarity to SA. This is sometimes indicated indirectly through asserting that the Qassim region is far removed from contact with outsiders or non-Arabs, thus protecting their dialect from change and helping it to preserve its SA roots as stated in Al-Jumaah’s work (2016b, 736). This perspective might be caused by the religious and historical prestigious value of SA.

The third issue is related to the methodology of previous studies. This concerns both the choice of the linguistic variants investigated and the data collection process. Most of the time, these works focus on one or two stereotypical sounds, particularly the two QA sounds *ts* and *dz* which have been discussed at length in most studies conducted on QA. As a result, much of QA remains understudied in spite of the amount of work conducted on it. Moreover, in most previous studies, these two sounds are described without examining their sociolinguistic aspects. The researchers typically collected data in three ways: from old QA speakers, from oral poetry (e.g. Al-Helwah, 2005), or by introspection as native speakers of the dialect (e.g. Al-Ubudi, 1979). In some of these previous studies, certain details of the data collection process are left unmentioned, such as whether the data was drawn from narration in a formal speech style or from a recording of everyday conversation. Moreover, only a few studies have paid attention to the young speakers of QA and how the dialect is rapidly changing in the current era of social media and internet (e.g., Al-Essa 2009; Al-Rojaie, 2013).

Chapter 4

Young Qassimi Arabic vs. Old Qassimi Arabic

Introduction

This chapter provides a description of variation in Qassimi Arabic (QA) as it is used by its speakers in their everyday lives when speaking to other members of the QA speech community. The goal is to compare the six linguistic variables chosen for this study between two generations: the old and the young speakers. This chapter thus aims to provide a clear picture of how the six linguistic variables are realised in conversations of QA speakers among each other. This chapter also explores the effect of the topic being spoken about, the type of education that the participants received, and gender on the QA used by the younger speakers.

The chapter consists of three main parts. The first part presents the results of the realisation of the six linguistic variables by the old generation. The second part of this chapter presents the realisation of the six linguistic variables in the speech of the young generation in conversations on everyday topics with friends or family members. The six linguistic variables were investigated in two different settings: when the speakers were talking about personal topics, and when they were talking about general topics. The third part concludes with a comparison of old QA and young QA.

4.1 PART 1: The Qassimi Arabic of the old speakers

4.1.1 Methodology

As mentioned previously in Chapter 3, this chapter investigates six QA variables. In this chapter, each linguistic variable is described in two groups: old female speakers (OF1-10), and old male speakers (OM 1-10)

4.1.2 Analysis

Different from some previous studies, we do not follow the method of simply calculating the frequency of the use of a variant. This method has been used in many previous studies that were conducted to investigate linguistic change in Najdi dialects, and involves counting how many times a variant is used by the participants in the study. This method can lead to unreliable results: in many of these previous studies, researchers came to the conclusion that a certain variant was abandoned by the speakers on the basis of the observation that the linguistic variant did only appear once or not at all in their data; however, it appears that there were no contexts in the data where one would have expected the form to appear, in whatever form. An example is Al-Azraqi (2007) when she stated that, according to her data, the male speakers are giving up the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix. The reason behind her conclusion might be because the male participants did not talk to a female interviewer or, as Al-Rojaie (2013) commented, it is possibly caused by the formality of the situation, as Al-Azraqi did not seem to have a close relationship with her male informants. A similar situation occurred in the present study with the realisation of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix by the male group. In my recordings, the *ts* variant was hardly used by the male group, but this was not because the participants were avoiding it, but rather because this type of affrication mainly occurs when directly addressing female interlocutors. In a context where the data of the male participants was collected by male interlocutors, this of course did not apply.

In order to avoid this kind of incorrect conclusion, the data in the present study were analysed using a modified method, not unlike methods already used by Labov in the 1960s. In my analysis, I first establish two main values: the number of uses where it could have appeared, and the actual number of uses. The number of uses where it could have appeared will be called the “expected number” here. The “actual number” is the number of times that a variant was actually used. The percentage of usage of a certain linguistic variant is the difference between its expected number and actual number. If the two values are identical, this implies that the variant is a feature of daily use for the participant; if the expected number is high and the actual number is low, this is an indication that the speaker does not use the variant, either because it is no more part of the speaker’s variety, or because the speaker is actively avoiding it. Each graph used in this chapter shows these two values per participant: the left-hand column presents the expected number, while the right-hand column presents the actual number and the relevant percentages.

In most cases, establishing the expected number for the six QA variant was straightforward. Thus, the pronominal markings show a simple binary opposition between originally QA forms and (originally) non-QA forms. Things are a bit more difficult where differences in the phonetics in stems are concerned, as forms may differ not only regarding the specific phonetic feature that is investigated, but also in other ways. This was the case of the affrication of *k* to *ts* and or *g* to *dz* in stems. I chose only to take into account those cases where the absence affrication presents the only difference with (original) QA, like in *tsibi:r* and *kibi:r* ‘big’, while cases where there are more differences, like *tsa:lmuh* and *kalmuh* ‘call him’, were left out.

For each linguistic variable in this chapter, the data analysis procedure comprised the following stages:

1- data transcription	I transcribed all the recorded sessions for all the 20 participants in the two groups. No software was used in this stage: I transcribed using pen and paper
2- finding the expected number	I counted the expected number of the variable for every participant in each group (how many times it is expected to be used in the context, regardless of whether it was actually used by the speaker)
3- finding the actual number	I counted the actual number of the variable for each individual participant (i.e., only the times when the variable was actually used by the speaker)
4- processing the data using Microsoft Excel	After finding the expected number and the actual number for each linguistic variable for each participant, I calculated the average expected number and the average actual number for the whole group. Then, I divided the average actual number by the average expected number, and calculated the percentage. After finding the difference between the expected number and actual number, a <i>t</i> -test is performed to investigate if there is a significant difference between the two groups.

Each linguistic variable is discussed individually. Part 1 ends with a summary section that provides an overview of the realisation of the linguistic variables between the two groups: the old female speakers, and old male speakers.

4.1.3 Results

In this section I present the data concerning the realisation of the six linguistic variables in the speech of the old QA speakers. For a description of each of the QA variables, see Chapter 3.

The affrication of *k* as *ts* in stems

Figure 4.1 shows the expected number and the actual number of occurrences of this variant by the old female QA speakers, while figure 4.2 shows the expected number and the actual number of occurrences of this variant by the old male QA speakers.

Note that the expected number in this variant was established by counting the cases where *ts* is a possible realization in QA, and by disregarding words where *ts* is unacceptable as in words like *ka:n* ‘he was’ and loan words as *ku:rah* ‘ball’.

Figure 4.1: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem by the old female group

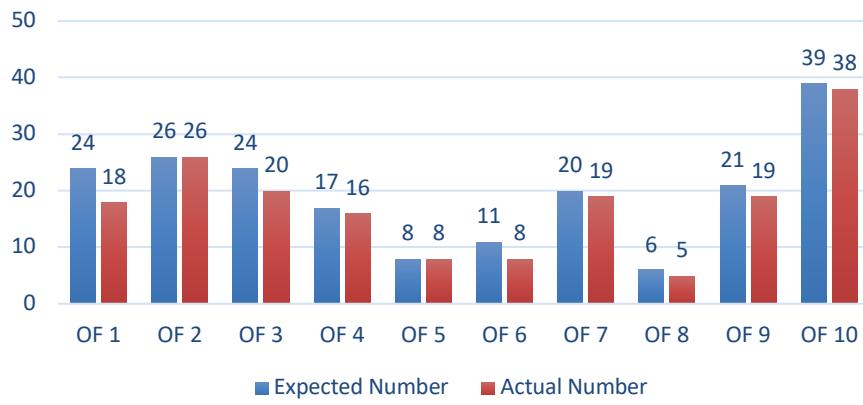
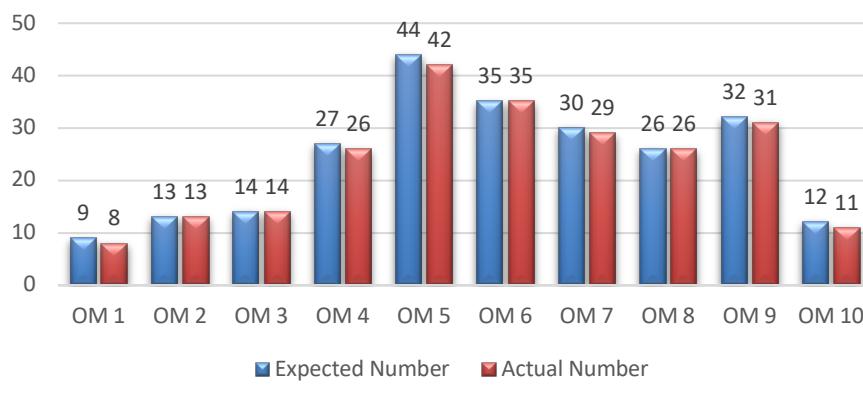


Figure 4.2: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem by the old male group



Old female participants used the *ts* variant extensively in their speech at a rate of 90%. The *ts* variant was also used extensively by the old male speakers at a rate of 97.11%. Together, Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show that *k* in the stem is produced with affrication in the large majority of instances by all the female and the male speakers. The difference between the two group is not significant as indicated in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: The *t*-test results of the difference in the use of *ts* variant in the stem between the old female and old male group.

	number	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
old female group	10	1.9	1.91	$= 0.08$
old male group	10	0.7	0.67	

The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix

Figures 4.3 and 4.4 show the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix by the old female and male, respectively.

Figure 4.3: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG:F pronominal suffix by the old female group

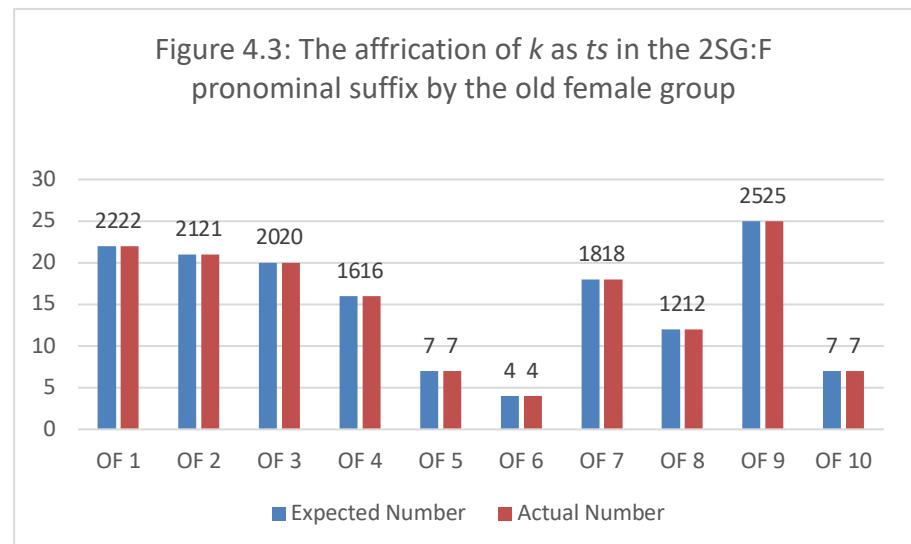
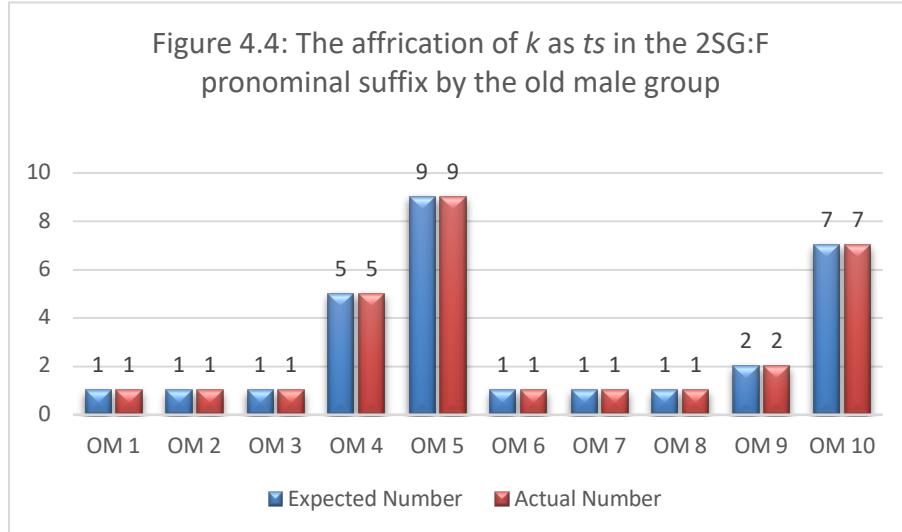


Figure 4.4: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG:F pronominal suffix by the old male group



The two figures 4.3 and 4.4 show that the *ts* variant is used in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix by the old QA speakers at a rate of 100%. The low rate of occurrence in the male group can be attributed to the methodology on how the data were collected from the old male speakers (Chapter 2). It was collected by a male research assistance. As mentioned previously in section (4.1.2), the 2SG.F pronominal suffix occurs mainly when directly addressing female interlocutors. The higher occurrence of use by the male speakers: OM4, OM5, and OM10 was because those speakers were reporting a dialogue with a female partner in their interviews.

The affrication of *g* or *q* as *dz*

Figures 4.5 and 4.6 show the use of the variant *dz* by the old female and old male participants, respectively. Note that the expected number in this variant was established by counting the cases where *dz* is a possible realization in QA, and disregards cases where only *q* or *g* are possible.

Figure 4.5: The affrication of *g* and *q* as *dz* by the old female group

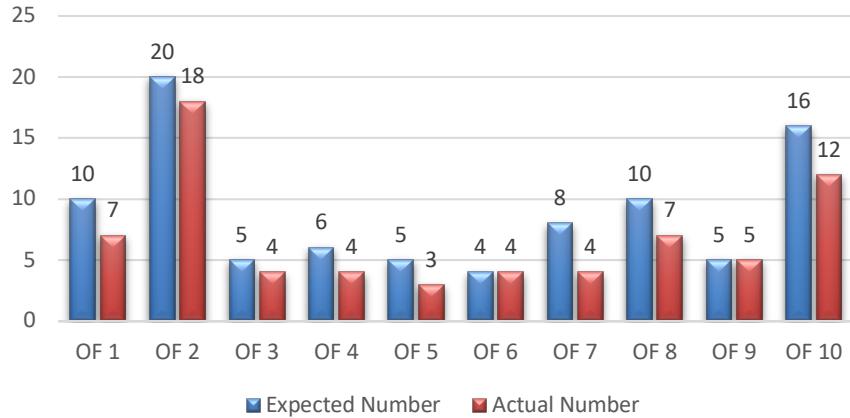
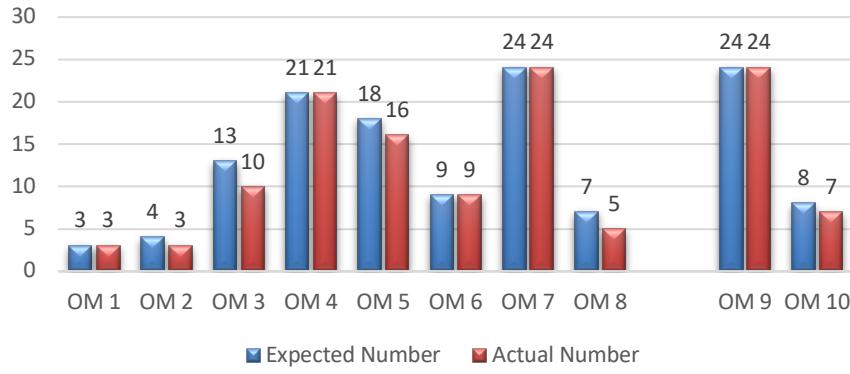


Figure 4.6: The affrication of *g* and *q* as *dz* by the old male group



The data show that the variant *dz* was used by the old female group with a rate of 76.40%. The old male group show a much more extensive use of the variant *dz* with a rate of 93.13%. The difference in the use of the variant *dz* between the two groups seem to be (close to) significant as the *t*-test result shows in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: The *t*-test results of the difference in the use of the *dz* variant between the old female and old male groups.

	number	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
old female group	10	2.1	1.45	0.05
old male group	10	0.9	1.10	

Additional notes on the use of *ts* in the stem and *dz* by the old QA speakers

The use of *dz* varies slightly among the older speakers, in contrast to *ts* in the stem which seems to be stable. For instance, *tsibi:r* ‘old, or big’ was never pronounced as *kibi:r* by any of the old speakers, but *mifra:dz* ‘place facing the sunrise’ was pronounced sometimes as *mifra:g* by old speakers – even by those who showed a high percentage of *dz* use otherwise. However, even though the use of *dz* is not fully stable among the old QA speakers, the data show no evidence of intra-speaker variation in the use of *dz*. In other words, with regard to this variable, the same speaker consistently pronounces a certain word in the same way.

It is also important to mention that names of people (e.g. *ibn ʕadzi:l*) and places (e.g. *sˤa:fi:dz*) always display affrication. As for the noun paradigm, the old speakers do not have affricated *dz* in all the forms of a noun. For instance, sometimes diminutive forms and plural forms are affricated while the single form is not, as in the following example: (Note that not all the following examples presented themselves in interview, I asked for them after the recording sessions).

wrigih singular ‘a (piece of) paper’

wrigtein dual

awra:g plural

wreidzih diminutive singular

wreidztein diminutive dual

wreidza:t diminutive plural

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In other nouns the singular noun of *g* is affricated with *dz*, while its plural or diminutive forms are not affricated, as in the following example:

<i>dzirbih</i>	singular	‘a goatskin water bag’
<i>dzirbtein</i>	dual	
<i>grab</i>	plural	
<i>greibih</i>	diminutive singular	
<i>greibtein</i>	diminutive dual	
<i>greiba:t</i>	diminutive plural	

Note that there were no attestations of diminutive forms by the younger speakers of QA. Instead, they tended to add the adjective *s'iyi:r* ‘little’ after the nouns, as in *walad s'iyi:r* ‘a small boy’, rather than using the diminutive form *wleid*.

Variation in the use of *dz* among a word and its derivatives is not limited to nouns, but may also occur in verbs and adjectives, for instance:

<i>maxru:g</i>	adjective	‘it is pierced’
<i>xarag</i>	simple past verb	‘he pierced’
<i>xridz</i>	passive present perfect verb	‘it has been pierced’
<i>jexridz</i>	simple present verb	‘he pierces’

The use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*

Figures 4.7 and 4.8 show the use of the variant *-n* instead of *-ni* by the old female and old male participants, respectively.

Figure 4.7: The use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* by the old female group

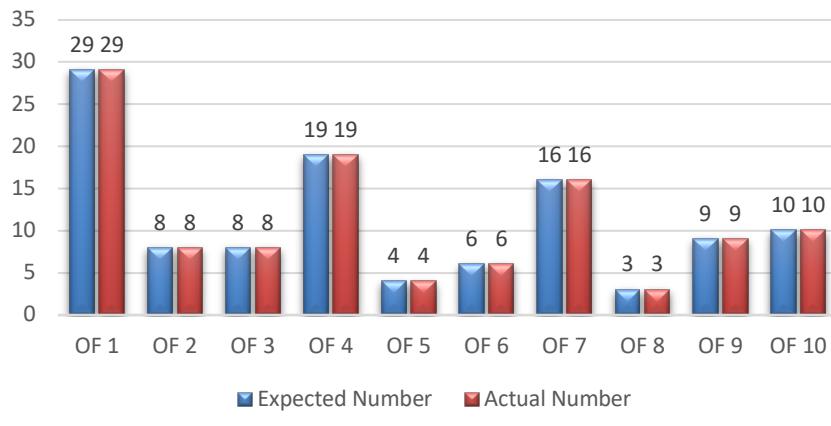
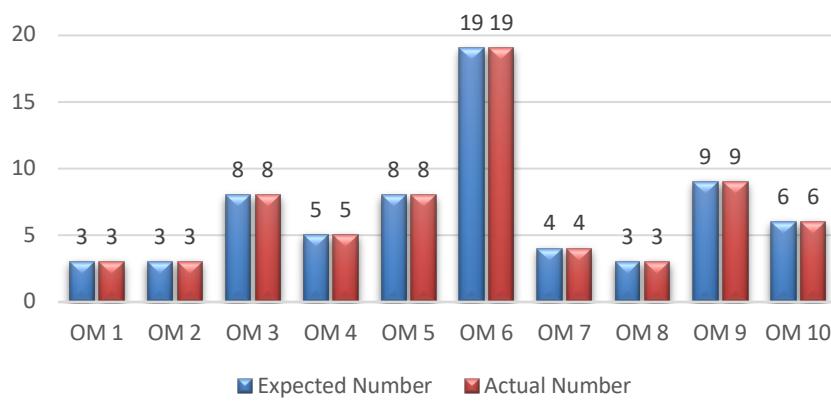


Figure 4.8: The use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* by the old male group



The participants in the two groups used the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* 100% of the time. It might be noteworthy to mention that the old speakers also used the variant *-n* in religious quotes borrowed from Standard Arabic (SA); for instance: *all'ah ?ṣt'a:-n ija:ha* ‘god gave it to me’, and *all'ah akram-an b-il-bani:n* ‘god blessed me with children’.

The absence of the final vowel *a* in the 3SG.F suffix pronoun *-ha*

Figures 4.9 and 4.10 show the use of the variant *-ah* in the 3SG.F suffix pronoun by the old female and old male speakers, respectively.

Figure 4.9: The absence of the vowel *a* in the 3SG:F suffix pronoun *-ha* by the old female group

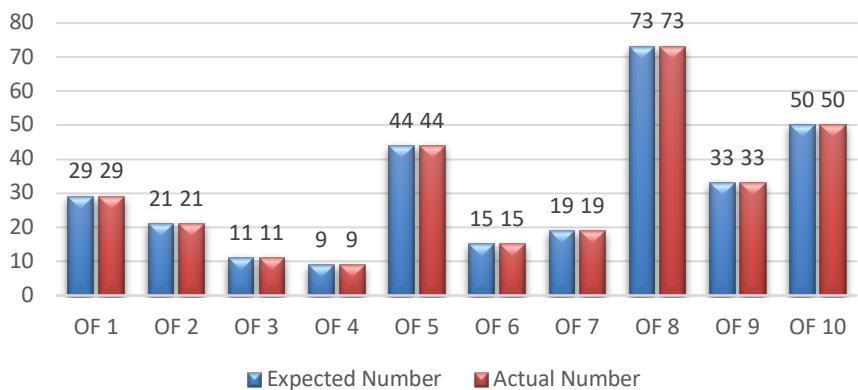
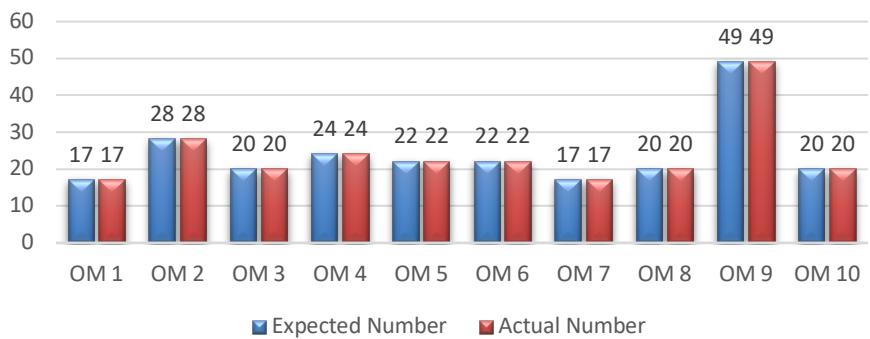


Figure 4.10: The absence of the vowel *a* in the 3SG:F suffix pronoun *-ha* by the old male group

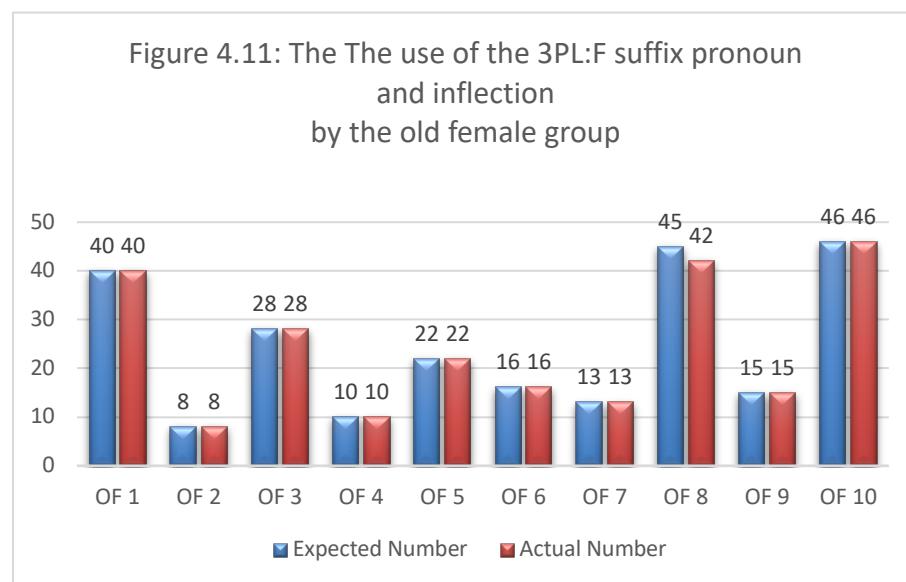


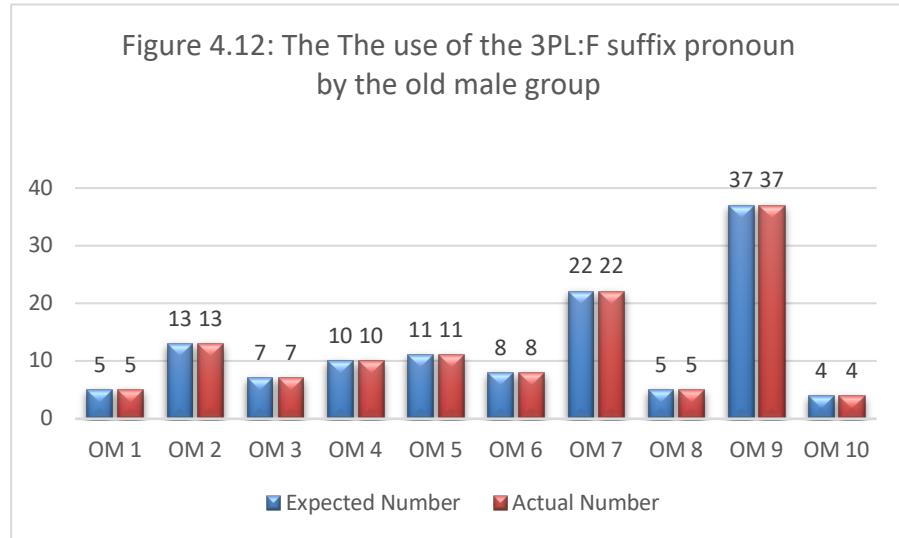
The participants in the two groups used the 3SGF suffix pronoun *-ah* instead of *-ha* 100% of the time. Similar to the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n*, the old speakers use the form 3SG.F *-h* also in religious quotes borrowed from SA, e.g., *marjam Saljah as-sala:m imra?ah qawjjah* ‘Maryam peace be upon her is a strong woman’.

The use of dedicated 3PL.F suffix pronouns and inflections

Figures 4.11 and 4.12 show the use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun and inflection by the old female and old male speakers, respectively

Figure 4.11: The use of the 3PL:F suffix pronoun and inflection by the old female group





Overall, all the participants in the two groups used the 3PL.F forms at a rate of 100%. The low rate of occurrence in the old male group can be attributed to the subjects they were discussing in their interview. In most of their answers, old men were narrating story using the word *an-na:s* ‘people’ which is treated as a masculine plural form, while old women talked mostly about women’s life in general.

4.2 PART 2: The Qassimi Arabic of the young speakers

4.2.1 Methodology

In this part, the use of each linguistic variable is described for two settings: when the participants talk about personal topics such as talking about their friends or previous embarrassing situations, and when they talk about general topics as their views about the feminist movement in Saudi Arabia. Two social variables are taken into account: gender and the type of education that the participants received. This study has two main groups: the male group (10 participants) and the female group (10 participants). Each group is divided into two subgroups: (FN1- FN5) young female participants who received a normal education, (FR1- FR5) young female participants who received a

religious education, (MN1- MN5) young male participants who received a normal education, and (MR1- MR5) young male participants who received a religious education.

4.2.2 Analysis

The data of the young generation was analysed in the same way as that of the old generation (section 4.1.2). I counted the number of times the variants were expected to be used, and then I counted the number of times the speakers actually used the variant. The percentage of the variant use was calculated from these two values. There was one minor difference when analysing the use of the 3PL feminine suffix pronoun. Counting the expected number for that particular variant was only in the situations when speakers used it to refer to feminine inanimate nouns, as the 3PL feminine suffix pronoun was never utilized by the young speakers when referring to actual women, since young QA speakers appeared to utilize alternate means to avoid it (discussed later in section 4.2.3).

Each linguistic variable is discussed individually. The discussion of each linguistic variable includes four figures: the first two figures present the results from the female group, and the other two figures present the results from the male group. Part 2 ends with a summary section that provides an overview of the realisation of the linguistic variables in relation to the social variables.

4.2.3 Results

In this section, I present the data concerning the realisation of the six linguistic variables in the speech of the young QA speakers, when they were talking casually with friends or family members. In each graph presented below, the leftmost five participants (FN1-FN5), (MN1-MN5) are those who received normal education and the other five (FR1- FR5), (MR1- MR5) are those who received religious education.

The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem

Figure 4.13 shows the use of this variant when the young female speakers were talking about personal topics. Figure 4.14 shows the use of this variant when the female speakers were talking about general topics.

Figure 4.13: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem by the young female group when talking about personal topics

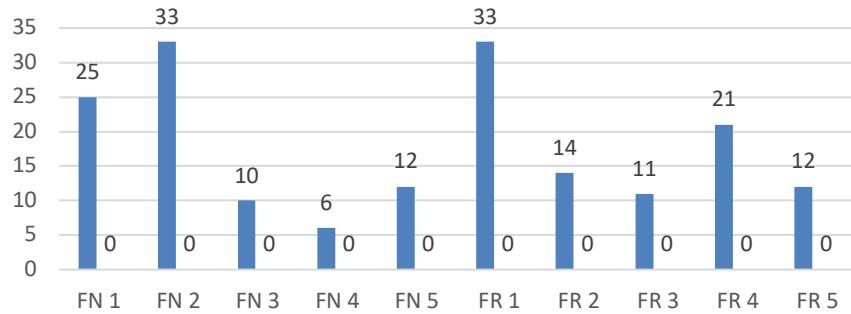
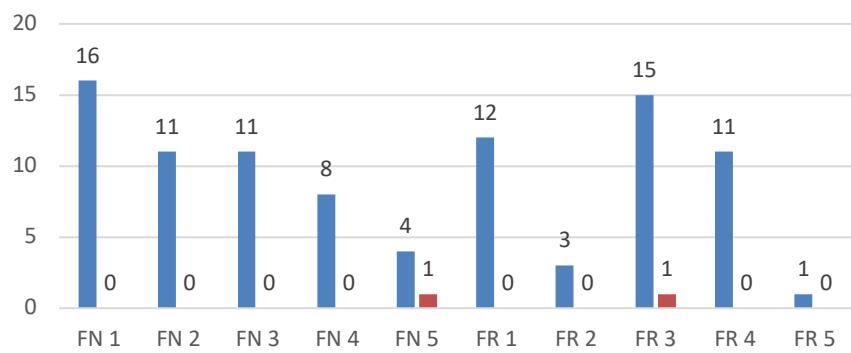


Figure 4.14: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem by the young female group when talking about formal topics



As Figure 4.13 shows, none of the 10 young female participants, whether they received a normal or a religious education, used this variant in their speech when talking about personal topics. However, the variant was used once by two participants when they were talking about formal subjects, as shown in Figure 4.14. In both of these cases, the affrication happened specifically in one word, namely *tsiðb* ‘lie, not true’ and the derived singular feminine adjective *tsaða:bih* ‘liar’. Together, Figures 4.13 and 4.14 show that *k* in the stem is normally produced without affrication by all the 10 female speakers in both types of topic.

Figure 4.15 shows the expected number and the actual number of occurrences of this variant when the male speakers were talking about personal topics. Figure 4.16 shows the expected number and the actual number of occurrences of this variant when the male speakers were talking about formal topics.

Figure 4.15 The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem by the young male group when talking about personal topics

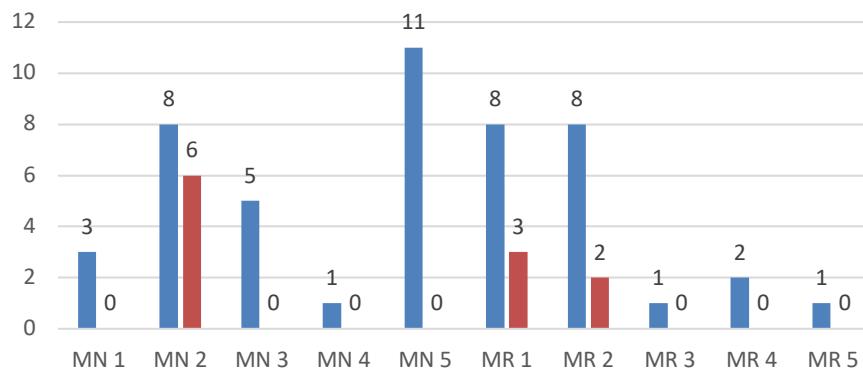
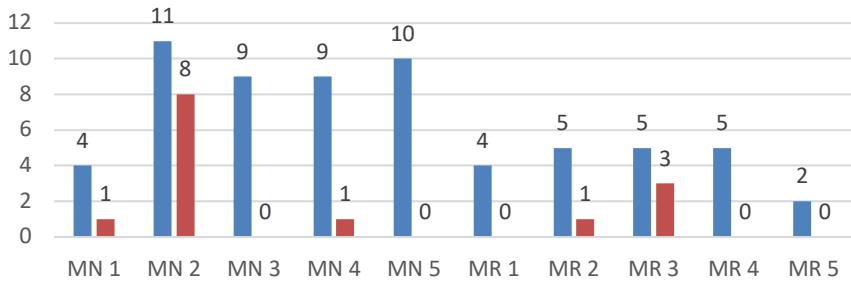


Figure 4.16: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem by the young male group when they were talking about formal topics



In Figures 4.15 and 4.16, the male group also shows a low percentage of usage of this variant, but it is much higher than with the female group. Overall, the male participants used the *ts* variant rather than *k* 22.32% of the time, while the female participants used it 0.74% of the time. As for the effect of topic on the male participants, there is no major difference in their use of the *ts* variant across the two settings. They used *ts* 22.92% of the time when talking about personal topics, and 21.88% of the time when talking about serious topics. The type of education does not appear to have an influence on the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem, as both the subgroups used the variable with similar frequencies in both settings. Unlike the results from the female participants, the range of words where the variant *ts* is used is not restricted to one word and its derived forms. Nonetheless, it is still limited to a few words: besides *tsiðb* and its derivatives, the participants affricated *k* as *ts* in the stem in the following words: *tsiða* ‘like this’, *tsinuh* ‘it looks like’, *tsibi:r* ‘big’, and *ba:tsir* ‘tomorrow’. The low number of attestations of the variant *ts* in the stem by the young QA speakers makes it difficult to perform a *t*-test to find out whether the differences between, or within, the groups, is statistically significant.

The results of the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem correspond to those obtained by Al-Essa (2009) who investigated this kind of affrication in the speech of Najdi immigrants in Jeddah city. It also corresponds with the conclusions of Al-Rojaie

(2013), who investigated dialect levelling in QA. Both authors report that young QA speakers had shifted towards the use of *k* instead of its variant *ts* in the stem.

The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix

Figures 4.17 and 4.18 show the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix by the female participants when talking about personal topics and formal topics, respectively.

Figure 4.17: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG:F pronominal suffix by the young female group when talking about personal topics

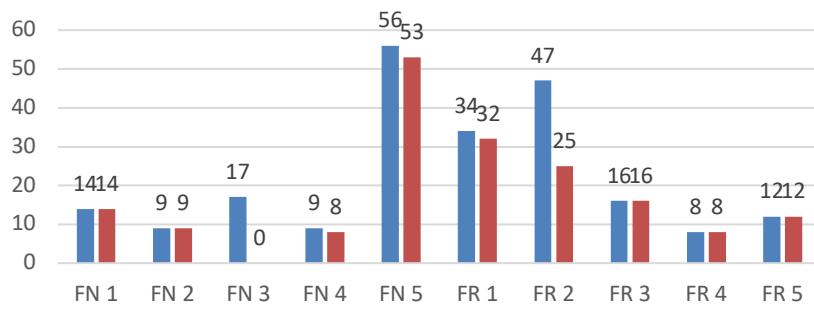
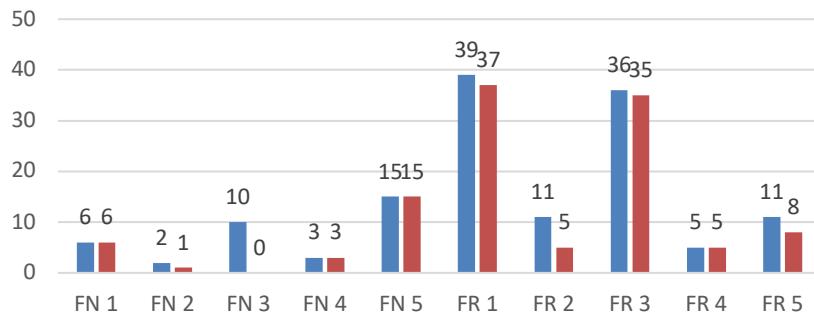


Figure 4.18: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG:F pronominal suffix by the young female group when talking about formal topics



Overall, the two figures show that the *ts* variant is still frequently used in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix by the young female speakers at a rate of 81.11%. In both types of topics, the two subgroups of education type do not show any significant difference in their use of the *ts* variant in the suffix, indicating that the type of education does not play a significant role in the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix as shown in Table 4.3. Comparing the two types of topics, the female participants used the *ts* variant in the suffix 76.58% of the time when they were talking about personal topics, and 83.33% of the time when they were talking about formal topics. This indicates that topic does not have an influence on the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix as there is no significant difference in the *ts* variance use in both the two types of topic as shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.3: *t*-test results for the difference between the two young female subgroups’ use of the *ts* variant in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix.

	number	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
FN1 - FN5	5	3.2	5.75	0.89
FR1 – FR5	5	3.6	6.74	

Table 4.4: *t*-test results for the difference between the young female use of the *ts* variant in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix in the two types of topics.

	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
personal topics	4.5	8.06	0.24
formal topics	2.3	3.30	

It is interesting to note that the female participants avoided the use of *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix when sarcastically quoting outsiders, especially authority figures, but emphasised the affrication when quoting older people. For example, one speaker quoted her headmistress talking on the phone as saying *taʃa:l xið bint-ik* ‘come and take your daughter’, while on the other hand she affricated the *k* with emphasis when she quoted her mother *xawa:l-its! ʃa:di* ‘your uncles! it’s ok’.

Figures 4.19 and 4.20 show the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix by the male participants when talking about personal topics and serious topics, respectively.

Figure 4.19: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG:F pronominal suffix by the young male group when they were talking about personal topics

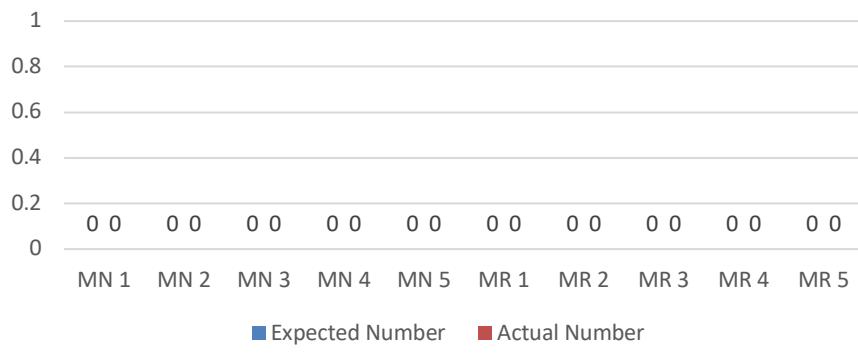
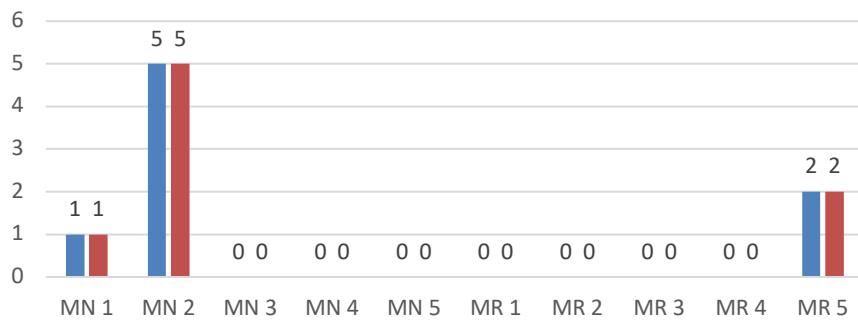


Figure 4.20: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG:F pronominal suffix by the young male group when talking about formal topics



It was difficult to investigate affrication in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix in the young male group as this kind of affrication requires the participants to be directly addressing female counterparts in order to use it. Figure 4.19 demonstrates that the

participants never used the *ts* variant in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix, not because they were avoiding it, but because it was never the right context to use it in their speech. Figure 4.20 meanwhile indicates that, when the context was right, the male participants used the variable 100% of the time. Although they were not talking to female counterparts in these recording sessions, male participants sometimes reported conversations they had had with female interlocutors as in *min bijes'i:r wili amr-its* ‘who’s going to be your legal guardian’, or as in *iða ka:n alwa:hid fa:ri-ts* ‘if the man values you’. Due to the overall low percentage of use by the male participants, the effect of topic and the type of education in the male group on the use of this specific variant cannot be determined.

The affrication of *g* or *q* as *dz*

Figures 4.21 and 4.22 show the use of the variant *dz* by the young female participants when talking about personal and formal topics, respectively.

Figure 4.21: The affrication of *g* and *q* as *dz* by the young female group when talking about personal topics

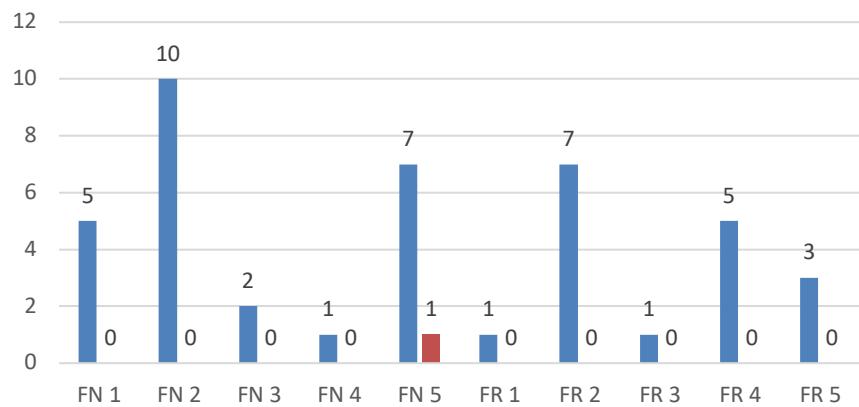
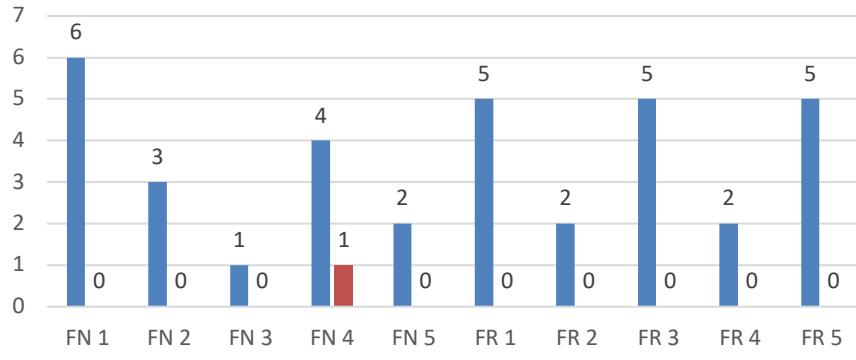


Figure 4.22: The affrication of *g* and *q* as *dz* by the young female group when talking about formal topics



Overall, the female participants used the variant *dz* only twice, that is 2.6% of the expected occurrences. Such a low percentage of use overall means that it is not possible to determine the effect of topic or the type of education on the use of this variant among the young female speakers.

Figures 4.23 and 4.24 show the use of the variant *dz* by the young male participants when talking about personal and formal topics, respectively.

Figure 4.23: The affrication of *g* and *q* as *dz* by the young male speakers when talking about personal topics

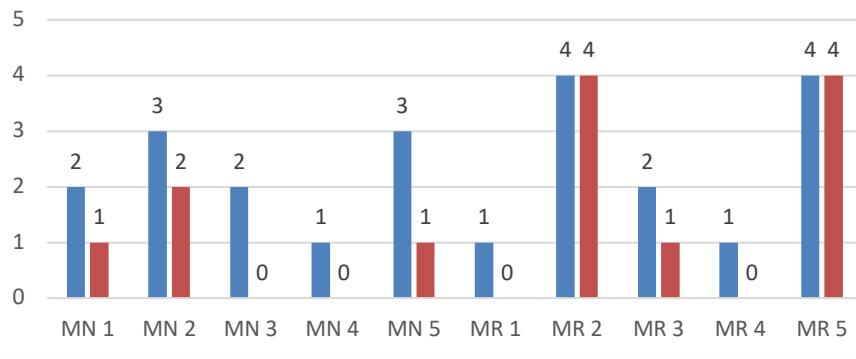
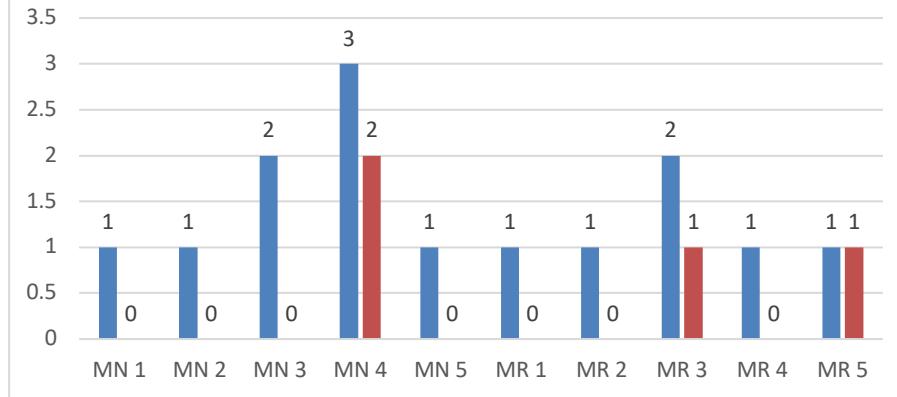


Figure 4.24: The affrication of *g* and *q* as *dz* by the young male speakers when talking about formal topics



The data show that the variant *dz* is still used by the male group. Overall, the male participants used the variant *dz* rather than the other variants *g* and *q* 45.95% of the time. Topic seems to be a factor in the males’ use of this variant: the participants used the variant *dz* 56.52% of the time when they were speaking about personal topics (Figure 4.23), and 28.57% of the time when they were talking about formal topics (Figure 4.24). However, considering the low number of cases of *dz* in the young male group, the differences of use between the two types of topic may be just due to chance. The type of education does not seem to affect the use of the variant *dz*, as the subgroups were approximately equal in their use of the variant, in both topics. Similar to the situation of the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem, the use of the variant *dz* was limited to two words in particular. The first of these was *s'idz* ‘real’ and its derivatives *s'a:dz*, *s'a:dzih* ‘he/she is honest’, *s'idzijih* ‘it is real’ (however, note that the affrication never appeared on the verb *s'addag* ‘he believed’). The second word is *rifi:dz-i* ‘my friend’, which was used only by the male participants when referring to their lifelong friends.

Additional notes on the use of the two other variants *q*, *g* by the young QA speakers

The *dz* variant never appeared as a minimal pair with its other variants *q* and *g*. This may simply be a result of the limited occurrence of this variant in the data from the QA young speakers. One notes, however, that there are quite some minimal pairs between *q* and *g*. The following table presents examples of the minimal pairs that were used by more than five participants from both gender groups.

<i>q</i>	<i>g</i>
<i>ðəʊq-uh</i> , <i>ðəʊq-ah</i> his/her taste of something	<i>ðəʊg</i> an adjective for being well-mannered (used for both men and women)
<i>mu:qif</i> a critical situation, or incident	<i>mu:gif</i> a parking spot
<i>ra:qi</i> , <i>ra:qijah</i> elegant man/woman	<i>ra:gi</i> , <i>ra:gijah</i> he/she is going up / is up
<i>daqi:qah</i> she/it is very precise	<i>digi:gah</i> a minute
<i>daqi:q</i> exact, or he is precise	<i>digi:g</i> flour
<i>t'abqi</i> apply a skill or a rule (singular feminine imperative)	<i>t'abgi</i> close a lid or put one layer on another (singular feminine imperative)

It is important to mention that this obtains to words as used in a QA sentence. When speakers borrow a whole phrase from SA, *q* forms may be used also in words belonging to the second column of the table. For example, speakers sometimes used *daqi:q* ‘exact, precise’ to mean ‘flour’ when it was used in a phrase denoting a specific type of flour, as in *daqi:q að-ðurah* ‘corn flour’, as the whole noun phrase is borrowed from SA. Standing alone, *daqi:q* was never used to mean ‘flour’ in the data obtained from the young speakers of QA.

Sometimes the choice between the two variants *q* and *g* varies between a word and its derivatives. For example, when talking about his job, one participant said *riħt l-il-muqa:balah* ‘I went to the interview’, and in his next sentence he said *w-alli ga:bal miġi*: ‘the one who interviewed me’.

The borrowing of *q* from SA into QA arises in two different ways. The first way is the borrowing of the whole word, which can be seen clearly in new derived forms of words that already exist in QA, as in the example mentioned above. The word *muqa:balah* is a lexical item relating to official employment, and thus a word that comes with the new, modern lifestyle of the Qassimi people, whereas the verb *ga:bal* ‘to meet someone’ or ‘to have a conversation with someone’ already existed in QA. The variant *q* in this type of borrowing cannot be switched to *g*; thus, *muqa:balah* is never pronounced as *muga:balah* in QA. Meanwhile, the verb *ga:bal* can also be pronounced as *qa:bal*, but they are semantically not at the same level, as *ga:bal* is used when referring to informal meetings with friends and family, while *qa:bal* is used for formal meetings as for a job interview or meeting a university professor. This type of borrowing is not limited to new derived forms of existing words in QA, as it can also be observed in new lexical items that did not exist in QA previously, as in lexical items with different local equivalents. Some examples are provided in the table below:

new lexical item	QA equivalent	gloss
<i>atwaqqas</i>	<i>að'ín</i>	I think
<i>θaqqa:fah</i>	-	culture
<i>al-wa:qiṣ</i>	<i>as'-s'idz</i>	the reality
<i>al-ḥaqi:qah</i>	<i>as'-s'idz</i>	the truth
<i>qali:l</i>	<i>iʃwaj</i>	little (for quantity)
<i>taʔaqlam</i>	<i>salak ~ taʕawwad</i>	he adapted

The second type of *q* borrowing from SA occurs in words that already exist in QA. In other words, speakers substitute dialectal *g* with SA *q* within existing words. This type of phonetic switching happens either intermittently, with speakers randomly alternating between *q* and *g*, or permanently, with speakers consistently replacing the dialectal *g* with the SA *q*. Sometimes, the shift from the dialectal variant to the SA also implies the vowels. A simple possible explanation for the vowel change is that

the variant *q* is borrowed from the source language along with the adjacent vowel.

Examples of the second type of borrowing are presented in the table below.

SA form	QA form	QA form after <i>q</i> borrowing	Gloss
<i>juqaddimu nafsa-hu:</i>	<i>jigaddim nafs-uh</i>	<i>jiqaddim nafs-uh</i>	He presents himself
<i>maqa:m-uka</i>	<i>miga:m-ik</i>	<i>maqa:m-ik</i>	your status
<i>qadi:m</i>	<i>gidi:m</i>	<i>qadi:m</i>	old
<i>muqawwas</i>	<i>imgawwas</i>	<i>imqawwas</i>	curved

The choice between the two variants *q* and *g* may be prone to intra-speaker variation. Speakers seem to choose *g* when the word is associated with a personal matter, while choosing *q* for general concepts. For example, the female participants used *as^f-s^fadi:qa:t* ‘the female friends’ when talking about friendship in general, but *s^fidi:ga:t-i* ‘my friends’ when referring to their close friends. A similar example was used by a male participant, who used *fuqu:bah* ‘punishment’ when he was speaking in the context of sexual harassment punishments, but used the form *fgu:bih* in another context when sarcastically referring to an incident that happened to him as a punishment from God.

The use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*

Figures 4.25 and 4.26 show the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* by the young female participants when talking about personal topics and formal topics, respectively.

Figure 4.25: The use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* by the young female group when talking about personal topics

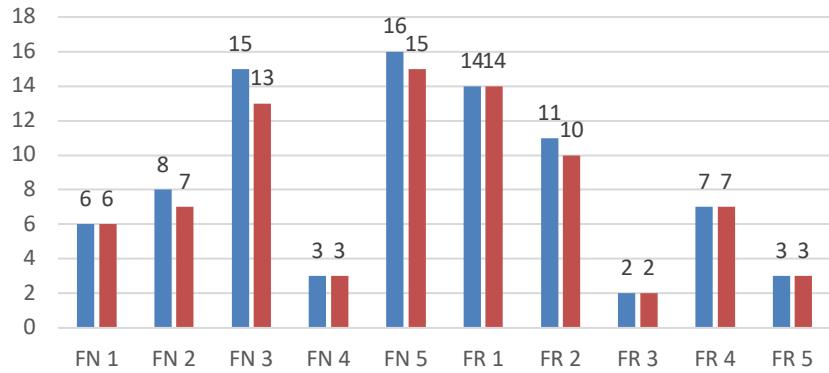
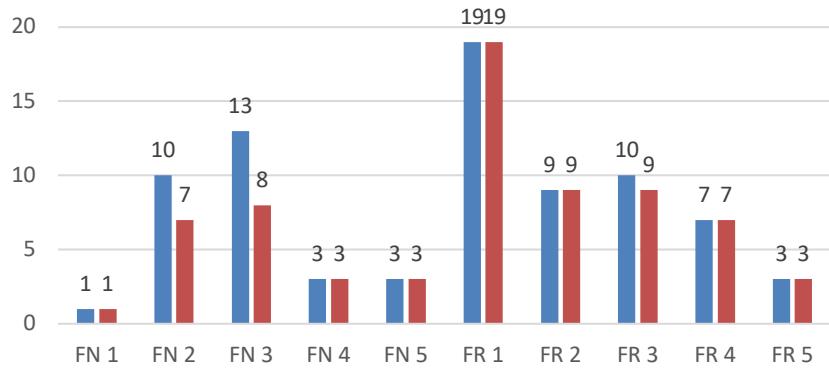


Figure 4.26: The use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* by the young female group when talking about formal topics



Overall, the young female participants used the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* 91.41% of the time. There is a slight difference regarding topic, as the female participants used the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* 94.12% of the time when speaking about personal topics, but only 88.46% of the time when speaking about

formal topics. However, the effect of topic on the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* by the young female speakers is statistically not significant as shown in the *t*-test result in Table 4.5. As for the type of education, the two subgroups did not show any significant difference either. One remarks that when speaking about personal topics, the two subgroups were almost the same in their use of the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n*; however, when speaking about formal topics a difference emerged: those who received a normal education used the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* just 73.33% of the time when discussing formal topics, while those who received a religious education used it 97.92% of the time. However, this difference is statically not significant as the *t*-test result shows in Table 4.6.

Table 4.5: *t*-test results for the difference between the young female participants' use of the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* in the two types of topic.

	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
personal topics	0.5	0.71	0.34
formal topics	0.9	1.73	

Table 4.6: *t*-test results for the difference between the two young female subgroups' use of the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*.

	number	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
FN1 - FN5	5	1.2	1.69	0.09
FR1 – FR5	5	0.2	0.42	

Figures 4.27 and 4.28 show the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* by the young male participants when talking about personal topics and formal topics, respectively.

Figure 4.27: The use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* by the young male group when talking about personal topics

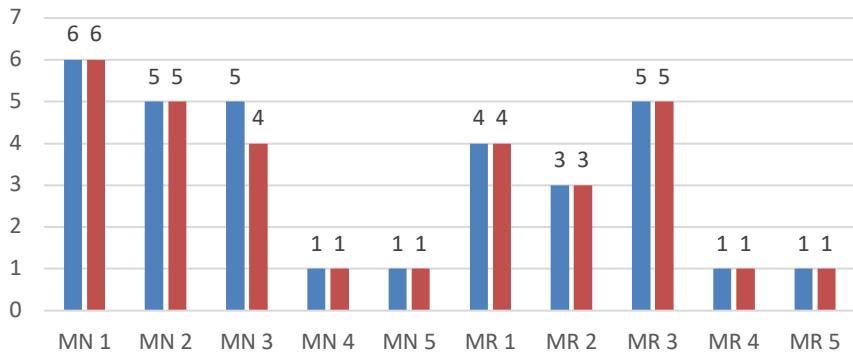
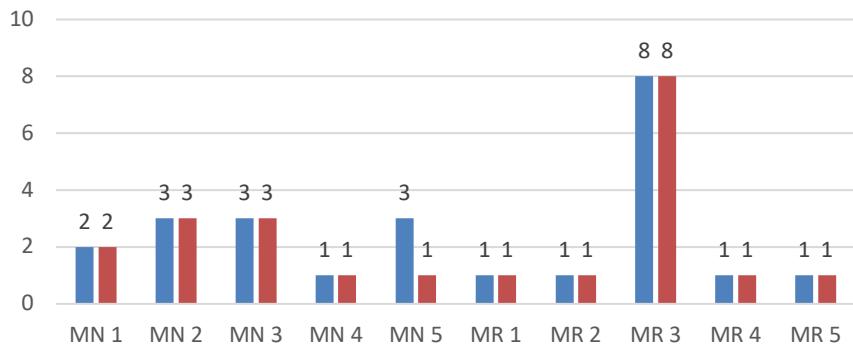


Figure 4.28: The use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* by the young male group when talking about formal topics



Overall, the male participants had almost the same rate of the use of the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* as the female participants, as they used this variant 94.64% of the time. The small difference between the two main groups of speakers is statistically not significant as shown in Table 4.7. Topic does not seem to have influenced the male participants who received a religious education, as they used the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* 100% of the time in both settings. However,

as in the female group, the male participants who received a normal education showed some difference in their use of the variant across the two settings: they used the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* 94.44% of the time when talking about personal topics, while when talking about formal subjects this was 83.33%.

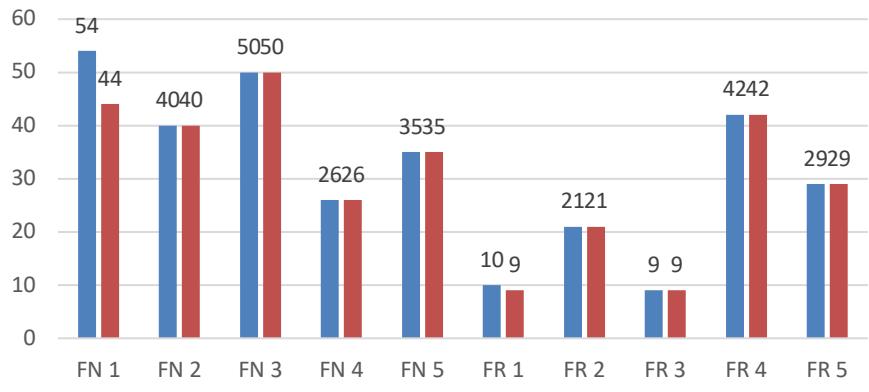
Table 4.7: *t*-test results for the difference between the two groups: young female and young male speakers in their use of the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*

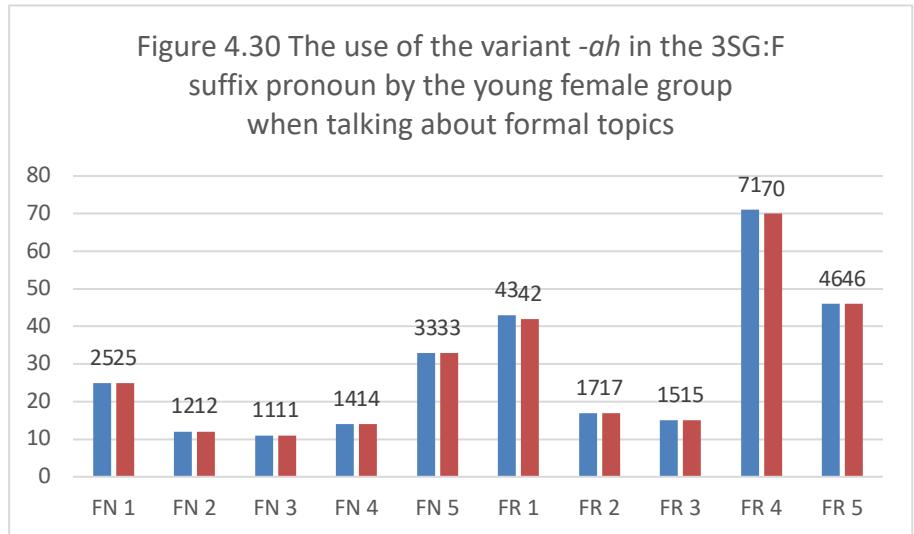
	number	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
young female group	10	0.70	1.30	0.08
young male group	10	0.15	0.49	

The use of the variant *-ah* in the 3SG.F suffix pronoun

Figures 4.29 and 4.30 show the use of the variant *-ah* in the 3SG.F suffix pronoun by the young female speakers when talking about personal topics and formal topics, respectively.

Figure 4.29: The use of the variant *-ah* in the 3SG:F suffix pronoun by the young female group when talking about personal topics





Overall, the young female participants used the variant 96.19% of the time, which indicates that they used the variant *-ah* in the 3SG.F suffix pronoun in almost all their speech. Figure 4.29 shows that this was the case 96.52% of the time when talking about personal topics, and 99.30% of the time when talking about formal topics (Figure 4.30). Thus, the type of topic does not seem to affect the frequency of the variant *-ah* of the 3SG.F suffix pronoun in this group. The overall difference between the two education subgroups is also very small, suggesting that the type of education does not have an influence on use of this variant in the young female participants’ QA speech.

Figures 4.31 and 4.32 show the use of the variant *-ah* in the 3SG.F suffix pronoun by the young male speakers when talking about personal topics and formal topics, respectively.

Figure 4.31: The use of the variant *-ah* in the 3SG:F suffix pronoun by the young male group when talking about personal topics

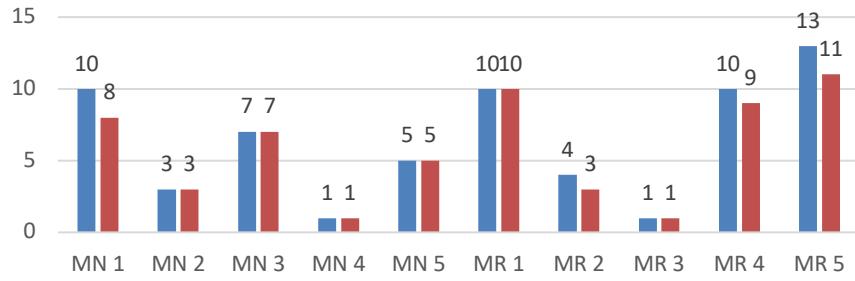
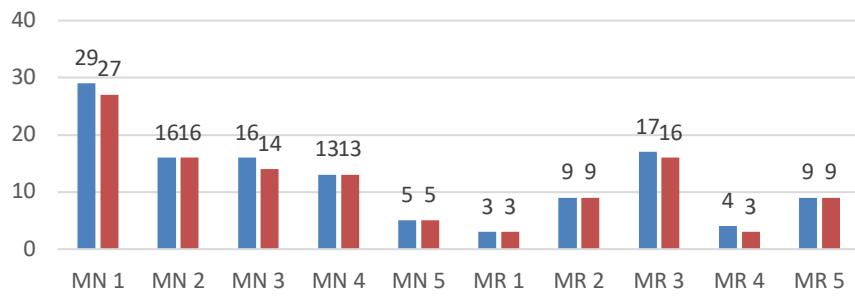


Figure 4.32: The use of the variant *-ah* in the 3SG:F suffix pronoun by the young male group when talking about formal topics



In general, the young male participants applied the variable 93.51% of the time, which is almost the same as the rate of usage by the female participants. The male participants used the variant *-ah* in the 3SG.F suffix pronoun 90.63% of the time when talking about personal topics (Figure 4.31) and 95.04% of the time when talking about formal topics (Figure 4.32). As in the female group, the small difference in percentage between the two topics, as well as the minimal difference between education subgroups, suggest that neither the topic nor the type of education affects

the use of the variant *-ah* in the 3SG.F suffix pronoun in the male participants' QA speech.

The use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun and inflection

Figures 4.33 and 4.34 show the use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun and inflection by the young female participants when talking about personal topics and formal topics, respectively.

Figure 4.33: The use of the 3PL:F suffix pronoun and inflection by the young female participants when talking about personal topics

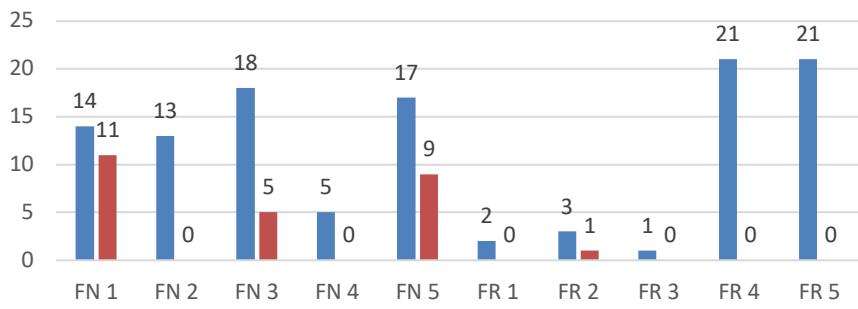
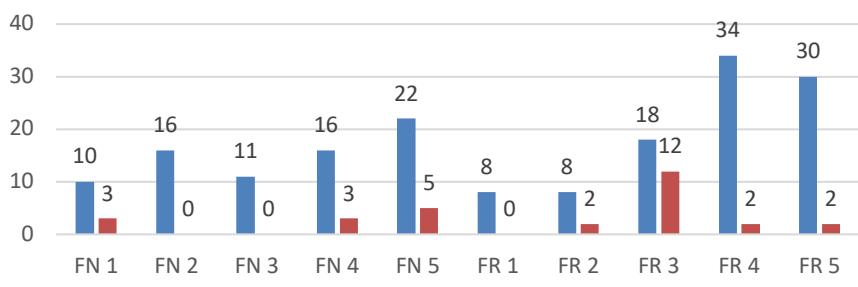


Figure 4.34: The use of the 3PL:F suffix pronoun and inflection by the young female participants when talking about formal topics



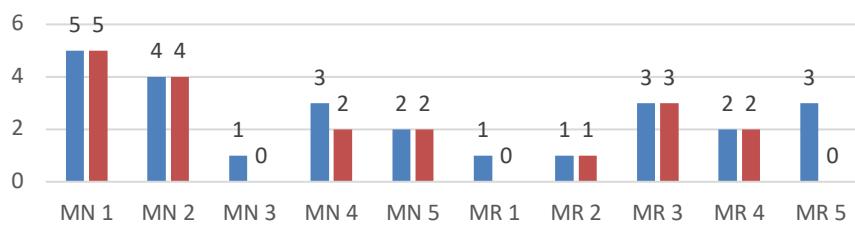
Overall, the young female participants used the variant 19.10% of the time. The numbers are different between topics: the special 3F:PL were used 22.61% of the time when talking about personal topics and 16.76% of the time when talking about formal topics. However, the difference in the use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun in the two different types of topic is statistically not significant as shown in the *t*-test result in Table 4.8. As for the type of education, the two subgroups showed different percentages of use across the two types of topic: when talking about personal topics, the participants who received normal education used the variant more than those who received a religious education, but this pattern is reversed for speech on formal topics.

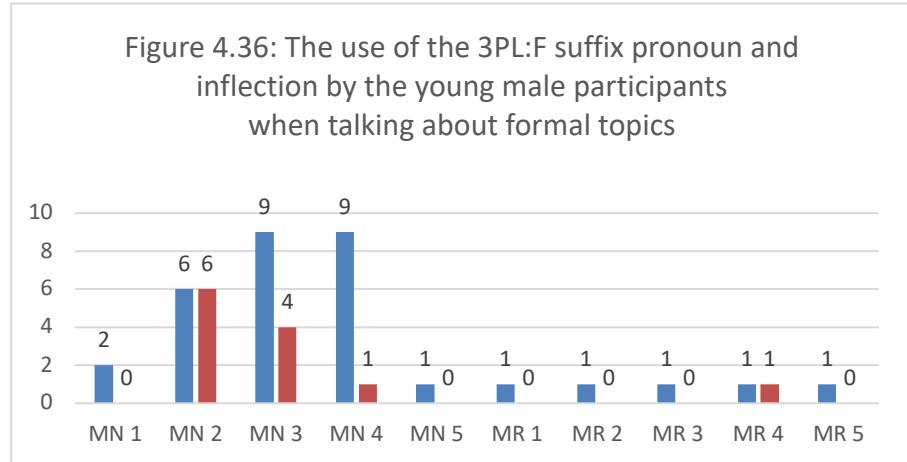
Table 4.8: *t*-test results for the difference in the young female participants' use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun in the two types of topic.

	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
personal topics	2.60	3.39	0.06
formal topics	2.9	2.62	

Figures 4.35 and 4.36 show the use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun and inflection by the young male participants when talking about personal topics and formal topics, respectively.

Figure 4.35: The use of the 3PL:F suffix pronoun and inflection by the young male participants when talking about personal topics





Overall, the male participants used the variant 54.39% of the time. As in the female group, the numbers are a bit different depending on the topic, but this is not statistically significant as the *t*-test result shows (Table 4.9). As for the type of education, the male participants who received normal education seemed to use the variant more than those who received religious education.

Table 4.9: *t*-test results for the difference in the young male participants’ use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun in the two types of topic.

	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
personal topics	0.6	0.97	0.11
formal topics	2	2.54	

Additional notes on use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun and inflection by young QA speakers

The 3PL.F forms were used by the female participants in two situations only:

- when quoting older people; for example, when one of the participants was quoting her father, she said *ru:ħan bas iftaylin* ‘just go and work’, and when a participant was quoting her aunt, she said *xalli:-hin jista:nsin* ‘let them have fun’.
- when referring to feminine inanimate nouns or feminine abstract concepts, such as walls, shoes, or rules; for example: *alqwa:ni:n baħað-hin* ‘some of the rules’, *nħa:l istaθmiri bi-hin* ‘shoes! invest in them’, *jagħidin ma:jaxarbin* ‘they remain without getting ruined’.

The young female participants never used the 3PL.F suffix pronoun when referring to other women. The low rate of usage of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun can be attributed to the availability of two strategies for avoiding its use. The first way is to use the masculine plural pronoun as for both feminine and masculine uses, as is the case in the RA, e.g. *al-bana:t jidžu:n* ‘the girls come’ instead of *jidžin*, *al-bana:t tafki:r-hum* ‘the girls, their thinking’ instead of *tafki:r-hin*. The second method is to use the singular form, particularly for relative clauses. In this approach, a feminine plural noun subject is followed by a relative clause that is feminine singular. Thus, the agreement in the sentence is applied only for the gender, but not the number. This is considered grammatically incorrect in SA, but it seems to be accepted by the younger speakers of QA. On the contrary, the old QA speakers used the 3PL.F suffix with all feminine nouns whether animate or inanimate and they never used the 3PL.M suffix with feminine nouns. For examples: *ħari:m awwal jas'birin* ‘old generation women are patient’; *kint ɻayassil aθ-θja:b wa ɻansfir-hin* ‘I was washing the clothes and hang them to dry’.

Below are two examples of the second method of avoiding the use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun by the young female participants:

- *hi mu min al-bana:t alli tintiqid*
she NEG PREP DET-girls REL 3SG.F.criticise
'she is not of the girls who criticise (s)' instead of 3PL.F *jintaqdin*.
- *al-bana:t at-ta:fha:t alli hamm-ah*
DET-girls DET-silly:F:PL REL interest-3SG.F.POS
'the silly girls whose (her) interest' instead of 3PL.F *hamm-ihi*

The young female speakers' new use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun is fixed and non-arbitrary. They use it and drop it, even within the same sentence, based on the conditions described above. Take for example the sentence:

- *baṣṭ^c al-bana:t jīgis^{u:n} gaṣṣ^{a:t} jaṁniṣ^{u:n-hin}*
some DET.girls 3PL.M.cut hairstyles 3PL.M.disallow-3PL.F.DO
'some girls cut new hairstyles that they disallow'

Here the speaker uses the masculine (or, in this case rather neutral) plural inflection *j-...-u:n* in *jīgis^{u:n}* 'they cut' because it refers to the girls, but uses it in the direct object suffix *-hin* on the verb *jaṁniṣ^{u:n-hin}* 'they disallow them', where it refers to the hairstyles.

Similarly, the following sentence:

- *bana:t wif ra:j-kum b-il-isbu:ṣein alli ra:ḥan*
girls what opinion-2PL.M.POS PREP-DET-weeks REL 3PL.F.go
'girls, what do you think of the past two weeks'

Here, the speaker uses the F:PL form *ra:ḥan* as it refers to the past two weeks.

The second method was used more by the male speakers, who used it to refer to both women and feminine objects, e.g. *aʃa:ṛ tgu:l-ah* ‘things that you say (it)’ instead of *tgu:l-hin*, *aʃa:l jisawj-ah al-wa:ħid* ‘actions that someone does (it)’ instead of *jisawji:-hin*.

4.2.4 Summary

Table 4.10 below summarises the social variables in relation to the linguistic variables as realised in the QA speech of the young generation. This is shown by means of the percentual difference between the highest of the two values (e.g., male gender) and the lowest of the two values (e.g., female gender). In this calculation, the percentual difference between the results for the two variables topic and type of education are calculated on the basis of the data from the two gender groups taken together.

Table 4.10: The social variables in relation to the linguistic variables.

linguistic variables	social variables		
	topic	type of education	gender
affrication of <i>k</i> as <i>ts</i> in the stem	1.04%	0.06%	21.58%
affrication <i>k</i> as <i>ts</i> in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix	3.38%	4.57%	18.89%
affrication of <i>q</i> and <i>g</i> as <i>dz</i>	27.95%	9.18%	43.35%
use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun <i>-n</i> instead of <i>-ni</i>	8.39%	13.11%	3.23%
use of 3SG.F suffix pronoun <i>-ah</i> instead of <i>-aha</i>	3.6%	0.12%	2.68%
use of 3PL feminine suffix pronoun and inflection	22.18%	19.79%	35.29%
total average percentage for all the Linguistic variables	11.09%	7.81%	20.84%

The effect of the social variables in relation to the linguistic variables differed among the six linguistic variables chosen in this investigation. The effect of all the three social variable seems to be limited as its effect on the young QA speech does not exceed 20.84%. Among these social variables, gender has leads to higher differences than topic, and topic leads to higher differences than type of education.

It is important to note that the effect of gender on the affrication *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix cannot be determined accurately as the pronoun hardly surfaced in the corpus of the male group due to the absence of female counterparts in the conversation. The percentage was extracted depending on the relationship between the two values (expected number and the actual number) as they were equal, which seems to indicate that the male speakers, despite the low rate of usage, used the variants *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix whenever they were addressing (in citations) a woman.

4.3 PART 3: Old Qassimi Arabic versus Young Qassimi Arabic

All six QA variants were used extensively by the old speakers. Their percentages of use were never below 76%, for both the genders, and with one exception all between 90% and 100%. Table 4.12 summarises the use of QA variants by both the young and the old generations:

Table 4.12: The use of QA variants by both the young and the old generations.

QA variant	old females	old males	young females	young males
affrication of <i>k</i> as <i>ts</i> in the stem	90.31%	97.11%	0.74%	22.32%
affrication <i>k</i> as <i>ts</i> in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix	100%	100%	81.11%	-
affrication of <i>q</i> and <i>g</i> as <i>dz</i>	76.40%	93.13%	2.60%	45.95%
use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun <i>-n</i> instead of <i>-ni</i>	100%	100%	91.41%	94.64%
use of 3SG.DO suffix pronoun <i>-ah</i> instead of <i>-aha</i>	100%	100%	96.19%	93.51%
use of 3PL.F suffix pronoun and inflection	98.77%	100%	19.10%	54.39%

Some QA variables are relatively stable over the two age groups, even though the younger group has a little bit more variation than the older group. These variables are: the affrication *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix, the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*, and the use of the feminine suffix *-ah* instead of *-aha* in the third person singular.

On the other hand, the younger generation did not give up the use of 3PL.F suffix pronoun completely, but they also found out alternative ways to avoid it. They also showed extremely weak usage of two QA variables: the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem, and the affrication of *q* and *g* as *dz*. The low percentage of use of these two variants by the young generation looks like a further development of a pattern already weakly present among the old generation. Even though these two variants are used at a high percentage by older QA speakers, they had the lowest percentage of use among all the six variants. This might suggest that the change in the use of these two variants have started in the old generation, with a sharp decrease in the young generation. Another cause of the dramatic difference between the two generations with regard to these two variables relates to the vocabulary choice of the young generation. In other words, many lexical items that contain *dz* or *ts* in the stem were either substituted with new or more common lexical items, or underwent more general phonological changes such as vowel changes. The following table shows some examples of words that contain *ts* in the stem or *dz* that were used by the old QA speakers alongside their new equivalents as used by the young QA speakers.

old QA form	young QA form	description of the difference	gloss
<i>tsa:lmuh</i>	<i>kalmuh</i> ~ <i>ittas'li ɬali:h</i>	- longer vowels were substituted with shorter ones and vice versa - a new lexical item was adopted	call him
<i>mitsna:t</i>	<i>ama:kin</i>	a new derivative of the lexical item was adopted	places
<i>al-ħatsi</i>	<i>al-kala:m</i>	a new lexical item was adopted	the talk
<i>tsibrat</i>	<i>kbarat</i>	phonetic change, i.e., different form	she got older
<i>ði:ts</i>	<i>haði:k</i>	different form	that (feminine)
<i>midzbil</i>	<i>dʒa:j</i>	an existing lexical item with a similar meaning was used	he is coming
<i>al-dza:blih</i>	<i>bukra:</i>	a new lexical item was adopted	tomorrow
<i>mdza:bil</i>	<i>gidda:m</i>	a new lexical item was adopted	in front of
<i>miɻlidz-in</i> <i>buh</i>	<i>mwalliʃ-in</i> <i>buh</i>	a new lexical item was adopted	he burns it
<i>midzfi</i>	<i>mɻtˤi:k ðˤahr-</i> <i>uh</i>	a description of the adjective was used	he turns his back on you

However, it is important to mention that the data showed that the young generation avoided *ts* in the stem and *dz* even in some of the lexical items that are shared between the two generations, such as: *mitsa:n* > *mika:n* ‘a place’, *?atsil* > *?akil* ‘food’, *sardz* > *sarg* ‘east’, *ðˤi:dz* > *ðˤi:g* ‘narrowness’.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter presents the use of six QA variants used by two age groups. Part 1 of this chapter provides clear evidence that all six QA linguistic variants investigated in this

study are used extensively by the old QA speakers. This part also shows that there is no significant difference in the use of these QA variants between the old female speakers and old male speakers except in one variant, i.e., the affrication of *q* and *g* as *dz*.

Part 2 presents the use of six QA variants used by the young generation when speaking to friends or family members. The use of these six variants in the young generation was investigated in relation to three social variables: topic, type of education and gender. In general, the results showed that these three social variables do not have a major influence in the use of the six QA variants used by the young generation. However, there were important differences with old QA speakers' group. The young QA showed an extensive use in only three of the studied variants: the affrication *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix, the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*, and the use of the 3SG.F suffix *-ah*. As for the use of 3PL feminine suffix pronoun, the younger generation found out alternative ways to avoid it. On the other hand, the young speakers showed an extremely low usage of two other QA variables: the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem, and affrication of *q* and *g* as *dz*. This seems to continue a tendency already found in the old generation group. Besides the investigation of the six QA variants, part 2 also showed that the two other variants *q* and *g* appeared to create different words in the dialect that arise under diglossic situations.

Part 3 presents a comparison of the use of the six variants between the two age groups. It also suggests a reason for the low of use of the two variants: the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem, and affrication of *q* and *g* as *dz* by the young generation. The difference of use between the two generations with regard to these two variables can be related to the lexical choices of the young generation as they tend to substitute the words that contain both *dz* or *ts* in the stem with new more common vocabulary. However, the linguistic differences between the two generations are not limited to the six variants investigated in this study, but include phonological, syntactic, and semantic differences as well as differences in narration style.

Chapter 5

The use of the Qassimi Arabic variants in the White Dialect

Introduction

In the pilot study, the young Qassimi Arabic (QA) speakers reported that they use that what they call the White Dialect (WD) in interactions with people who are not speakers of QA, and that they try to avoid certain QA features when having such interactions.

This chapter will first describe the use of the six QA variables introduced in Chapter 3 in contexts where they would be expected to use the WD (see 5.1.1 for details). This will be compared to the rates of use of these six QA variables in in-group QA speech as produced by the same young speakers. The following chapter (Chapter 6) provides more detailed description on the main features of the WD speech used by the young QA speakers.

5.1 PART 1: The six Qassimi Arabic variants in the White Dialect of QA speakers

5.1.1 Methodology

As mentioned in Chapter 2 (section 2.2.3 Stage 2), the participants in this study were requested to provide two video or audio recordings of their social media posts: one directed to a Saudi audience, and the other for a general Arabic-speaking audience. The young participants explicitly confirmed that these posts represent a way of speaking that they would call “White Dialect”. The reason for testing the two types of audiences was to check whether they speak differently to a closed audience (Saudis) than to a broader audience of Arabs in general.

5.1.2 Analysis

The data was analysed in the same way as the in-group QA speech in Chapter 4 (section 4.1.2); that is, by calculating the difference between two main values: the number of times when the QA variant is expected to be used (the expected number), and the number of times a speaker actually used the QA variant (the actual number). The percentage of the linguistic variant use was calculated based on these two values.

Each linguistic variable is discussed individually. The discussion of each linguistic variable includes four figures: the first two figures present the results from the female group, when addressing Saudis, and when addressing Arabs in general, and the other two figures present the results from the male group, when talking to Saudis, and when talking to Arabs in general.

5.1.3 The use of the six QA variants in the WD

In this section, I present the data concerning the six variables described in chapter 3 in the social media posts produced by the young QA speakers.

The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem

Figure 5.1 shows the use of this variant when the young female speakers were using the WD to address a Saudi audience, while Figure 5.1 shows their use of this variant when they were addressing Arabs in general.

Figure 5.1: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem by the young female group when addressing a Saudi audience

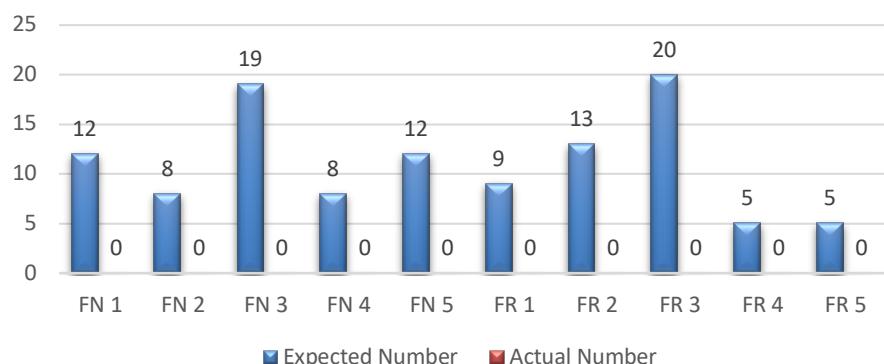
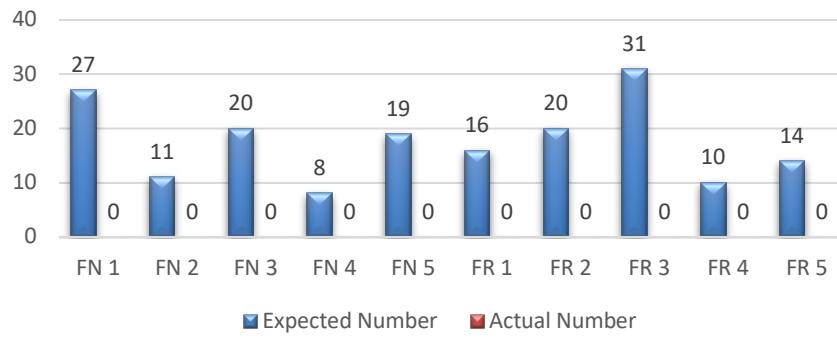


Figure 5.2: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem by the young female group when addressing Arabs in general



As the two figures 5.1 and 5.2 show, the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem was never used by the female group in their WD speech.

Figures 5.3 and 5.4 show the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem by the male participants when addressing Saudis, and when addressing Arabs in general, respectively.

Figure 5.3: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in stem by the young male group when addressing a Saudi audience

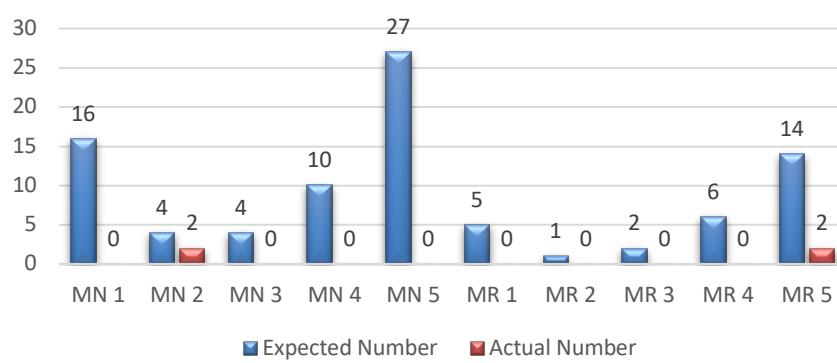
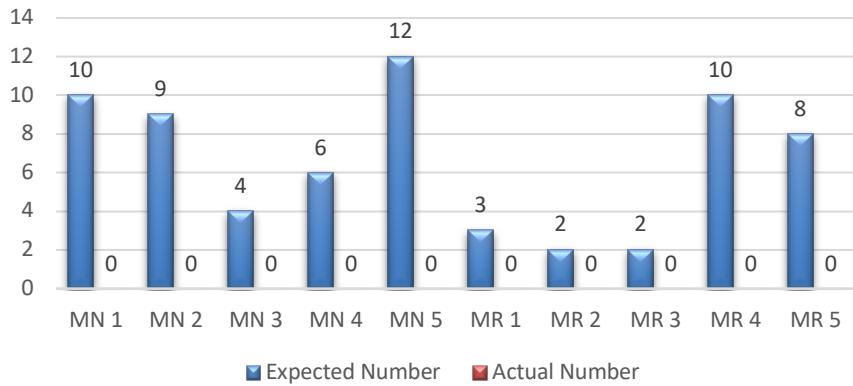


Figure 5.4: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem by the young male group when addressing Arabs in general



Two young male participants (namely MN 2 and MR5) used the variant in their WD speech when addressing a Saudi audience. They used it specifically in two words *tsiðb* ‘lie, not true’, and *tsinnuh* ‘it he looks like’. Meanwhile, the two participants avoided the use of the *ts* variant in the stem when addressing the Arabs in general even in the same words that they affricated when addressing the Saudi audience.

The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix

Figures 5.5 and 5.6 show the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix by the female participants when addressing Saudis, and when addressing Arabs in general, respectively.

Figure 5.5: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG:F pronominal suffix by the young female group when addressing a Saudi audience

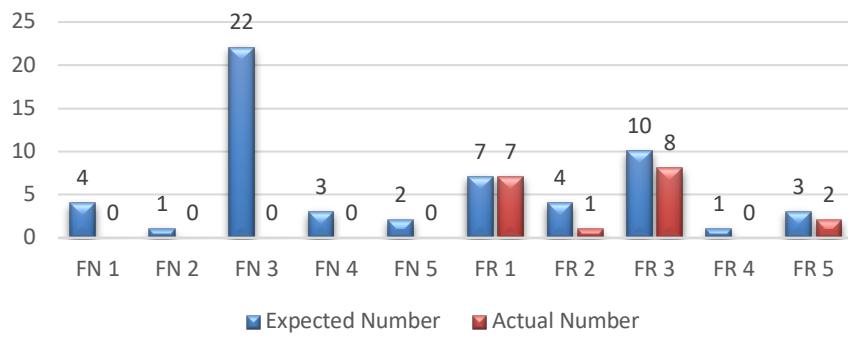
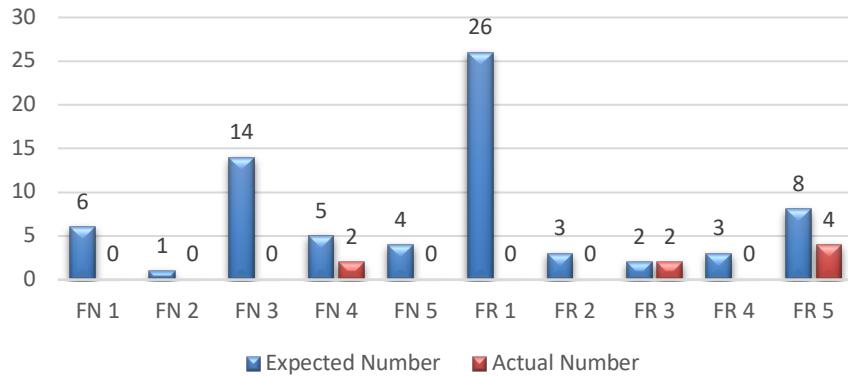


Figure 5.6: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG:F pronominal suffix by the young female group when addressing Arabs in general



Overall, the two figures show that the *ts* variant was used in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix by the young female speakers at a rate of 32% when addressing a Saudi audience and of 11.11% when addressing Arabs in general. It is important to note that the expected number of the variant *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix is low compared to the percentages found in the in-group speech of the young female group. The rationale behind this low rate of the expected number is that the young female

participants used an alternative method to avoid the affrication in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix: they used the 2PL.M pronominal suffix where the 2SG.F pronominal suffix would be expected, as illustrated by the following examples:

- (1) *istaxdimi: af-/a:mbu: hag-kum* (instead of) *hag-its*
 IMP.F.SG.use DET.shampoo PREP-2PL.M
 ‘use your shampoo’
- (2) *irdʒiʃi: il-beit-kum* (instead of) *il-beit-its*
 IMP.F.SG.go.back PREP-house-2M.PL
 ‘go back to your house’
- (3) *istaxdimi: al-mitwaffir ʃind-kum* (instead of) *ʃind-its*
 IMP.F.SG.use DET-available PREP-2M.PL
 ‘use what is available to you’

This strategy was also noticed by Al-Azragi (2007) when investigating the affrication in what she calls “the Najdi dialect”. She referred to it as one of the indirect methods of avoiding the 2SG.F pronominal suffix. According to Al-Azragi, speakers use this strategy only when they are talking about a shared possession, such as a house which is shared by all family members and is not exclusive to the addressed female. The results of my study concerning the use of the *ts* variant in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix in the WD speech of the young female group correspond to Al-Azragi’s (2007), as the participants never used this strategy when referring to the private property of the addressed female.

In addition, in my corpus, I detected another method that the speakers use to refer to the private property of a female addressee while avoiding affrication: namely, avoiding the possessive pronoun and expressing the object without pronominal reference, as in the following examples:

- (4) *al-karbuhaidra:t bsr̩ih tarfaṣ as-sikkar wa bsr̩ih tinazl-uh*
 DET-carbohydrates rapidly 3F.SG.raise DET-sugar CONJ rapidly 3SG.F.lower-
 3SG.M.DO
 ‘the carbohydrates rapidly raise and lower the sugar level’

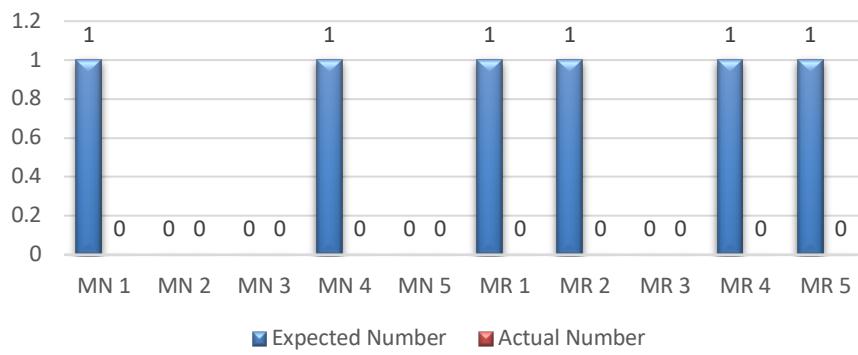
Here, instead of saying *sikkar-ts* ‘your sugar’ using the feminine possessive pronoun, the speaker uses an unpossessed noun with the definite article.

- (5) *bida:l ma tinazli:n wazin tinazli:n ʃað'äl*
 instead CONJ 2SG.F.lose weight 2SG.F.lose muscle
 ‘instead of losing weight you lose muscle’

In this example, instead of saying *wazin-ts* ‘your weight’ and *ʃað'äl-ts* ‘your muscles’, the speaker refers to the concepts in general without the use of possessive pronouns.

Figures 5.7 and 5.8 show the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix by the male participants when addressing Saudis, and when addressing Arabs, respectively.

Figure 5.7: The affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG:F pronominal suffix by the young male group when addressing a Saudi audience



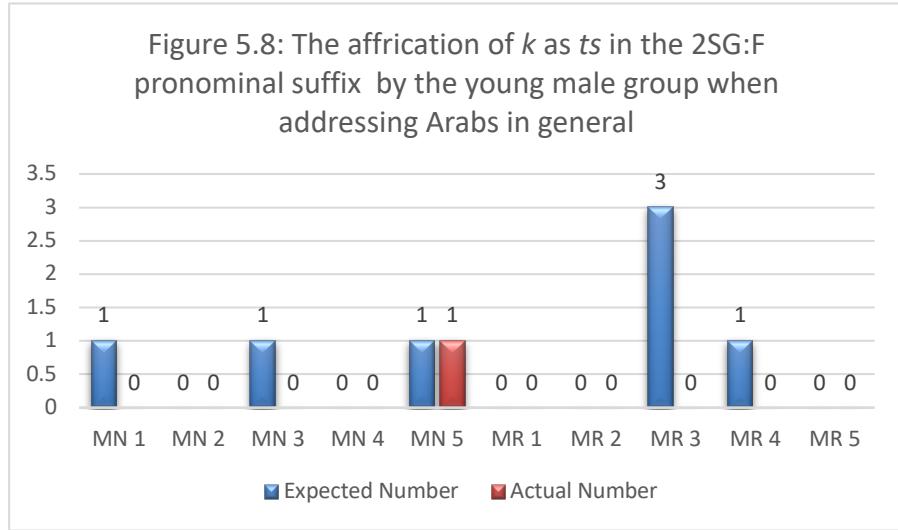


Figure 5.7 and 5.8 show that the expected number for the use of this variant by the male group in their WD speech is very low, thus, it is impossible to come up with a conclusion. As mentioned previously (Chapter 4), it is difficult to investigate affrication in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix in the young male group as this kind of affrication requires the participants to be addressing female counterparts. In their social media posts, the young male participants address both the Saudi audience and the Arabs in general using the 3PL.M pronominal suffix as they were speaking about general topics that concern both genders.

The affrication of *g* or *q* as *dz*

Figures 5.9 and 5.10 show the affrication of *q* or *g* as *dz* by the female participants when addressing Saudis, and when addressing Arabs in general, respectively.

Figure 5.9: The affrication of *q* or *g* as *dz* by the young female group when addressing a Saudi audience

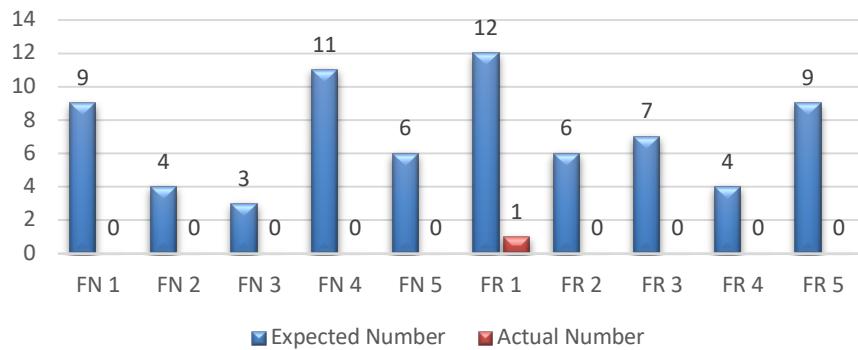


Figure 5.10: The affrication of *q* or *g* as *dz* by the young female group when addressing Arabs in general

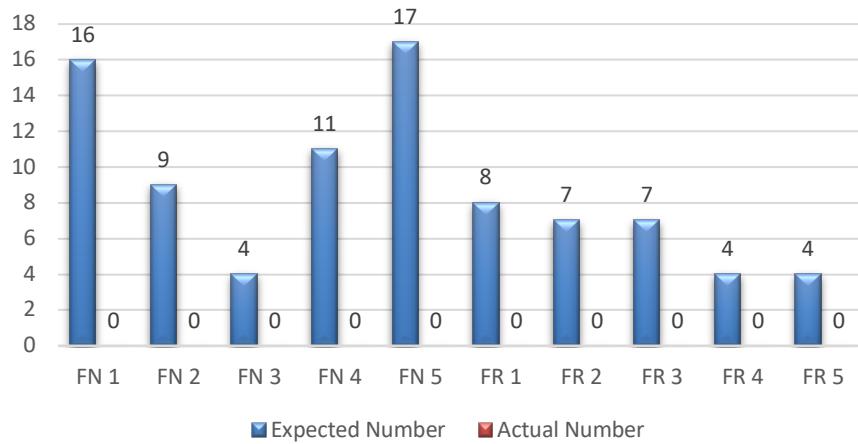


Figure 5.9 shows that the variant was used only once by one participant. Among all the 12 expected times in her WD speech, participant FR1 used the variant *dz* once in the word *s'a:dzih* ‘she is honest’, while she pronounced it without

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affrication two other times. The other 9 female participants did not use the variant *dz* in their WD speech at all.

Figures 5.11 and 5.12 show the affrication of *q* or *g* as *dz* by the male participants when addressing Saudi audience, and when addressing Arabs in general, respectively.

Figure 5.11: The affrication of *q* or *g* as *dz* by the young male group when addressing a Saudi audience

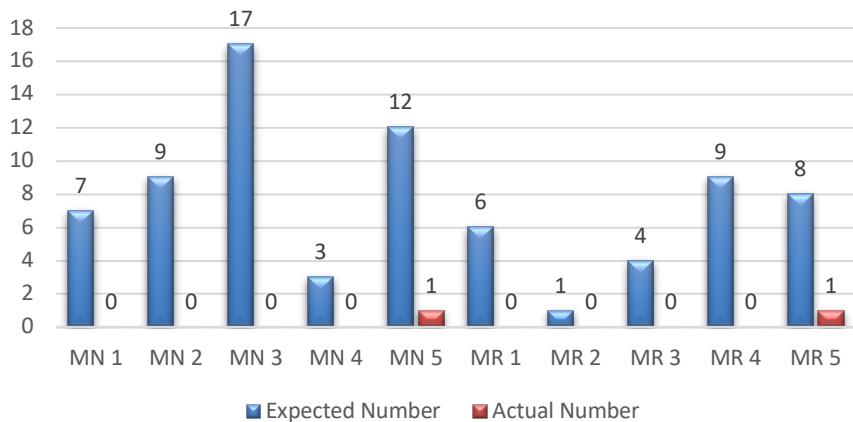
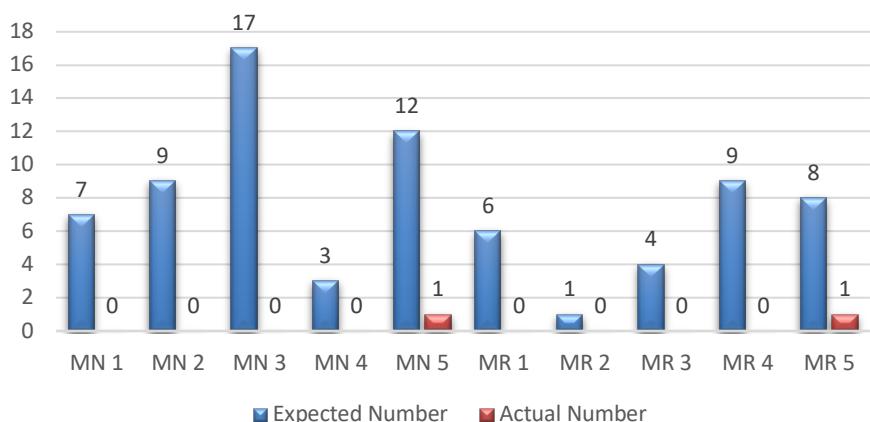


Figure 5.12: The affrication of *q* or *g* as *dz* by the young male group when addressing Arabs in general



As in the female group, the *dz* variant was used only in one word *s'a:dz* ‘he is honest’ which was pronounced as *s'a:dig* 3 other times by the same participants (MN5 and MR5).

The use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun -*n* instead of -*ni*

Figures 5.13 and 5.14 show the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun -*n* instead of -*ni* by the female participants when addressing a Saudi audience, and when addressing Arabs in general, respectively.

Figure 5.13: The use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun -*n* instead of -*ni* by the female participants when addressing a Saudi audience

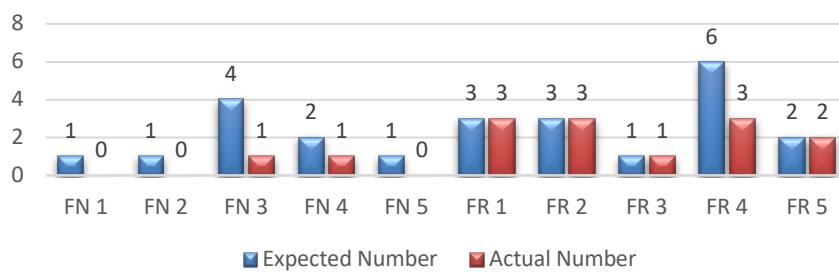
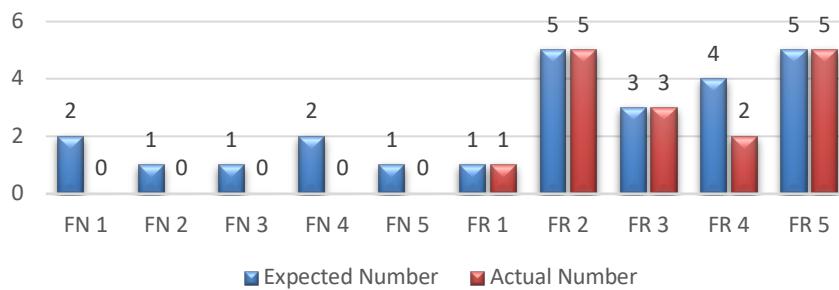


Figure 5.14: The use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun -*n* instead of -*ni* by the female participants when addressing Arabs in general



Overall, the female participants used the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of its other variant *-ni* in their WD speech with a rate of 69.39%. Both figures (5.13 and 5.14) show that the young female speakers who received religious education (FR1-FR5) used the variant more than those who received a normal education (FN1-FN5). The difference of use between the two subgroups in the female group is statically significant as shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: *t*-test results for the difference between the two female subgroups' use of the variant 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of its variant *-ni*

	number	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
FN1 - FN5	5	11.11	15.71	0.03
FR1 – FR5	5	84.45	6.29	

Figures 5.15 and 5.16 show the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* by the male participants when addressing Saudi audience, and when addressing Arabs in general, respectively.

Figure 5.15: The use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* by the male participants when addressing a Saudi audience

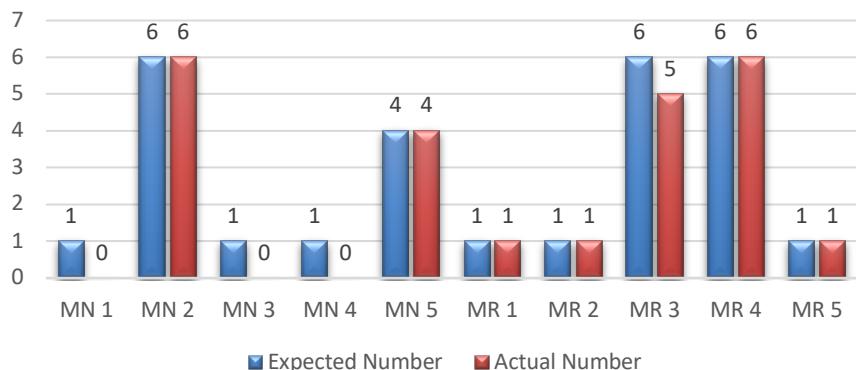
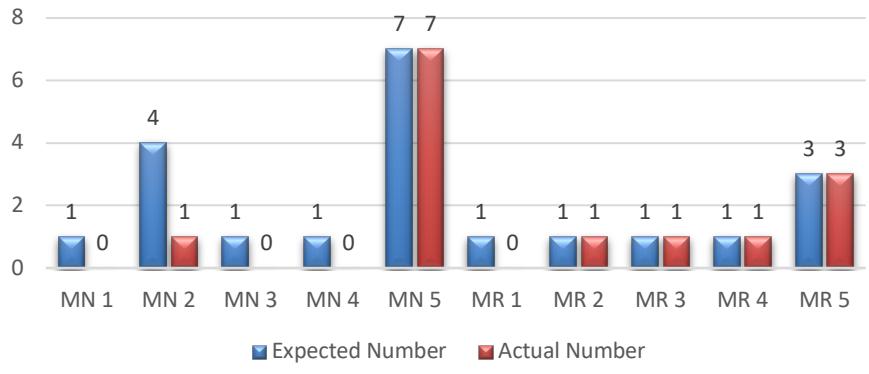


Figure 5.16: The use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* by the male participants when addressing Arabs in general



Overall, the male participants used the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* in their WD speech with a rate of 77.55%. The rate of use in the male group is higher than that in the female group; however, the difference of use between the two groups is not statically significant as shown in Table 5.2. Moreover, unlike in the female group, the type of education does not seem to affect the use of this variant in the WD of the male speakers as the *t*-test result shows no statistically significant differences between the two male subgroups (shown in Table 5.3.)

Table 5.2: The *t*-test results of the difference in the use of the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* in the WD by the female and male groups.

	number	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
female group	10	61.17	4.01	0.27
male group	10	76.19	13.47	

Table 5.3: *t*-test results for the difference between the two male subgroups' use of the variant 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of its variant *-ni*.

	number	mean	standard deviation	t- test
MN1 - MN5	5	67.03	13.99	0.17
MR1 – MR5	5	89.52	5.39	

In general, the expected numbers of use of the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* by both the two groups in the WD is lower than that in their in-group QA speech. The reason behind this is that young QA speakers are using two alternative ways to avoid the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* in their WD speech. The first way is by using the 1SG independent pronoun *ana*: ‘I’, as in the following two examples:

- (6) *gill-uh ana: ɻafrah b-hada:ja:-h*
 IMP.M.SG.tell-3SG.M I 1SG.delight PREP-gifts-3SG.M.POS
 ‘tell him that I get delighted by his gifts’

Instead of:

- gill-uh tara:-h jifarħa-n b-hada:ja:-h*
 IMP.M.SG.tell-3SG.M CONJ-3SG.M 3SG.M.delight-1SG.DO PREP-gifts-3SG.M.POS
 ‘tell him that he delights me with his gifts.’

- (7) *hu: jadri innuh⁸ ana: atð'a:jag*
 he 3SG.M.know CONJ I 1SG.get annoyed
 ‘he knows that I get annoyed’

instead of:

- hu: jadri innuh jð'a:jiga-n*
 he 3SG.M.know CONJ 3.SG.M.annoy-1SG.DO
 ‘he knows that he annoys me’

⁸ *innuh* is a neutral QA conjunction ‘that’.

The second alternative method to avoid the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* in the WD speech is to speak in a general sense without using the first-person pronoun, by using the form: noun phrase + adjective + *binisbah li:* ‘for me’, as in the following two examples:

- (8) *h-al-mauð'u:ɬ migrif binisbah li:*
 DEM-DET-issue disgusting concerning PREP.1SG
 ‘this issue is disgusting for me’

instead of:

h-al-mauð'u:ɬ jigrifa-n
 DEM-DET-issue 3SG.M.disgust-1SG.DO
 ‘this issue disgusts me’

- (9) *ad-dait ŋaða:b binisbah li:*
 DET-diet torture concerning PREP.1SG
 ‘the diet is a torture for me’

instead of:

ad-dait jaɻaðba-n
 DET-diet 3SG.M.torture-1SG.DO
 ‘the diet tortures me’

- (10) *al-dʒa:mʃih. yaθa: binisbah li: h-al-ɻajja:m*
 DET-university a nuisance concerning PREP.1SG DEM-DET-days
 ‘the university is a nuisance for me these days’

instead of:

al-dʒa:mʃih. tiyɪθa-n h-al-ɻajja:m
 DET-university 3SG.F..annoy-1SG.DO DEM-DET-days
 ‘the university annoys me these days’

The second method was observed only in expressions with negative connotations. Specifically, it occurred with just three verbs in the whole dataset: ‘disgust’, ‘annoy’, and ‘torture’, as in the examples just given.

The presence of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* fluctuates in WD speech. This is especially noticeable when multiple possible contexts occur in one sentence, as in the following example:

mumkin all'ah ma aʕt'a:-ni ijah li?ann-uh jið'ir-an
 maybe Allah NEG 3SG.M.give-1SG.DO it because-3SG.M 3SG.M.harm-1SG.DO
 ‘Allah might not give it to me because it harms me’

In this example, the speaker used the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-ni* at the beginning of the sentence *aʕt'a:-ni*, but went back to the QA 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* at the end of the same sentence *jið'ir-an*.

The speakers do not adhere exclusively to one single approach regarding the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* when using the WD. Rather, they tend to alternate between the four approaches: for example, they use *-ni* at the beginning of their discourse, then they switch to *-n*; then, after a while they alternate between the two alternative methods of avoidance mentioned above; then they go back to *-ni*. Ultimately, the use of the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* is not stable in the WD, in contrast to its situation in in-group QA speech.

The use of the 3SG.F suffix variant *-ah*

Figures 5.17 and 5.18 show the use of this variant by the female participants when addressing Saudi audience, and when addressing Arabs in general, respectively.

Figure 5.17: The use of the 3SG:F suffix variant *-ah* by the female group when addressing a Saudi audience

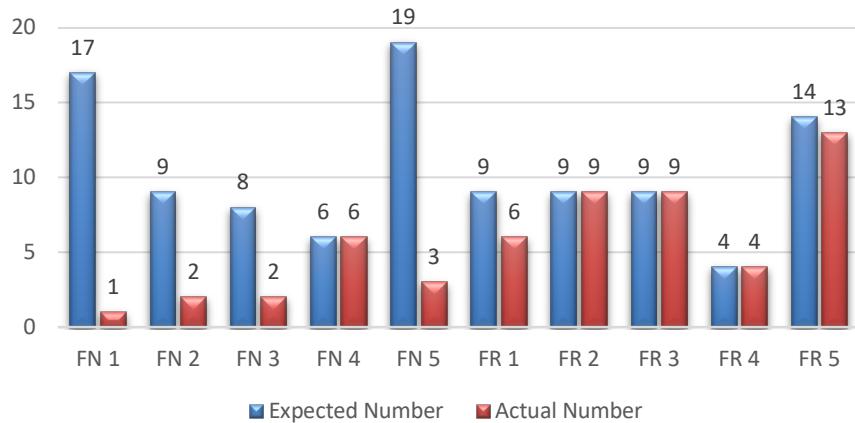
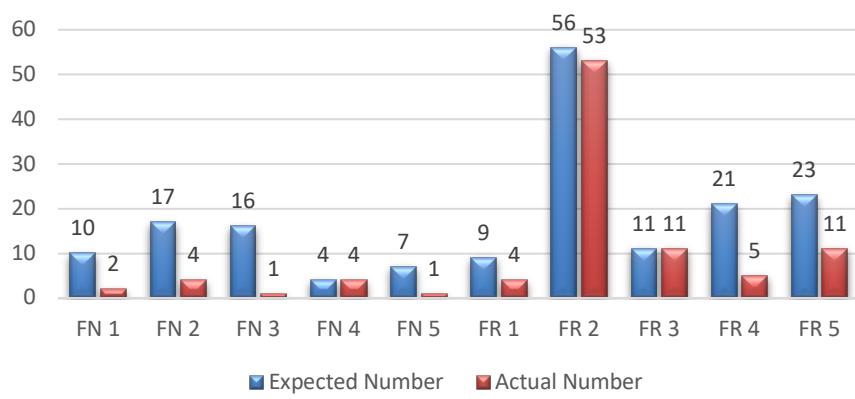


Figure 5.18: The use of the 3SG:F suffix variant *-ah* by the female group when addressing Arabs in general



In general, the variant *-ah* was used in the 3SG.F suffix pronoun in the females' WD speech with a rate of 54.32%. The use of this variant is almost the same when addressing the two types of audience; as they used this variant with a rate of 52.88% when addressing Saudi audience and with a rate of 55.17% when addressing Arabs. Similar to the female group's result when investigating the variant 1SG.DO

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suffix pronoun *-n*, the Qassimi variant *-ah* was found more in the WD speech of the female speakers who received the religious education (FR1-FR5). The difference in the use of this variant among the two types of education is statistically significant as the *t*-test result shows in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: *t*-test results for the difference between the two female subgroups’ use of the variant the 3SG.F suffix variant *-ah*

	number	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
FN1 - FN5	5	22.98	1.07	0.03
FR1 – FR5	5	80.56	14.93	

Figures 5.19 and 5.20 show the use of this variant by the male participants when addressing Saudi audience, and when addressing Arabs in general, respectively.

Figure 5.19: The use of the 3SG:F suffix variant *-ah* by the male group when addressing a Saudi Audience

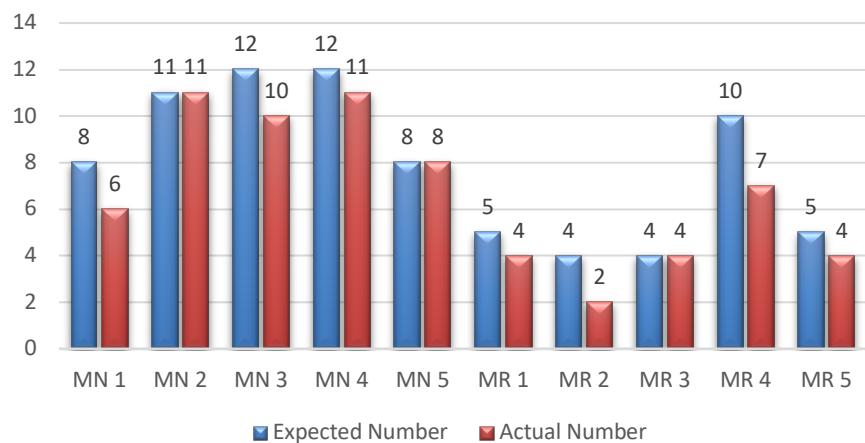
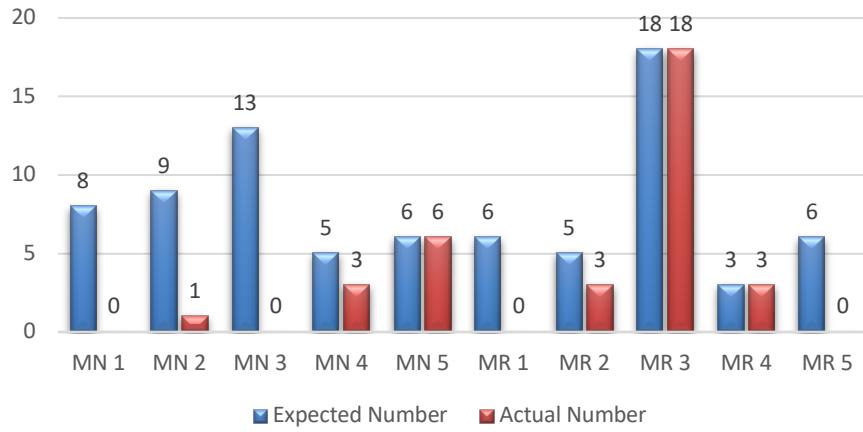


Figure 5.20: The use of the 3SG:F suffix variant *-ah* by the male group when addressing Arabs in general



Overall, in the males' WD speech the 3SG.F suffix variant *-ah* was used with a rate of 63.92%. Unlike the female group, the male participants showed a significant difference in their use of this variant when addressing the two types of audiences as the *t*-test result shows in Table 5.5. When addressing a Saudi audience, the male group used the variant with a rate of 84.81%, while when addressing Arabs in general, they used it with a rate of 43.04%. However, the male group did not show any difference concerning the use of this variant that are related to the type of education they have received.

Table 5.5: *t*-test result for the difference in the male group's use of the variant the 3SG.F suffix variant *-ah* between the two types of audience.

	mean	standard deviation	<i>t</i> - test
Saudi audience	1.2	1.03	0.04
Arabs in general	1.2	4.40	

The data collected show that in the WD the use of the 3SG.F variant *-ah* is unstable among all the participants. They all seemed to start with the non-Qassimi

variant -(a)ha when beginning to talk and give it up once they started to get deeper into their speeches or arguments. Speakers’ awareness of this variant in QA gave rise to many issues concerning number and gender agreement in their WD speech. This phenomenon will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

The data collected also show that there seems to be a correlation between keeping the vowel *a* in the feminine pronoun -(a)ha and recurrent use of the QA preposition *bi* ‘in’ in situations where Riyadh Arabic (RA) would use the preposition *fi*:. Thus, as the equivalent of RA *fi:-ha*: ‘in it’, they use the QA preposition to give as *b-aha*: ‘in it’. This is unusual, as the prepositional phrase is *b-ah* in QA. Thus the form *b-aha*: neither reflects QA nor RA.

There is an interesting difference in the frequent use of the non-Qassimi 3SG.F suffix pronoun -(a)ha and the maintenance of the Qassimi 3SG.M suffix pronoun -uh, as opposed to RA -ah. This might be one reason behind their report in the pilot that people “sound like Qassimis” even when they are using the WD. One possible explanation is that the speakers are aware that the masculine pronoun form in RA is phonetically the same as the feminine form in QA and the young speakers choose forms that are maximally unambiguous. While -ah can be interpreted as masculine or feminine according to the dialect, -aha and -uh, even though coming from different dialects, are unambiguous as to the intended gender. The following table shows an example, ‘her/his book’, of how the feminine and the masculine pronouns are treated differently in the WD:

	3SG.F	3SG.M
WD	<i>kita:b-aha ~ kita:b-ah</i>	<i>kita:b-uh</i>
QA	<i>kita:b-ah</i>	<i>kita:b-uh</i>
RA	<i>kita:b-aha</i>	<i>kita:b-ah</i>

The use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun and inflection

Figures 5.21 and 5.22 show the use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun by the female participants when addressing Saudi audience, and when addressing Arabs in general, respectively.

Figure 5.21: The use of the 3PL:F suffix pronoun and inflection by the female participants when addressing a Saudi audience

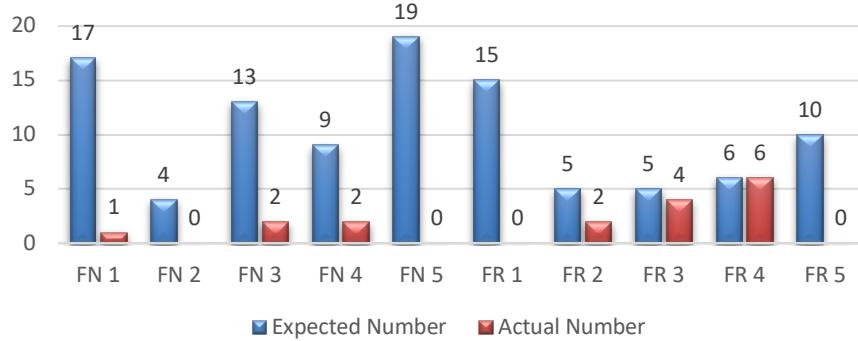
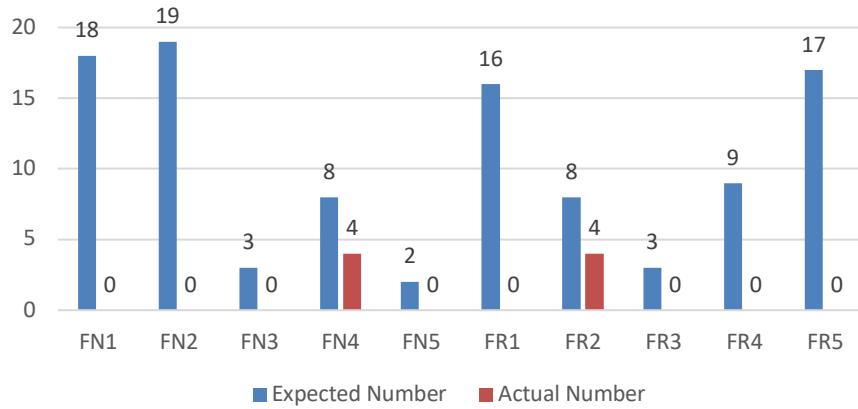


Figure 5.22: The use of the 3PL:F suffix pronoun and inflection by the female participants when addressing Arabs in general



Overall, the female group used the 3PL.F suffix pronoun and inflection with a rate of 12.14%. With a low rate of use of this variant by the female group, investigating the difference in use between the two different types of audience would not provide reliable conclusions.

Figures 5.23 and 5.24 show the use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun by the male participants when addressing a Saudi audience, and when addressing Arabs in general, respectively.

Figure 5.23: The use of the 3PL:F suffix pronoun and inflection by the male participants when addressing a Saudi audience

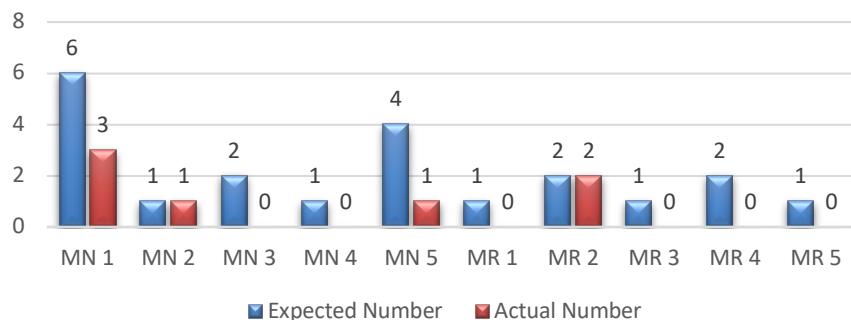
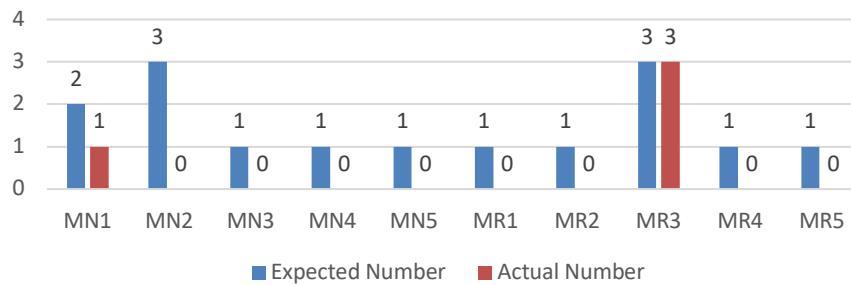


Figure 5.24: The use of the 3PL:F suffix pronoun and inflection by the male participants when addressing Arabs in general



The male group used the 3PL.F suffix pronoun with a rate of 30.56%. In general, both the female and male groups were avoiding the use of the 3PL.F suffix pronoun in their WD speech. There is a clear difference between the in-group uses and the WD speech in the social media posts. In conversations among each other, the female QA speakers used 3PL.F suffix pronoun and inflection only with inanimate objects and abstract concepts. In the WD, however, the 3PL.F suffix pronoun and inflection are rarely used at all, both by the female and the male speakers. Instead, the speakers either use the plural pronoun *-hum* that stands for both masculine and feminine uses in RA, but only for masculine uses in QA, or they use the feminine singular pronoun *-(a)ha*. The following examples contrast how the 3PL.F suffix pronoun was used in the in-group QA data and how it was used in the WD (note that every QA and WD example in the following table was produced by the same speaker):

QA	WD
<i>al-mawa:d alli: darasti:-hin</i> DET-courses REL 2SG.F.study- 3PL.F.DO 'the courses that you have studied'	<i>at-taxas^{us}a:t alli jadrusu:n-aha</i> DET-majors REL 3PL.M.study-3SG.F.DO 'the majors that they study'
<i>mihi:b jit^{ab}gin al-qawa:ni:n</i> NEG.F 3PL.F.apply DET-rules 'they do not apply the rules'	<i>keif tu:s^{af}-hum</i> how 3SG.F.describe-3PL.DO 'how she describes them' (the speaker was referring to a feminine noun)
<i>t^{umu}:ha:t-i: alli: ?abya:-hin</i> ambitions-1SG.POS REL 1SG.want-PL.F.DO 'my ambitions that I want'	<i>astaxdim ziju:t tarf^{ib}-aha ?aqwa:</i> 1SG.use oils 3SG.F.moisture-3SG.F.DO stronger 'I use oils with more moisturising effect'

Sometimes, the switch to the use of the feminine singular pronoun to substitute the 3PL.F suffix pronoun is followed by the use of the QA-specific variant *-ah* instead of *-aha*, as in the following example:

?ayli:-hum ɻa-n-na:r baɻduh as'afit:-h wa aʃrub-ah
 1SG.boil-3PL.M.DO PREP-DET-fire then 1SG.rinse-3SG.F.DO and 1SG.drink-
 3SG.F.DO
 ‘I boil them on the fire, I rinse it and drink it’

min ar-riwa:ja:t alli: ɻagra-h da:jim
 PREP DET-novels REL 1SG.read-3SG.F.DO perpetually
 ‘from the novels that I read all the time’

As with the other QA variants when they are avoided in the WD, there were a few cases where speakers used the 3PL.F suffix pronoun and avoided it in the same sentence, as in the following examples:

al-mawa:qif alli: taktib-hum lamma asmaɻ-hin
 DET-situations REL 3SG.F.write-3PL.DO when 1SG.hear-3PL.F.DO
 ‘when I hear the situations that she writes about’

ɻala:qat-ha bi-l-ɻaʃja:? *alli: tiftri-hin wa keif tu:s'af-hum*
 relationship-3SG.F.POS PREP-DET-things REL 3SG.F.buy-3PL.F.DO and how
 3SG.F.describe-3PL.DO
 ‘her relationship with the things that she buys and how she describes them’.

5.1.4 Summary

In general, the use of the six QA variant in the WD was lower than that in the QA in-group speech of the young generation. Moreover, the female group showed lower use compared to the male group as shown in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6. The difference in the percentage of use of the six QA variants in the WD between the female and male groups (for both types of audience).

QA variant	female group	male group
the affrication of <i>k</i> as <i>ts</i> in the stem	0%	2.58%
the affrication of <i>k</i> as <i>ts</i> in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix	20.16%	n/a
the affrication of <i>q</i> or <i>g</i> as <i>dz</i>	0.63%	1.87%
the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun <i>-n</i> instead of <i>-ni</i>	69.39%	77.55%
The use of the 3SG.F suffix variant <i>-ah</i>	54.32%	63.92%
the use of 3PL feminine suffix pronoun and inflection	12.14%	30.56%

Only two out of six QA variants were highly used over the two gender groups in their social media posts: the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*, and the 3SG.F suffix pronoun *-ah* instead of *-(a)ha*. The other variables were used in a low ratio in the following descending order: the 3PL feminine suffix pronoun and inflection, the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix, the affrication of *q* or *g* as *dz*, and lastly the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem.

The difference between the use of the six QA variants in the WD between the two types of audience is shown in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7: The difference in the percentage of use of the six QA variants in the WD between the two types of audience.

QA variant	female group Saudi audience	female group Arab audience	male group Saudi audience	male group Arab audience
the affrication of <i>k</i> as <i>ts</i> in the stem	0%	0%	4.49%	0%
the affrication of <i>k</i> as <i>ts</i> in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix	31.58%	11.11%	n/a	n/a
the affrication of <i>q</i> or <i>g</i> as <i>dz</i>	1.41%	0%	2.63%	0%
the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun <i>-n</i> instead of <i>-ni</i>	58.33%	64%	85.71%	66.67%
The use of the 3SG.F suffix variant <i>-ah</i>	52.88%	55.17%	84.81%	43.04%
the use of 3PL feminine suffix pronoun and inflection	16.50%	7.77%	33.33%	26.67%

As for the difference in use of the six QA variants in the WD between the two types of audience, it appeared to be significant in only one variant (the use of *-ah* in the 3SG.F suffix pronoun) in the male group.

5.2 PART 2: The in-group QA of the young speakers versus their WD

In the analysis of the in-group QA speech of the young speakers in Chapter 4, the six QA variants were all used by the young QA speakers in their in-group speech, even though some of them were relatively rare. The data collected for the WD speech indicated that the use of the six QA variants was lower than that in the WD as shown in Table 5.6.

Table 5.8: The percentage of use of the six QA variants in the in-group QA and the WD.

QA variant	female group in-group QA	female group WD speech	male group in-group QA	male group WD speech
the affrication of <i>k</i> as <i>ts</i> in the stem	0.74%	0%	22.32%	2.58%
the affrication of <i>k</i> as <i>ts</i> in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix	81.11%	20.16%	n/a	n/a
the affrication of <i>q</i> or <i>g</i> as <i>dz</i>	2.60%	0.63%	45.95%	1.87%
the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun <i>-n</i> instead of <i>-ni</i>	91.41%	69.39%	94.64%	77.55%
The use of the 3SG.F suffix variant <i>-ah</i>	96.19%	54.32%	93.51%	63.92%
the use of 3PL feminine suffix pronoun and inflection	19.10%	12.14%	54.39%	30.56%

The data compiled in chapter 5 showed that there are very clear overall differences between the use of these six variants in in-group QA speech and the WD for both the female and male groups (see Table 5.8)"

5. 3 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the use of six QA variants used by the female and male groups in their WD speech. The use of the six QA variants in the WD was significantly lower than in in-group QA, which indicates that the young QA speakers are avoiding the use of the QA variants when utilizing the WD. However, the level of avoidance is not the

same for all variants. Results show that two QA variants, namely the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* and the use of the 3SG.F feminine suffix *-ah*, were the least avoided variants among the six QA variants. The rate of use of these two variants in the WD corresponds to their rate of use in in-group QA as they had the highest rate of use in the young speakers’ in-group QA speech.

The results in this chapter also suggest that the six QA variants are less used when the speakers are addressing a general Arab audience than when addressing a Saudi audience. However, the two types of audiences (Saudis, and Arabs in general) do not seem to lead to major differences.

Chapter 6

The main feature of the White Dialect

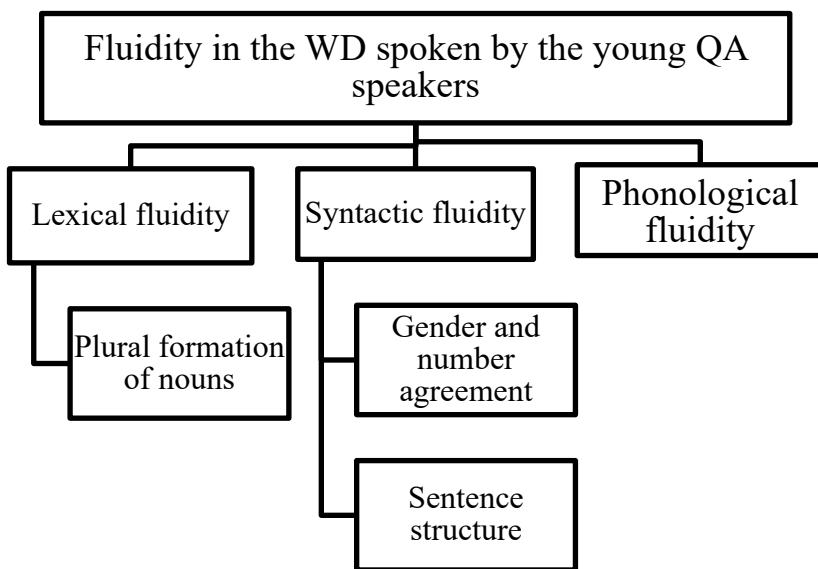
Introduction

The previous chapter provided quantitative evidence that the young Qassimi Arabic (QA) speakers' use of the QA variants is reduced when they speak in what they call the White Dialect (WD). They avoided the use of the QA variables either by switching to their counterparts in other varieties, or by using alternative strategies. The present chapter provides a broader linguistic description of the WD beyond the analysis of the use of the six QA variants that were investigated earlier in this study. I will discuss the main characteristic of the WD: fluidity, as an unpredictable and instable way of speech. Idiosyncratic styles were not taken into consideration; in other words, if a linguistic feature was used by an individual speaker but did not appear in the WD speech of the other participants, it was considered idiosyncratic. Influence from further Arabic varieties was occasionally detected, such as Lebanese Arabic (e.g. the adjectives *mni:h* 'good' and *ħazna:n* 'sad'), and Moroccan Arabic (*zweinah* 'beautiful'), but these varieties were not taken into consideration in this investigation as they were used only rarely (around 2 instances both, by 3 of the 20 participants). Note that this chapter is dedicated to discussing the main characteristics of the WD; the question what WD refers to exactly, and how it is generated are discussed in Chapter 8.

6.1. Fluidity as a characteristic of WD speech

6.1.1. Introduction

The WD is particularly characterised by its fluidity. It is a style of speech where speakers use a mixture of various Arabic varieties that may or may not include Standard Arabic (SA). The process of mixing different Arabic varieties occurs not only at the lexical level, but also at the phonological and syntactic levels. All three levels will be discussed below in detail. The following diagram provides an overview of the main aspects where the fluidity of the WD occurs.



6.1.2 Methods

As explained before (see also Section 2.2.3, Stage 2), the 20 young QA speakers who participated in this study were requested to provide two video or audio recordings of their social media posts: one directed to a Saudi audience, and one for a general Arabic-speaking audience. The analysis made in Chapter 5 did not show major

significant differences in the WD when addressing the two types of audience. Therefore, the examples discussed in this section are extracted from the WD speech of all participants (both male and female) regardless of their audiences.

6.1.3 Analysis

In order to describe the WD used by the young QA speakers, I adopted the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model developed by Myers-Scotton (1993). The MLF model proposes that in any sentence that contains a codeswitch, there is a hierarchy that acts as the base for structuring the sentence: the Matrix Language (ML), and the Embedded Language (EL). The ML is the language that provides the grammatical frame, and is therefore at work in every sentence. The morphemes of this language are referred to as “system morphemes”. Meanwhile, the EL may only provide thematic content of the sentence; morphemes from this language can be referred to as “content morphemes”. System morphemes include determiners, negation markers, affixes, and possessive pronouns, while content morphemes include nouns, verbs, and descriptive adjectives.

The MLF model is usually used to investigate codeswitching between two different languages, but according to Myers-Scotton (1997, 3), it is also suitable for analysing codeswitching between different dialects, registers, or styles. The sociolinguistic situation of Arabic involves diglossic codeswitching between Standard Arabic (SA) as a high variety, and the Arabic dialects as low varieties. The MLF model has been employed by a number of linguists working on Arabic (e.g. Boussofara-Omar, 1999, 2003, 2006; Bassiouney, 2009; Holes, 1993; Mazraani, 1997; Eid, 1988), who also remarked on certain limitations of the model. As discussed by Bassiouney, no existing model perfectly serves the investigation of diglossic codeswitching in Arabic; however, she notes that the MLF model is the most promising model, as it can apply to any grammatical structure (2009, 40). Bassiouney also addresses the limitations of the MLF model when applying it to Arabic diglossic codeswitching (2009, 49). In particular, there are sometimes system morphemes from both source languages in one sentence; that is, grammatical structures from both

codes. Moreover, there are some grammatical elements in diglossic Arabic sentences that are hard to categorise as either SA or dialectal, such as definite articles.

In this investigation, I faced a third issue when applying the MLF model. In almost all of the WD sentences, there are more than two codes at play. In contrast with the previous studies that investigated diglossic codeswitching between SA and an Arabic dialect as two codes, the WD sentences can be seen as containing multiple codes, and SA is not necessarily always one of them. The purpose of applying the MLF model in this investigation is not so much to determine case by case which variety is the ML (i.e., the dominant variety in the WD sentence), but rather to shed some light on the fluidity of the WD sentence and to highlight its flexibility to employ more than one code for system morphemes.

6.1.4 Lexical fluidity

In our WD data, speakers alternate between SA and dialectal lexical items without any apparent systematicity. In the WD data collected for this investigation, lexical elements from the following Arabic varieties were found:

- Qassimi Arabic (QA): the speakers’ mother tongue
- Riyadh Arabic (RA): the variety spoken in the capital city
- Standard Arabic (SA): the variety used at school and in the media
- Hijazi Arabic (HA): a variety spoken in the western region of Saudi Arabia
- Kuwaiti Arabic (KA): the Arabic dialect spoken in Kuwait
- Egyptian Arabic (EA): the Arabic dialect of Egypt, used in the media

The examples presented in the analysis below each comprise two sentences from the same speaker. The rationale for this is to reveal how speakers might use different lexical choices even when producing similar sentence structures. Below each sentence, the system and content morphemes are described, and labelled as to which variety they derive from. The label “neutral” is used to denote the shared morphemes between SA and the various Arabic dialects. Sometimes, the morphemes seem to be shared by SA and the dialectal forms but differ in pronunciation, particularly in terms

of vowels (compare, for example, the definite article *al-* in SA and QA with its counterpart *il-* in RA). In such cases, the word is labelled based on the speaker's pronunciation. In order to provide full clarity on the differences between the varieties, I follow the method of presentation used by Bassiouney (2009), in which certain example sentences are accompanied by counterpart sentences in each of the varieties detected in the example sentence. The counterpart sentences in QA, RA, and SA were formed by myself (as a native speaker of QA, and a fluent speaker of RA and SA); meanwhile, the HA, KA, and EA counterpart sentences were formed and checked by three native speakers of each variety.

- (1) a. *hal iħna: ð'aru:ri: niħta:dʒ haði: il-mukammila:t*
 Q we necessarily 1PL.need DEM.F.SG DET-supplements
 'Do we necessarily need these supplements'

System morphemes:

<i>hal</i>	interrogative particle	SA
<i>iħna:</i>	personal pronoun 'we'	HA
<i>haði:</i>	demonstrative	QA or RA
<i>il</i>	definite article	RA

Content morphemes:

<i>ð'aru:ri:</i> adverb 'necessarily'	SA
<i>niħta:dʒ</i> verb 'need'	QA or RA
<i>mukammila:t</i> noun 'supplements'	SA

QA counterpart

hu: iħna: b-al-ħi:l niħta:dʒ ha-l-mukammila:t

RA counterpart

hu: iħna marrah niħta:dʒ ha-l-mukammila:t

HA counterpart

hu: iħna marrah niħta:dʒ di-l-mukammila:t

SA counterpart

hal naħnu bi-ðˤ-ðˤarū:rati naħta:dʒu li-ha:ðihi l-mukammila:t

- b. *ma:-fi: tˤiri:gah θa:njah nigdar niħasˤsˤil ha-l-mukammila:t*
 NEG-PREP way other.F.SG 1PL.can 1PL.get DEM-DET-supplements
 ‘There is no other way to get these supplements?’

System morphemes:

<i>ma:</i>	negative marker	QA, RA
<i>fi:</i>	preposition	RA
<i>ha</i>	demonstrative	RA, QA
<i>l</i>	definite article	QA, RA

Content morphemes:

<i>tˤiri:gah</i>	noun ‘way’	RA
<i>θa:njah</i>	adjective ‘another’	QA, RA
<i>nigdar</i>	verb ‘can’	RA
<i>niħasˤsˤil</i>	verb ‘get’	RA
<i>mukammila:t</i>	noun ‘supplements’	SA

QA counterpart

ma:buh tˤiri:gih θa:njih nagdar na:xið minah ha-l-mukammila:t

RA counterpart

ma:fi:h tˤiri:gah θa:njah nigdar niħasˤsˤil minha ha-l-mukammila:t

SA counterpart

?ala: ju:dʒadu tˤari:qatun ?uxra: nastatˤi:ġu min xila:liha: al-ħusˤu:la qala: ha:ðihi l-mukammila:t

In general, even though speakers of the WD seem to alternate arbitrarily between SA and the various dialects, there is a tendency to switch to SA for

interrogative particles such as *hal*, and in frequently used adverbs such as *ð'aru:ri* ‘necessarily’. In the two examples above, the same speaker uses three codes for system morphemes within the same utterance: SA, QA, and RA are used in both sentences, and HA is present only in the system morphemes. For the first sentence, the QA and RA counterparts differ mostly in content morphemes, specifically the adverbs *b-al-hi:l* and *marrah* which both mean ‘very’, used to intensify the RA verb *niħas's'il* and the QA verb *niħta:dʒ* ‘we need’, thus giving an equivalent meaning to the SA-based adverb *ð'aru:ri*: ‘necessarily’. However, for the second sentence, the QA and RA counterparts differ in the final vowels of the words *t'iri:gah* ‘way’ and *θa:njah* ‘another’, and in the first vowel of the verb *nigdar* ‘we can’. The fluidity of the WD is apparent in the presence of more than two varieties in one sentence. It is also apparent in the lexical choice of the speaker to use a full dialectal ML form in the phrase *ha:ði: il-mukammila:t* in the first sentence, and a shortened form in the second sentence *ha-l-mukammila:t* ‘these supplements’.

- (2) a. *ra:h ɻakawwir at-tamir wa ɻaħaffi: maħ-a:h il-mukassara:t*
 FUT 1SG.shape in balls DET -dates and 1SG.stuff PREP-3SG.M DET-nuts
 I will shape the dates into balls and stuff it with nuts'

System morphemes:

<i>ra:h</i>	future marker	RA
<i>a(l)-</i>	definite article	neutral
<i>maħ-</i>	preposition	neutral
<i>-a:h</i>	3SG.M suffix pronoun	HA
<i>il-</i>	definite article	RA

Content morphemes:

<i>ɻakawwir</i>	1SG verb ‘shape into balls’	QA, RA
<i>tamir</i>	collective noun ‘dates’	neutral
<i>wa</i>	‘and’	neutral
<i>ɻaħaffi:</i>	verb ‘stuff’	QA, RA

mukassara:t noun ‘nuts’ neutral

QA counterpart

b-akawwir at-tamir wa ʔahaffi: muʕ-uh al-mukassara:t

RA counterpart

ra:ħ ɻakawwir at-tamir wa ʔahaffi: maʕ-ah il-mukassara:t

HA counterpart

ħ-akawwir at-tamr wa ħ-aħaffi: maʕ-a:h il-mukassara:t

SA counterpart

sa-ɻukawwiru at-tamra wa sa-ʔahaffi: maʕahu al-mukassara:t

In example (2a), the speaker employs both RA and HA as the ML. Looking into the counterpart sentences given for each of the varieties used in the example, the difference lies mainly in the future marker *ra:ħ* and the third person masculine singular suffix pronoun *-a:h* in the prepositional phrase *maʕ-a:h*.

- b. *ra:ħ Paxazzin-uh b-aθ-θalladzah ill-ħagg baʕdein*
 FUT 1SG.store-3.SG.M.DO PREP-DET-fridge PREP-possession later
 ‘I will store it in the fridge for later’

System morphemes:

<i>ra:ħ</i>	future marker	RA
<i>-uh</i>	3SG.M.DO pronoun	QA
<i>b-</i>	preposition	QA
<i>aθ-</i>	determiner	neutral
<i>ill-</i>	preposition	QA, RA (shared by many dialects, but not SA)
<i>ħagg</i>	possessive particle	QA, RA
	preposition	KA

Content morphemes:

<i>?axazzin</i>	1sg ‘store’	QA, RA
<i>θalla:dʒah</i>	noun ‘fridge’	neutral
<i>baʕdein</i>	noun ‘later’	shared by many Arabic dialects, but not found in SA

QA counterpart

b-axazzin-uh b-aθ-θalla:dʒih ill-baʕdein

RA counterpart

ra:ħ ?axazzin-ah b-aθ-θalla:dʒah ill-baʕdein

KA counterpart

b-axazzin-ih b-iθ-θalla:dʒah hagg baʕdein

SA counterpart

sa-?uxazzinu-hu bi-θ-θalla:dʒati li-waqtin ?a:xar

In example (2b), the speaker employs three codes for the system morphemes, namely QA, RA, and KA. In addition, the speaker uses *ill-ħagg*, which is a combined form drawing on two codes: *ill-* is a preposition found in QA and RA with the meaning ‘for’, and *ħagg* is a preposition with the same meaning found in KA. Note that the word *ħagg* exists in QA and RA as a possessive particle, as in *al-bait ħagg al-walad* ‘the boy’s house’(lit. ‘the house of the boy’), but it is not used as a preposition ‘for’ in these varieties. However, in KA, *ħagg* is a preposition ‘for’, while the possessive particle is *ma:l* (Holes, 1984). Thus, the sentence ‘the boy’s house’ in KA would be *al-bait ma:l l-walad*. In short, in example (2b) the speaker combines the QA/RA form *ill-* with the KA form *ħagg* to serve as a preposition ‘for’.

In both (2a) and (b), the speaker seems to adhere to using the RA future marker *ra:ħ*. However, the speaker alternates between the HA form of the third person masculine suffix pronoun *-a:h* in the first sentence, and the QA form *-uh* in the second sentence. This indicates fluidity in the codeswitching patterns in the WD of the young QA speakers.

- (3) a. *mif mitwaffir ɻind-inā: fikrat taqabbul li-r-raʔi: al-ɻa:xar*
 NEG available PREP-1PL concept acceptance PREP-DET-opinion DET-other
 ‘We do not have the concept of accepting the other opinion’

System morphemes:

<i>mif</i>	negative marker	EA
<i>ɻind</i>	preposition	neutral
<i>-inā</i>	1PL suffix pronoun	neutral
<i>li-</i>	preposition	neutral
<i>(l-)</i>	determiner	neutral
<i>al-</i>	definite article	QA, SA

Content morphemes:

<i>mitwaffir</i>	adjective ‘available’	RA
<i>fikrat</i>	noun ‘concept’	SA
<i>taqabbul</i>	noun ‘acceptance’	SA
<i>raʔi:</i>	noun ‘opinion’	SA
<i>ɻa:xar</i>	adjective ‘other’	SA

QA counterpart

mahu:b imtiwaffir ɻind-inā: fikrat innina nagbal rai aθ-θa:ni:n

RA counterpart

mu: mitwaffir ɻind-inā: fikrat innina nagbal rai aθ-θa:ni:n

EA counterpart

mif mitwaffir ɻind-i:na: fikrat innina nitɻabbal raj in-nas it-ta:njah

SA counterpart

la: tatawaffaru ladajna: fikrat taqabbuli raʔi: al-ɻa:xar

In example (3a), the speaker employs a combination of neutral morphemes with one EA morpheme, the negative marker *mif*. Providing counterpart sentences for

this example was challenging, as the speaker structured the first part of the sentence using a dialectal frame (*mif mitwaffir ʃind-inā:*) but structured the second part of the sentence using an SA frame (*fikrat taqabbul li-raʔi: al-ʔa:xar*). Thus, to form the dialectal counterparts, *innina* ‘that we’ was used to connect the two parts of the sentence.

(3) b. *ha:ða: mumkin mub maudʒu:d*

DEM.M.SG probably NEG available

‘This is probably not available’

System morphemes:

ha:ða: masculine singular demonstrative neutral

mub negative marker QA

Content morphemes:

mumkin adverb ‘probably’ RA, EA (and many other Arabic varieties)

maudʒu:d adjective ‘available’ neutral

QA counterpart

ha:ða: jimkin mub maudʒu:d

RA counterpart

ha:ða: mumkin mu: maudʒu:d

SA counterpart

rubbama: ha:ða: lajsa maudʒu:dan

In example (3b), the speaker chose to use the QA negative marker *mub*, while in example (3a) the same speaker uses the EA negative marker *mif*. The two sentences were uttered in the same discourse, separated by a number of intervening sentences. At first, example (3b) may appear to be essentially a QA sentence, since the system morpheme contains the QA negative marker *mub*. However, the RA adverb *mumkin* reveals that it is a sentence of mixed varieties (note that the other content morpheme,

maudzu:d, is neutral as to the dialect). Moreover, in contrast to example (3a), the sentence in (3b) does not include any morphemes from SA. This seems to indicate that SA is not an essential feature of WD speech; in this way, its role is similar to the other Arabic varieties used in the WD.

Plural formation in the WD

Both in SA and in the relevant dialects, nominal plurals are formed according to many different patterns, and are largely unpredictable. Interestingly, in WD they are sometimes mixed up. Speakers sometimes use or create plural noun forms that do not exist in either SA or QA or RA. The following examples show WD plural forms that are different from the QA, SA, and RA forms:

- (8) *ka:nat min ʔafð'äl at-tadzruba:t*
 3SG.F.be PREP best DET-experiences
 ‘It was one of the best experiences’

System morphemes:

<i>min</i>	preposition	neutral
<i>a(l)-</i>	definite article	neutral

Content morphemes:

<i>ka:nat</i>	3SG.F verb (to be) ‘she was’	neutral
<i>ʔafð'äl</i>	adjective ‘best’	SA
<i>tadzruba:t</i>	noun ‘experiences’	not part of SA or a dialect

The noun *tadzruba:t* in example (h) is unexpected and does not exist in the Arabic varieties used by the WD speakers. In SA, the plural form of *tadzrubah* ‘the experience’ is *tadza:rib*. This word is borrowed from SA into QA and RA, and as such retains its SA plural form in both varieties.

- (10) *ilbisi: firra:ba:t ɻala: rdzu:l-ik*
 IMP.F.SG.wear socks PREP legs-2F.SG.POS
 ‘Wear socks on your feet’

System morphemes:

<i>ɻala:</i>	preposition	SA
<i>-ik</i>	2SG.F possessive suffix pronoun	RA

Content morphemes:

<i>ilbisi:</i>	fsg imperative verb ‘wear’	neutral
<i>firra:ba:t</i>	noun ‘socks’	not part of SA or a dialect
<i>rdzu:l</i>	noun ‘legs’	RA, HA

In example (10), there are two plural nouns. The first one *firra:ba:t* ‘socks’ is very unusual, as it does not exist in any of the other Arabic varieties used by the speaker. The plural form of the singular word *firra:bih* ‘a sock’ in QA is *firra:b*, *fara:b* in EA, and *fara:ri:b* in RA and HA, while the SA counterpart is *dʒawa:rib*, and KA uses a different word, *dla:ya:t*. The second plural form, *rdzu:l* ‘legs’, is a common plural form in RA and HA. The QA counterpart is *ridʒlein*. The word for ‘leg’ in many Arabic dialects is also used to refer to the foot; therefore, the SA counterpart for this sentence would be *qadamaj-ki* ‘your feet’ (the SA equivalent for ‘your legs’ would be *?ardzula-ki*).

A different case of unexpected constructions related to plural formation is found with the use of unit nouns vs. collective nouns. Collective nouns are syntactically masculine singular, while unit nouns are feminines and have both singular and plural forms. Unit nouns are, among others, used in combination with numbers in the range $3 \leq 10$, as in SA *θala:θatu tuffa:ħa:t* ‘three apples’, while collective plurals are used when talking about the noun in an indefinite plural quantity, as in SA *?akaltu tuffa:ħan* ‘I ate apples’ (i.e. I ate apples in general without counting how many apples I ate).

- (9) *gat^qi: min θala:θ il-xams tiffa:ħ*
 IMP.F.SG.cut PREP three PREP-five apples
 ‘Cut from three to five apples’

System morphemes:

<i>min</i>	preposition	neutral
<i>il-</i>	preposition	QA, RA (shared by many Arabic dialects)

Content morphemes:

<i>gat^qi:</i>	SG.F imperative verb ‘cut’	QA, RA
<i>θala:θ</i>	numeral ‘three’	neutral
<i>xams</i>	numeral ‘five’	neutral
<i>tiffa:ħ</i>	noun ‘apples’	QA, RA

In example (9), the speaker uses the collective plural *tiffa:ħ* ‘apples’. The expected plural form in this situation would be the plural of the unit noun, both in SA and in the relevant Arabic dialects. In QA and RA it would be *tiffa:ħa:t* and in SA *tuffa:ħa:t*.

Unexpected plural formations were found mostly in the speech of the female group. One exception that was used almost equally between the two genders is the two nouns *an-na:s* or *al-ʕa:lam* ‘the people’, which is most of the time treated as singular feminine nouns even when used to denote a masculine or plural referent people in a masculine or plural context, e.g. *al-ʕa:lam titʔaθθar* ‘people get affected’ (singular feminine verb) instead of *titʔaθθaru:n* (plural masculine verb).

More notes on the lexical fluidity of the White Dialect

In general, when the young QA speakers use the WD, they tend to use more lexical items that are shared by SA and the Arabic dialects (labelled above as ‘neutral’), such as *ð^qaru:ri:* instead of *lizu:m* or *la:zim* ‘necessarily’, and *kiba:r as-sinn* instead of *fi:ba:n* ‘old people’. Moreover, they seem to replace the QA

preposition *bi-* ‘in’ with its RA equivalent *fi-*, even though both prepositions exist in SA. An example of this is the replacement of the QA prepositional phrase *ma:-buh* with the RA *ma:-fi:h* ‘there is none’. They typically use *bi-* only when *bi-* precedes a noun or a determiner, as in the phrase *b-h-al-haja:h* ‘in this life’ (instead of *f-h-al-haja:h*).

Some of the WD speakers tend to give both the QA word and its SA or RA equivalent, combined by means of the conjunctions *wa* ‘and’ or *aw* ‘or’. This is illustrated in the following examples (underlining denotes the equivalent words):

- (4) a. *fa fa:fu:-hum wa fa:hadu:-hum*
QA + SA
‘Then they saw them’
- b. *ɻan ar-ridʒa:l al-musinni:n aw ɻumu:man ar-rdʒa:l al-kba:r*
SA + QA
‘About the old men in general’
- c. *hal bitalti: aw istamarriti:*
QA+ SA
‘Did you continue?’

In some cases, speakers use the same strategy of mentioning two words or phrases together, but these two words or phrases are not semantically equivalent: they might be in the same lexical category or have a semantic association, but they are not synonymous. This situation is illustrated by the examples below:

- d. *jadʒdaʃ girʃ b-al-bahar w-girʃ b-as-sifi:nih aw di:na:r*
b-al-bahar w-di:na:r b-as-sifi:nih
QA + neutral
‘He throws qirsh in the sea and qirsh on the ship or dinar in the sea and dinar on the ship’

The terms *girf* ‘qirsh’ and *di:na:r* ‘dinar’ refer to two different currencies, which are not equivalent in value. Here, *girf* was pronounced with the dialectal *g* not the SA *q*, which indicates that it is a dialectal word, while *di:na:r* is a neutral word. Since the speaker was narrating an ancient story, he may have used them together due to confusion about which currency was used during the era of the story. Alternatively, he may have wished to change the locality of his narration, as *girf* is a monetary unit of the Saudi Arabian Riyal, while *di:na:r* is the currency of several other Arab countries.

- e. *luh maṣa:jir muṣajjanah wa bunu:d muṣajjanah*
 SA + SA
 ‘It has certain standards and certain articles’

In this example, the speaker was talking about the law regarding a certain issue in his society. The word *bunu:d* refers to the articles in a certain law, while *maṣa:jir* refers to standards that are used to judge quality. The two words both apply to the semantic field of (legal) judgment, but, in general, they are not synonymous.

- f. *ḥarr jis‘i:b-uh dif? jaṣni:*
 neutral + SA
 ‘He gets hot, warm, I mean’

Here, the first uses the noun *ḥarr* ‘hot’, which has a strong negative connotation in Saudi culture, and then corrects it with the SA word *dif?* ‘warmth’, which has a more positive connotation.

This method of mentioning two (semi-)equivalents at the same time is used repeatedly by different speakers of both genders, which indicates that it is not an idiosyncratic style but a recurring feature in WD speech. There are two plausible accounts for this behaviour: either the speakers accidentally use a QA lexical item and then try to correct themselves with a shared equivalent that they are familiar with,

such as from SA or RA, or they wish to add more clarification to their speech as they are aware that they are shifting away from their natural dialect and that the form that they shift to might not convey their meaning adequately.

In a similar pattern that is specific to the male group, speakers use a common QA metaphorical phrase or proverb and describe its meaning in the following phrase, often without using any conjunction. This is illustrated in the following two examples:

(5) a. *jamsik nṣa:l-uh wi jagð'ib al-arð' ha:dʒ marrih misri'*

'He holds his shoes and grips the ground running very fast'

Here, the first part *jamsik nṣa:l-uh wi jagð'ib al-arð'* 'he holds his shoes and grips the ground' is a QA metaphorical phrase, of which the meaning is described in the second part: *ha:dʒ marrih misri'* 'running very fast'.

b. *jadxil b-wadʒh fla:n ja:xið hagg-uh b-jid-uh*

'He enters into someone's face he takes his right with his own hands'

Here, the metaphorical phrase *jadxil b-wadʒh fla:n* 'to enter into someone's face' means that the person referred to is brave, and that *ja:xið hagg-uh b-jid-uh* 'takes [that which is] his right with his own hands'.

Lexical fluidity in the WD can also be seen in speakers' choices to use lexical items, including prepositions in a way that conforms neither to one of the relevant Arabic dialects, not to SA. Examples are provided in the following table:

WD utterance	SA expected form	QA expected form	exceptional behaviour	Gloss
<i>jusabbib yeir ra:hah</i>	<i>jusabbibu fadam ar-ra:hah</i>	<i>jisabbib ð'eighi (i.e., discomfort)</i>	lexically unexpected: <i>yeir</i> means ‘different’ while <i>fadam</i> means 'un-'	‘It causes <u>discomfort</u> ’
<i>hatta jantudʒ al-qara:r</i>	<i>hatta: juttaxaðu l-qara:r</i>	<i>lein ju:xað al-qara:r</i>	lexically unsuitable: <i>jantudʒ</i> means 'produced'	‘Until the decision is <u>made</u> ’ (lit. <u>'produced'</u>)
<i>h-al-mawa:ð'i :f ɻatit'arraaq ɻalj-ah</i>	<i>ha:ðihi l-mawa:ð'i :f ɻatat'arra qu la-ha</i>	<i>h-al-mawa:ð'i:f ɻatit'arraaq lah ~ (lihin)</i>	lexically unsuitable: <i>ɻalj-ah</i> means ‘on it’ while <i>la-ha</i> means 'about them'	‘These subjects, I talk <u>about</u> them’
<i>al-baha:ra:t li-t-tanki:h</i>	<i>al-buha:ra :tu li-ɻið'a:fat i n-nakhah</i>	<i>al-baha:ra:t li-ɻið'a:fat a-nnakhih</i>	lexically unsuitable: the verbal noun <i>tanki:h</i> is not a grammatically accepted Arabic derivation of the noun <i>nakhah</i> ‘flavour’	‘Spices are for <u>adding a</u> <u>flavour</u> ’

6.1.5 Syntactic fluidity

Syntactic fluidity in the WD can be seen in two aspects: in gender and number agreement and in sentence structure. These are discussed in turn below.

Gender and number agreement

In almost all varieties of Arabic, there are two nominal genders: masculine and feminine. All nouns require agreement in gender and number with the associated linguistic items in the utterance. SA has a very complicated set of agreement rules; the system is different, and slightly less complicated, in QA and the other Arabic dialects. For example, in QA, dual nouns take plural agreement, as in

ħit'i: milqagtein kba:r

IMP.F.SG.put two.spoons big.PL

‘Put two big spoons’

In SA, the adjective must agree in number with the noun; thus, in SA, the adjective *kba:r* would be *kabi:ratain*, while in QA, RA, and many other Arabic dialects, dual nouns are treated as plural for the purpose of agreement, as in the example above.

Another important difference in number agreement between SA and QA and other Arabic dialects is the way the position of the subject in the sentence affects verbal agreement. In SA, if the subject is preverbal, as in *at'-t'a:liba:tu ðahabna ila: l-madrasah* ‘the students went to school’, the verb has to agree in number with the subject; meanwhile, if the subject is postverbal, the verb only agrees in gender, for example *ðahabat at'-t'a:liba:tu ila: l-madrasah*. By contrast, in QA, the verb always agrees in gender and number with its subject regardless whether the subject is preverbal or postverbal. When it comes to the WD, the speakers do not adhere consistently to either SA or QA rules of gender or number agreement. Below are some examples of fluidity in number agreement in the WD:

WD utterance	SA equivalent	QA equivalent	Gloss
<i>ħat^c milħagtein malja:nih</i> verb + dual noun +singular adjective	<i>wadħaġa</i> <i>milħagataina</i> <i>mammlu:ʔatain</i> verb + dual noun + dual adjective	<i>ħat^c milħagtein</i> <i>malja:na:t</i> verb + dual noun + plural adjective	‘he puts two full spoons’
<i>θala:θah ki:s</i> three + singular noun	<i>θala:θatu ʔakja:s</i> three+ plural noun	<i>θala:θ ʔakja:s</i> three+ plural noun	‘three bags’

In the first example, the phrase *milħagtein malja:nih* in the WD utterance is neither SA nor QA as the speaker used a singular adjective to agree with a dual noun. In SA, as mentioned earlier, the adjective must agree in number with the noun if it is a dual, while in QA dual nouns agree with plural adjectives.

Number agreement fluidity and gender agreement fluidity are both common in the WD. Most of the instances of fluidity found in number agreement concern dual nouns, or the use of the unexpected plural forms (discussed in the next section). However, while fluidity in gender agreement was found in the speech of all the participants, this was not the case for number agreement. The latter mostly occurred in the WD of the female group and was found less in the male group. Furthermore, it is important to note that there was both inter-speaker and intra-speaker variation in number agreement.

In terms of gender agreement, some speakers show a very high level of fluidity while others are more consistent in their choices. Moreover, a speaker of WD may demonstrate gender agreement fluidity while talking about one subject, but apply the QA or RA rules of agreement after moving to a new topic. Since the WD data were taken from social media posts on various subjects, no specific type of topic could be determined as the main controller of the level of fluidity in gender agreement in the WD. The example below illustrates the fluidity of gender agreement in the WD:

- (6) *lau tarawwaſein tru:ḥ ləun as'-s'abyih*
 CONJ 2SG.F.shower 3SG.F.go colour DET-dye
 'If you take a shower, the colour of the hair dye will go away'

System morphemes:

<i>lau</i>	conjunction	neutral
<i>a(l)-</i>	definite article	neutral

Content morphemes:

<i>tarawwaſein</i>	2SG.F verb 'take a shower'	QA, RA
<i>tru:ḥ</i>	3SG.F verb 'go'	QA, RA
<i>ləun</i>	noun 'colour'	neutral
<i>s'abyih</i>	noun 'dye'	QA

In example (6), the feminine verb *tru:ḥ* 'go away' does not agree with the masculine noun *ləun* 'colour'. One could argue that this gender disagreement is caused by the confusion between the masculine noun *ləun* and the feminine noun *s'abyih*. However, this is not a likely source of confusion for a native QA speaker, given the relationship of the verb *tru:ḥ* with *ləun* rather than *as'-s'abyih* — it is the colour of the hair dye that goes away, not the dye itself. If this sentence were uttered in QA or SA, the verb would agree in gender with *ləun* 'colour', e.g. (QA): *lau tarawwaſein jiru:ḥ ləun as'-s'abyih*.

In a similar situation of fluid gender agreement in the WD, one speaker produced the following phrase:

- (7) *gahwih mintahjah ta:ri:x-aha*
 coffee expired date-3SG.F.POS
 'Coffee with an expired date'

System morphemes:

-aha	3SG.F possessive suffix pronoun	SA, RA
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Content morphemes:

gahwih	noun ‘coffee’	QA
mintahjah	adjective ‘expired’	RA
ta:ri:x	noun ‘date’	neutral

In example (7), the feminine adjective *mintahjah* ‘expired’ describes the masculine noun *ta:ri:x* ‘its date’. The speaker’s choice of the feminine adjective form is probably caused by confusion between the feminine noun *gahwih* ‘coffee’ and the masculine noun *ta:ri:x* ‘date’. The suffixed feminine pronoun *-aha* in *ta:ri:x-aha* may have contributed to this confusion: it is attached to a masculine noun *ta:ri:x* ‘date’, but it is a possessive pronoun referring to the feminine noun *gahwih*. In other words, it is the date that has expired, not the coffee itself. If this sentence were uttered in QA or RA, it could be formed in two ways: the first way would be *gahwih mintihī ta:ri:x-aha*, in which the adjective agrees with the masculine noun *ta:ri:x*; the second way would be *gahwih mintahjat at-ta:ri:x*, in which the whole adjectival phrase *mintahjat at-ta:ri:x* ‘that is expired regarding to its date’ agrees with the feminine noun *gahwih*.

Sentence structure in the WD

In general, sentences in the WD follow the structure of the Najdi dialects. However, the data collected for this study show features that would be considered ungrammatical according to the grammatical rules common to the Najdi Arabic varieties. These features are found in the morphology of the word, in the sentence order in general, and in the unexpected use of some of the QA prepositions. These features have been attested repeatedly among the WD speakers. The following example demonstrates one such common issue in the composition of WD sentences:

- (11) *af-sa:mbu: ḥagg-kum tarawwafein ʕa:di*
 DET-shampoo possession-2PL.M.POS 2SG.F.shower normally
 ‘You take a shower normally with your shampoo’

System morphemes:

<i>a(l)-</i>	definite article	neutral
<i>ḥagg</i>	possessive particle	QA, RA
<i>-kum</i>	2PL.M possessive pronoun	neutral

Content morphemes:

<i>sa:mbu:</i>	noun ‘shampoo’	neutral (borrowed from English)
<i>tarawwafein</i>	verb ‘shower’	QA, RA
<i>ʕa:di</i>	adverb ‘normally’	neutral

In example (11), the speaker creates an inversion which is considered atypical in the grammar of the Najdi Arabic varieties. Instead of starting with the verb *tarawwafein* ‘take a shower’, the sentence starts with a topicalization, *af-sa:mbu: ḥagg-kum* ‘your shampoo’. The most common sentence structure would be *tarawwafein ʕa:di b-af-sa:mbu: ḥagg-kum* in which a preposition *b-* is added to connect the two phrases. Another alternative formulation would be *b-af-sa:mbu: ḥagg-kum tarawwafein buh ʕa:di*; note that the latter is not a frequently used structure in spoken QA or RA, but perfectly grammatical. The WD sentence is atypical because it bypasses the need for the QA preposition *b-* ‘with’.

Another recurring atypical construction is found where the functional status of certain adjectives that express quantity is changed from adjectives to quantifiers, as in the following sentence *tantaqil ɻan t'ari:q kiθi:r ɻaʃa:?* ‘it spread through a lot of things’, for which the expected form would be *ɻaʃa:? kiθi:rih* in which the adjective follows the noun, as in almost all Arabic varieties. This kind of construction occurs very frequently in the data with quantifiers such as *kiθi:r* ‘a lot’ in the previous example and *gili:l na:s* ‘few people’. This feature was found in the speech of both male and female participants.

One thing that I observed in the WD data is that speakers tend to formulate longer sentences to convey their message. This could be a result of their awareness that they are shifting away from their native dialect, combined with a desire to be as clear as possible in their speech. An example of this is the tendency to reiterate nouns where it would have been possible to use a subject or an object pronoun instead. In addition, many of the sentences in the WD data are followed by a paraphrase, as in the following sentence:

*All'a:h ḥadżab ɻan faj yajbi: mumkin faj kint ana: abi faj la:kin All'a:h ma: aɻt'a:ni
ija:h wa h-ar-raybah ma:za:lat b-nafsi: la:kin All'a:h ḥa:dzbuh ɻanni*

‘Allah deprived me of a metaphysical thing. It might be something that I wanted something but Allah did not give it to me and this desire is still in me but Allah deprived me of it’.

It would have been possible for the speaker to convey the message in a shorter form, for example, *mumkin ɻindi: raybah l-faj wa Allah ḥadżab-ha ɻanni* ‘I might have a desire for something but Allah deprived me of it’. Many of the WD sentences were formed in a similar way. Note that it is unlikely that this would have been caused by the pressure of the moment, as the data were drawn from pre-recorded social media posts and the speakers were not improvising when they were talking to their audience: they had the chance to re-record and modify the post if it did not sound acceptable to them.

6.1.6 Phonological fluidity

Fluidity in the WD phonology can be clearly seen in the pronunciation of lexical items that are shared by SA and RA and/or QA. Specifically, it can be clearly observed where the first vowel of a word alternates between *i* and *a*. In this regard, WD speakers may alternate between two or more pronunciations of the same word, even within a single utterance. This can be seen in the case of the definite article *al-*, which is also

pronounced as *il-*, as illustrated in the following example, which has *al-xija:ra:t* with *al-* and *il-muħallija:t* with *il-* in one single sentence:

- (12) *al-xija:ra:t tsˤu:m iθna:ṣaf sa:qih bas il-muħallija:t*
 DET-choices 2SG.M.fast twelve hour CONJ DET-sweeteners
taksir. asˤ- sˤija:m
 3SG.F.break DET-fast
 ‘The choices are fasting for twelve hours, but the sweeteners break the fast’

System morphemes:

<i>al-</i>	definite article	QA, SA
<i>bas</i>	conjunction	QA, RA (found in many Arabic dialects)
<i>il-</i>	definite article	RA
<i>a(l)-</i>	definite article	QA, SA

Content morphemes:

<i>xija:ra:t</i>	noun ‘choices’	SA
<i>tsˤu:m</i>	2SG.M verb ‘fast’	neutral
<i>iθna:ṣaf</i>	numeral ‘twelve’	QA, RA
<i>sa:qih</i>	noun ‘hour’	neutral
<i>muħallija:t</i>	noun ‘sweeteners’	SA
<i>taksir</i>	3SG.F verb ‘breaks’	neutral
<i>sˤija:m</i>	noun ‘fast’	neutral

The definite article is *al-* both in QA and SA, but *il-* in RA. However, since the article is pronounced the same in SA and QA, it is hard to tell whether it should be considered an SA pronunciation or a QA one. The alternation between *i* and *a* as first vowel is also found in content morphemes, specifically, verbs that are shared between QA and the other Arabic varieties, as in the following two examples:

- (13) a. *tigdar* *ta:kil* *min θala:θ la-?parbaʕ wadʒba:t*
 2SG.M.can 2SG.M.eat PREP three PREP-four meals
 ‘You can eat from three to four meals’

System morphemes:

<i>min</i>	preposition	neutral
<i>la-</i>	preposition	QA, RA

Content morphemes:

<i>tigdar</i>	2SG.M verb ‘can’	RA, HA
<i>ta:kil</i>	2SG.M verb ‘eat’	QA, RA
<i>θala:θ</i>	numeral ‘three’	QA, RA
<i>?parbaʕ</i>	numeral ‘four’	QA, RA
<i>wadʒba:t</i>	noun ‘meals’	QA, RA, HA, KA

- b. *tagdar* *ta:kil* *b-at-tari:qah alli tabya:-ha*
 2SG.M.can 2SG.M.eat PREP-DET-way REL 2SG.M.want-3SG.F.DO
 ‘You can eat in the way you want’

System morphemes:

<i>b-</i>	preposition	QA, SA
<i>a(l)-</i>	definite article	QA, SA
<i>alli</i>	relative marker	QA, RA
<i>-ha</i>	3SG.F.DO pronoun	RA

Content morphemes:

<i>tagdar</i>	2SG.M verb ‘can’	QA
<i>ta:kil</i>	2SG.M verb ‘eat’	QA, RA
<i>tari:qah</i>	noun ‘way’	SA
<i>tabya:</i>	2SG.M verb ‘want’	QA, RA

In examples (13a) and (b), the speaker used the same verb with different pronunciations: in example (a) it is pronounced *tigdar* as in RA and HA, and in (b) it is pronounced *tagdar* as in QA.

Another case of this is found in the second person singular masculine independent pronoun, which is *?anta:* in SA. It is pronounced *?ant* in QA, but *int* in RA and KA, and *inta* in HA and EA. The WD speakers in this study differed greatly in their choices among the forms of these personal pronouns: some used one form for a while and then switched to another within the same discourse, while others adhered to one form throughout.

In a similar situation, phonological fluidity is apparent in the feminine ending of the noun. In QA, the ending is usually *ih*, while in SA, RA, and many other Arabic dialects it is *ah*. For instance, the noun *sa:sih* ‘hour’ in example (l2) above was pronounced as in QA, while in SA, RA, KA, and EA it is pronounced as *sa:sah*. In the WD, speakers appear to alternate arbitrarily between the two pronunciations. Further examples are provided below.

- (14) a. *il-hadaf hu: al-ħus'u:l ɻala: haja:t s'iħħijih*

DET-goal he DET-getting PREP life healthy

‘The goal is getting a healthy life’

System morphemes:

<i>il-</i>	definite article	RA
<i>hu:</i>	3SG.M pronoun	neutral
<i>al-</i>	definite article	QA, SA
<i>ɻala:</i>	preposition	neutral

Content morphemes:

<i>hadaf</i>	noun ‘goal’	neutral
<i>ħus'u:l</i>	noun ‘getting’	SA
<i>haja:t</i>	noun ‘life’	neutral
<i>s'iħħijih</i>	adjective ‘healthy’	QA

- b. *min al-ʔajja:ʔ alli la-ha: ʕala:qah b-s'iħħat al-bafrīh*
 PREP DET-things REL PREP-3SG.F. relationship PREP-health DET-skin
 ‘From the things that are related to skin health’

System morphemes:

<i>min</i>	preposition	neutral
<i>al-</i>	definite article	QA, SA
<i>alli</i>	relative marker	QA, RA
<i>la-</i>	preposition	neutral
<i>-ha:</i>	3SG.F suffix pronoun	SA, RA
<i>b-</i>	preposition	neutral

Content morphemes:

<i>ʔajja:ʔ</i>	noun ‘things’	SA
<i>ʕala:qah</i>	noun ‘relationship’	SA
<i>s'iħħat</i>	noun ‘health’	neutral
<i>bafrīh</i>	noun ‘skin’	QA

In example (14a) the speaker pronounces the adjective *s'iħħijih* as in QA, rather than using a pronunciation shared by SA and the other Arabic dialects, namely *s'iħħijah*. In example (14b), the same speaker uses the word with both pronunciations, i.e. once with *a* and another time with *i*. In the word *ʕala:qah*, the speaker uses the vowel *a* before the final feminine *h*, but in the word *bafrīh*, the same speaker uses the vowel *i* before the final feminine *h*. Among the female speakers, this alternation between the two pronunciations (-*ih* and -*ah*) almost never occurred in loan nouns from SA; this can be clearly seen in words containing the case of the SA sound *q*, such as *θaqqa:fah* ‘culture’ and *qija:dah* ‘leadership’. However, this approach does not seem to be applied by male WD speakers, as they tend to alternate between the *a* and *i* vowels before final feminine *h* even in words from SA: the word *ʕala:qah* was pronounced as *ʕala:qih* by three male speakers. This is shown in the examples below.

- (15) a. *ma:-luh ḥala:qih b-alli has‘al*
 ‘He has no relation to what has happened’
- b. *al- ḥala:qih tirgil*
 ‘The relationship is shaking’
- c. *tagdar tigu:l ḥala:qih ḥa:birah*
 ‘You can say it is a temporary relationship’

In the third example above, both the noun *ḥala:qih* ‘relationship’ and the adjective *ḥa:birah* ‘temporary’ are borrowed from SA. In *ḥala:qih*, the speaker uses *-ih* rather than SA *-ah*. However, he does not do so in the word *ḥa:birah*.

6.2 General notes about the fluidity of the WD

Each individual’s use of the WD is unique. Moreover, every speaker of the WD shows intra-speaker variation, even within a single utterance. Sometimes, a speaker uses more SA features than dialectal ones in his/her speech; other times, s/he creates new linguistic forms and mixes them with forms from SA and other Arabic dialects.

In most cases, the WD of the young QA speakers is a mix of the following Arabic varieties: Standard Arabic, Qassimi Arabic, Riyadh Arabic, Hijazi Arabic, Kuwaiti Arabic, and Egyptian Arabic. A WD sentence tends to use system morphemes from different varieties and that contradicts the predictions of the MLF that speakers utilize the system morphemes from a single variety and which referred to as the Matrix language. What determines how much of each form is used within a WD utterance appears is unclear. Speakers seem to use more SA and RA characteristics than from the other dialects, including their own QA. When it comes to the SA and the RA characteristics in the WD speech, the data do not point to major differences between the two types of audiences. In both sets of recordings (i.e. targeting the two different audiences), the WD speech fluctuated as speakers moved from one discussion topic to another. Neither the topic of discussion, nor the type of education a speaker received

affected the linguistic feature of their WD. One could argue that the limited use of QA characteristics in the WD could be linked to the speakers’ exposure to the other Arabic varieties; however, this does not explain why there was inter-speaker variation in the use of SA characteristics in their WD speech even though they were exposed to a similar amount of SA via school and media.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a further linguistic analysis of the WD used by the young QA speakers, which goes beyond the use of the six variables as presented in the previous chapter. This chapter aimed to shed light on the main characteristic of the WD used by the young QA speakers, which is its fluidity. Results show that the young speakers use more than one Arabic variety in their WD speech, and that SA might not be a necessary variety in a WD sentence. This mix of Arabic varieties is detected in terms of system morphemes as the grammatical frame of the sentence, as well as in the content morphemes such as verbs, nouns, and adjectives. The data show clearly that the WD tends to use system morphemes from several varieties in one single sentence, which is against the predictions of the MLF. The participants in this investigation shared a core set of Arabic varieties, including three Saudi dialects (QA, RA, and HA) and other Arabic varieties (such as SA, KA, and EA). However, the occasional use of other varieties, in addition to the nature of the WD as a fluid form, seems to indicate that the WD may include more varieties than just QA, RA, HA, SA, KA, and EA, depending on speakers’ exposure or attitudes to these other varieties. Therefore, with a larger group of participants and more extensive data collection, there will no doubt emerge elements from further varieties in the WD speech of young QA speakers besides the ones mentioned above.

What young Qassimi speakers say about the White Dialect

Introduction

This chapter addresses some issues that lie beyond the linguistic analysis of the White Dialect (WD). In this chapter, I discuss the perspectives of three different groups regarding the WD: the young Qassimi Arabic (QA) speakers (i.e., the young participants in this research), people in the media, and Arabic linguists.

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part is dedicated to the perspectives of the young QA speakers, which are ascertained by analysing the open interview conducted for this investigation (i.e., the third stage of data collection mentioned in Section 2.2.3). The first part concludes with a brief comparison of the results of the analysis in this chapter with the results of the linguistic analysis in Chapter 6. The second part concerns the WD according to public discourse. The chapter concludes by addressing the three research questions presented above.

7.1 PART 1: Young QA speakers' perspectives on the WD

7.1.1 Introduction

One of the main goals of the research interview conducted for this investigation (see Section 2.2.3) was to get the perspective of the young QA speakers themselves regarding the WD. As discussed in Chapter 2, the research interview was the final step in the data collection process for this research. After having submitted their recorded social media posts, the 20 participants in this investigation were all interviewed

individually in a face-to-face meeting. The interview comprised several questions that were similar to the main research questions presented above. The rationale for this was to enable a direct comparison between speakers’ perceptions of the WD and the results of my analysis. All participants across the two gender groups were asked the same questions. Since the interview was open-ended, some participants were asked additional questions to elicit extra information concerning certain points that they had mentioned, or to clarify certain answers.

7.1.2 Method

Due to the heterogeneity of the data collected from the interviews, I used the thematic analysis approach developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyse the data. This approach involves six phases of analysis. The table below shows the six phases and how they are applied in this research.

Phases of thematic analysis	How the phases were applied in this study
1. Familiarising oneself with the data	I transcribed all the data. After transcribing all the recorded interviews, I read the transcriptions several times and wrote down my initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes	I coded all the transcribed data. First, I coded the semantic content (i.e. what is expressed directly by the speaker), followed by the latent content (i.e. the underlying assumptions and concepts that were not uttered directly by the speaker).
3. Searching for themes	I organised the codes into initial themes. Some of the themes were driven by the research questions, while others were driven by the data itself.

4. Reviewing themes	I generated a thematic map to check whether the themes fitted with all the coded data. At this stage, I noticed that some of my themes needed to be subdivided, while others needed to be eliminated from the analysis as there was insufficient evidence to support them.
5. Defining and naming themes	I considered the themes from a general perspective, and how they fit into the bigger picture of the research. I also defined the themes with names that clearly describe the nature of each one.
6. Producing the report	I produced the report, providing my analysis along with extracts from the interviews to support my narrative.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), the process of finding the main themes may be conducted in two ways: inductive or theoretical. The inductive approach means that the themes are derived from the data. In other words, in the inductive approach, the analyst codes the data without attempting to integrate these codes into an existing theoretical framework. By contrast, the theoretical approach to thematic analysis means coding with the intention to fit these codes into a particular theoretical framework. Braun and Clarke add that choosing the most suitable approach depends on the purpose of coding. If the researcher codes in order to answer certain questions, then the theoretical approach is appropriate. If the researcher codes in order to find themes beyond these questions and to progress to a deeper analysis, then the inductive approach is appropriate.

In the thematic analysis of the interviews in this study, I follow an inductive approach. Four main themes were identified in this study, which will be presented in the following section. It is important to mention that some of these themes comprise a combination of semantic and latent codes, while others only comprise semantic codes.

7.1.3 Analysis

Theme 1: The ideology of the White Dialect

The term “ideology” will be used in the following to refer to speakers’ beliefs regarding the WD, which may or may not align with reality; that is, the beliefs could be proven correct or incorrect. The ideology of the WD varies between speakers. This difference might be caused by the fluidity of the WD, as discussed in Chapter 6. In particular, when the speakers were asked to describe their WD, their answers varied. The majority of the speakers (11 out of 20) think of it as a dialect that has emerged from their attempt to speak the Arabic variety that is spoken in the capital Riyadh (Riyadh Arabic, henceforth RA). The following excerpts from the interviews serve to illustrate this view. The code following the citation refers to the participant who gave it (see 2.2.1).

“In my mind, I think that I speak the dialect of Riyadh, but somehow, they know that I am from Qassim. I believe this is the White Dialect.” FN5

“The White Dialect is that [which I speak] when I try to hide my Qassimi dialect and try to speak the dialect of Riyadh.” MN1

“The White Dialect is that [which] is understood by everyone. In other words, I speak a similar dialect to Riyadh people.” FN1

“I try to speak the dialect of Riyadh. I avoid the Qassimi long vowels and use the Riyadh vocabulary.” FR4

“When I go to Riyadh and try to speak like them, they tell me: you are Qassimi. I try to soften my dialect and avoid the use of *ts*, but it shows against my will.” MR4

Other speakers (4 out of 20) state that the WD is actually another term for RA. Their belief is based on the fact that Riyadh is a multi-dialectal city and their perception that the WD is a result of this dialectal mix. They define the WD as “the dialect of Riyadh”, which all Arabic speakers are able to understand. This can be seen in the following excerpts from the interviews:

“The dialect of Riyadh is the White Dialect. I believe it is the most understood dialect.” MR2

“It is the dialect of Riyadh because it is neutral. People there are mixed.” FN3

“My children will speak the White Dialect because I am going to live and work in Riyadh.” FR2

“The White Dialect is the dialect of Riyadh people. Those people have ethnic origins before they become Riyadh citizens.” MN2

Meanwhile, other interviewees (5 out of 20) describe the WD as a dialect without a homeland. It is only these speakers who see it as a dialect of flexible forms. Their description of the WD focuses on the purpose of its use, which is to be understood by all listeners. They also describe it as an intermediate dialect that does not belong to anyone. This view can be seen in the following interview excerpts:

“The dialect of Riyadh is not the White Dialect. The White Dialect is the dialect that is understood by all people.” MN4

“The White Dialect is the dialect that is understood and used by all people. It depends on where you are; if you are in Riyadh, you change it to be similar to the Riyadh dialect, if you are in Mecca, you adapt your dialect to fit with

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Mecca people. The people of Riyadh give up their dialect for the White Dialect. It is the meeting point of all the Saudi dialects.” MR1

“Part of it is making my dialect similar to the Riyadh dialect. The Riyadh dialect does not represent me as I am not one of them. I use the White Dialect because I want people to understand me.” FR5

“It is the dialect that does not have any aspects that are specific to a certain region. It is similar to the dialect of Riyadh, but my White Dialect is not the dialect of Riyadh.” FR1

“It is not a Qassimi dialect or a Riyadh dialect. It is a mix from here and there.” FN4

Even though the WD speakers vary in their ideology, they all agree on one point: the WD is related in one way or the other to RA. This relationship could be attributed to their perception of the linguistic situation in Riyadh as multi-dialectal, or because of the political influence of RA as the dialect spoken in the capital. However, even though the speakers differed in their descriptions of the WD, they were all in agreement when asked how the dialect is formed. They all reported that it represents the process of avoiding sounding Qassimi, by avoiding the use of vocabulary or linguistic features that are exclusive to Qassimi Arabic. Some of the interviewees also reported that the WD involves the use of some Standard Arabic (SA) and English lexical items, depending on the situation. Their perspective on how the WD is formed is revealed in the following excerpts:

“I speak normally without Qassimi vocabulary and avoid using *ts*.” MR5

“I avoid Qassimi speech. I say *laha*: instead of *lah*.” (*laha*: ~ *lah* ‘for her’)
MR3

“I try to make the dialect lighter; no Qassimi words or sounds.” MN5

During the interviews, the verb *atsa:tsi:* was used multiple times by the female participants. Literally, this term refers to the use of *ts* rather than its variant *k* in the stem or in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix. Metaphorically, the term is used to refer to the use of pure QA in speech. The sound *ts* in QA seems to be a stereotypical feature in QA, as it was the first sound provided by all the participants when they were asked to mention the main characteristics of QA. This is illustrated by the excerpts below:

al-lahdzhih al-beið'a hi: muħħa:walat innits ma: tiguli:n innits tahardzi:n b-al-ka:f bida:l al-tsa

‘The White Dialect is the attempt that you make to try not to use *ts*. Use *k* instead.’ FN5

anti:saxsijjh kibi:rih b-tagħidli:n itsa:tsi:n

‘You are an elite person, are you going to use *ts*?’ FN3

Theme 2: Reasons for using the White Dialect

The codes in this theme comprise both semantic and latent codes. In other words, some of the reasons for using the WD were uttered directly by the speakers, while others were identified through their discourse. The majority of speakers mentioned more than one reason for using the WD. However, all 20 participants mentioned that the main reason for using the WD is to ease communication. They believe that QA has many linguistic features that might not be understood by people who do not speak the dialect, as demonstrated by the following extracts from the interviews:

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“It is a dialect that eases communication.” MN1

“I use the White Dialect because it is easier for the people I am talking to.”
FR4

“I try to pay attention to the way I talk in order to be understood by the person
in front of me.” MR5

Four of the 20 speakers mentioned hiding where they come from as a reason for using the WD. They mentioned that at the beginning of the conversation it is better if the interlocutor does not know where they are from. For some speakers, the possibility to hide their Qassimi origins seems to be associated with the expression of their individuality. This is illustrated in the following examples:

“I have to change my dialect to hide my identity.” MN2

“When I was younger, I used to talk like old Qassimi women. Now, I have enrolled in the university. I have changed. I will be a doctor. I have to use the White Dialect.” FR1

“Old Qassimi speakers speak like us with different vocabulary, but we are more intelligible than them. Their generation did not mix with others. Their social surroundings are limited, but we have social media.” MR2

“My White Dialect does not indicate whether I am from Qassim or Riyadh. I do not hide that I am Qassimi because I am ashamed of it, but because I have mixed with others and have changed.” FR5

Another reason for the use of the WD, mentioned by 7 of the 20 participants, is that it provides them with more social value and acceptance. Speakers believe that the sense of formality that the WD adds to their conversations confers social value,

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especially in the context of a classroom or a governmental institution. For them, QA is too local and informal, meaning that it might bring a sense of impoliteness to the conversation. This issue will be examined from a different perspective under Theme 3 below. The following are excerpts from the interviews relating to this point:

“They might understand my QA, but I see it as more polite to use the White Dialect with them.” FN1

“The White Dialect is more formal when giving a presentation. They will not respect me as much [if I use Qassimi Arabic] as when I present using the White Dialect.” FN2

“If you grow socially, you have to change your Qassimi Arabic.” FN3

“The reason is: it is prestigious and more formal [*rasmijjih Pakθar*].” MR4

“I do not like to speak Qassimi Arabic outside Qassim. If they know that I am from Qassim, they will not accept me.” FR2

“My sister uses [the White Dialect] to be socially accepted. If they know that you are Qassimi, they label you.” FR3

“In formal situations I use the White Dialect, especially when I meet someone for the first time. They will not accept me if I tell them that I am Qassimi, especially at the beginning of our conversation.” FN5

Speakers' fear of social rejection seems to be caused by their awareness of the stereotypical images of Qassimi people among Saudis from other regions. Based on the speakers' answers in the interviews, the Qassimis are known as being rich and smart, but also stingy, racist, narrow-minded, religiously intolerant and opportunistic. This seems to be the main reason for the use of the WD, as it was found both in the

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semantic and latent codes. Some of the speakers believe that these are just stereotypes that were created by the other Saudis, while others consider these stereotypes as reflecting true characteristics of Qassimi people. It emerged very clearly that the younger generation wish to present themselves as being open and accepting of other people, and they aimed to show this by giving up their QA. This perspective is revealed in the following quotations from the interviews:

“The reputation of the Qassimi people is very bad. A White Dialect user might not want to be judged.” FN3

“Qassimi Arabic is related to intolerance. Its people are not accepting of others.” MN3

“The stereotypical image of the Qassimi people is religious extremism” MR1

“The Qassimi man is so rich, he is conceited.” MN4

“They view us on social media as being too religious, complicated, and intolerant, and as having obtained all the important positions in the country. I want them to know that we, the new generation, are different from the older one.” MN5

“I want to distance myself from the stereotypical image of being intolerant.”
MR3

“For example, you are going to meet some people for the first time: you do not want them to have in their minds the same things that the people of this particular dialect are famous for.” FN4

A few speakers revealed that they use the WD as a form of modest behaviour: believing that the Qassimi people do in fact hold a higher position in society, they felt it necessary to adapt their dialect to convey a lower social status that they perceived as equal to that of their interlocutors. Meanwhile, a few other speakers use the WD as a way to protect themselves from the negative judgments that others may have of the Qassimi people. The following excerpts illustrate these attitudes:

“I have to use the White Dialect because people hate us. They are jealous of us. We obtained most of the important positions in the country.” MR4

“I do prefer, at the beginning, that he does not know where I am from. Once he gets comfortable and he starts to know my manners, I tell him that I am from Qassim and I switch back to Qassimi Arabic.” FN5

“My uncle works in Al Qurayyat⁹. He said: when they ask about my origin, I do not tell them that I am Qassimi. They hate Qassimis and would like to kill them.” MN4

“When people know that you are from Qassim they might try to deceive you, especially when you try to purchase something—you are rich.” MR5

Theme 3: The White Dialect in the diglossic situation of Arabic

Arabic-speaking societies are typically diglossic. This diglossia involves two varieties of the language: Standard Arabic (SA), the formal or ‘high’ form of the language used in official contexts and media, and colloquial Arabic, which is the informal variety of Arabic used in daily life. In this study, the participants revealed that the WD is the formal way of speech that they use the most, or would most like to hear, in classrooms and in governmental institutions. For them, ‘pure’ SA speech confers a negative type of formality on a given situation. However, the WD is also used in informal situations;

⁹ Al Qurayyat is a city located in the northern area of Saudi Arabia.

this contrasts with the situation in the typical diglossic Arabic situation, where colloquial Arabic is the preferred choice when the context is informal. Thus, within Ferguson’s H and L model of diglossia (1959), the WD would still be a diglossic L variety, but a prestigious and more formal variant of it. It is used as a spoken form in formal settings, such as in universities; at the same time, it is used informally in daily conversations. Nonetheless, while the WD seems to be a more prestigious (or ‘higher’) variety than QA, it is not at the same level as SA, since it is not used across all H domains. For example, it is used by university professors as a spoken form, but not in written materials and papers. In fact, it is used as a written form only in informal settings on social media. The QA speakers mentioned that they prefer the WD to QA in informal written contexts, as certain Qassimi sounds (such as *ts* and *dz*) do not have representative letters in the Arabic writing system.

The position of the WD as a prestigious variety is not stable in all contexts, and the WD speakers are aware of this instability. On the one hand, some speakers revealed that they often switch to QA when they tell jokes or try to be sarcastic; moreover, using the WD with Qassimi friends or family members would elicit a negative attitude and might make them the target of mockery or teasing. On the other hand, the participants report that their friends are accepting, and sometimes supportive, of the practice of switching to the WD when talking to people outside the QA community or in formal contexts. The speakers also report that using some SA and English words or phrases in the WD does not affect its level of formality. This theme is exhibited in the following extracts from the interviews:

“If the professor uses Qassimi Arabic in the classroom, I will feel like he is joking. I will not take him seriously. The Qassimi dialect is what I use over a cup of tea while chewing seeds¹⁰.” MN2

¹⁰ The phrase “chewing seeds” has a cultural association of informality in the Qassimi community. Chewing seeds is an activity that friends or family members enjoy during social gatherings or while watching TV.

“Sometimes, I use a few English words, depending on the subject.” MN1

“Sometimes I unintentionally use a few SA words when I lose control of what I’m saying, then I go back to my White Dialect.” MR3

“I have a Syrian friend. I spontaneously switch to the White Dialect when I talk to her, sometimes even when we are joking.” FR1

“In writing, if I say *f-axba:r-ah* [‘how is she’], they think that I am talking about a male although I am talking about a girl. The one who is reading cannot hear my pronunciation. I can avoid the issue of misunderstanding by using *-ha* [i.e., using the RA form of the pronoun]

“He who uses pure Qassimi Arabic is always funny. I feel it is a dialect that provides its speaker with charisma, especially in telling jokes.” FR2

“The sound *k* does not fit in a joke, while *ts* makes a joke funnier. It becomes very spontaneous.” FN5

“I feel annoyed by those who change their speech among us. Speaking neatly is good, but do not be pretentious.” FN1

“I feel like it all depends on the situation. If I am surrounded by Qassimi people, I will speak in Qassimi Arabic, but if there are other Arabs, I have to speak in an Arabic that they can understand.” MN3

“One of my old friends speaks with me using *ts*, but when a new Qassimi friend comes to her she switches to *k* ... she’s too shallow.” FN4

“With my close friends, we all *intsa:tsi:* [use *ts*], but with the other girls in the university I use the sound *k*. However, in my voice messages on

WhatsApp I avoid the sound *ts* even if I am sending [a message] to my mother. Someone might be around my mother and hear my voice message.”

FN2

“I unintentionally switch with people. For example, if I sit with an old Qassimi woman, I have to use pure Qassimi Arabic and no English words at all. Did you notice? When I just said ‘an old Qassimi woman’ I used *-ha* [i.e. using the RA form of the pronoun] — that is my true dialect. Qassimi Arabic reveals itself when I am talking to my close friends, but in a classroom presentation, I feel it does not fit.” MR1

Theme 4: Attitudes towards the White Dialect

The WD users express three different attitudes towards the WD: positive, negative, and neutral. Positive attitude is expressed when the WD is used in the appropriate contexts, such as in classrooms and governmental institutions, while negative attitude is expressed when the WD is used with close friends and family. As for the neutral attitude, this emerges when the speakers feel that the use of the WD is optional. This optionality is seen when speakers are aware of the people who may overhear their conversation—for instance, when a QA speaker has a conversation with a family member that takes place outside the Qassim region, such as at a restaurant in the capital Riyadh or at the airport. In this case, switching to the WD is a personal choice. The following examples illustrate a neutral attitude towards the WD:

“If my brother speaks with me in Riyadh city using the White Dialect, I do not feel it is something negative, even though I do not feel that it is a necessity. For me, my dialect is part of my personality, why would I change it for the [other] people?” FR2

“When I go to Jeddah city to [visit] Qassimi relatives who live there, of course *atsa:tsi*: [I use *ts*]. Sometimes I switch to the White Dialect.” FR1

“In Riyadh with Qassimi people, of course I will speak in Qassimi Arabic ...
In the southern areas, I might speak in the White Dialect.” MR4

7.1.4 Discussion

Taken together, the four themes discussed in this part suggest that QA is an in-group code that is only accepted when talking to other QA speakers within the Qassim region, while the WD is the out-group code that is used with non-QA speakers and in a few formal settings within Qassim (such as when giving presentations at university and in governmental institutions). The four themes also suggest that the young QA speakers’ attitudes to the WD encompass two main dimensions: communicative necessity, and negative attitudes to QA. In using the WD, young QA speakers seem to seek other communicative functions beyond mutual intelligibility. They seem to be aware that QA is not that difficult to understand for speakers of other Arabic varieties, especially within Saudi Arabia. However, the WD seems to be necessary to achieve fully effective communication with non-QA speakers—a purpose that QA fails to fulfil. Through the analysis of the four themes, it is clear that young QA speakers associate the QA dialect with negative characteristics that they believe hinder their social growth or affect their social status. Yet, by using the WD rather than shifting to an existing prestigious dialect (such as RA), it seems they can express their individuality as Qassimis who diverge from the stereotyped character of Qassimi people.

It is informative to briefly compare the findings of the current analysis with those in Chapter 6, with regard to the definition of the WD. As described under Theme 1 above, the young QA speakers offered three different definitions of the WD: first, that it is the result of their attempt to speak RA; second, that “White Dialect” is simply another term for RA; and third, that it is a dialect without a homeland. Compared to the results discussed in Chapter 6, the first definition comes closest to the reality of the WD; however, it is still not a fitting description for the phenomenon. As discussed in Chapter 6, the WD speech of the QA speakers indeed contains features from RA,

but it also has other features from Hijazi Arabic (HA), Kuwaiti Arabic (KA) and Egyptian Arabic (EA). If the WD was merely the result of QA speakers’ attempts to switch to RA, then it is unclear why their speech would include these other varieties. As for the third definition proposed by participants, it does not seem to fit the WD: in Chapter 6 it was demonstrated that, while the WD may include features that do not belong to any variety (such as the formation of plurals), most of the features in a given WD sentence belong to specific varieties spoken in certain geographical areas. In sum, the three definitions provided by WD speakers do not correspond fully with the results of the WD analysis in Chapter 6. As for how the WD speech is formulated, the opinions provided by the QA young participants largely concurred with our findings in Chapters 5 and 6. In particular, they were all in agreement regarding the fact that WD speech involves shifting away from the stigmatised QA feature *ts*, which is indeed part of the WD formulation process (discussed in Section 8.3.2).

7.2 PART 2: White Dialect according to public discourse

The term *al-lahdžah al-baid'a:*? ‘the White Dialect’ is used extensively by TV presenters and social media influencers to refer to their speech style. Even though they do not all speak in exactly the same way, there is general consensus that it involves code-mixing between SA and dialectal forms. As for the purpose of using what they call WD, there seems to be agreement that it is a meeting point for the various spoken Arabic dialects; in addition, some believe that the use of the WD stems from a low level of fluency in SA among media presenters.

In this section, I discuss opinions and descriptions of the WD as imagined in public discourse, including both Saudis and non-Saudis. These are all taken from written articles authored by these people, with the exception of one that was expressed in a YouTube video. Note that, since the views were mostly extracted from written articles and not live recordings, it was not possible to provide examples of how these people use the WD in their spoken media communication, or to determine if their views correspond with how they actually use the WD.

Ghlees (2014), a linguist and a journalist, states in an online article in Sabr digital newspaper, that Arab television presenters are not supposed to use their vernacular in the media; by using a form of Arabic that might not be intelligible to all Arabic speakers, the presenter's status may be negatively impacted. Ghlees also adds that since SA is not an easy form of Arabic for all speakers, television presenters use the WD; he describes this as a very simplified form of SA without case-marking [*iʃra:b*], and which avoids the use of salient consonants in certain words—for example, a KA speaker speaking in this manner would use SA *dʒ* instead of KA *j*. Ghalom (2014), an Arabic poet and author, states in an online article that the WD is a language that does not need Arabic dictionaries to be understood, as it is directed to both uneducated people and highly educated intellectuals. Rahmah (2015), a journalist, states in an online article that the WD is a new dialect that is used in the media, such as in television interviews, songs, online forums, press interviews, responses to readers, and much more. Rahmah sees the WD as basically a form of SA, but involving a mixture of several dialects with some English terms and some modern youth expressions. She also adds that the need for the WD arose or increased with the enormous openness provided by modern means of communication: as people encountered the difficulty of understanding local dialects, they invented the WD to ease communication. She adds that the label "White" gives the impression that it does not carry a particular identity. In his online newspaper article discussing why Saudi advertising content fluctuates between SA and WD, Alfelou (2020), a copywriter & economy reporter in an online magazine, states that "White Dialect" is a relatively recent term that has been invented by people in the marketing sector, who wish to direct their content to consumers both in Saudi Arabia and other Arabic-speaking countries. Alfelou defines the WD as a dialectal form that is highly mixed with SA, and which is understood by all Saudis. Al-Osaimi (2022), a Saudi sport reporter, describes WD in an online article for [alarabiya.net](#) as a mixture between SA and the vernacular forms, and comments that this WD has provided the people of different Saudi regions with mutual intelligibility, in contrast to the linguistic situation in Saudi Arabia three decades ago. Al-Osaimi states that the WD is affected by the dialects

spoken in Riyadh (i.e. RA) and Mecca (i.e. HA), which are the two most culturally dominant cities in Saudi Arabia.

In a video uploaded to his YouTube channel, Khaled Alnajjar (2021), a freelance voice commentator who has worked in thirteen Arabic channels and three radio stations, discusses what he believes to be the nature of the WD. He describes it as a form of “normal” SA without word-final case marking and with the possibility to use dialectal consonants and lexical items. Alnajjar states that WD speech should not be considered SA speech, and that it should not be used for formal voiceovers. In addition, he refers to the WD by a different name, namely *al-fus̄ha: an-na:ṣimah* ‘soft SA’. The following extract is part of an example of WD speech that he provides in this video:

(1) a. *nuraḥḥib bikum fi: haḍa: al-liqa:?* *al-dʒadi:d*

1PL.welcome PREP.2M.PL PREP M.SG.DEM DET-interview DET-new.M.MSG
ṣabr ʔiḍa:ṣat kaḍa wa kaḍa

PREP broadcast DEM and DEM

‘We welcome you to this interview via such-and-such broadcast’

b. *natakallam b-ʔislu:b ḥur biyair quju:d wa bi-luyah fus̄ha:*

1PL.talk PREP-style free without restrictions and PREP-language standard

‘We talk in a free style without restrictions, using Standard Arabic’

c. *ma allaḍi: jamnaḥ an jaku:n l-il-fan ḥurmah wa*

NEG REL.SG.M 3SG.M.prevent CONJ 3SG.M.be PREP-DET-art sanctity and

quju:d

restrictions

‘What prevents art from having sanctity and restrictions?’

d. *marħaba aġt'i:-na raġj-ak law samaħt fi:*

hello IMP.SG.give-1PL.DOOPINION-2SG.M.POS CONJ 2SG.M.allow PRE

haða:

DEM

‘Hello! Please give us your opinion on this’

e. *qul haða: liqa: ? hur jixlit' il-jimi:n b-il-jasa:r*

IMP.SG.M.say M.SG.DEM interview free 3SG.M.mix DET-right PREP-DET-left

‘Say this is a free interview that mixes the right side with the left’

Alnajjar’s examples correspond to his description of WD speech in the media. They are indeed SA sentences without case marking and a few dialectal consonants. The pure SA counterparts of these five WD examples are provided below, with the differences between the WD and pure SA forms indicated in bold:

- (a) *nurahħibu bikum fi: ha:ða: l-liqa: ?i l-džadi:di ġabrab? iða:ġati kaða: wa kaða:.*
- (b) *natakallamu bi-?islu:biñ ħurriġ biyairi quju:din wa bi-luyat?in fusħa:.*
- (c) *ma: allaði: jamna?u ?an jaku:na li-l-fanni ħurmatun wa quju:dun*
- (d) *marħaban aġt'i:-na: raġja-ka law Paðinta fi: ha:ða:.*
- (e) *qul ha:ða: liqa: ?un ħurrun jaxlit'u l-jami:na bi-l-jasa:ri*

However, Alnajjar does not provide many examples of WD speech that include code-mixing between SA and dialectal forms. This can be attributed to his fluency in SA. The word *samaħt* ‘allow’ in example (d) can be considered SA, but in most pure SA sentences, the verb *?adinta* is used instead. Of the five examples above, (e) is the only one that shows the mix between SA and dialects that Alnajjar mentions. In particular, the first vowel in *jixlit'* and the determiner and first vowel in *il-jimi:n* are borrowed from Alnajjar’s mother tongue, Jordanian Arabic, and may also exist in other Arabic varieties. Meanwhile, the rest of the sentences given by Alnajjar are SA-

oriented; in other words, their grammatical structure and most of their lexical items come from SA.

The WD has not received much attention from linguists in general, and most Arabic linguists who have discussed it as a phenomenon do not provide a linguistic analysis of the WD that they are discussing. Rather, they speak about it in general terms, providing their observations but no analysis of WD speech. As a result, most of their descriptions do not provide a clear definition or analysis of what the WD actually is, but can serve here as primary sources for how they see the WD. To my knowledge, there are only two papers that are entirely dedicated to the topic. One is by Bin-taleb (2020) an Arabic linguist from Saudi Arabia, and the other is by Farraj (2016), an Arabic linguist from Egypt. In general, all accounts of the WD by Arabic linguists, including these two, refer to something similar to Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA) or intermediate levels of Arabic, as commonly analysed in Arabic linguistics (see 8.2.1). All of those who discussed the WD seem to agree that the WD moves towards clarity and simplicity for all the Arabic speakers by giving up dialectal forms and involves borrowing from SA. Bin-taleb (2020) highlights that the definition of the WD is not clear among its users. Nonetheless, she expresses her own attitude towards the WD as a linguistic phenomenon: she states that if the WD refers to a simplified form of SA that avoids complex or high-register lexical items, then it does not constitute a “threat” to SA, but if the WD refers to a mix between SA and the various Arabic dialects, then it is “a disaster” that might affect SA negatively (2020, 9). Farraj (2016), on the other hand, perceives the WD positively and defines it as a spoken middle Arabic dialect that depends heavily on the use of common Arabic vocabulary, such as is understood by speakers of the different Arabic varieties, and which falls in the middle between SA and the Arabic dialects. Both Bin-taleb (2020) and Farraj (2016) approach the WD in relation to SA. Bin-taleb views the WD based on personal views without providing a linguistic analysis on how WD affects SA; meanwhile, Farraj provides some linguistic features of the WD, but these seem to be based on casual observation, and no linguistic analysis of WD speech in a specific community is provided.

The WD was discussed in Arabic related podcasts or literally articles and was also described as a middle Arabic. For instance, Al-Shamsan (2019) refers to the White Dialect as *al-luyah al-baid'a?* ‘White Arabic’ and *al-luyah aθ-θa:liθah* ‘the third language’ and describes it as: a simplified form of SA that drops the strict SA grammatical rules and allows the use of dialectal words with Arabic roots. Alsaaeidi (2022) views the WD as the Arabic of globalisation and the media that does not adhere to SA grammatical rules such as case marking. Abdel Nasser (2017) describes the WD as a form of Arabic that has SA as its base and a mixture of different dialects and some English terms commonly used by young people. She adds that WD speakers use lexical items from SA but with different pronunciation, as there are some Arabic consonants that are difficult for non-fluent SA speakers to pronounce.

To summarise, in contrast to the young QA speakers, the majority of public discourse seems to perceive the WD as an Arabic variety that basically moves towards clarity and simplicity by giving up dialectal and adopting more SA borrowings. Moreover, this view seems to correspond to the descriptions provided above by journalists considering that most of the Arabic used in official media is purely SA in written forms, or SA speech that is mixed with dialectal forms for audio and video forms. That is to say, the main language is always SA. Note that this is the opposite of the WD used by the young QA speakers, in which SA does not play a major role in sentence formation (see Chapter 6).

One may conclude from this overview that the term White Dialect is used to refer to different ways of speaking in the public discourse of media persons and linguists than those that are called WD by the young QA speakers that were interviewed for this study.

7.3 General Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the perception of the WD by two groups: the young users of the WD (i.e., the young participants in this research), and according to public discourse. From the foregoing discussion, it has emerged that the two groups are not in alignment when it comes to defining the WD. Within the first group—young QA

speakers—there are also differences of opinion on how to define the WD. Some young participants believe it is the form of Arabic that results from their attempt to shift to RA. Other young speakers believe that “White Dialect” is simply another name for RA, while yet others believe the WD to be an Arabic dialect without a homeland. The perception of the WD according to public discourse fall into two groups: those who believe the WD is a mix between Arabic dialects and SA, and those who believe it is a simplified form of SA that dispenses with strict grammatical rules such as number agreement or case marking. Both views seem to be alternatives to what is referred to as Educated Spoken Arabic or Intermediate Arabic by the previous Arabic linguists (the two terms are discussed in 8.2.1). None of these views reflect the reality of the WD as a fluid form that does not necessarily use SA linguistic features (as discussed in Chapter 6). Therefore, the ideology of the WD might have contrasts with the reality of its actual use.

As for when the WD is used, the young QA speakers seem to use the WD as an out-group code used with non-QA speakers both within and beyond the Qassim region. They also reveal that they use the WD with other QA speakers in official governmental institutions and certain formal occasions, such as giving a presentation at Qassim University. In public discourse, a different definition of “White Dialect” is used. It is rather described as the spoken intermediate Arabic form used in media such as television programmes, radio broadcasts and social media, without discussing its possibility for use in day-to-day communication.

Even though the reasons given for using the WD are different within and between these two major groups – young QA speakers and public figures, they align with regard to one point: the WD is used to ease communication between speakers of different Arabic dialects. For the young QA speakers, the WD also helps them to avoid being framed in the stereotypical image of Qassimi people as being intolerant. In addition, they also seem to use it for the prestige it confers. As for public discourse, the “White Dialect” – which seems to refer to a somewhat different entity than what young QA speakers call WD – is said to be used because it is easier than pure SA, and is more intelligible for speakers of various Arabic dialects compared to using colloquial forms.

Chapter 8

The sociolinguistics of the White Dialect

Introduction

As shown above, the term *al-lahdžih al-beið'a:*¹¹ ‘the White Dialect’ (WD) is used extensively by the young Qassimi Arabic (QA) speakers to refer to specific ways of speaking they switch to when they feel their dialect is too local for speakers of the other Arabic varieties to understand or to appreciate. However, more in general, the term “White Dialect” appears to be used to refer to various ways of speaking. Thus, as discussed in the preceding chapter, the speech that was referred to as the White Dialect by the young QA participants of this investigation is not exactly the same as that referred to by Arabic scholars and media presenters.

This chapter discusses the White Dialect in its QA definition from a sociolinguistic point of view. It consists of three parts. The first part (Section 8.1) discusses the label “White Dialect”. The second part (Section 8.2) discusses the position of the WD within the sociolinguistic context of Arabic. The last section (8.3) provides a description of the WD, including how speakers formulate their WD speech.

8.1 The White Dialect in a general sociolinguistic perspective

From a linguistic point of view, the term “White Dialect” may not be the most appropriate label, as the WD does not fit the definition of a dialect. WD is not specific to a certain region or social group, nor is it a unified linguistic form that is shared by all its users. The WD of the QA speakers shows linguistic elements and features from other regional Arabic dialects within Saudi Arabia, such as Riyadh Arabic (RA) and

¹¹ This is the QA pronunciation. In SA it is called *al-lahdžah al-baid'a:*?

Hijazi Arabic (HA), and other Arabic dialects outside Saudi Arabia, such as Egyptian Arabic (EA) and Kuwaiti Arabic (KA), as well as from Standard Arabic (SA) and sometimes other languages such as English. That is to say, the WD is fluid, and subject to seemingly less-structured intra-speaker and inter-speaker variation.

It is unknown why this way of speaking is called “White Dialect”, nor who coined the label. The term *lahdžah* ‘dialect’ may have been used to indicate that this variety is a colloquial form of Arabic, as Arabic speakers in general refer to varieties that are not SA as “dialects”. As for the association of this variety with the colour white, this could possibly stem from the associations that this colour carries in the Arab culture. In a study comparing colour connotations between Arabic and US culture, Qtaishat and Al-Hyari (2019) reveal that the colour white may convey contradictory meanings in Arabic culture in general, symbolising both positive and negative concepts. For instance, *fein-uh beid'a*: ‘his eye is white’ is used to describe someone who is blind, while *al-galb al-?abjad* ‘the white heart’ describes an honest and pure character. Therefore, calling the WD “white” does not automatically imply a specifically positive or negative association. On the other hand, it might be a way of indicating that it does not belong to any other variety, that is, it is colourless and identity-free, as suggested by Farraj (2016). A study by Al-Rojaie (2020a) aimed to investigate the emergence of a national koine in Saudi Arabia, which was likewise labelled the “White Dialect” by some research participants. Al-Rojaie reports that these speakers call the variety “White Dialect” because it is “accent-free” and does not contain “stigmatised linguistic feature[s]” (2020a, 41).

Being used extensively by the young generation in the QA community, one might consider the WD to be a sociolect. However, even though the term “White Dialect” is used by the QA speakers to refer to a way of speaking that they use besides their QA, this is characterised by its enormous inter-speaker and intra-speaker variation; that is, it is not the same for every single speaker, and it is not the same for the same speaker on a different occasion. Moreover, it is not specific to a certain social-economic class, or gender in a community. QA speakers seem to use the term “White Dialect” to refer to the many different forms that they shift to. Even though these varieties are not linguistically homogeneous, speakers do identify them

collectively. In other words, speakers are aware that WD does not refer to a single monolithic linguistic form. A female QA speaker in Al-Rojaie's study (2020a) described the WD as a variety that is similar to RA, but that also adopts other features from other dialects. Moreover, some of the participants in the current study acknowledged that the WD refers to a very flexible variety, as they mentioned that they adjust their WD based on where they are (Chapter 7, Theme 1).

Since the young speakers' use of the WD is dependent on the situation, one might consider WD to be a style or a register. The terms "style" and "register" both refer to situational linguistic variation. According to Kortmann (2020), it is not easy to differentiate between register and style as they both refer to varieties which are mainly "determined by the relevant communicative situation" and they both refer to the linguistic items that speakers choose, or are expected to choose, in a specific communicative situation. Kortmann distinguishes the two terms based on different functions fulfilled by situational linguistic variation. He states that stylistic variation is determined by a speaker's personal choices and artistic preferences, while variation in register is mainly determined by the "functional-communicative context"; as such, variation in style is "less predicted" than variation in register (2020, 203). As a fluid way of speaking, the WD is often used for a specific functional communicative purpose, but this may vary. Some speakers use the WD to ease communication with other Arabic speakers, some use it to hide that they are from Qassim, and some use it for prestige or other purposes (discussed in chapter 7, Theme 2). Therefore, the label "register" might be more suitable than "style" for describing the WD.

"Style" is a term that has been interpreted differently among sociolinguists and variationists. For instance, Labov's (1972) concept of style refers to the way speakers adjust their own speech under certain social circumstances. In his work on stylistic variation (1984), Labov refers to five principles of style. The first of these was that "there are no single style speakers"; in other words, speakers regularly and consistently shift between styles in their speech. Secondly, "styles can be ranged along a single dimension, measured by the amount of attention paid to speech"; that is, style shift is greatly affected by speakers' attention to their own speech. Thirdly, "the vernacular, in which the minimum attention is paid to speech, provides the most

systematic data for linguistic analysis”; Labov describes the vernacular as what speakers acquire when they are young, which forms the base for all speech styles. The fourth principle is that “any systematic observation of a speaker defines a formal context where more than the minimum attention is paid to speech”: that is, speakers shift away from their vernacular in formal situations. Lastly, in the fifth principle, Labov states that “face-to-face interviews are the only means of obtaining the volume and quality of recorded speech that is needed for quantitative analysis.” Based on these five principles, every way of speaking can be considered a style, thus the WD can be considered a style as much as pure QA or SA.

Coupland (2011) criticises Labov’s view of style. He states that, in Labov’s work, “style was treated as a methodological problem more than a theoretically important issue in its own right” (2011, 140). Coupland argues that if speakers adjust their speech styles toward prestigious speech norms when they are paying attention to their speech, then this indicates that people within the speech community share one perception of their speech, namely that it is associated with low prestige. This observation, according to Coupland, shows that style is a theoretical issue, not just a methodological one. On the other hand, style was defined by Bell (1984) as the changes that speakers apply to their speech based on their audience. This follows a cognitive approach similar to that of Labov, in addition to considering social communicative factors. Smakman (2018) defines style as the various ways of speaking that result from the linguistic change that speakers apply to their language due to several factors, such as the degree of formality of the situation, the social status of their interlocutors, and the goals that they wish to achieve in a conversation (such as to persuade or discourage). Note that Smakman’s definition of style seems to cover the notions of both style and register as distinguished by Kortmann (2020).

One should also bear in mind that style shifting by Arabic speakers differs from style shifting in other languages, considering the number of linguistic varieties an Arabic speaker may have at her or his disposal. Due to the diglossic nature of Arabic and the existence of inter-dialectal code-mixing, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether a speaker is style shifting or code-mixing, especially considering that code-mixing can be a feature of a certain style. Trudgill (1983, 114) describes

code-switching as a process that occurs between two distinct varieties in a diglossic context. However, Arabic code-mixing might have more than two distinct varieties in a diglossic context. When an Arabic speaker adjusts their speech in formal situations, then this most likely involves code-mixing of different Arabic varieties that the speaker considers to be standard or formal varieties.

In my view, the most fitting description of the WD is that it is a linguistic strategy for Arabic speakers to adopt linguistic features from the range of different Arabic varieties available to them, to produce a spontaneous form of Arabic that serves their particular communicative motives.

8.2 The White Dialect in the sociolinguistic context of Arabic

When considering the sociolinguistic situation of Arabic in order to understand the WD as a phenomenon, a number of important topics emerge that relate to the sociolinguistic context of Arabic, such as diglossia, code-mixing, and variation. These themes may shed light on the WD and its use by the young QA speakers.

8.2.1 Diglossia

Ferguson (1959) states that SA and Arabic dialects are in a diglossic relationship. SA is the “high” variety (H) used in formal situations, writing, media and education, while the Arabic dialects are the “low” varieties (L), which are the linguistic forms used in everyday conversation and informal situations. According to Ferguson (1959, 328), when a speaker uses an H variety in an informal setting or an L variety in a formal situation, he/she becomes a target for “ridicule”, as the use of H and L varieties is associated with specific sociolinguistic rules that should not be violated. In his model, Ferguson introduces twelve main domains for the use of H and L varieties, which are described in the following table.

High variety (Standard Arabic)	Low variety (Arabic dialects)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - religious speech in a church or mosque - personal letters - parliaments, political speech - news broadcasts - university lectures - newspaper editorials, news stories, captions on pictures - poetry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - instructions to waiters, servants and workmen - radio (soap opera) - conversations with family, friends and colleagues - captions on political cartoons - folk literature

Over time, Ferguson’s model has received much criticism. With respect to Arabic, Albirini (2016, 21) summarises the criticisms of Ferguson’s model in two points. First, there are a range of existing “intermediate varieties” and linguistic levels that lie between SA and the Arabic dialects, i.e., between the H and the L varieties. Second, it is possible for SA and the colloquial Arabic varieties to coincide in the same context or domain, as when speakers codeswitch between SA and their dialects (discussed later in Section 8.2.2).

As for the first point of criticism, intermediate levels of Arabic have been identified by several scholars. For instance, Blanc (1960) identifies two colloquial Arabic forms that lie between classical Arabic and the plain colloquial, which he refers to as “elevated colloquial” and “koineised colloquial”. Similarly, Cadora (1992) identifies a level between SA and the colloquial Arabic which he refers to as “intercommon spoken Arabic”. One of the most discussed intermediates is “educated spoken Arabic” (ESA) Mitchell (1982) defines ESA as an existing “unregistered” level of mixed Arabics that provides the foundation for a “koineised Arabic” for Arabs from different countries to communicate with one another. In a later work, Mitchell (1986) provides a description of the specific features found in ESA and recognises the instability of these features. Ryding (1991), on the other hand, defines ESA as an elevated prestigious regional Arabic that is used for communication in various Arabic-speaking communities. Meiseles (1980) defines ESA as colloquial form in which the speakers attempt to avoid linguistic features associated with their local dialects

through a process of koineising their Arabic or borrowing from Classical Arabic (CA)¹², or sometimes both. He adds that this level of Arabic is the main linguistic form used for communication by educated Arabic speakers from different regions. Karim (2016) defines ESA as the “mid-way” between SA and vernacular forms. He describes ESA as a variety of Arabic that uses standard forms and shared linguistic features among the different Arabic dialects in informal contexts.

Badawi (1973) proposes a model to reflect the five levels of spoken Arabic in Egypt. He highlights that educated speakers are capable of skillfully shifting from one level to another based on the situation. These levels are explained below; note, however, that Badawi’s model is a reflection of the linguistic situation in the spoken Arabic of Egypt of his time, which may differ from the spoken Arabic of other countries or even from the present situation in Egypt.

1. Inherited Arabic, i.e., CA: mostly used in written contexts and spoken only by religious scholars, although not in spontaneous religious speeches but only in prepared or pre-recorded religious speeches on radio or television. Grammatically, it is a well-defined form.
2. Modern literary Arabic, i.e., Modern Standard Arabic (SA): a modernised and modified form of CA. It is the form of SA that is used in written and spoken media by television news reporters and in political speeches.
3. Colloquial of the cultured or educated: the spoken form of colloquial Arabic that is used mostly by educated people in formal discussion, university lectures, television interviews and political speeches.
4. Colloquial of the basically educated: a colloquial form of Arabic used by both educated people and illiterate people in informal situations, as well as in everyday conversation among friends and family.

¹² Classical Arabic is the language of traditional scripture and scholarship. Its modernised form is called Standard Arabic.

5. Colloquial of the illiterate: a pure vernacular form that is only used by illiterate people. Its use in the media is restricted to certain situations, such as in comedy programmes that emphasise the use of linguistic forms as a subject of humour.

Badawi (1973) also highlights that the boundaries that delineate these five levels are not fixed, as the levels may blend and mix with each other. In fact, the above descriptions of the different intermediate levels of Arabic all seem to reflect two key characteristics of these levels that lie between the SA and the Arabic dialects; namely, their fluidity and instability. These two features might be a reason why it is difficult to provide definitions for each level. However, scholars seem to be in alignment on the following two points:

- Even though the intermediate levels are spoken forms, they are sometimes used in contexts where a H variety would be appropriate.
- The intermediate levels involve code-mixing between SA and the colloquial forms.

Bassiouney (2009) states that it is difficult to provide rules for the intermediate levels only in terms of the relationship between SA and the various Arabic vernaculars, as this method does not take into account the differences that exist between the various Arabic dialects. Albirini (2016) also seems to concur with this point of view. Even though he agrees with Badawi’s observation regarding the gradient nature of Arabic speech in terms of a continuum between SA and colloquial Arabic, Albirini notes that defining a given variety as a specific level of language used by a specific group is “difficult” (2016, 23-24).

One might assume that the WD is one such intermediate level between SA and the vernacular forms. However, it should be noted that SA is just an optional component of WD speech, and that much of the variation in WD is not related to the relative importance of SA elements in the speech. Thus, it is questionable if it is on a

continuous scale with Standard Arabic on the top. Thus, the WD is different from intermediate Arabic as defined by Badawi and others, in that it is not related to its position vis-à-vis SA. This is easily shown by our results (Chapter 6) that show that speech involving many SA features and speech that uses mostly dialectal features can both be referred to as WD by its users.

8.2.2 Code-mixing

Considering the linguistic varieties available to Arabic speakers, it is plausible that code-mixing is a constant trait of their speech. Code-mixing in the Arabic context relates to the diglossic situation of the language. That is to say, code-mixing in Arabic occurs between the H variety, i.e., SA, and the L varieties, i.e., the colloquial forms. Code-mixing in Arabic occurs in formal situations such as in religious and political speeches, as well as in everyday conversations. In domains generally associated with H varieties, such as political and religious speeches, SA is the most accepted variety among Arabic speakers (Holes, 2004). However, in certain situations, SA and the dialectal varieties are mixed in such formal domains. In his analysis of the political speeches of the former Egyptian president, Gamal Abd al-Nasir, Holes (1993) observes that Abd al-Nasir was fully aware of his linguistic choices and their impact on his audience. In his speeches, Abd al-Nasir used SA to express political power over the audience, and EA to convey his solidarity with the audience. Mazaranni (1997), in analysing the speeches of three former Arab presidents, finds that those presidents switched to the dialect when they wanted to kindle emotions in their audience. Similarly, in religious speeches, code-mixing between SA and dialectal forms serves specific functions. According to Saeed (1997), religious preachers use SA in their speech in order express a moral concept or to quote religious scripture and switch to the vernacular for such purposes as simplifying ideas, mentioning inconsequential topics, or adding a touch of humour. Furthermore, Albirini (2011) believes that the function of code-mixing between SA and colloquial Arabic varieties in formal situations also includes the highlighting of speakers' attitudes toward the topic being discussed. According to Albirini, in an H variety context, SA is employed to express

positive attitudes towards a given topic, whereas dialectal forms are employed to express negative attitudes or to add jokes and insults to the speech.

Code-mixing also occurs in informal contexts, such as daily conversations. Albirini (2016) differentiates this type of code-mixing from that which occurs in political and religious speeches. Code-mixing in informal speech may be a way to increase mutual intelligibility among speakers of different dialects, but Albirini also points to the fact that code-mixing in informal contexts is not always for the purpose of increasing intelligibility (2016, 248).

The WD indeed involves the use of elements from several codes in one single sentence, as shown by the data analysed in Chapter 6. Speakers mix three or more Arabic varieties, which may, but must not, include SA. Unlike in typical contexts of code-mixing in Arabic, the use of SA in the WD does not seem to add a degree of formality or prestige. In other words, SA does not necessarily mark prestigious speech within WD. In a WD context, speakers seem to use few linguistic elements from their vernacular, more elements from the variety that they consider the main, prestigious variety (i.e. SA or RA), and few elements from other Arabic varieties or other languages such as English (for further discussion, see Section 8.3.2).

In the WD speech that was produced by the young QA speakers, the result is sometimes a blend of SA and colloquial forms, and at other times it is a mix of different colloquial Arabic forms with only very few elements from SA. The linguistic choice in code-mixing seems to be personal rather than contextually determined. However, it is important to note that the WD is not exclusively a form of code-mixing between the various Arabic varieties: it also involves the introduction of new linguistic forms which might be considered linguistically unacceptable based on the linguistic rules of the varieties being mixed (as discussed in Section 6.1.4).

8.2.3 Arabic varieties

The Arabic sociolinguistic landscape comprises different linguistic varieties that vary between and within the countries where Arabic is spoken. Sometimes, multiple Arabic varieties exist within one geographical region. Some of these Arabic varieties share lots of linguistic features, whereas others differ to such an extent that mutual intelligibility is low. On the other hand, SA is largely the same in all Arabic countries, and—as their shared language of education—may constitute a common ground to speakers of different dialects. As discussed above (Section 8.2.1), the sociolinguistic situation of Arabic is one of diglossia, involving a complex coexistence of many different varieties. In the diglossic context of Arabic, the possible varieties that a speaker might use include: SA; vernacular Arabic that could be a local, ethnic, or regional dialect; a standard dialect which could be a national dialect or a koineised form; and intermediate levels of Arabic that lie between SA and the vernacular forms. In addition to the various varieties of Arabic, other languages also occupy space in the Arabic sociolinguistic landscape, such as English, French, Berber (Amazigh) and Kurdish (Albirini, 2016).

The sociolinguistic context of Arabic can be characterised as including both standard and prestige forms. Ibrahim (1986) calls for an explicit distinction between standard and prestige varieties of Arabic. Moreover, Ibrahim asserts that SA is not a prestige variety, as prestige varieties are related to social factors such as higher social class, which is a trait that SA does not confer on its speakers. According to Ibrahim, the prestigious value of SA depends on the accepted attitudes to “correct” or “good” language (1986, 115). In almost every Arabic-speaking country, there exists a prestigious colloquial variety (or varieties), whose value comes from the socioeconomic, political or social influence of the region from where the variety originates. For instance, for Jordanian Bedouin women, the prestige variety is represented by urban dialects spoken in big cities (Abdel-Jawad, 1986). In Iraq, Christian speakers from Baghdad use the Muslim Baghdadi dialect as a prestige variety in formal situations with non-Christians (Abu-Haidar, 1991). Similarly, in his research into language change and variation in Bahrain, a country that is home to both

Sunnis and Shiites, Holes (1984) finds that the direction of language change is strongly influenced by the Sunnis, as the political and financial power of Bahrain is held by the country’s Sunni royal family. Likewise, the younger generation of Qatari Bedouins, especially women, tend to give up their Bedouin linguistic features in favour of those associated with prestige and upper-class speech (Ahmad & Al-Kababji, 2020).

Inter-dialectal communicative practices among speakers of different Arabic varieties typically involve a process of levelling, in which marked features among dialects are eliminated. Using prestigious forms of Arabic may be one way to attain this levelling (cf. Versteegh 2014). According to Blanc (1960), in inter-dialectal contact, speakers may give up certain features in their dialect in favour of features from other dialects that are more prestigious. On the level of actual conversation, Holes (1995) defines levelling as the linguistic process that occurs due to the dialectal differences between two speakers who attempt to use shared linguistic features and eliminate local ones. Gibson (2002), in his investigation of phonological and morphological change in Tunisian Arabic, states that the influence of SA on dialectal change is only at the level of the lexicon, and does not affect the phonological or morphological levels. He also adds that the direction of linguistic change is towards the urban dialect of Tunis. Many other linguists who have investigated levelling in Arabic dialects are in agreement with Gibson’s point of view (e.g., Ibrahim, 1986; Abdel-Jawad, 1986; Al-Wer, 1997); they consider that levelling in Arabic dialects does not always move towards SA, rather, it may move towards the prestigious linguistic forms of other Arabic-speaking countries or regions.

In the diglossic situation of Arabic in Saudi Arabia, the WD seems to be a colloquial form that could be used in daily conversation. It is important to note that the motives underlying linguistic choices do not seem to be related exclusively to prestige based on political and socioeconomic factors. In research carried out in perceptual dialectology by Al-Rojaie (2021), participants revealed other factors underlying the choice of a certain perceived Arabic variety, which were associated with clarity, intelligibility, and the absence of regional and local identity in that particular variety.

8.3 The White Dialect as a linguistic phenomenon

8.3.1 Qassimi Arabic speakers: sociolinguistic profile

In the interviews, young QA speakers reported that they use the WD in certain situations when they feel that QA is too local and SA is too formal. This seems to indicate that the WD serves as an intermediate level of Arabic on the scale of linguistic prestige (section 8.2.1). In his perceptual dialectological investigation of the Saudi national koine, Al-Rojaie (2020a) came across the term “White Dialect” when he asked his participants about the name of this national koine. In his study, Al-Rojaie used a “draw-a-map task”, where he provided his participants with a map of Saudi Arabia showing limited geographic information; that is, only the major cities and a few smaller cities were marked. He collected his data using two questions: (1) What is the dialect closest to the Saudi national dialect? and (2) What is the dialect closest to the SA? (2020a, 33). Al-Rojaie also conducted post-survey discussions with his participants to investigate four emergent issues: the name of this national koine, the reasons why a certain area was chosen as closest to the koine, the linguistic characteristics associated with the koine, and the attitudes towards it. His results show that most of his participants acknowledge the emergence of a Saudi national koine, which they associate with RA through features that they say characterise RA, such as “clarity” and “simplicity”, lack of stigmatised features, and not being associated with a specific regional identity. Al-Rojaie states that the Saudi national koine is dominated by RA, which is itself the result of dialectal contact between the regional dialects of internal migrants from all parts of the country and the indigenous dialect of the city of Riyadh city. He also adds that this koine, which he also terms “urban RA”, has become the new urban variety of Saudi Arabia and “representative of Saudi national identity to many people” due to its political value as the variety spoken by political figures and the royal family (2020a, 46). According to Al-Rojaie, this national koine is a stable form. Interestingly, some of his participants referred to this as “White Dialect”. This is different from the lack of stability in the way of speaking that was

called WD by the young QA speakers. Al-Rojaie does not refer to this koine as “White Dialect” himself, but rather reports that some of his young participants identify RA as the WD, about whom he said—slightly condescendingly—that they “lack awareness of dialect variation that other age groups have due to less experience and contact with other speakers in the area” (2020a, 38). A middle-aged Qassimi female participant in Al-Rojaie’s investigation said “I agree that the White Dialect is very similar to the dialect spoken by the Riyadh people, but there are some words and sounds adopted from other dialects” (2020a, 45). The fact that some young participants in Al-Rojaie’s study used “White Dialect” for RA highlights that the term WD may not refer to the same phenomenon everywhere for all speakers (see also Chapter 7).

To understand the WD—in the QA sense of the term—as a phenomenon, one should first address the varieties that are available to young QA speakers. Generally speaking, young QA speakers have three Arabic varieties at their disposal: QA, which is the vernacular form of Arabic that speakers use every day in informal situations with friends and family; SA, which is used in schools and written contexts; and the kind of Arabic that one may find in mediatized contexts and that presents an intermediate form in between SA and dialectal Arabic. Qassimi children acquire QA from their parents and the people around them. At the same time, they start to acquire SA from (pre-schooler directed) television programmes even before enrolling in school. This linguistic situation differs from that experienced by their parents, as children’s television programmes were not available during their parents’ childhood. In other words, young QA speakers are very fluent speakers of SA compared to their parents who only started to learn SA once they enrolled in school or started receiving religious education. Young QA speakers are also exposed to other varieties of Arabic, such as RA, HA (spoken in Saudi Arabia), KA, EA (used in the media), and other languages, particularly English. English also plays a role. According to Omar and Ilyas, Arabic speakers in Saudi Arabia switch to English when using certain phrases that carry emotional content, that they feel would “sound better in another language” (2018, 83). For instance, they use ‘thank you’ instead of *fukran* and ‘welcome’ instead of *marhaba*:

8.3.2 The White Dialect: A Linguistic Strategy

Based on the metalinguistic commentary about the WD by its users (Chapter 7) and the analysis of WD speech (Chapters 5 and 6), “White Dialect” does not seem to be a term that refers to a specific stable Arabic variety. While what they call the WD shows large-scale inter-speaker and intra-speaker variation, speakers nonetheless follow similar strategies in shaping their WD speech. The WD is therefore best seen as a linguistic strategy of shifting away from a vernacular form, which involves convergence towards the prestigious variety as well as code-mixing of various Arabic varieties and other languages. Thus, the formation of WD speech seems to consist of three different processes: de-localisation, adoption of prestigious variants, and admixture. Even though even though the WD is not a dialect in the strict sense, I will keep using the term the WD as it is the label that was given to this linguistic strategy by its users.

The process of de-localisation in the WD is basically the avoidance of features that are considered highly local. This depends of course on the speakers’ awareness of stigmatised or salient features in their vernacular. The factors that make certain features in a certain linguistic variety more stigmatised than others are not always known or clear. In general, stigmatisation of linguistic features is related to identity stereotypes and to speakers’ attitudes towards these linguistic features. In order to be stigmatised, features need to have a certain salience. Salience, according to Mejdell (2006, 283), is a “perceptual phenomenon” that reveals speakers’ and listeners’ awareness of certain features in a given variety, and this awareness makes these features more susceptible to change than other, less salient features in the same variety. Mejdell also connects salience to Labov’s idea (1972) about how speakers are conscious of certain features in linguistic varieties. In Labov’s terminology, features that speakers are aware of in a speech community are referred to as markers, while features that speakers are not aware of are referred to as indicators. Note, though, that while stigmatised features are by definition salient, not all salient features are stigmatised. The investigation of young speakers’ perceptions of QA markers (Chapter 7) revealed that speakers tend to have negative attitudes towards certain

markers associated with Qassimi Arabic, specifically the affrication of *k* as *ts* and the affrication of *g* as *dz*, but did not reveal negative attitudes towards other markers of QA. The difference between salient and stigmatised markers is not just apparent in the attitudes towards these features, but has practical repercussions on how they are used: the two stigmatised features *ts* and *dz* were the least-used markers in the WD of the young QA speakers. Similarly, Al-Rojaie comments that young QA speakers did not change their use of certain QA features—such as the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* and the use of the 3SG.M suffix *-uh*—because these features “have not been yet associated with a social value” (2013, 57).

The second relevant process is the adoption of a linguistic form that speakers consider higher prestige than their local variant. This prestigious form is either another dialectal form or SA. If a speaker chooses a dialectal form as the prestigious form to shift to, this form is in most cases a national dialect or a prestige variety. In most cases, SA and dialectal forms co-occur in the same WD sentence. To determine the prestigious variety chosen, I counted the lexical items in the sentences participants produced in their social media posts. By analysing the WD sentences using the Matrix Language Frame Model (MLF) (Myers-Scotton 1997) (Chapter 6), I aimed to determine the Matrix Language (ML) of the sentences—that is, the language that provides the grammatical frame—and analyse their system morphemes. Almost all WD sentences have system morphemes from several varieties. In other words, in such sentences there are system morphemes from two or more codes; some of these morphemes belong to a prestigious dialectal variety, while others belong to SA. As such, even though the MLF model succeeds in showing the fluidity of the WD (as in Chapter 6), the existence of more than one Matrix Language in almost all the WD sentences means that the model cannot be used to determine the matrix variety.

On the other hand, counting lexical elements proved to be a fruitful method for determining the oriented variety. By orientation towards a certain variety, I mean here that this variety is most frequently chosen for lexical items in a sentence. Almost all WD sentences produced by the young QA speakers are of two types, either RA-oriented or SA-oriented. Below are examples of the two types, including glosses that illustrate how the lexical element counting method is applied to the data.

- (1) *ana: mu: ſa:rfaḥ il-waqṭ illi jīnā:sb-ah*
 I NEG knowing.F.SG. DET-time REL 3SG.M.suit-3SG.F.DO
 neutral RA RA RA-SA RA QA&RA-QA
 'I do not know what time suits her'
- (2) *ma:-fi: t̄iri:gah ḥa:njah nīḍar nīḥas̄s̄il ha-l-mukammila:t*
 NEG-PREP way other.F.SG 1PL.can 1PL.get DEM-DET-supplements
 QA&RA-RA RA RA RA QA&RA- SA
 'There is no other way to get these supplements?'
- (3) *an-nas̄i:ḥah alli kill-aha ḥiqd wa ḥasad mu: mutaqabbalah*
 DET-advice REL all-3SG.F.POS malice and envy NEG acceptable.F.SG
 SA-SA QA neutral-RA SA neutral SA RA SA
 'The advice that is full of malice and envy is not acceptable'
- (4) *ði: il-maba:di? ḥa:bitah wa s̄a:midah ma:*
 DEM DET-principles stable:F.SG and steady.F.SG NEG
 QA RA-SA SA neutral SA RA&QA
taqbal at-tayyibi:r
 3SG.F.accept DET-change
 SA SA-SA
 'These principles are stable and steady, and do not accept the change'
- (5) *hal iħna: ðarū:ri: niħta:dʒ haði: il-mukammila:t*
 Q we necessarily 1PL.need DEM.F.SG DET-supplements
 SA HA SA QA&RA QA&RA RA-SA
 'Do we necessarily need these supplements'

- (6) *mu: mas?alat dawa:fī? bas ka:nat il-wað'i:fah marrah marmu:qah*
 NEG matter motivation CONJ 3SG.F.be DET-job very prestigious:F.SG
 RA SA SA RA neutral RA-SA RA SA
 ‘It is not a matter of motivation the job was very prestigious’

- (7) *tigdar ta:kil min ðala:θ la-ðarba? wadðba:t*
 2SG.M.can 2SG.M.eat PREP three PREP-four meals
 RA&HA QA&RA neutral QA&RA QA&RA-QA&RA QA&RA&HA&KA
 ‘You can eat from three to four meals’

The following table shows the total number of lexical items from each variety in the WD examples above.

example no.	SA	RA	QA	neutral	other varieties	classification
(1)	1	5	2	1	0	RA-oriented
(2)	1	7	2	0	0	RA-oriented
(3)	5	2	1	2	0	SA-oriented
(4)	6	2	2	1	0	SA-oriented
(5)	3	3	2	0	1	RA-oriented
(6)	4	4	0	1	0	SA-/RA-oriented
(7)	0	6	5	1	2	RA-oriented

Based on the lexical item counting method, examples (1) and (2) are clearly RA-oriented WD sentences, while examples (3) and (4) are clearly SA-oriented WD sentences. In some sentences, the numbers of RA and SA lexical elements are equal. In those cases, I have looked at the other lexical elements in the sentence: if there are other dialectal lexical items, I classify the sentence as RA-oriented, as a sentence cannot be SA-oriented while having more dialectal lexical items than SA ones. This

is illustrated above by example (5). There were a few cases in the data where the RA and SA lexical elements are equal but there are not any other dialectal lexical elements in the sentence. I classify such sentences as both SA and RA-oriented, as in example (6). Finally, example (7) is a RA-oriented WD sentence that does not include any SA elements.

An important note to add is that in our data SA-orientation of a sentence seems to be associated with the educational history of its speaker. The QA speakers who provided SA-oriented sentences were mostly those who had received their education in religious schools, while those who provided RA-oriented sentences tended to have family and friends from Riyadh and to visit the city very frequently. This may be a matter of fluency, as religious schools give more exposure to SA than normal public education. Religious schools in Saudi Arabia provide extra Islamic courses that are strictly presented in SA, while in public schools, the language of instruction is more flexible and Arabic dialects are often used within classrooms.

Gender did not seem to play a major role in the choice between a dialectal form or SA. This conclusion is different from the findings of Ismail (2012) in her investigation of gender differences in code-mixing among Saudi undergraduates in formal interviews. In these interviews, Ismail found that Saudi women tended to use more dialectal Arabic forms, while men tended to use more SA forms. She states that this gender-based preference for a certain linguistic form can be attributed to social and cultural norms, as men's and women's speech seem to reflect "their differential entitlement to the public sphere" (Ismail 2012, 274). According to Ismail, SA is used in formal situations and places that are dominated by men, and that Saudi male and female social roles are reflected in their in their code-mixing (Ismail 2012, 274-275).

The data analysed in this investigation also reveal that WD users do not stick to one orientation all the time. A young QA speaker's WD is sometimes RA-oriented and other times SA-oriented. In the social media posts submitted for this investigation, some participants adopt SA in one post, while in another they adopt RA. The following two examples are uttered by the same speaker when talking to a Saudi audience:

- (7) *iða: istaffar aʃʃaxs^r ða: af-saj? yazhad bi-d-dunja:*
 CONJ 3SG.M.feel DET-person DEM DET-thing 3SG.M.become PREP-DET-life
 neutral SA SA-SA QA SA-SA SA neutral-SA-SA
 ‘If a person feels this thing, he becomes an ascetic in life’

- (8) *al-wa:hid yaffal-ah marrah marritein*
 DET-someone 3SG.M.do-3SG.F.DO once twice
 neutral SA-QA RA RA&QA
lein tus^rbih kaʔannaha sidzin
 CONJ 3SG.F.become CONJ.3SG.F prison
 RA SA RA&SA RA&QA
 ‘A person does it once, twice, until it becomes like a prison’

In example (7), all elements of the sentence belong to SA, except for the demonstrative marker *ða*: ‘this’ which comes from QA. Therefore, the sentence appears to be SA-oriented. In example (8), the same speaker uses SA in two verbs: *yaffal* ‘does’ (which is suffixed with a QA pronominal form *-ah*), and *tus^rbih* ‘becomes’. The rest of the sentence is composed of dialectal elements, mostly from RA with a few elements from QA. Therefore, example (8) can be analysed as RA-oriented.

The third process relevant to WD formation involves the admixture of further Arabic varieties or other languages that the speakers are exposed to. Mostly, this is a case of lexical borrowing, with speakers borrowing certain phrases or lexical items from other Arabic varieties or English. One area where code-mixing of this kind can be seen in my WD data is in the forms of negation, as mentioned in Chapter 6: speakers sometimes use the EA negative marker *mif*, rather than *mu:*, which is the negative marker in RA, the variety towards which the sentence is oriented. Use of English in the WD seems to be strongly affected by the orientation of the sentence: in SA-oriented sentences, speakers tend to use little or no English vocabulary, while in RA-oriented sentences, speakers tend to extensively use English vocabulary. The admixture process seems to serve two purposes in the WD. One of these is a safe “get-

away” technique; that is, a way out when speakers want to avoid a stigmatised feature in their vernacular but do not know its counterpart in the variety towards which the sentence is oriented. The other function seems to be related to prestige: the WD users seem to code-mix to other Arabic varieties or English in order to express their universality. The admixture process does not seem to be restricted to certain themes or specific structures, and it appears at all levels, as discussed in Chapter 6, where code-mixing was identified both in the structure and the thematic elements of the example sentences. Note that when WD users adopt RA as the variety towards which their sentence is oriented, they may still occasionally employ SA as one of the other codes in the code-mixing process (as also discussed in Chapter 6).

The choices related to the first two processes are similar for all QA users of WD. They tend to avoid the features that they mentioned when asked to identify the characteristics of Qassimi Arabic (Section 2.2.3; Chapter 3), i.e., its markers and stereotypical features. As for the choice of orientation variety this is determined by the varieties available to the speaker. One option available to almost all Saudi Arabians is SA. Beyond this, the available options may depend on the speaker community involved. In the current study, the other prestigious variety QA speakers adopted was RA: this is the national dialect spoken in the capital city and by the royal family, and it shares many features with QA as they both are Najdi dialects. The situation is different elsewhere, for example for speakers of Faifi Arabic (FA), a Saudi dialect spoken in the south-western part of the country (Alfaife, 2018). In this region, speakers are not as fluent in RA and, according to Alfaifi (2020), their diglossic code-mixing usually occurs between FA and SA.

In summary, by means of these three processes—avoidance of local features, adoption of a prestigious variety, and admixture of other varieties and languages—a very fluid and unpredictable kind of Arabic is produced.

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the WD as a sociolinguistic phenomenon. It consists of three parts. The

First part discussed the label “White Dialect” as it does not seem to be a fit description for this phenomenon. The most fitting description of the WD seems to be that it is a linguistic strategy for Arabic speakers to adopt linguistic features from the range of various Arabic varieties available to them, to produce a spontaneous fluid form of Arabic that serves their specific communicative motives. The second part of this chapter discussed the position of WD within the sociolinguistic context of Arabic. A number of important topics that are related to the sociolinguistic context of Arabic are discussed in this part, such as diglossia, code-mixing, and variation.

The third part of this chapter provides a description of how speakers formulate their WD speech. The WD seems to be a linguistic strategy that is formed by means of three main processes. The first process is de-localisation, where speakers shift away from their vernacular by avoiding stigmatised features in their dialect. The second process is the adoption of one variety towards which the sentence is oriented. In the current study, two such varieties were observed: RA and SA. The third process is admixture with various other Arabic dialects and English. In the current study, multiple Arabic varieties were used in the third process; however, four varieties were found among more than half of the participants: Riyadh Arabic, Hijazi Arabic, Kuwaiti Arabic, and Egyptian Arabic. Still, it should not be assumed that every young QA speaker uses each of these four varieties, as exposure and attitudes might have an influence over the WD, and these factors may differ among speakers. Considering that the 20 participants in this investigation were picked from the same or similar social circles, they might have similar linguistic exposure. Thus, there is a strong possibility that other Arabic varieties might be included in the mix if the investigation were conducted with a larger group of QA participants from different networks. Further study is also needed to investigate whether exposure and attitudes toward the various

Arabic varieties play a significant role in the use of these varieties in the WD of the QA speakers.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

The linguistic situation in Arabic-speaking countries is complex due to the existence of many varieties of Arabic, along with new forms that result from the contact among these varieties. According to Al-Wer, in any contact situation, “various linguistic developments can be expected” (2002, 64). However, studies conducted to investigate contact among the various Arabic dialects often tend to look for permanent changes that have taken place due to inter-dialectal contact; there are fewer studies that investigate temporary adjustments that speakers apply to their speech when they feel, for example, that their dialect or colloquial Arabic might not be intelligible for other Arabic speakers.

One of the strategies speakers employ to make their speech intelligible for other Arabic speakers is to use the White Dialect (WD). The term “White Dialect” has recently been frequently used by people in the media, as well as by young people producing Arabic content on social media. As part of a pilot study, I asked the five participants which form of Arabic they mostly use on social media or when meeting someone who does not speak their variety of colloquial Arabic (Qassimi Arabic, henceforth QA), there was consensus that this would be something they called “the White Dialect”. It is for this reason that I have investigated the WD used by the young QA speakers, in order to establish a clear definition of the WD, to ascertain when it is used, and to identify the reasons motivating its use. Moreover, this thesis provides insight into the young QA used within the QA community, and to the difference between the QA of the older generation versus that of the younger generation, with particular emphasis on the permanent changes that have taken place in the QA of the young speakers. In this concluding chapter, I summarise the findings of this thesis.

9.1 Qassimi Arabic: the older versus the younger generation

The first step in this study was to take a closer look at the QA as used by people of the older generation (chapter 4). The data was analysed on the basis of six QA variants that were chosen by the young QA speakers. In the pilot study, the participants had been asked what how do they form their WD and all five participants insisted that they avoid QA vocabularies and “certain sounds” that are found only in their dialect. As part of the further study, I asked the 20 young QA that I interviewed one of the two following questions: how to know a QA speaker when you hear him/her talking in the street, or what are the characteristics of the QA (chapter 2). Based on these answers, I hypothesized that the speakers try to avoid in their WD those linguistic features that they provided as typical for the dialect, and selected the 6 variables that were mentioned by 20 participants (chapter 3). By focusing on those variables that were mentioned by the participants, my methodology thus targets the linguistic features that Labov (1972b) labels as markers and stereotypes while leaving out the indicators. The variables are:

- > the affrication of **k* as *ts* in stems
- > the affrication of **k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix
- > the affrication of **q* (> *g*) as *dz*
- > the use of the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*
- > the use of the 3SG.F suffix pronoun *-h* instead of *-ha*
- > the use of dedicated 3PL feminine forms in verbs and pronouns

The old speakers were found to use all six QA variants in the majority of the cases, with percentages of 76% or above. The young QA speakers showed much lower frequencies of usage of two QA variants in particular: the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem, and the affrication of *q* and *g* as *dz*. The low percentage of use of these two variants by the young generation seems to be a further development of a pattern that already occurs to some extent the old generation. Even though these two variants are

used frequently by older QA speakers, they had the lowest percentage of use compared to the rest of the QA variants. This suggests that the decrease in the use of these two variants already started in the speech of the old generation, with a perceptible drop in the young generation. Another cause of this discrepancy relates to the lexical choices of the young generation. Many lexical items that contain *dz* or *ts* in the stem were replaced with either newer or more common lexical items, e.g. *mitsna:t* was replaced with *ama:kin* ‘places’ and *al-dza:blih* was replaced with *bukra:* ‘tomorrow’. As for the rest of the QA variants (the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix, the use of the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*, and the use of the feminine suffix *-ah* instead of *-aha* in the third person singular), they are relatively stable over the two generations, even though the younger group shows slightly more variation than the older group.

9.2 In-group Qassimi Arabic of the young generation

The use of the six QA variants by the young generation when speaking informally to friends or family was investigated in relation to three social variables: the topic of discussion, the type of education the participant had received, and the participant’s gender (chapter 4). Generally speaking, the results showed that these three social variables do not have a major influence on the frequency of use of the six QA variants by the young generation. Unlike the old QA group, who showed extensive use of all six QA variants, the young QA group showed extensive use of only three of the QA variants: the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix, the use of the 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*, and the use of the 3SG.F suffix *-ah*. As for the 3PL feminine suffix pronoun, this form was only used by the young QA speakers in two contexts: when quoting older QA speakers, or when referring to feminine inanimate nouns or feminine abstract concepts. When referring to women, speakers employed avoidance strategies: the first strategy consists of using the masculine plural pronoun to stand for both feminine and masculine, as is the case in Riyadh Arabic (RA); the second strategy is to use the singular form, particularly with relative clauses. The female speakers alternated between the two strategies, while the male speakers

tended to use the second strategy. As mentioned above (Section 9.1), the young speakers showed an extremely low frequency of usage of the two other QA variables (the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem, and the affrication of *q* and *g* as *dz*), which seems to continue a tendency already found in the older generation.

9.3 Young Qassimi Arabic versus the White Dialect

For studying the WD, participants were asked to send two social media posts each, thus providing us with a corpus of 40 spoken social media posts. These social media posts are considered here to be representative of WD speech. The first step in the analysis was to study the use of the six variables mentioned above (chapter 5). The QA variants were used much less in the WD than in the in-group QA speech of the young generation. Moreover, the female speakers showed a lower frequency of use of the QA variants compared to the male group. However, two of the six QA variants occurred frequently in the WD speech of both genders: the use of 1SG.DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*, and the use of the 3SG.F suffix pronoun *-ah* instead of *-(a)ha*. The other variants were used very infrequently; in descending order: the use of the 3PL feminine suffix pronoun and inflection, the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG.F pronominal suffix, the affrication of *q* or *g* as *dz*, and lastly, the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem.

The WD speech samples collected from young QA speakers as data for this investigation were addressed to two different types of audience: Saudis who do not speak QA, and Arabic speakers in general. The use of the six QA variants only appeared to differ significantly between the two types of audience for one variant within one gender; namely, the use of *-ah* in the 3SG.F suffix pronoun in the male group. Further research is recommended to investigate the correlation between the geographical distance of the listener’s dialect from QA and the degree of shift away from the QA variants. The more distant the listener’s dialect, the more the WD speaker would be expected to shift away from QA.

9.4 The main characteristic of the White Dialect

The use of the six variables only provides a very partial insight into what characterises the WD. In a second step, I looked at the corpus as a mixture of different Arabic varieties. This showed the main characteristic of the WD: its fluidity, as it is an unpredictable and unstable way of speaking (chapter 6). The fluidity of the WD was investigated on three linguistic levels: the lexical level, the phonological level, and the syntactic level. Results show that the young QA speakers use more than one Arabic variety in their WD speech, and that Standard Arabic (SA) is not always present in a WD sentence. This mix of Arabic varieties is detected in terms of system morphemes, which are the morphemes pertaining to the grammatical frame of the sentence, as well as in the content morphemes such as verbs, nouns, and adjectives. The data show clearly that the WD tends to use system morphemes from several varieties in one single sentence. This finding goes against the predictions of the Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame model (Myers-Scotton 1993, 1997, 1998), which predicts that there is only one Matrix Language in every code-mixing context. The data revealed that the young QA speakers share a core set of Arabic varieties when utilising the WD, including three Saudi dialects (QA, RA, and Hijazi Arabic) and other Arabic varieties (such as SA, Kuwaiti Arabic, and Egyptian Arabic). However, the occasional use of additional varieties suggests that the WD may incorporate yet other varieties depending on speakers' exposure or attitudes to these other varieties.

9.5 The structure of the White Dialect

The results show that even though the WD is characterised by enormous intra- and inter-speaker variation, it seems to be formed according to a consistent set of processes (chapter 6). Every WD sentence goes through three processes: de-localisation, adoption of an Arabic variety that brings about most of the lexical content of a sentence (orientation towards such variety), and admixture of various other Arabic varieties or other languages that the speakers are exposed to. In the first process,

speakers avoid the features that are considered highly local. This depends greatly on the speakers’ awareness of stigmatised or salient features in their colloquial Arabic speech. The results of this investigation reveal that young QA speakers tend to have negative attitudes towards two markers of Qassimi Arabic, specifically the affrication of *k* as *ts* and the affrication of *g* as *dz*, but they do not seem to have any negative attitudes towards the other four QA variants investigated. The second process is that sentences are oriented towards one specific variety of Arabic. This variety is either RA or SA, both varieties with higher prestige within Saudi Arabia and the Arab world in general than QA. In order to establish the variety towards which a sentence is oriented, I looked at the number of lexical items from each variety represented in a given WD sentence. Results also show that WD users do not stick to one prestige variety all the time: sometimes, the same speaker uses RA-oriented WD in one social media post and SA-oriented WD in another, on the same social media platform. The third process is admixture, in which speakers incorporate material from other Arabic varieties or from other languages such as English. This process was found not only on the lexical level but also in terms of the grammatical structures of WD sentences, such as in negation forms. The admixture process seems to serve two goals. One function is to offer a safe “getaway” technique; that is, a way out when speakers need to avoid a stigmatised feature in their local dialect but they did not know its counterpart in the prestige variety that they have adopted. The other function relates to prestige: WD speakers sometimes code-mix between their chosen prestige variety and other Arabic varieties or English in order to display their universality and to avoid associations with a certain locality.

9.6 Sociolinguistics of the White Dialect

The label “dialect” does not seem to be a fitting description for the WD, as this fluid way of speaking does not fit the definition of a dialect (chapter 8). The WD does not seem to be specific to a certain region or social group, nor is it a unified linguistic form that is shared by all its users. Based on my linguistic analysis of the WD used by the young QA speakers and my investigation of the meta-commentary about the WD

by its users, people in the media, and Arabic linguists, I define the WD as a linguistic strategy that allows Arabic speakers to adopt linguistic features from the range of different Arabic varieties at their disposal, to produce a spontaneous and fluid form of Arabic that serves their desired communicative motives.

The main trigger for the use of the WD is audience. The WD is used by the young QA speakers in two situations: when they are addressing non-QA speakers, and in situations that are formal, but not sufficiently formal for SA to be used. The first type of situation can arise within or outside the QA region, but mostly it occurs online where all the speakers of the various Arabic varieties come into contact with one another on the same platform. It might also occur when QA speakers are having an informal conversation in the presence of non-QA speakers who might overhear, as when having a conversation with a family member in a restaurant in Riyadh city. The second type of situation arises mostly in universities and governmental institutions in Qassim region, where the majority of speakers are QA speakers. The young QA speakers revealed that in Qassim University they conduct presentations and class discussions using the WD, even though they are in majority QA speakers.

Young QA speakers, people in the media, and Arabic linguists all agreed that the WD is used to ease communication among different Arabic speakers (chapter 7). However, the results show that the reason for using the WD is not necessarily intelligibility only. The young QA speakers also revealed a further reason for using the WD; namely, that it hides where they come from and offers a way to avoid being framed in the stereotypical image of Qassimi people as intolerant. Additionally, using the WD confers prestige. Conversely, a few young QA speakers hinted that using the WD is a modest behaviour that enables them to appear on the same level as their interlocutors, as they believe that Qassimi people tend to be of a higher social status within Saudi Arabia.

Looking at meta-commentary on “White Dialect” by media presenters and some Arab linguists, it seems that they use a different definition of the term, and rather focusing on the intermediate variety between dialectal and Standard Arabic as used in many media.

This thesis has discussed the White dialect, a strategy used by the young Qassimi Arabic speakers in their out-group communications. It emphasizes three key ideas that together represent an important addition to the field of Arabic sociolinguistics.

- Regardless of its prestigious value, SA is not always present in all formal code-mixing contexts. The WD that is used by young QA speakers shows that they sometimes choose RA as the dominant variety in their code-mixing. This conclusion differs with some previous studies on Arabic that position SA as the variety that is mostly used in any formal code-mixing contexts.
- This thesis highlights the importance of not only focusing on the permanent linguistic changes among young speakers but also paying attention to the occasional ones. It is crucial to recognize that not all linguistic shifts in the sociolinguistic realm of Arabic are permanent. Research in the field of Saudi Arabic sociolinguistics has a tendency to focus on changes that have taken place in a particular community, either to investigate a permanent shift, or concerning a certain feature or the code-mixing that is related to certain formal domains, such as in religious preaching or political speeches and announcements. Young QA speakers are using a linguistic strategy that they call WD for out-group communication; it would be worth investigating whether this strategy (or a similar one) is used in other Arabic speech communities.
- This thesis also shows that exposure as a factor of influence on Arabic code-mixing may be more important than political and financial powers. In previous studies conducted on Arabic, political dominance was considered the major influence on certain dialects. In a research conducted by Holes (1984) to study language change and variation in Bahrain, a country that is home to both Sunnis and Shiites sects, he found that the direction of language change is strongly influenced by the Sunnis, who hold the political and financial power of Bahrain, which is held by the country's Sunni royal family. Our results highlighted that exposure may be a stronger influence than political power. In their WD, the young QA speakers employed elements from Kuwaiti Arabic (i.e., the national dialect of a small county with no major political influence in the Arabic Gulf region) and Egyptian Arabic (the national dialect of a

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country that has a smaller economy than Saudi Arabia), but on the other did not use any linguistic elements from Emirati Arabic, the national dialect of United Arab Emirates. This is remarkable, as politically Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are close allies in terms of foreign policy and geopolitical interests, and represent the two countries with the largest economy in the region. One may speculate that the reason for this absence of Emirati features is that this variety of Arabic is not widely used in mass media as compared to Kuwaiti Arabic and Egyptian Arabic, which can be said to dominate the Arabic language media in Saudi Arabia.

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Appendix A

The topics discussed in the female participants' pair interview:

Part 1. personal topics (about 15-25 minutes)

- What are the characteristics that you dislike in your sister (i.e., not the counterpart in the interview)?
- Do you allow your parents to interfere in your life choices?
- What are your dreams?
- Describe yourself ten years from now.
- Do you want to have an arranged marriage, or a 'love story' marriage?
- What type of friends do you have?
- Is there a recent incident that has affected you?

Part 2. formal topics (about 15-25 minutes)

- What are the characteristics that you would like to change in Saudi society?
- What do you think of the male guardianship of women in Saudi Arabia?
- Do you support the Saudi feminist movement on Twitter?
- What do you think of the educational system in Saudi Arabia?
- Being religious and conservative: is it a personal choice or a social necessity?

Appendix B

The topics discussed in the male participants' pair interview:

Part 1. personal topics (about 15-25 minutes)

- What are the worst characteristics in your best friend or cousin (i.e., his counterpart in the interview)?
- Describe yourself in ten years.
- Have you ever had an embarrassing moment?
- What was the worst stage of education in your life?

Part 2. formal topics (about 15-25 minutes)

- What is the worst type of women in Saudi society?
- What do you want to change in your society?
- What do you think of the male guardianship of women in Saudi Arabia?
- Being religious and conservative: is it a personal choice or a social necessity?

Appendix C

Open interview questions (Stage 3) for all 20 young participants (Unlimited time)

- How do you recognise Qassimi Arabic speakers when you hear them talking in the street?
- What are the characteristics of Qassimi Arabic?
- Do you use Qassimi Arabic when you travel outside Qassim?
- Do you use the White Dialect? If so, when, and why?
- Describe the White Dialect.

English Summary

The overall aim of this thesis is to provide a linguistic analysis of the White Dialect (WD) used by young Qassimi Arabic (QA) speakers, investigating when it is used and the reasons for its use. As such, this thesis aims to provide answers to the following research questions: what is the WD used by the young QA speakers, when and where is it used, and why it is used? In addition, this thesis highlights some of the differences between the natural QA speech and WD speech of young QA speakers, as well as the differences between the QA of the older generation (“old QA”) and that of the young generation (“young QA”).

Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter that lays out the research questions and the main goals of the thesis. It also provides an overview of the pilot study, a brief description of the methodology used, and the region in Saudi Arabia where QA is spoken, namely Qassim Province. This chapter also provides a description of the linguistic situation in Qassim and highlights the issue that Saudi Arabia is a country that does not have an official national dialect; rather, each region has its own ethnic or regional dialect.

Chapter 2 presents the methodology adopted in this investigation. The data collected as part of this investigation comprise the following: old QA speech, QA speech as used among young QA speakers, WD speech produced by young QA speakers, and young QA speakers’ views about the WD. The old QA speech data were collected from 20 older participants (10 male and 10 female) in open interviews. As for the young generation, the data were collected in three stages, implemented in three data collection sessions. Stage 1 consisted of pair interviews, and targeted the speech of young QA speakers among each other. Young QA speakers were grouped in pairs to discuss two different types of topics (casual and formal) in a naturalistic setting to investigate the effect of topic on their language use. Stage 2 concerned the collection of social media posts. The young QA participants were asked to provide audio or video recordings that they had posted publicly on social media. Each participant was asked to provide two posts, one for a Saudi audience, and another for Arabic speakers in general. This second stage targeted the WD used by young QA speakers, as participants in the pilot study revealed that the main trigger for using the WD is the audience. This stage was inspired by Bell’s Audience Design (1984). Stage 3 comprised open interviews with the young QA speakers. The open interviews were conducted to collect data relating to two aspects of the research: the main linguistic variants to be investigated in this study, and speakers’ perceptions of the WD. The

data in Stage 1 and Stage 2 were analysed quantitatively; meanwhile, the open interview in Stage 3 was analysed qualitatively using the thematic analysis approach developed by Braun and Clarke (2006), in which key themes were drawn from the participants' answers (Chapter 7). A third sociolinguistic approach was also adopted in the selection of young participants in this investigation: Schilling-Estes' Speaker Design approach (2002), which focuses on the speaker as the main cause of stylistic change. In the pilot study, the participants described the stereotypical character of a Qassimi person: a conservative religious character who is not very welcoming of outsiders. It is possible that the use of the WD could be an attempt to escape this stereotypical image. Of the ten participants selected per gender, five participants were chosen as they had received a special religious education, while the other five had received a normal public education. This is to explore the effect of religious education on participants' language use, as a stereotype relating to this theme emerged from the pilot study with young QA speakers.

Chapter 3 introduces QA and the way it is studied here. It consists of two parts. The first part presents the QA linguistic variants that are investigated in this study. The second part discusses some issues encountered in previous research conducted on QA. The linguistic variables in this investigation were determined on the basis of the interviews with the young participants. In the open interview (the last stage of data collection with the young QA speakers), participants were asked one of the two following questions: how do you know a QA speaker when you hear him/her talking in the street? Or: what are the characteristics of QA? The decision to have the participants determine the linguistic variables in this investigation was made following a pilot study. In the pilot study, the participants described the WD as a way to “avoid sounding like a Qassimi”. When they were asked how exactly they did this, they reported that they avoid QA lexical items and “certain sounds” that are found only in QA. Based on their answers, it was hypothesised that the speakers would try to avoid particularly those linguistic features that they are able to identify themselves, since these features reflect their explicit knowledge about their dialect. The six QA variants investigated in this thesis are: the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem, the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the 2SG:F pronominal suffix, the affrication of *q* or *g* as *dz*, the use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*, the absence of the vowel *a* in the 3SG:F suffix pronoun *-h ~ -ha*, and the use of 3PL feminine suffix pronoun.

Chapter 4 provides a quantitative analysis of QA as it is used by its speakers in their everyday lives in Al-Qassim. The six QA linguistic variants investigated in this study were compared between two generations: the old and the young speakers. This chapter also explores the effect of the topic being spoken about, the type of education that the participants received, and the participant's gender on the QA used by the younger speakers. This chapter consists of three parts. The first part presents the results regarding the realisation of the six linguistic variables by the old generation. It provides clear evidence that all six QA linguistic variants investigated

in this study are used extensively by the old QA speakers. This part also shows that there is no significant difference in the use of these QA variants between the old female speakers and old male speakers except in one variant, namely, the affrication of *q* and *g* as *dz*.

The second part of this chapter presents an investigation into the realisation of the six linguistic variables in the speech of the young generation when holding an everyday conversation with friends or family members. Usage of the six QA variants by the young generation was investigated in relation to three social variables: topic of discussion (personal or serious topics), type of education, and gender. In general, the results showed that these three social variables do not have a major influence on the use of the six QA variants by the young generation. However, there were important differences with the old QA speakers. The young QA speakers showed extensive use of only three variants: the affrication *k* as *ts* in the 2SG:F pronominal suffix, the use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni*, and the use of the 3SG:F suffix *-ah*. As for the use of the 3PL feminine suffix pronoun, the younger generation displayed strategies to avoid using this variant. In addition, they showed extremely low usage of the two other QA variables, namely, the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem, and the affrication of *q* and *g* as *dz*. This seems to continue a tendency already found among the older generation participants. Besides the investigation of the six QA variants, this second part of the chapter also notes that the two variants *q* and *g* appear to create different words in the dialect as an effect of the diglossic situation.

The chapter concludes with a comparison of old QA and young QA. It suggests a reason for the low frequency of two variants—the affrication of *k* as *ts* in the stem, and the affrication of *q* and *g* as *dz*—in the speech of the young generation. The difference between the two generations with regard to these two variables can be attributed to the lexical choices of the young generation, as they tend to substitute words containing *dz* or *ts* in the stem with newer, more common lexical items. It should be noted, however, that the linguistic differences between the two generations are not limited to the six variants investigated in this study; they include other phonological, syntactic, and semantic differences as well as differences in narration style.

Chapter 5 provides a description of how the six QA variants chosen for this investigation are treated in the WD. The use of the six QA variants in the WD data was noticeably lower than in the data of QA as used by young people among each other, which indicates that the young QA speakers avoid the QA variants when using the WD. However, the level of avoidance is not the same for all the variants investigated. The results show that two QA variants in particular, namely the use of 1SG:DO suffix pronoun *-n* instead of *-ni* and the use of the 3SG:F feminine suffix *-ah*, were hardly avoided of the six QA variants. The rate of use of these two variants in the WD data corresponds to their rate of use in the in-group QA data. The results in this chapter also suggest that the use of the six QA variants in the WD may be lower

when speakers are addressing a general Arabic-speaking audience versus a Saudi audience. However, this difference is only statistically significant for one of the six variants in one gender, namely the 3SG:F suffix pronoun *-ah* in the male group.

Chapter 6 provides further linguistic analysis of the WD used by the young QA speakers, going beyond the investigation of the use of the QA variants in the WD as presented in the previous chapters. This chapter sheds light on the main characteristic of the WD used by the young QA speakers, which is its fluidity. Results show that the young speakers use more than one Arabic variety in their WD speech, and that Standard Arabic (SA) does not need to be present in a WD sentence. This mix of Arabic varieties is detected in terms of system morphemes, which provide the grammatical frame of the sentence, as well as in content morphemes, such as verbs, nouns, and adjectives. The data clearly show that a WD sentence typically involves system morphemes from several varieties, which goes against the predictions of the Myers Scotton’s Matrix Language Frame model (1993, 1997, 1998). The WD data reveal that the participants in this investigation make use of a core set of Arabic varieties, including three Saudi dialects (QA, Riyadh Arabic (RA), and Hijazi Arabic) and other Arabic varieties (such as SA, Kuwaiti Arabic, and Egyptian Arabic). However, , the WD may include yet more varieties depending on speakers’ exposure or attitudes to these other varieties, as shown by their occasional use in the data. Therefore, with a larger group of participants and more extensive data collection, elements from still other varieties will likely emerge in the WD speech of young QA speakers besides the ones mentioned above.

Chapter 7 presents the perception of the WD by three groups: the young users of the WD (i.e. the young participants in this research), media presenters, and Arab linguists. The three groups are not in alignment when it comes to defining the WD. Within the first group—young QA speakers—there are also differences of opinion on how to define the WD. Some young participants believe it is the form of Arabic that results from their attempt to shift to RA. Other young speakers believe that the term “White Dialect” is simply another name for RA, while yet others believe the WD to be an Arabic dialect without a homeland. Media figures and Arab linguists, on the other hand, fall into two groups: those who believe the WD is a mix between Arabic dialects and SA, and those who believe it is a simplified form of SA that dispenses with strict grammatical rules such as number agreement or case marking. None of these views accurately reflect the reality of the WD as a fluid form that does not necessarily use SA linguistic features (as discussed in Chapter 6). Therefore, the ideology of the WD might contrast with the reality of its use. As for when the WD is used, the young QA speakers seem to use the WD as an out-group dialect with non-QA speakers both within and beyond the Qassim region. They also reveal that they use the WD with other QA speakers in official governmental institutions and certain formal occasions, such as giving a presentation at Qassim University. As for media presenters and Arab linguists, both discuss the WD as a spoken Arabic form used in

media such as television programmes, radio broadcasts and social media, without discussing its possibility for use in day-to-day communication.

Even though the reasons for using the WD vary among the three groups, all groups align with regard to one reason: namely, that the WD is used to ease communication between speakers of different Arabic dialects. For the young QA speakers, the WD helps them to avoid being framed in the stereotypical image of Qassimi people as religiously intolerant. In addition, they also seem to use it for the prestige it confers, and to hide their Qassimi identity. A few young QA speakers hinted that using the WD is a modest behaviour which they adopt in order to be equal with their interlocutors, as they believe that Qassimi people tend to be of higher social standing within Saudi Arabia. As for the media presenters and Arab linguists, the WD is used because it is easier than pure SA, and is more intelligible for speakers of various Arabic dialects compared to using colloquial forms.

Chapter 8 discusses the WD as a sociolinguistic phenomenon. The WD does not appear to be a dialect, but rather a fluid, unstable, spontaneous way of speaking that young people use when talking directly or indirectly to people from outside their dialect community, or in situations where they feel pure SA is too formal but their vernacular is too informal. The WD seems to be a linguistic strategy that is formed by means of three main processes. The first process is de-localisation, where speakers shift away from their vernacular by avoiding stigmatised features in their dialect. The second process is the adoption of a prestige variety. In the current study, two prestige varieties were observed: Riyadh Arabic and SA. The third process is admixture with various other Arabic dialects and English. In the current study, many Arabic varieties were used in this process, of which four varieties were found among more than half of the participants: Riyadh Arabic, Hijazi Arabic, Kuwaiti Arabic, and Egyptian Arabic. Still, it should not be assumed that every young QA speaker uses each of these four varieties, as exposure and attitudes to different varieties might have an influence on the WD, and these factors may differ among speakers. Considering that the 20 participants in this investigation were picked from the same or similar social circles, they might have similar linguistic exposure. Thus, there is a strong possibility that other Arabic varieties might be included in the mix if the investigation were conducted with a larger group of QA participants from different networks. Further study is also needed to investigate whether exposure and attitudes toward the various Arabic varieties play a significant role in the use of these varieties in the WD of the QA speakers.

Chapter 9 concludes the thesis. In this chapter, I reflect that the label “dialect” does not seem to be a fitting description of the WD; rather, the WD is a linguistic strategy in which Arabic speakers can adopt linguistic features from the range of different Arabic varieties available to them, to produce a spontaneous and fluid form of Arabic that serves their desired communicative motives.

Nederlandse samenvatting

Dit proefschrift beoogt een taalkundige analyse te geven van het zogenoemde *White Dialect* (WD), dat wordt gebruikt door jonge sprekers van het Qassimi-Arabisch (QA), waarin wordt onderzocht wanneer dit dialect wordt gebruikt en om welke redenen het wordt gebruikt. Er wordt antwoord gegeven op de volgende onderzoeks vragen: Wat is het WD dat gebruikt wordt door de jonge sprekers van het QA, wanneer en waar wordt het gebruikt, en waarom wordt het gebruikt? Bovendien bespreekt dit proefschrift enkele verschillen tussen het natuurlijke gesproken QA en het gesproken WD van jonge sprekers van het QA en de verschillen tussen het QA van de oudere generatie (“oud QA”) en dat van de jonge generatie (“jong QA”).

Hoofdstuk 1 is een inleidend hoofdstuk dat de onderzoeks vragen en de belangrijkste doelen van het proefschrift beschrijft. Het hoofdstuk geeft ook een overzicht van de pilotstudie en een korte beschrijving van de gebruikte methodologie en de regio in Saudi-Arabië waar QA wordt gesproken, namelijk de provincie Al-Qassim. Dit hoofdstuk geeft ook een beschrijving van de taalsituatie in Qassim. Bovendien wordt er ingegaan op de kwestie dat Saudi-Arabië een land is dat geen officieel nationaal dialect heeft; in plaats daarvan heeft elke regio zijn eigen etnische of regionale dialect.

Hoofdstuk 2 presenteert de methodologie die is gebruikt voor dit onderzoek. De data die zijn verzameld als onderdeel van het onderzoek zijn als volgt: gesproken QA geproduceerd door oude sprekers van het QA, gesproken QA zoals dat gebruikt wordt door jonge sprekers van het QA, gesproken WD geproduceerd door jonge sprekers van het QA, en de visie van jonge sprekers van het QA op het WD. De data van de oude sprekers van het QA werden verzameld onder 20 oudere deelnemers (10 mannen en 10 vrouwen) in open interviews. Voor de jonge generatie werden de data verzameld in drie fases, die tot stand kwamen door middel van drie dataverzameling-sessies. Fase 1 bestond uit interviews in tweetallen en was gericht op het taalgebruik van jonge sprekers van het QA onder elkaar. De tweetallen werd gevraagd om te praten over twee verschillende typen onderwerpen (informeel en formeel) in een natuurlijke setting, om op die manier te onderzoeken wat het effect van het onderwerp op hun taalgebruik was. Fase 2 betrof het verzamelen van berichten op social media. De jonge deelnemers werd gevraagd om audio- of video-opnamen te verstrekken die ze openbaar hadden gedeeld op social media. Aan elke participant werden twee van dit soort berichten gevraagd, een voor een Saudisch publiek en een ander voor Arabischsprekenden in het algemeen. Deze tweede fase was gericht op het WD dat gebruikt wordt door jonge sprekers van het QA, aangezien deelnemers in de

pilotstudie aangaven dat de belangrijkste trigger voor het gebruik van het WD het publiek is. Deze fase werd geïnspireerd door Bells *Audience Design* (1984). Fase 3 bestond uit open interviews met de jonge sprekers van het QA. De open interviews werden gehouden om data te verzamelen voor twee aspecten van het onderzoek: de belangrijkste taalkundige varianten die in deze studie zouden worden onderzocht en de percepties van de sprekers over het WD. De data in Fase 1 en Fase 2 werden kwantitatief geanalyseerd, terwijl de open interviews in Fase 3 kwalitatief werden geanalyseerd met gebruikmaking van de thematische analysebenadering die is ontwikkeld door Braun en Clarke (2006), waarin belangrijke thema's werden vastgesteld op basis van de antwoorden van de participanten (Hoofdstuk 7). Een derde sociolinguïstische benadering werd gebruikt bij de selectie van de jonge deelnemers aan dit onderzoek: Schilling-Estes *Speaker Design approach* (2002), die zich richt op de spreker als de belangrijkste factor in stijlistische keuzes. In de pilotstudie beschreven de deelnemers het stereotypische karakter van een Qassimi-persoon: een conservatieve religieuze persoon die niet heel gastvrij is naar buitenstaanders. Het is mogelijk dat het gebruik van het WD een poging is om dit stereotypische beeld te ontluchten. Van de tien deelnemers die voor elk gender werden geselecteerd, werden vijf deelnemers gekozen die speciaal religieus onderwijs hadden gekregen, terwijl de andere vijf normaal openbaar onderwijs hadden genoten. Dit werd gedaan om de invloed te onderzoeken van religieus onderwijs op het taalgebruik van de participanten, aangezien een stereotype dat gerelateerd is aan dit thema uit de pilotstudie met jonge sprekers van het QA naar voren kwam.

Hoofdstuk 3 introduceert het QA en de manier waarop het hier wordt bestudeerd. Het hoofdstuk bestaat uit twee delen. Het eerste deel presenteert de taalkundige variabelen van het QA die in deze studie worden onderzocht. Het tweede deel behandelt enkele kwesties die naar voren zijn gekomen uit eerder onderzoek dat naar het QA is gedaan. De taalkundige variabelen in dit onderzoek werden bepaald op basis van de interviews met de jonge participanten. In het open interview (de laatste fase van de dataverzameling met de jonge sprekers van het QA) werd aan de deelnemers een van de volgende twee vragen voorgelegd: Hoe herken je een spreker van het QA wanneer je hem/haar hoort praten op straat? Of: Wat zijn de kenmerken van het QA? De beslissing om de deelnemers de taalkundige variabelen in dit onderzoek te laten bepalen, werd genomen op basis van een pilotstudie. In de pilotstudie beschreven de deelnemers het WD als een manier om “te voorkomen als een Qassimi te klinken”. Wanneer hun werd gevraagd hoe ze dit precies deden, dan rapporteerden ze dat ze lexicale items van het QA en “bepaalde klanken” die alleen in het QA voorkomen, vermijden. Op basis van hun antwoorden werd de hypothese gevormd dat de sprekers zouden proberen om vooral die taalkenmerken te vermijden die ze zelf kunnen identificeren, aangezien deze kenmerken hun expliciete kennis over hun dialect weerspiegelen. De zes QA-variabelen die zijn onderzocht in dit proefschrift, zijn: de affricatie van *k* als *ts* in de stam; de affricatie van *k* als *ts* in het

pronominale suffix 2SG:F; de affricatie van *q* of *g* als *dz*; het gebruik van het pronominale suffix 1SG:DO *-n* in plaats van *-ni*; de afwezigheid van de klinker *a* in het pronominale suffix 3SG:F *-h ~ -ha*; het gebruik van het pronominale suffix 3PL vrouwelijk.

Hoofdstuk 4 geeft een kwantitatieve analyse van het QA zoals dat gebruikt wordt door zijn sprekers in hun dagelijks leven in Al-Qassim. De zes taalkundige varianten van het QA die in deze studie zijn onderzocht, werden vergeleken tussen twee generaties: de oude en de jonge sprekers. Dit hoofdstuk onderzoekt ook de invloed van het onderwerp waarover wordt gesproken, het type onderwijs dat de deelnemers hebben genoten en het gender van de participanten op het QA dat wordt gebruikt door de jongere sprekers. Dit hoofdstuk bestaat uit drie delen. Het eerste deel presenteert de resultaten met betrekking tot de realisatie van de zes taalkundige variabelen door de oude generatie. Dit verschafft duidelijk bewijs dat alle zes de QA-varianten die zijn onderzocht in deze studie op grote schaal worden gebruikt door de oude sprekers van het QA. Dit deel van het hoofdstuk laat ook zien dat er geen significant verschil is in het gebruik van deze QA-varianten tussen de oude vrouwelijke sprekers en de oude mannelijke sprekers, op één variant na, namelijk de affricatie van *q* en *g* als *dz*.

Het tweede deel van dit hoofdstuk presenteert een onderzoek naar de realisatie van de zes taalkundige variabelen in het taalgebruik van de jonge generatie, wanneer zij een alledaags gesprek met vrienden of familie voeren. Het gebruik van de zes QA-varianten door de jonge generatie werd onderzocht in relatie tot drie sociale variabelen: gespreksonderwerp (persoonlijke of serieuze onderwerpen), type onderwijs en gender. Over het algemeen lieten de resultaten zien dat deze drie sociale variabelen geen grote invloed hebben op het gebruik van de zes QA-varianten door de jonge generatie. Er waren echter belangrijke verschillen met de oude sprekers van het QA. De jonge sprekers maakten van slechts drie QA varianten op grote schaal gebruik: de affricatie van *k* als *ts* in het pronominale suffix 2SG:F, het gebruik van het pronominale suffix 1SG:DO *-n* in plaats van *-ni* en het gebruik van het suffix 3SG:F *-ah*. Wat betreft het gebruik van het pronominale suffix 3PL vrouwelijk bleek dat de jongere generatie gebruikmaakte van bepaalde strategieën om het gebruik van deze variant te vermijden. Daarnaast lieten ze een extreem laag gebruik zien van de andere twee QA-variabelen, namelijk de affricatie van *k* als *ts* in de stam en de affricatie van *q* en *g* als *dz*. Het lijkt erop dat er hiermee een tendens wordt voortgezet die al bij de participanten van de oudere generatie werd gevonden. Naast het onderzoek naar de zes QA-varianten, merkt dit tweede deel van het hoofdstuk ook op dat de twee varianten *q* en *g* verschillende woorden lijken te creëren in het dialect als gevolg van de diglossische situatie.

Het hoofdstuk sluit af met een vergelijking van oud-QA en jong-QA. Het geeft een mogelijke reden voor de lage frequentie van twee varianten—de affricatie van *k* als *ts* in de stam en de affricatie van *q* en *g* als *dz*—in het taalgebruik van de

jonge generatie. Het verschil tussen de twee generaties met betrekking tot deze twee variabelen kan worden toegeschreven aan de lexicale keuzes van de jonge generatie, aangezien zij de neiging hebben om woorden met *dz* of *ts* in de stam te vervangen door nieuwere, meer gebruikelijke lexicale items. Het moet echter worden opgemerkt dat de taalverschillen tussen de twee generaties niet beperkt zijn tot de zes varianten die in dit onderzoek zijn onderzocht; ze omvatten ook andere fonologische, syntactische en semantische verschillen en ook verschillen in vertelstijl.

Hoofdstuk 5 geeft een beschrijving van hoe de zes QA-varianten die voor dit onderzoek zijn gekozen worden behandeld in het WD. Het gebruik van de zes QA-varianten in de WD-data was beduidend lager dan in de data van het QA zoals dat gebruikt wordt door de jonge mensen onderling, wat aangeeft dat de jonge sprekers van het QA de QA-varianten vermijden wanneer ze het WD gebruiken. De mate waarin deze varianten worden vermeden is echter niet dezelfde voor alle onderzochte varianten. De resultaten laten zien dat met name twee QA-varianten, namelijk het gebruik van het pronominale suffix 1SG:DO *-n* in plaats van *-ni* en het gebruik van het suffix 3SG:F *-ah*, nauwelijks werden vermeden. De mate waarin deze twee varianten werden gebruikt in de WD-data komt overeen met de mate waarin ze werden gebruikt in de *in-group* QA-data. De resultaten in dit hoofdstuk suggereren ook dat het gebruik van de zes QA-varianten in het WD lager is wanneer sprekers een algemeen Arabischsprekend publiek aanspreken dan wanneer ze zich richten tot een Saudisch publiek. Dit verschil is echter alleen statistisch significant voor één van de zes varianten bij één gender, namelijk het pronominale suffix 3SG:F *-ah* in de groep mannen.

Hoofdstuk 6 geeft een taalkundige analyse van het WD, dat gebruikt wordt door de jonge sprekers van het QA, die verder gaat dan het onderzoek naar het gebruik van de QA-varianten in het WD zoals die gepresenteerd is in de vorige hoofdstukken. Dit hoofdstuk werpt licht op het belangrijkste kenmerk van het WD dat gebruikt wordt door de jonge sprekers van het QA, namelijk vloeindheid. De resultaten laten zien dat de jonge sprekers meer dan één Arabische variëteit in hun WD gebruiken en dat Standard-Arabisch (SA) niet aanwezig hoeft te zijn in een WD-zin. Deze mix van Arabische variëteiten is te zien in de systeemmorphemen, die het grammaticale frame van de zin vormen, en in inhoudsmorphemen zoals werkwoorden, zelfstandige naamwoorden en bijvoeglijke naamwoorden. De data laten duidelijk zien dat een WD-zin doorgaans systeemmorphemen van verschillende variëteiten bevat, wat ingaat tegen de verwachtingen van het *Matrix Language Frame model* van Myers Scotton (1993, 1997, 1998). De WD-data laten zien dat de deelnemers aan dit onderzoek gebruikmaken van een kernset van Arabische variëteiten, waaronder drie Saudische dialecten (QA, Riyad-Arabisch (RA) en Hijazi-Arabisch) en andere Arabische variëteiten (zoals SA, Koeweits-Arabisch en Egyptisch-Arabisch). Het WD kan echter nog meer variëteiten bevatten, afhankelijk van de mate waarin de sprekers bekend zijn met deze andere variëteiten en hoe hun houding tegenover deze variëteiten is. Dit

blijkt ook uit de data, waarin ook af en toe andere variëteiten worden gebruikt. Daarom zullen, wanneer wordt gewerkt met een grotere groep deelnemers en een uitgebreidere dataverzameling, waarschijnlijk elementen van nog meer variëteiten dan die hierboven al zijn genoemd naar voren komen in het gesproken WD van de jonge sprekers van het QA.

Hoofdstuk 7 presenteert de perceptie van het WD door drie groepen: de jonge gebruikers van het WD (de jonge participanten in dit onderzoek), presentatoren in de media en Arabische taalkundigen. De drie groepen verschillen van mening met betrekking tot de definitie van het WD. In de eerste groep—jonge sprekers van het QA—zijn er ook meningsverschillen over hoe het WD gedefinieerd moet worden. Sommige jonge participanten beschouwen het als een vorm van Arabisch is die het resultaat is van hun poging om over te schakelen op het RA. Andere jonge sprekers beschouwen de term “*White Dialect*” gewoon als een andere naam voor RA, terwijl weer anderen zeggen dat het WD een Arabisch dialect is zonder thuisland. Aan de andere kant zijn er de mediafiguren en de Arabische taalkundigen, die in twee groepen uiteenvallen: degenen die het WD definiëren als een mix tussen Arabische dialecten en SA en degenen die het als een vereenvoudigde vorm van het SA is waarin strikte grammaticale regels als congruentie in getal en naamvalsmarkering wegvallen. Geen van deze opvattingen weerspiegelt accuraat de realiteit van het WD zoals hier beschreven, als een fluïde vorm die niet per se taalkenmerken van het SA gebruikt (zoals besproken in Hoofdstuk 6). Daarom zou het kunnen dat de ideologie van het WD contrasteert met de realiteit van zijn gebruik. Wat betreft de vraag wanneer het WD wordt gebruikt, lijkt het erop dat de jonge sprekers van het QA het WD gebruiken als een *out-group dialect*, dat ze spreken met personen die geen QA spreken, zowel in de Qassimregio als daarbuiten. Ze merken ook op dat ze het WD gebruiken met andere sprekers van het QA in officiële overheidsinstellingen en bij bepaalde formele gelegenheden, bijvoorbeeld wanneer ze een presentatie geven aan de universiteit van Qassim. Zowel presentatoren in de media als Arabische taalkundigen behandelen het WD als een gesproken Arabische vorm die gebruikt wordt in media als televisieprogramma’s, radio-uitzendingen en social media, zonder dat zij de mogelijkheid bespreken voor het gebruik ervan in de dagelijkse communicatie.

Hoewel de redenen om het WD te gebruiken verschillen tussen de drie groepen, zijn alle groepen het over één reden eens: het WD wordt gebruikt om communicatie tussen sprekers van verschillende Arabische dialecten te vergemakkelijken. Voor de jonge sprekers van het QA helpt het WD om te voorkomen dat ze geframed worden in het stereotypische beeld van Qassimi-personen als religieus intolerant. Bovendien lijken ze het WD te gebruiken voor het prestige dat het met zich meebrengt en om hun Qassimi-identiteit te verbergen. Een paar jonge sprekers van het QA lieten doorschemeren dat het gebruik van het WD bescheiden gedrag is dat zij hebben overgenomen om gelijk te zijn aan hun gesprekspartners, aangezien zij geloven dat Qassimi-personen over het algemeen van een hogere sociale

klasse zijn in Saudi-Arabië. Voor de mediapresentatoren en de Arabische taalkundigen geldt dat het WD wordt gebruikt omdat het makkelijker is dan puur SA en het verstaanbaarder is voor sprekers van verschillende Arabische dialecten vergeleken met het gebruik van vormen uit de informele omgangstaal.

Hoofdstuk 8 bespreekt het WD als een sociolinguïstisch fenomeen. Het WD lijkt geen dialect te zijn, maar eerder een fluïde, onstabiele, spontane manier van spreken die jonge mensen gebruiken wanneer zij direct of indirect praten met mensen van buiten hun dialectgemeenschap, of in situaties waar zij het idee hebben dat puur SA te formeel is en hun dialect te informeel. Het WD lijkt een taalstrategie die gevormd wordt door drie hoofdprocessen. Het eerste proces is de-lokalisatie, waarbij sprekers zich afwenden van hun dialect door gestigmatiserde kenmerken in hun dialect te vermijden. Het tweede proces is de overname van een prestigevariëteit. In de huidige studie werden twee prestigevariëteiten waargenomen: Riyadh-Arabisch en SA. Het derde proces is vermenging met verschillende andere Arabische dialecten en met het Engels. In de huidige studie werden veel Arabische variëteiten gebruikt in dit proces, waarvan vier variëteiten werden gevonden bij meer dan de helft van de participanten: Riyadh-Arabisch, Hijazi-Arabisch, Koeweits-Arabisch en Egyptisch-Arabisch. Toch mag er niet van worden uitgegaan dat elke jonge spreker van het QA elk van deze vier variëteiten gebruikt, aangezien blootstelling aan en houdingen tegenover verschillende variëteiten invloed zouden kunnen hebben op het WD, en deze factoren kunnen verschillen tussen sprekers. Aangezien de 20 deelnemers aan dit onderzoek werden gekozen uit dezelfde of vergelijkbare sociale kringen, zouden ze een vergelijkbare talige blootstelling kunnen hebben. Het is dus heel goed mogelijk dat andere Arabische variëteiten in de mix opgenomen hadden kunnen zijn als het onderzoek zou zijn uitgevoerd met een grotere groep participanten uit verschillende netwerken. Er is ook vervolgonderzoek nodig om te onderzoeken of blootstelling aan en houdingen tegenover de verschillende Arabische variëteiten een belangrijke rol spelen in het gebruik van deze variëteiten in het WD van de sprekers van het QA.

Hoofdstuk 9 besluit het proefschrift. In dit hoofdstuk reflecteer ik op de stelling dat het label “dialect” geen goede beschrijving lijkt te zijn voor het WD. Het WD is eerder een taalstrategie waarin Arabische sprekers taalkenmerken kunnen overnemen vanuit alle verschillende Arabische variëteiten die zij tot hun beschikking hebben, om een spontane en vloeiente vorm van het Arabisch te produceren die hun gewenste communicatieve doelen dient.

Curriculum vitae

Bushra Alkhamees was born in Al Mithnab city, Qassim Province, Saudi Arabia in October 1987. After obtaining a bachelor degree from the English Department in Qassim University in 2009, she worked as an English teacher at a private elementary school for a whole academic year. In June 2010, she was assigned as a teaching assistant of Linguistics in the English Department at Qassim University. In 2011, she pursued her education and obtained a Master degree in Linguistics from Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University in Riyadh. After Obtaining her MA degree in March 2014, she continued her job as a teaching assistant at Qassim University until 2017 when she was granted a scholarship, sponsored by Qassim University and the Saudi Ministry of Education, to pursue her education for a PhD. Bushra started her PhD research at Leiden University on 20 March 2017.