
University of Southern Queensland



**Arabic Language Maintenance among the Arabic-speaking
community in the regional Queensland city of Toowoomba,
Australia**

A dissertation submitted by

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Abstract

This research project explores language maintenance efforts, experiences and challenges faced by the Arabic-speaking community in the regional Queensland city of Toowoomba, Australia. The purpose of this inquiry was to identify issues that might have contributed to or prevented the maintenance of Arabic language among Arabic speakers. The theoretical framework was developed by the researcher from several existing language maintenance theories and models. A qualitative approach was selected to investigate the language maintenance phenomenon through engaging in the everyday life of the Arabic speakers. Additionally, a descriptive and interpretive ethnography was applied to understand this community from insider and outsider perspectives, aiming to enhance the quality and richness of the results. Data were collected through participant observations, in-depth semi-structured interviews with 20 adult individuals, and a research journal. Subsequently, a thematic analysis was undertaken which involved organizing, exploring and coding the data into several themes, and displaying and interpreting the data to answer the research questions. The emerging themes informed the findings of this study to answer the research questions. The conclusions of this research are envisaged to enrich the knowledge and theories of language maintenance and raise awareness of the Arabic speakers and the community about the importance of maintaining their language.

CERTIFICATION OF DISSERTATION

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, software and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

To my parents Sadia and Ahmed

To my wife Meryam (Emanita)

To my daughter Sara (Ava)

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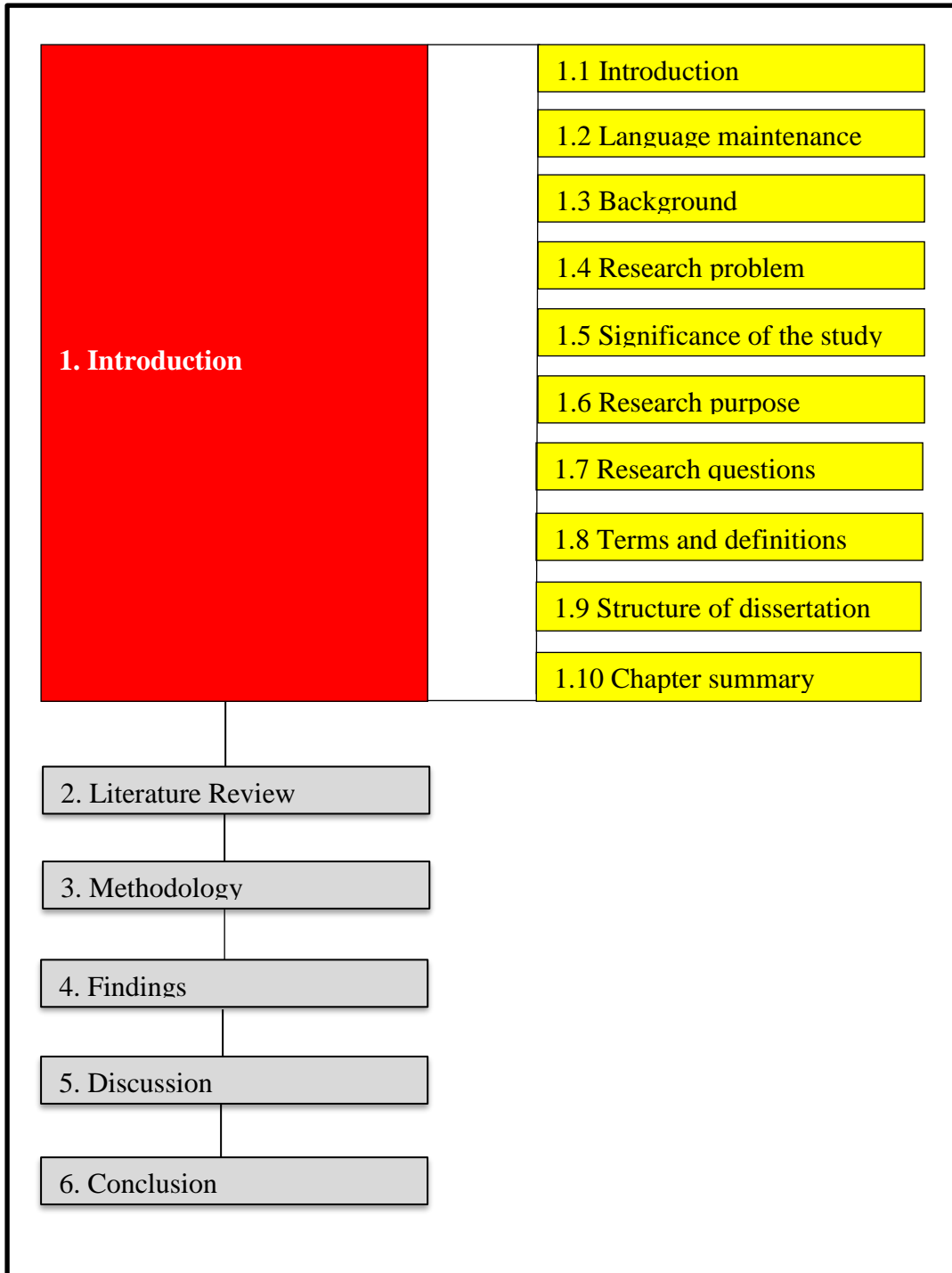
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1: A Highlighted Outline of Introduction



Definition of Terms:

| Terms | Definitions |
|-------------------------|---|
| Arab world | Consists of 22 Arab states who are followers of the Arab League of Nations and Arabic language is their official language (Shora, 2009). |
| Muslim world | Includes all the Muslim countries which follow the teaching of Islam. It is also called the Islamic world. |
| Arabic community | Includes all Arabic speakers from the Arab world. |
| Muslim Community | Includes all Muslims from different linguistic and cultural background (Arabic speakers and non-Arabic speakers). |
| Muslim Arabs | Refers to Arabs who are Muslims, there are also Arabs who are not Muslims. There are Muslims who are not Arabs in terms of their ethnicity, such as Indonesian Muslims. |
| Arabic | The original language of the Holy Qur'an. |
| Arabic language | The mother tongue and official language in all Arab states. |
| Arab | A person who speaks the Arabic language as his/her first language (mother tongue). |
| Islam | A religion like Christianity and Judaism. In Arabic it means 'submission', or specifically, submission to the will of Allah (God) and it literally means 'Peace'. |
| Allah | Arabic word for God. |
| Qur'an | Islamic Holy Book which was revealed to the Prophet Mohammad by Allah. |
| Mosque | A Muslim place of worship and gathering of all Muslims. |
| Imam | Community religious leader (Prayer leader and Community leader). |
| Madrasah | Informal class to teach the children of the community. It is located at the mosque. It is different from Madrasah in Indonesia, which refers to the primary and secondary school. |

1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the challenges facing immigrants in host countries and defines the language maintenance phenomenon. Then, the background about the spoken languages in Australia, the Arabic-speaking community in Australia and the regional city of Toowoomba, is provided. The researcher also outlines the research problem, significance of the research, and the research questions related to the maintenance of the Arabic language within the Arabic-speaking community in the regional Queensland city of Toowoomba. Lastly, the dissertation structure and chapter summary are presented.

1.2 Language Maintenance

Immigrants all over the globe face more or less the same challenges in their early stages of settlement in their host country (Louie, 2012; Sainsbury & Renzaho, 2011). Among these challenges are adjustment difficulties, language barriers, culture shock, identity conflicts, and the lack of cultural, linguistic and religious recognition (Papillon, 2002). The major challenge for many is related to the maintenance of their mother tongue (Borland, 2005; Pauwels, 2005). Maintaining this language often involves resisting the cultural power of the majority language (Gibbons & Ramirez, 2004). Consequently, some immigrants are proactive in maintaining their mother tongue and transmitting it to their children, while others adopt the language of the host country for social integration within the society (Clyne, 2005; Zhang, 2004).

Language maintenance is concerned with the retention of the minority language by its speakers when it is in a constant contact with the majority language. Language maintenance is defined by Baker (2011) as: “relative language stability in the number and distribution of its speakers, its proficient usage by children and adults, and its retention in specific domains (e.g., home, school, religion)” (p. 72). According to Benrabah (2004), language maintenance is the continuous use of the mother tongue, regardless of the cultural pressures from a

more prestigious or politically more dominant language. Language maintenance is needed to face the threat of language shift.

In the last two decades, Australia has experienced an increasing flow of immigrants from the Middle East, Asia and Africa (Clyne, 2005). This high influx of immigrants relates to the massive transformation of Australia from an overwhelmingly British-dominated population, imposing its English language and culture, to becoming a multicultural society of diverse languages and cultures (Hugo, 2009). During this transformation, immigrants have substantially contributed to the development of multiculturalism and multilingualism of the country (Hatoss, 2005a).

Immigrants from Arabic-speaking countries have positively contributed to reshaping the face of multiculturalism in Australia and succeeded in integrating into the mainstream Australian society. Arabic language speakers in Australia represent the whole Arab world, including North Africa and the Middle East. They come from different Arab countries, and they bring with them different and diverse languages, cultures and identities. According to the 2011 census led by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the majority of Arabic speakers are concentrated in large urban cities such as Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane (ABS, 2011).

Arabic speakers, similar to other immigrants, face challenges in regards to the maintenance of their mother tongue and its transmission to the next generation. Additionally, it should be noted that the language maintenance efforts of Arabic-speaking immigrants involve the maintenance of both their religion and identity (Benrabah, 2004). Maintaining the community language reinforces the maintenance of the diverse culture of the community (Clyne, 2001; Hatoss, 2005b) and also expresses one's identity (Baker, 2011; Cavallaro, 2005; Brown, 2009). The maintenance of the language has a great impact on the maintenance of the culture and identity (Hatoss, 2013).

In the context of language maintenance, Fishman (2000b) argued that “people who speak a community language do not necessarily transmit it” (p. 5). He

further claimed that it is not enough to speak the community language, but it needs to be transmitted and acquired by each subsequent generation. In this sense, Baker (2011) and Rannut (2009) confirmed Fishman's claim and reported that the most important factor is the intergenerational language transmission of the community language, during which this language should be effectively passed on to the children to guarantee its maintenance. Thus, intergenerational language transmission is the most important factor to ensure the maintenance and the vitality of a community language.

Additionally, Fishman (2000b) contended that the continuance and transmission of the intergenerational mother tongue to the next generation are the responsibility of the family and the community. Thus, the maintenance of a community language is not considered complete until it reaches and benefits the next generation. In this research, the term community language refers to the non-English language spoken by immigrant families who live in Australia.

The maintenance of a community language is beneficial for immigrant families and their children, as well as to the host society. The maintenance of the community language may provide benefits to speakers such as better success at school, positive self-esteem, pride and confidence (Wu, 2007), closer and stable family relationships and better job opportunities such as translation jobs (Park & Sarkar, 2007). For the society, the community languages may contribute to the richness of the host country's cultural and linguistic diversity. In this sense, Garcia (2003) stated that the maintenance of ethnic languages has great benefit for all nations that call for, and rely on, international communication.

In the same vein, the lack of intergenerational language maintenance and transmission may cause language shift or even language death because the language is no longer passed on through generations. It is pointed out by Edward (2010) that "the most common way in which language death occurs is the lack of transmission of an original language from parents to children" (p. 40). Clyne (2005) stated that it has been predicted that between 70% and 90% of the remaining spoken languages around the globe will be exterminated within the current century because they are no longer being used and

transmitted to the subsequent generation. Language maintenance efforts appeared as a result of the actual cessation of the use of community languages, and in an effort by their speakers to promote them.

1.3 Background

1.3.1 Overview

Australia has always been recognized by its linguistic and cultural diversity practised by the Indigenous inhabitants. It is reported that there were more than 600 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages during the British settlement in Australia (Hatoss, 2013). Unfortunately, most of these languages have disappeared and the number has diminished to only 150 languages, due to the conflict with the Indigenous people and early death from epidemic diseases (Holmes, 2013) as well as assimilation pressures (Clyne, 1991). More recently, the linguistic situation in Australia has been entirely amended and reshaped with another 150 immigrant languages other than English brought by immigrants from all over the globe. In spite of such huge linguistic and cultural diversity, with over 300 languages spoken by Indigenous Australians and immigrants, Australia remains a monolingual society where most of the population speaks English as the majority and official language (Beykont, 2010; Holmes, 2013; Rubino, 2010). Immigrants are facing not only the linguistic strength and dominance of the English language, but its cultural power as well. Burnett (1998) pointed out that “Australian society may be culturally diverse, but it is largely mono-cultural in terms of the major institutions and the structures of power” (p. 26, 27). Thus, the English language dominates most institutions such as schools and the media.

On the basis of the 2011 census, 81% of the Australian population speak English at home, and this number has decreased slightly from 86% in 1986 (ABS, 2011). That implies that less than 20% of people speak their native language at home, and this little number may alert us to the fact that some languages are on the edge of language shift in Australia (see Table 1.2 for more details). Statistics from the recent census indicate that: (1) the majority of immigrants are gradually losing their original languages (ABS, 2011;

Cavallaro, 2005) because of the great dominance of English; (2) Australia's language policies are unsuccessful in encouraging the maintenance and transmission of the immigrant languages across generations (Hatoss, 2013); and (3) multicultural policies have failed to protect and promote minority languages (Cavallaro, 2005) within the host country.

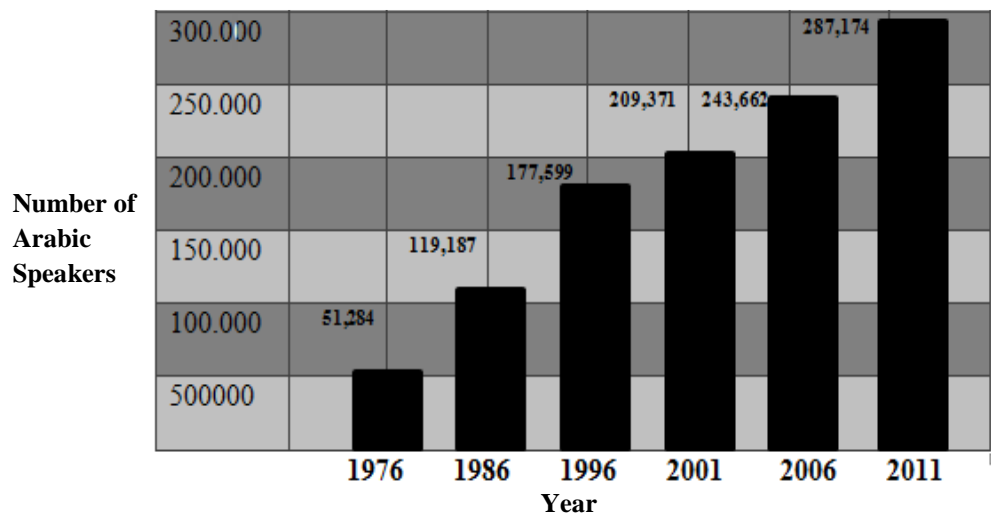
The languages that have been brought from outside Australia by immigrants and need to be maintained by minority groups have been known by several different terms. In the US, Fishman (1964) introduced the term heritage language and he then called it a language of personal relevance other than English (Fishman, 1999). In Europe and South Africa, terms such as *allochthonous*, home language, foreign language, immigrant language and language of origin have been used (Deusen-Scoll, 2003).

In the Australian context, the term community language has been implemented by many linguists to include languages other than English (LOTE) and Aboriginal languages within the Australian community (Clyne, 1991). Then, the term "CLOTE", which stands for community languages other than English, has been presented to stress that English is a community language as well (Clyne, 1991). The Arabic language is also considered a community language other than English in Australia (ABS, 2011). Consequently, in this present study, the term Arabic language and community language will be used interchangeably when referring to Arabic speakers. Therefore, this term has been adopted and is commonly employed in Australia, where this research took place.

1.3.2 Arabic-speaking community in Australia

The first Arabic speakers who migrated to Australia were Lebanese, and they still represent the largest community, followed by the Egyptians and then immigrants from Iraq (Batrouney, 2006). At present, Australia accepts immigrants from nearly all Arab countries. There are 22 Arab states in Southwest Asia and North Africa, which represent the Arab League (Weiss, 2015). The members that constitute the Arab League include: "Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya,

Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, the Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen” (Weiss, 2015, p. 1). There are more than 300 million Arabic speakers who use the Arabic language in these 22 Arab countries (Shora, 2009). Arabic speakers are distinctively identified by the Arabic language despite a great diversity in religion, nationality, gender and class (Mansouri & Trembath, 2005). The Arabic language is among the dynamic languages, and it is the third most frequently spoken language other than English in Australia, preceded by Mandarin and Italian. There are about 287,174 Arabic speakers who use Arabic throughout Australia (ABS, 2011). The following Figure 1.1 illustrates the increase of Arabic speakers in Australia.



Source: Adapted from ABS, 2011

Figure 1.1: The growth of Arabic Speakers in Australia

As Figure 1.1 indicates, the number of Arabic speakers has increased substantially between 1976 and 2011. This demographic growth has culminated in the maintenance of the Arabic language as an issue among Arabic speakers. The Arabic language has maintained its position among the 10 most widely spoken languages in Australia since 1976, from the eighth position to become the fifth in the 1986 census, then shifting to fourth position between 1996 and

2006 and finally, it is currently the third most regularly spoken community language in Australia (ABS, 2011).

1.3.3 Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba

In the regional city of Toowoomba, where this research has taken place, Arabic is spoken by 679 speakers and it is classified as the most common spoken language at home after English followed by Mandarin, Dinka and Afrikaans (ABS, 2011). The Arabic-speaking community in this study refers to the Arabic speakers the first generation adult and their second generation children whether they were Australian born or overseas born. Table 1.1 illustrates the position of Arabic among the top 10 spoken languages in Toowoomba in 2011.

Table 1.1: The status of Arabic among the top 10 languages in Toowoomba

| Languages | Speakers (2006) | Languages | Speakers (2011) |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|
| English | 90,861 | English | 91,359 |
| Mandarin | 457 | Arabic | 679 |
| Dinka | 323 | Mandarin | 542 |
| Arabic | 266 | Dinka | 303 |
| Cantonese | 234 | Afrikaans | 290 |
| German | 203 | Cantonese | 206 |
| Afrikaans | 153 | German | 196 |
| Italian | 141 | Tagalog | 192 |
| Hindi | 123 | Filipino | 171 |
| Dutch | 107 | Italian | 162 |

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2011)

As Table 1.1 indicates, the number of Arabic speakers in the regional city of Toowoomba is increasing faster than that of any other language due to the status of this city as a refugee welcome zone (ABS, 2011). In the period of five years since 2006, it increased three times from what it was in 2006, from 266 speakers in 2006 to 679 in 2011. Thus, the Arabic language occupies the second

position after English in the city of Toowoomba in terms of numbers of speakers. It is noticeable from the statistics that the number of Arabic speakers is still small in comparison with English speakers in Toowoomba, despite this rapid growth.

1.4 Research Problem

The maintenance of community languages has always been a challenging field for investigation (Jamai, 2008). As mentioned earlier, the majority of these languages live under the cultural power of the host country language.

Therefore, it has never been an easy task for immigrants and their children to maintain their community languages, especially under the linguistic and cultural pressures of the English language (Rubino, 2010). Most community languages lose ground to English and adopt English in several domains in everyday life and this is a sign of language shift (Baker, 2011).

Research has found that language shift is more noticeable among immigrant children than their first generation parents (Clyne; 2003, 2005; Fishman, 1966). For example, Hatoss, Starks and Janse van Rensburg (2011), in their research about the maintenance of Afrikaans among the South African community in South East Queensland, found that the reduction in the language use among immigrants was visible among those who immigrated at an early age and also the second generation children who were born overseas. Hence, second generation children tend to adopt the host country language at the expense of their parents' native language due to the absence of intergenerational maintenance and transmission of this language. It is worthy to note that the second generation children in this study refer to both children who are born overseas or born in Australia.

It is argued by Holmes (2013) that language shift is predictable in monolingual countries such as Australia, New Zealand, England and the USA, where English is a dominant and prestigious language. In Australia, statistics demonstrate that only a few languages have withstood the cultural strength and high status of

English language (ABS, 2011). Table 1.2 depicts the top 10 languages maintained at home in Australia in 2011.

Table 1.2: Top 10 Languages Spoken in Australia at Home (a) (b)

| Language spoken at home in Australia | Persons '000' (Speakers in thousands) | Proportion of total population, % | The proportion who spoke English very well % | Proportion born in Australia % |
|---|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| English only | 15394.7 | 80.7 | N/A | 83.8 |
| Mandarin | 319.5 | 1.7 | 37.5 | 9.0 |
| Italian | 295.0 | 1.5 | 62.1 | 43.2 |
| Arabic | 287.4 | 1.4 | 61.9 | 38.5 |
| Cantonese | 254.7 | 1.3 | 46.4 | 19.9 |
| Greek | 243.3 | 1.3 | 65.0 | 54.1 |
| Vietnamese | 219.8 | 1.2 | 39.5 | 27.9 |
| Spanish | 111.4 | 0.6 | 62.1 | 21.9 |
| Hindi | 104.9 | 0.5 | 80.2 | 9.8 |
| Tagalog | 79.0 | 0.4 | 66.9 | 5.9 |

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2011)

As shown in Table 1.2, a number of languages have been maintained by their speakers and Arabic language is one of the most spoken languages at home in Australia. Only 19.3% of the Australian population can resist the linguistic and cultural power of the English language. It is noticeable from the statistics that languages such as Arabic, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Greek, Mandarin, and Italian have been stable and well-maintained for the last three decades (see Appendix A for more details). However, some European languages such as Dutch, German, Austrian, French, Maltese and Hungarian are shifting with high rate of adoption of English as the only means of communication (Hatoss, 2013).

It should be noted, however, that the maintenance of community languages remains a major concern for linguists, educators, language activists and for immigrant families, who need to support and maintain these languages for the next generation. Fishman (1996) raised a very serious and important question: "What are you going to do with your mother tongue?" (p. 80). This is a very decisive question because it determines the fate of the language either to be maintained and preserved for the second generation or to be lost.

It seems increasingly evident that the maintenance of community languages in Australia is still a very fertile area for investigation. Some studies have focused on early immigrants and those who have well-established groups living in urban settings (Clyne, 2003, 2005; Rubino, 2010; Sanchez-Castro & Gil, 2009). What remains to be explored, however, is how small communities, such as the Arabic-speaking community whose members have recently arrived in Australia and are not very well-established, can maintain their community language and pass it on to their second generation children.

1.5 Significance of the research

The significance of this research is linked to the lack of research and literature regarding the maintenance of Arabic language among the Arabic-speaking community in Australia, notably in rural and remote areas. Based on the existing literature in the field of applied linguistics, this is the first research to address the issue of Arabic language maintenance within the small Arabic-speaking community in the regional city of Toowoomba, Australia.

In the Australian linguistic context, it is argued by Hatoss (2013) that much support and attention are given to stable and well-established language communities that seem to have economic benefits, while small communities have been marginalized (Hatoss, 2013). Thus, Fishman (1991) advocates the right to support small communities in maintaining their languages. He contends that higher priority should be given to these communities because they are few in numbers and have no strong influence to survive language loss. In this sense, the Arabic-speaking community is one of the smallest language groups in Toowoomba which deserves greater attention and supports in terms of language maintenance.

The expected outcomes of this research may encourage this community and other small communities to take the initiative in maintaining their original languages and preserve them for subsequent generations.

1.6 Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore language maintenance efforts, experiences and challenges confronting the Arabic-speaking community in the regional city of Toowoomba, Australia, and to pinpoint the different factors that may support or hinder the intergenerational maintenance and transmission of Arabic language within this community. Language maintenance has always been a topic of interest in the field of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics because of its connection with other factors such as culture, identity and religion (Rouchdy, 2013).

The maintenance of a language leads to the maintenance of culture, identity, and religion (Baker, 2011) and the loss of a language may result in the loss of culture, identity and religion (Cavallaro, 2005). The link between language and other socio-cultural factors makes it necessary to keep the community language alive and transfer it to the second generation. This study attempts to find out more about the Arabic-speaking community's experiences and their opinions about the maintenance of the Arabic language, as well as the factors that may foster or impede its maintenance.

1.7 Research Questions

This study will investigate how the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba, Australia maintains the Arabic language in an English-speaking environment.

The research questions that this study will seek to answer are:

1. To what extent do Arabic speakers of Toowoomba maintain their Arabic language?
2. What are the factors that may contribute to or impede the maintenance of Arabic language among the Arabic-speaking community?
3. What are the opinions of Arabic speakers about language maintenance or loss?

1.8 Terms and Definitions

In the fields of applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, language maintenance is linked to two phenomena concerning aspects of language dynamics, including language shift and language death. The interactions of these phenomena are the consequence of the societal patterns of language choice in bilingual situations. These language choices are influenced by structural and functional forces, which can lead to the shift and potential death of one's original language, by the majority language. A study conducted by the ABS (2011) found this process to be more likely in the absence of language maintenance. While this study focuses on language maintenance, it is necessary to define these aspects of language dynamics to understand the importance of language maintenance in immigrant communities.

Language shift

Language shift is a complex term with no standard concrete definition. Baker (2011) refers to language shift as “a reduction in the number of speakers of a language, a decreasing saturation of language speakers in the population, a loss in language proficiency, or a decreasing use of that language in different domains” (p. 72). In addition to these factors mentioned by Baker, language shift also takes place among speech communities because of the absence of the maintenance and transmission of the original language to the second generation.

Language shift is a common phenomenon among the immigrant communities living in bilingual and multilingual societies such as Canada, Australia, and America. In these communities, bilingualism serves as an intermediate stage where the dominant language is gradually adopted over the original or minority language (Trudgill, 2007). Many linguists such as Baker (2011), Hatoss (2013) and Holmes (2013) agree that a language shift process leads to a reduction or shifts away from the use of a minority language due to the collective adoption of the majority language in domains once occupied exclusively by the minority language.

Language death

Language death is viewed by Baker (2011) as “the outcome of language shift” (p. 72). Benrabah (2013) claims that the loss of speakers culminates in the death of their native languages. According to Benrabah, the loss of speakers refers to those who have died naturally or disappeared by an external force as well as those who have preferred to adopt a new language in their social life at the expense of their mother tongue. In the same context, Crystal (2000) estimated that 4% of the world's languages are spoken by 96% of the population. According to Crystal, only 600 of the 6,000 world languages can be considered “safe” from extinction. This suggests language death has become a reality confronting all minority language speakers all over the globe. Therefore, it is a significant concern not only for linguists and anthropologists, but for all those who want to protect their cultural identity (Crystal, 2000).

It has been said that language shift leads to language loss and culminates in language death. The latter can apply mainly to Indigenous languages, but it is not on the same for immigrant languages since these can still be used in the country of origin, and they can be reversed in the host country (Clyne, 2003; Holmes, 2013). For example, Arabic language can be exposed to language shift in multilingual societies, but should never die because it is the official language and has mother tongue status in many Arab countries (Rouchdy, 2013). Hence, Arabic is an active language with a high status among millions of Arabic speakers.

Arabic language

The Arabic language is related to the Semitic languages, and it is spoken mainly in its geographical area of the Arabian Peninsula and in North Africa (Versteegh, 2014). In the Arab world, the Arabic language is considered the standard language for the twenty-two Arab countries along with other countries such as Israel, Chad and Eritria (Bateson, 2003). The Arabic language has contributed to the construction of many other languages in the Islamic world,

such as Berber, Persian, Turkish, Bosnian, Bengali, Urdu and Hindi (Javed, 2013).

The Arabic language possesses a solid position and a high status among not only Arabs but all Muslims worldwide. It has a religious significance as being the language of the holy Qur'an that revealed on the Prophet Muhammed. Arabic speakers use different varieties of Arabic. There are two formal varieties of Arabic, known in English as Classical Arabic, and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and one informal variety of Arabic called colloquial Arabic (dialect). Firstly, Classical Arabic, is known as the original language of the Qur'an and it was used in the era before Islam (Hijjawi & Elsheikh, 2015). Classical Arabic is used for religious and ceremonial purposes (Ethnologue, 2014). Secondly, Modern Standard Arabic is derived from Classical Arabic and regarded as a simplified version of it (Owens, 2006). It is also called literary Arabic, which is used in written documents and during formal speaking occasions. Modern Standard Arabic serves as a lingua franca among all Arabs (Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Rouchdy, 2013). Thirdly, a dialect is the colloquial variety of Arabic and each country has its own dialect that distinguishes it from other varieties (Owen 2006). According to Benrabah (2004), Arabic dialects are the most commonly spoken languages amongst all Arabs.

1.9 Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation contains six chapters:

Chapter 1 describes the issues around language maintenance, which involves the intergenerational transmission of community languages. This chapter also represents the research problem, the purpose, and the research questions that are investigated in this study.

Chapter 2 reviews literature linked to language maintenance on the topics relevant to the research questions. It then states the factors that contribute to the maintenance of community languages such social, cultural, and institutional support factors. Additionally, different language maintenance models and theories are discussed to frame the current study.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology, which involves the implementation of the qualitative approach. This chapter also describes the research design, participants and sampling strategies, ethical issues, data collection techniques and researcher stance. Furthermore, the data analysis plan and strategies to ensure the rigour, validity and reliability of this study are discussed in this section.

Chapter 4 outlines the findings of the study. This section depicts the major themes and sub-themes revealed by careful analysis of the gathered data. Moreover, the results are displayed visually, using tables and diagrams to report the data as described by the participants in their settings.

Chapter 5 discusses the key findings and their relevance to the previous studies in the literature and the conceptual framework. The results also present answers to the research questions related to the maintenance of the Arabic language within the Arabic-speaking community in the regional area of Toowoomba.

Chapter 6 outlines the general conclusions, contributions and recommendations of the current study and suggests some recommendations for further research.

1.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the background and the significance of maintaining the original language and transmitting it to the second generation were briefly discussed. The research problem and purpose of this study, which are related to providing insight into language maintenance efforts of the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba, Australia was described. This chapter has also addressed some research questions aiming to explore and identify the different factors that may contribute or impede the maintenance of Arabic language within this community. Finally, the key terms of this study have been defined and clarified to get a better understanding of the process of language maintenance.

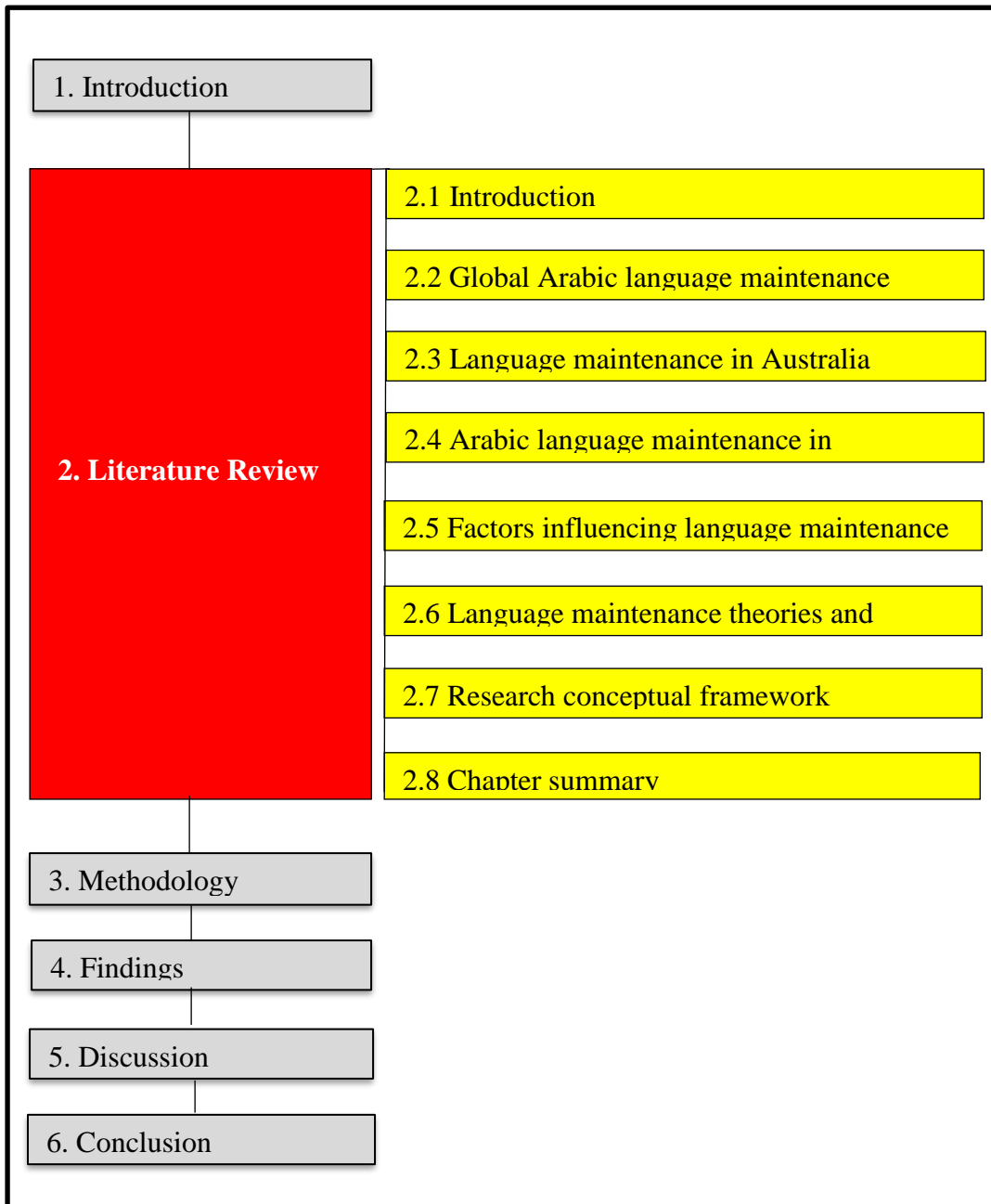
The following chapter presents the literature review about the maintenance of the Arabic language in different multicultural countries such as the USA, Canada, and Australia. Also, it refers to a few studies conducted in the regional

city of Toowoomba to address the necessity for more studies to be conducted in this area. Chapter 2 also portrays some of the language maintenance factors and models, and the way in which the researcher uses them as a guide to develop a conceptual framework to underpin this study.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 2: A Highlighted Outline of Literature Review



2 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the background of the issues and challenges facing the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba, Australia was discussed. The research problem, purpose, and research questions were also stated. This chapter reviews the previous studies and theories relevant to the maintenance of Arabic language globally as well as in Australia, and specifically in the regional city of Toowoomba. Thus, some of the language maintenance factors and models are reviewed and summarized to verify to what extent these factors affect the Arabic language maintenance within this community. Finally, this chapter describes the conceptual framework developed in this qualitative study from a combination of existing theories and models.

2.2 Global Arabic Language Maintenance

Several studies have investigated the maintenance of minority languages all over the globe, notably in multilingual and multicultural societies (Clyne, 2005; Rubino, 2010). The aim of these studies is linked to the advocacy for, and preservation of, ethnic minority and immigrant languages to protect them from an unexpected shift or loss (Garcia, 2003). However, little research has been undertaken on the maintenance of Arabic language among Arabic-speaking immigrants (Abdalla, 2006; Martin, 2009; Sehlaoui, 2008). Region-based studies are reviewed to get comprehensive perspectives on Arabic language maintenance, as well as to position the current study and check its congruence with language maintenance findings.

2.2.1 Europe

Research has been conducted in many bilingual and multilingual countries in Europe to explore the maintenance of the Arabic language within different Arab ethnolinguistic groups (Gomaa, 2011; Othman, 2006; Abu-Haidar, 1994). Gomaa (2011) has investigated the Arabic language among the Egyptian community in Durham, England. The analysis of the data revealed the factors

contributing to the maintenance of the Arabic language. Among these factors were the educational level of participants, access to Arab media through satellite channels, religion, and identity. According to Gomaa, the most effective factor was the home where the Arabic language was used continuously between parents and children in their daily life.

Similarly, Othman (2006) examined language choice among different families from five Arab countries in Manchester, Britain. The results revealed that children maintain the Arabic language through the support of many factors. These factors include elements such as: (1) accessibility of satellite channels which allow them to watch Arabic movies and TV series, (2) expansion of mosques to learn the Qur'an in Arabic, (3) the role of Arabic schools in maintaining Arabic literacy, (4) the ease of travel to their homeland, and (5) the positive attitude of the family in encouraging children to use Arabic at home.

In another study, Abu-Haidar (1994) studied language loyalty among Algerian immigrants' children in France. She found that Algerian immigrants in France had shown loyalty by maintaining their Arabic language within the community. Abu-Haidar concluded that children proved their loyalty in the maintenance of their Arabic outside the community, giving it a greater prestige. Moreover, the results indicated that the maintenance of Arabic for French-born Algerians is primarily a matter of identification and loyalty to their mother tongue rather than for its communicative use. Language loyalty as introduced by Fishman (1966), suggests that community motivations and constant exposure to the community language are very important factors for language maintenance.

2.2.2 The USA

In the US context, the English language has dominated the Indigenous languages and other European immigrant languages (Baker, 2011) because of its status as the language of the majority. In this respect, only a few studies have dealt with Arabic language maintenance efforts among Arab-American communities (Bale, 2010; Martin, 2009; Rouchdy 2013; Sehlaoui; 2008; Seymour-Jorn, 2004). Martin (2009) conducted research on the Arabic-

speaking community in America. She found that Arab-American parents' attitudes were positive towards the maintenance of their original language. The parents encouraged their children to speak Arabic at home to maintain their Arabic cultural heritage. The results indicated that the Arabic language was used for socialization among Arabic speakers as well as in their religious practices. The results also showed the role of religious school classes in teaching the language and the Qur'an.

Rouchdy (2013) examined the spoken Arabic among the Arab community in Detroit, US. She reported that there had been an increase in the use of Arabic within this community and an enhancement of the quality of Arabic language use. The reasons for this improvement in Arabic language use related to several factors. These factors included the availability of Arabic newspapers, the expansion of many television programs in Arabic, and the satellite cables that broadcasted from the entire Arab world. The findings also indicated that there was a noticeable establishment of national religious institutions and private schools that could offer Arabic and Islamic studies to the community.

Another study was carried out by Sehlaoui (2008) about Arabic as a heritage language in the USA. He reported that the role of the family at home, the central role of culture, literacy, and the positive attitudes to learning the community language were important factors for intergenerational language maintenance and transmission. Similarly, Seymour-Jorn (2004) investigated the Arabic language within the Arab-American community in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA. The results showed that Arabic language education, connectedness and alignment of language use with the homeland, through regular visits and communication with relatives using the phone, contributed effectively to the maintenance of Arabic language within this community. Additionally, Seymour-Jorn contended that the Arab-Americans' motivation to read the Qur'an in Arabic, their cultural identity and attachment to the parents' country were among the strongest factors that led to intergenerational language transmission.

2.2.3 Canada

Many studies have been conducted on the minority languages of Canada as a feature of a multilingual and multicultural society (Dweik, Nofal & Qawasmeh, 2014; Qawar, 2014). Dweik et al. (2014) investigated the maintenance of the Arabic language among the Muslim Arabs of Vancouver in Canada. The results indicated that the Muslim Arabs maintained their Arabic language through multiple factors. These factors related to the use of the Arabic language in different domains such as the home, friendship, the workplace, and the neighbourhood. Besides, language maintenance factors such as the use of Arabic in religious activities, the status of the Arabic language, cultural identity, attending Arabic schools and the role of the Arab mass media (TV, radio, and newspapers) were seen to be essential for the maintenance and transmission of Arabic within this Arab-Canadian community. Furthermore, the results also revealed that the positive attitude held by the Muslim Arabs towards their Arabic language contributed effectively to its maintenance and transmission to the second generation.

Qawar (2014) explored the maintenance of Arabic language among the Arabic-speaking community of Quebec in Canada. She found that the Arabic language had been maintained in many domains besides the use of English and French for different purposes. Additionally, she also reported that the Arabic language was well-maintained because of the presence of diverse factors. These factors included the use of Arabic at home among family members, the role of the mass media in Arabic, religious activities in Arabic, the role of educational institutions, regular visits to the home country, and communication with family and relatives overseas. The results also indicated that the connections between Arabic and heritage culture such as Arabic food and dance, contributed to the maintenance of the Arabic language and culture. Furthermore, the results revealed that the Arabs of Quebec were positive not only towards the maintenance of the Arabic language and culture, but also towards the maintenance of French and English. Their positive attitudes were reflected in their ethnic pride in their language and heritage culture.

2.2.4 Asia

In the Asian context, Abdalla (2006) investigated the maintenance of the Arabic language amongst Malaysian citizens who were born in Mecca, Saudi Arabia and who had moved to settle permanently in their homeland Malaysia. The author referred to them as Arabized Malays because they adopted Arabic as their first language before they returned to their home country. The results indicated that the majority of the Arabized Malays were successful in maintaining their Arabic language in Malaysia. Such success was due to many factors related to the media, such as listening to Arabic radio, watching Arabic television channels, and reading Arabic newspapers. Additionally, the results also indicated that the positive attitudes towards Arabic, the role of literacy in Arabic and the significant impact of religion were among the crucial factors that contributed to the maintenance of Arabic language among Arabized Malays. The findings further revealed Arabized Malays' loyalty to the Arabic language as well as their enthusiasm to transmit it to their children.

Another study, conducted by Vaish (2008), focused on the impact of religion on language use in Singapore. The results indicated that Malays maintained the Arabic language in their religious practices for its exalted status as the language of the Qur'an. All Malay children learned the Arabic language outside of school because it represented their identity as Malay Muslims and it is the language that can connect them with other Muslims all over the world. Children had positive attitudes towards learning the Arabic language, knowing more about their religion, and reading about the history of Islam.

Both examples revealed that the Arabic language was best maintained by Malaysians, who used to live in Saudi Arabia and Malays of Singapore because of its connection to their religion. Positive attitudes, literacy in Arabic and the role of the religion were the common factors influencing the maintenance of the Arabic language among Malays.

2.2.5 New Zealand

Some research has been done on the Arabic language maintenance in the English-speaking country of New Zealand. Al-Sahafi (2015) explored the role of Arabic-speaking fathers in regards to the maintenance of their Arabic language. The Arab parents had positive attitudes towards the maintenance of their original language and culture. All the parents reported that Arabic is important in preserving their cultural and religious identity as Arab Muslims. The Arabic language is considered a core value for the Arabic-speaking fathers because of its connection with the religion. Furthermore, the results indicated the presence of several factors that seem to be conducive to Arabic language maintenance such as the use of Arabic at home within the family, communication with friends and relatives using the Internet, and teaching children at home, using Arabic books, videos and DVDs. The results also revealed that the use of digital media such as reading newspapers and magazines via the Internet is very important for the parents and their children as a way of having access to the written form of Arabic.

In the same context, another study was conducted by Al-Sahafi and Barkhuizen (2006) about the use of Arabic among 63 adult Arabic speakers from Iraq and Palestine, who reside in Auckland, New Zealand. The results revealed that the Arabic language was maintained in the home domain between parents, children and siblings. Arabic speakers also used the Arabic language in their social gatherings, with friends at school and university, and with their fellow bilingual workers. The results also demonstrated the use of satellite dishes among the Arabic speakers to get access to Arabic media channels. Furthermore, the authors referred to the critical role of religion in the maintenance of the Arabic language. The religious status of Arabic as being the language of the Holy Qur'an contributed effectively to its maintenance by the Arabic speakers of New Zealand.

2.3 Language Maintenance in Australia

The right to maintain community languages in Australia came into effect with the acceptance of multiculturalism and the abolition of the White Australia Policy as well as Australia's restrictive assimilation and integration laws. The White Australia Policy restricted immigration to only British and later only to white European immigrants (Batrouney, 2006). Subsequently, the assimilation laws were adopted throughout Australia. These laws put restrictions on people from non-English speaking backgrounds to abandon their languages and cultures and to accept the host country's values, cultural practices and language (Hatoss, 2013).

The implementation of multicultural policies in Australia by 1970 had significant benefits for many immigrants. Saeed (2006, p. 76) pointed out that "the idea of multiculturalism, giving a voice to various ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious minorities and assisting them by providing an opportunity to retain their distinct identities within an Australian context". The right to maintain community languages, cultures and religions in this multicultural society were undeniable and protected by the law (Koleth, 2010). Language maintenance has been investigated with the aim to advocate for minority languages and to protect them from extinction (Baker, 2011; Clyne, 2005; Hatoss, 2013). It is important to note that language maintenance runs parallel with language shift as not all minority groups are fortunate enough to be able to maintain their original language.

Statistics show that the majority of the world's languages are not maintained, and their speakers are using the dominant language (ABS, 2011). In Australia, many European languages, excluding Italian, Greek, and Spanish, lost ground to the dominant language, for example Dutch, German and Hungarian (Clyne, 2005). The speakers of these languages have been shifted to use English in their everyday communication. That is not the case for Arabic in the concentrated urban cities where it is mostly spoken (ABS, 2011).

In the Australian context, many investigations have been carried out on language maintenance of ethnic immigrant communities, such as Chinese (Tannenbaum & Howie, 2002), Italian (Walker, 2003), Hungarian (Hatoss, 2005b), German (Kipp, 2008), South Sudanese (Hatoss & Sheely, 2009), Turkish (Beykont, 2010), Japanese (Oriyama, 2010) and Cantonese (Au-Yeung, 2011). This amount of research can be seen as a result of the newly adopted multicultural language policies that supported and encouraged the use of community languages (Clyne, 2009; Hatoss, 2013). It is worthy to note at this stage that most of these studies were conducted in the urban cities rather than the remote rural areas.

In this respect, Sanchez-Castro and Gil (2009) investigated language maintenance in two different Spanish-speaking communities: a newly arrived Salvadorian community in Queensland, and a more established Spanish community in South Australia. Results indicated significant success of Spanish language maintenance among Salvadorians due to the support of several factors. These factors included the time of arrival and length of stay, migrant status (e.g. refugee status), frequency of trips to El Salvador, ongoing contact with friends and relatives in El Salvador, and the concentration of Salvadorians in the community. The major factor influencing Spanish language maintenance within this community was the use of Spanish language for communication (e.g. at home, work and education). They also found that the positive attitude towards Spanish was a sign of the community's culture and identity, and as a means of communication its use was at the core of Spanish language maintenance. However, they found that the more established community in South Australia maintained their Spanish through endogamous marriages, and through close links between Spanish culture and the Spanish community. Sanchez-Castro and Gil referred to the importance of language practices in the home in transmitting the Spanish language to the second generation. Also, encouraging and supporting the integration of the children in the local Spanish community by the first generation was an important factor for the maintenance

of Spanish. The researchers placed great emphasis on the role of parents in Spanish language maintenance in this community.

Au-Yeung (2011) investigated language maintenance among Cantonese migrants in Brisbane, Australia. He explored the factors affecting the use of the Cantonese language. The results indicated that the cultural identity and the role of the family at home were the major factors contributing to language maintenance. The results also showed that institutions such as a community language schools, churches, and media play a supportive role in Cantonese language maintenance.

Beykont (2010) provided further evidence for her research on language maintenance among Turkish communities in Australia. She found that watching Turkish television, reading Turkish newspapers, speaking the Turkish language with family and friends and attending classes in Turkish were essential in promoting language maintenance in the Turkish community.

Perhaps the most common pioneering work in the field of language maintenance has been provided by Clyne and associates (Clyne, 2005; Clyne & Kipp, 1999, 2006; Fernandez & Clyne, 2007), who have been investigating the phenomenon for more than four decades. For example, the Arabic language was investigated by Clyne and Kipp (1999) in their focus group study about two Arabic-speaking communities in Australia: Lebanese and Egyptians. They found that these two Arabic-speaking groups had a positive attitude towards their language and they had a great interest in retaining their identity and participating effectively in the culture of their country of origin.

Clyne and Kipp identified some of the factors that contributed to the maintenance of the Arabic language among the Egyptians and Lebanese. These factors included media use, TV and radio programs, school programs and literacy, the requirement of religious affiliation to achieve language proficiency, the role of the mosque and church, the role of the internet in learning the community language, reading books in the Arabic language, and

communication with friends and relatives via the phone. The results indicated that the Arabic language was maintained and used at home by the Egyptians more so than Lebanese, including the first and second generations. The results also displayed that identity and religion were the strongest inspiring factors for the Egyptians to maintain their Arabic language. However, the communication with friends and family was seen to be the most important motivating factor for the next Lebanese generation.

Bahhari (2014) investigated the maintenance of the Arabic language among Saudi children in Melbourne. The children's parents are international students and the author referred to them as sojourners who have to go home after they finish their studies in Australia. The results indicated that the Saudi Arabic-speaking children maintained their Arabic language through many language maintenance factors. Among these factors were the commitment of the parents to transmit their original language to their children, teaching children at home, and the use of Arabic only at home. The communication with the extended family back home via video call, watching Arabic shows and the use of new technology to access Arabic video games were also among significant factors in maintaining the Arabic language. The results further revealed that literacy in Arabic, through Arabic schools, and the role of the religion by teaching the Qur'an were found to be crucial for intergenerational language transmission. The author reported that Saudi international students were more successful in maintaining their Arabic language than Arabic-speaking immigrants due to their temporary stay in Australia for the purpose of study, and their obligation to return home.

It is noticeable from the aforementioned literature in the Australian context that most of the studies were based on the minority language groups in the urban cities rather than rural areas. This is also the case for Arabic language as illustrated in both studies presented by Bahhari (2014) and Clyne and Kipp (1999) about the maintenance of Arabic among the Arabic speakers. Both studies took place in large urban centres where the language maintenance

institutions and resources were available to benefit the community language unlike in the rural areas.

2.4 Arabic Language Maintenance in Toowoomba

Unlike urban contexts where most studies have been carried out, little research has been done on ethnolinguistic minority groups in regional areas. In the regional Queensland city of Toowoomba, Hatoss and associates (Hatoss, 2006; Hatoss & Sheely, 2009; Hatoss et al., 2011) are among the few researchers who have given attention to rural minority groups such as the South Sudanese, Germans and South Africans. In regards to the Arabic-speaking minority groups in the city of Toowoomba, there has been some research by some research students (Muftah, 2013; Almansouri, 2014).

Almansouri (2014) conducted research about the social and academic experiences of international Arabic-speaking students in Australian tertiary education. He included in his sample some Arab students from the regional city of Toowoomba to explore their challenges in regards to the transition in their learning. However, his research focus was on the differences between their home country's education and the Australian educational system rather than the maintenance of their native language.

In the same context, Muftah (2013) conducted a case study about the bilingual journey of a Libyan child in the city of Toowoomba. He found that the socio-psychological factors had a great impact on the maintenance of the Arabic language as well as the host country language. He discovered that the Libyan child was more proficient in the English language than in Arabic because of the influence of the English schools and the environment. Muftah was interested in finding out how socio-psychological factors contributed to promoting or hampering the bilingualism of this child.

Both of these two studies about the Arabic speakers in Toowoomba did not focus on the maintenance of the community language as a main issue confronting the second generation children. Moreover, these studies seem to have certain methodological limitations. For example, Almansouri included

only male participants in his qualitative selection of the sample and he was not able to listen to the voice of female participants due to religious and cultural constraints. Muftah investigated the journey of only one child which may not be reflective of other children of the community. Despite the large body of literature about the maintenance of the minority languages, there is no single study that has deeply focused on the maintenance of the Arabic language among the Arabic-speaking community in the regional city of Toowoomba. This study attempts to fill this gap by focusing on Arabic language maintenance and addressing different factors influencing the maintenance of Arabic among this community.

2.5 Factors Influencing Language Maintenance

Most of the studies on community languages in Australia have attempted to identify multiple factors that are either conducive or affective to language maintenance (Pauwels, 2005). These factors are diverse and include political, social, demographic, economic, cultural, linguistic, psychological and institutional support factors. The maintenance of the Arabic language can be affected either positively or negatively by these factors.

2.5.1 Language Domain Factors

Community languages can be maintained through several domains based on the speakers' choices and preferences. These language domains include home/family, friends, neighbours, community, religion, education, and the media, as suggested by Fishman (1964, 1991). Baker (2011) points out that the regular use of community languages amongst family, friends, neighbours and the local community is referred to as *language targets*. The use of community languages in the home domain is recorded every five years by the Australian Census (ABS, 2011). However, some of these languages have been maintained in several domains other than the home.

The language maintenance domains were found to be very significant, not just for the maintenance and activation of community languages, but also to reverse these languages in case of any unexpected shift. As argued by Holmes (2013),

the minority language is more likely to be maintained and preserved by its speakers if it used in multiple domains.

Kittaneh (2009) conducted research on the language situation of Palestinian Arabs living in Israel. She found that both Arabic and Hebrew were used by the second generation Palestinian Arabs of Israel in their everyday interactions. The results indicated that both languages were well-maintained by the Palestinian Arabic speakers of Israel. The Arabic language was widely used in many domains such as at home with family members, in religious places such as the mosque, in the neighbourhood, the school, and the media. The Hebrew language was used mainly in workplaces and in business.

Likewise, Dweik and Qawar (2015) examined language choice and attitudes among Arab Canadians in Quebec. They reported that the Arabic language was used mostly by Arabic speakers in Quebec in different domains. These domains included the home with their children, the mosque for worship, and in the Arab media such as radio. At the same time, Arabic speakers also used English and French in other domains such as in official spheres and educational institutions. The researchers also concluded that Arabic speakers of Quebec mixed Arabic with French and English in other areas such as in the neighbourhood, with friends, and in their media use.

Based on what has been said in regards to language domains, it is concluded that the dynamic use of the minority language in multiple domains is a sign that the language maintenance is inevitable. Conversely, the limited use of the minority language in private domains such as the home is an indicator of the shift to the majority language (Holmes, 2013; Lee, 2013).

2.5.2 Socio-Demographic Factors

2.5.2.1 Geographical Concentration

Research has shown that the geographical concentration of community languages in a particular area can be very helpful for language maintenance (Fishman, 1991; Clyne 2005; Holmes, 2013; Lee, 2013; Sanchez-Castro & Gil,

2009). Fishman (1991) argued that community languages were better well-maintained by minority groups who were more concentrated within certain geographical areas than those that were more dispersed. Mesthrie, Swann, Deumert and Leap (2009) pointed out that, “the smaller the size of a community, the stronger the threat of language shift and death” (p. 250).

Lee (2013) contended that the geographical concentration of the community in one area allows for the increase of daily interaction and use of the community language outside of the private domain, unlike the dispersed community where the community language was associated with the home domain only. Similarly, Holmes (2013) found that Chinese, who were living in China-towns in the US, were more likely to maintain the Chinese language than those who had left the China-town areas.

Additionally, Sanchez-Castro and Gil (2009) investigated the use of the Spanish language among the Salvadorian Community in Queensland and the Spanish Community in South Australia. The results indicated that the former community was successful in maintaining the Spanish language in comparison to the latter. The reason was related to the strength in numbers and also the Salvadorians maintained daily contact within their community and other Spanish communities surrounding them.

Arabic language is one of the most concentrated languages in Australia, especially in urban centres, with 69% of the Arabic-speaking population living in Sydney, 22% in Melbourne and 9% living outside these two capital cities (Clyne & Kipp, 1999). However, the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba is not as established as the Arabic speakers who live in the urban settings. The geographical concentration helped in creating social networks, as did institutions such as schools and mosques within the community (Harte, 2010).

In contrast, Arfi (2008) conducted comparative research between Algerian languages in the United States and France. She reported that the concentration of immigrants with the same language was not always an indicator for the

maintenance of the community language. Arfi provided some reasons that impeded the transmission of the community language. The first reason was that the majority of educated Algerians in France used the French language in their daily communication even before they emigrated. The second reason related to the generational gap between the first and second generation that prevented language transmission. The third reason was the exposure of children to the French language as the medium of education at school.

2.5.2.2 Length of Stay since Arrival

The length of stay since arrival was also found to be an important factor in language maintenance and transmission (Clyne, 2005; Hatoss, 2005b; Sanchez-Castro & Gil, 2009). Clyne (2005) found that recently arrived communities from outside Europe, such as those who came from the horn of Africa and South-East Asia were successful in maintaining their community languages. Similarly, Hatoss (2005b) reported that the Hungarian language was more used and preserved at home by the recently arrived Hungarian migrants than the earlier arrival, older generation groups. Turjoman (2013) investigated the role of Arab American mothers in maintaining their Arabic language in Chicago. She found that Arabic was best maintained by mothers who had recently immigrated to America in comparison to earlier arrival Arab Americans. According to the author, the newly arrived mothers were keener to teach their children Arabic than the earlier arrival Arab immigrant mothers.

Likewise, Sanchez-Castro and Gil (2009) investigated the maintenance of the Spanish language of Salvadorian and Spanish groups. They stated that the recently arrived Salvadorians in Queensland tended to maintain their languages more than established Spanish groups in Adelaide.

2.5.2.3 Geographical Proximity

The geographical proximity and ease of travel to the homeland can be an advantage for language maintenance. Jamaï (2008) stated that Moroccan speakers of Arabic, who live in Western Europe, were able to maintain ties with their homeland through mutual visits and marriage, due to the geographical

proximity between Morocco and Europe. By contrast, Arfi (2008) argued that proximity to the home country did not necessarily lead to the maintenance of Arabic language among Algerian immigrants who live in France. She found that many Algerians in France adopted the French language in their daily interactions with their children at the expense of their community languages.

Therefore, geographical proximity is not relevant for this study since Australia is very far from the Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East and North Africa. Arabic is one of the commonly spoken languages of Australia regardless of the geographical distance from the Arabic-speaking countries.

2.5.2.4 Exogamy and Endogamy

Research on immigrant languages confirmed that the minority group's marriage patterns could influence the maintenance of the community languages (Baker, 2011; Clyne & Kipp 1999; Clyne, 2005; Holmes, 2013; Namei, 2012). This influence on community languages could be either negative, through exogamous marriage, or positive through endogamous marriage. Holmes (2013) points out that, "Marriage to a majority group member is the quickest way of ensuring the shift to the majority group language for the children" (p.65). According to Namei (2012), exogamy, or inter-ethnic marriages, contribute to the loss of the community languages, a process during which the language with the higher status and prestige becomes the preferred language for daily communication.

Baker (2011) contended that in a bilingual society, the marriage between a bilingual person from the minority and a monolingual person from the majority language would culminate in monolingual children who spoke the majority language. Census data, collected every five years in Australia, demonstrate in the 2011 census that the shift towards English was very high among the second generation children in Anglo-ethnic marriages (ABS, 2011). For example, second generation children from Malta, Germany and The Netherlands were no longer maintaining their parents' language, and they shifted to English only, whereas Greek and Italian children did maintain their languages to some extent

(Namei, 2012). In this respect, Holmes (2013) noted that Greek and Chinese immigrants were not in favour of exogamy, which can be seen as part of maintaining their community languages and to resist language shift.

2.5.3 Cultural Factors

2.5.3.1 Ethnic Identity

The maintenance of community languages for many sociolinguistic scholars has a significant relationship with the maintenance and retention of one's identity (Clyne, 1991, Fishman, 1989, 1991, 2000a; Hatoss, 2003; Smolicz, 1999). As pointed out by Fishman (1989), the minority language is an important tool for expressing cultural heritage and ethnic identity. Similarly, Cavallaro (2005) noted that language is the key factor representing ethnic identity in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Therefore, it seems that there is a strong connection between language and identity. This firm connection has been considered by Fishman (1991) who contended that "the destruction of a language is the destruction of a rooted identity" (p. 4). According to Fishman, the loss of the language may also lead to a loss of identity.

Albirini (2016) points out the close connection between the Arabic language and identity, in which the vitality of Arabic contributes to the dynamism and maintenance of the ethnic and religious identities. He further explored in his study the participants' multiple identities in regards to the different varieties of Arabic. His results indicated that the majority of the participants, namely Egyptians, Jordanians, Moroccans and Saudi considered Standard Arabic as a marker for their religious identity as Arab Muslims.

Gogonas (2012) studied second-generation Arabic speakers in Athens, mainly adolescents of the Coptic religion and Muslims. He found that Egyptian Muslim parents were more likely to maintain the Arabic language and transmit it to their children than the Egyptian Copts. However, in this significant study both the Egyptian Muslims and Copts viewed the Arabic language as a core value of their identity due to their daily religious practices. In this respect, Arabic is a

symbol of religious identity because it is an authentic language of the Qur'an (Clyne, 2003, Benrabah, 2004).

2.5.3.2 Family Role

Research has shown that maintenance of the community language is based on the role of the family at home (Letsholo, 2009; Pauwels, 2005; Sufo, 2009; Velázquez, 2012). The home is the only domain where the family has close control of the children in terms of communication and transmission of the community language. Children get exposed to the majority language of the host country outside the home domain in places such as schools and playgrounds. As indicated by Clyne (2003, 2005), language is not going to survive another generation unless it is transmitted in the home within the family.

Pauwels's (2005) research about language dynamics in families reported that children who were exposed to a community language at home, usually became more proficient in maintaining good receptive skills even if their productive skills were imperfect. According to the 2011 Census, 16.8% of the Australian population used a language other than English at home (ABS, 2011). The Arabic language was among the most commonly spoken languages other than English at home in Australia for the period of 1991 to 2006 (Clyne, 2009).

The family environment is a motivating factor in the promotion of successful intergenerational maintenance of the community language. However, the language used at home may be affected by external factors such as mixed marriages, the birth of new children, entering the workforce, and children's departure from the parental home (Clyne 2003).

2.5.4 Linguistic Factors

2.5.4.1 The Status of Arabic

Arabic is the common native language for more than 300 million speakers in the world (Bale, 2010). Most of these speakers live in the Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East and North Africa (Bale, 2010; Suleiman, 2003). Arabic is among the seven most widely spoken languages in the world (Baker,

2011). Nowadays, the Arabic language is growing quickly with a high number of speakers in the USA, and it is among the six most recognized spoken languages of the United Nations (Temples, 2013). This international status of the Arabic language makes it highly valued by its speakers and encourages them to maintain it for the next generations. As Holmes (2013) argued “the status of a language internationally can contribute to these positive attitudes” (p. 63). However, Clyne (2005) contended that the status of a language internationally does not always culminate in the maintenance of this language. He further claimed that the most widely spoken and prestigious languages in the world, such as German and French, are not well-maintained in Australia. In contrast, languages with less international status, such as Greek and Turkish are well maintained by their speakers (Clyne, 2003, 2005).

Furthermore, the status of Arabic is linked with its prestige as being the language of the Qur’an and Islamic teaching (Benrabah, 2004; Jamai, 2008; Suleiman, 2003). Clyne (2005) pointed to “the symbolic status of Arabic within Islam as the language through which Allah spoke to the Prophet Mohammed and through the Qur’an to His people” (p. 82). In the same context, Rouchdy (2013) refers to the religious status of Arabic as the unique language that is used by all Muslims when they are performing their daily prayers. According to Rouchdy, this religious status of Arabic also represents the religious identity of all Muslims. Hayati and Mashhadi (2010) point out that the Arabic language is taught in Iran alongside the Persian language as the main foreign language to preserve Islamic traditions.

Similarly, Dweik et al. (2014), in their investigation of Muslim Arabs in Vancouver, found that all the participants demonstrated positive attitudes towards the Arabic language because of its status. The finding revealed that Arabic was considered the most prestigious language among all the participants because of its connection with the Holy Qur'an.

2.5.4.2 Standardisation of Arabic

The Arabic language is characterized by diglossia: the existence of a formal or “high” variety, and the vast array of dialects that constitute “low” varieties. High variety refers to Standard Arabic, and low variety refers to informal colloquial Arabic (Suleiman, 2003). As mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, in regards to the linguistic position of Arabic, there are three varieties of Arabic language: a) Colloquial Arabic, or dialect that is spoken language and draws a sense of belonging (identity) (Benrabah, 2007), b) Classical Arabic, which is associated with religion (Hoffman, 2006), and c) Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) which is used in formal domains such as education, media, government and business interactions (Bale, 2010).

In this study, the focus is on Modern Standard Arabic which is used as a medium of instruction in all Arabic schools in Australia (Clyne, 2005). Standard Arabic is the ideal language for communication, which acts as a unifying force among all speakers of the language in the Arab world (Rouchdy, 2013) as well as for non-Arab Muslims who share and use Arabic with the Arabs (Al-Abed Al-Haq & Al-Masaeid, 2009).

2.5.4.3 Literacy in Arabic Language

Arabic is the language of literacy and a medium of instruction in all Arab countries. Literacy in the community language helps children to develop their language proficiency and make them feel confident in using the language. However, literacy by itself does not guarantee the maintenance of the language, which implies the need for other language maintenance factors such as the role of the family and the community. As pointed out by Conklin and Lourie (1983), literacy can only be successful in maintaining and reinforcing the community language if the family continues to play its vital role in the home.

In the Australian context, it is pointed out by Rubino (2010), that there has been an emergence of Islamic schools for Arab and Muslim students to promote their Arabic usage and maintain its stability in the host country. The Arabic language

is one of the top ten community languages other than English to be taught in the Australian schools (Clyne, 2005).

2.5.5 Socio-Psychological Factors

2.5.5.1 Positive Language Attitudes

Many studies on language maintenance have found that speakers' positive attitudes towards community languages may affect the maintenance of such languages strongly and positively (Al-Nahar, 2009; Dweik et al., 2014; Dweik & Al-Obaidi, 2014). Al-Nahar (2009) investigated language maintenance among the Armenians of Jordan. The results indicated that the Armenians had positive attitudes towards the Armenian language; they considered it to be the most beautiful and useful language. Furthermore, the Armenian language was seen as an expressive and sentimental language for expressing the speakers' ideas and feelings, especially when they were angry. The results also showed that the Armenian language reflected their identity as Armenians. Additionally, the suffering and challenges to maintain the Armenian language gave them a sense of pride about their ethnicity, identity and history. Al-Nahar also noted that the Armenian language was strictly used at home and the family members were not allowed to use any other language besides Armenian.

Dweik et al. (2014) found that the Arabic-speaking community of Vancouver had positive attitudes towards learning and speaking the Arabic language. Their findings revealed that the Muslim Arabic speakers believed that their language was the most prestigious language since it is the language of the holy Qur'an. The participants stated that Arabic was the most beautiful national language as well as a marker of an Arabic speaker's identity. The results further revealed that Arabic linked the Arabic speakers with their childhood and it reflected their cultural heritage. The authors also noted that Arabic-speaking parents wanted their children to be proficient speakers of Arabic by sending them to Arabic schools to learn the language.

Dweik and Al-Obaidi (2014) studied the language situation among the Chaldo-Assyrians in Baghdad, Iraq. They found that Chaldo-Assyrians used the Syriac

language in several domains, especially at home with their families and for religious practices. This community also used the Arabic language in other domains such as media, work places and some public places. They also reported that the Chalso-Assyrians community demonstrated a positive attitude towards Syriac and Arabic, and both languages were used side by side by its speakers.

Khadidja (2013) investigated different attitudes of the Kabyle minority group living in Oran, Algeria. Results indicated that the Kabyle are positive towards the maintenance of their mother tongue in spite of the significant impact of Arabic as the national language. They have a positive attitude towards their Kabyle language because they see it as the most beautiful and the richest language. The results also indicated that the Kabyle minority group demonstrated a strong will and loyalty towards their Kabyle language and Tamazight culture by using their language within the family and in other different social contexts. The author claimed that loyalty to the Kabyle language was the main reason for its maintenance and transmission to the second generation children.

2.5.5.2 Emotional Attachment to the Community Language as a Sense of Identity

Emotional attachment to the community language reshapes the speakers' identity and contributes to the maintenance of their language (Benrabah, 2004; Conklin & Lourie, 1983; Hatoss & Sheely, 2009; Gomaa, 2011). Hatoss and Sheely (2009) investigated the maintenance of Dinka language among the Sudanese community in a regional settlement in the South-East Queensland city of Toowoomba, Australia. They reported that the Sudanese community had a strong attachment to their Dinka language.

In the case of Arabic speakers, their emotional attachment to the Arabic language was derived from their emotional attachment to the Qur'an and Islam (Benrabah, 2004). Gomaa (2011) pointed out that the commitment and emotional attachment of the Egyptian parents in Durham, UK towards Arabic formed part of their identity and contributed to the intergenerational

transmission of their language to their second generation children. However, the emotional attachment to the language itself could lead to a fear of losing it, since the language represented the identity, and loss of the language would result in the loss of identity (Stoessel, 2002).

2.5.6 Institutional Support Factors

The maintenance of community languages can be influenced by the availability or the lack of governmental or non-governmental institutions such as media, religious and educational organisations. The availability of these institutions may contribute to the maintenance of the community language while their absence may lead to language loss. These institutional support factors are an integral part in most language maintenance theories and models (Baker, 2011; Clyne, 2003, 2005; Fishman, 2000a).

2.5.6.1 Media

The media can be one of the important institutional support factors that are needed for the maintenance and transmission of community languages to second generation children (Baker, 2011; Cormack; 2007; Namei, 2012; Pauwels, 2005). Cormack (2007) refers to the benefits of the media in encouraging community languages to be stronger in the face of the dominant culture. He states that:

...the media can meld people into a sense of a larger community. ... Media can function as a signifier a community is fully modernized, capable of taking part in contemporary life. ...providing media in a language puts a large amount of language use in the public domain, whether in print, video and audio recordings, or multimedia formats. The media can provide economic support and attractive employment (Cormack, 2007, p. 54, 55).

Similarly, Baker (2011) also refers to the status of community languages when they are used in the media. He contends that media can affect the status and the prestige of the language either positively by its presence or negatively by its absence. Namei (2012) agrees with Baker, in arguing that the availability of the media in minority languages helps in maintaining their stability in terms of the number of speakers, and that it gives them the status and prestige to be used

publicly, rather being restricted to private domains. In this sense, the status of the community languages could be increased and promoted through the presence of the media. For example, Lee (2013) investigated the maintenance of the Spanish language among the Chilean community in New Zealand. She referred to the major role of the media in maintaining the Spanish language. She mentioned that the popularity of television series *Dora the Explorer* had a strong impact on the status of the Spanish, in the sense that young children were attracted to the language because of popular programs like that.

Similarly, Jamaï (2008) investigated language maintenance among the Moroccan community in Britain. He found that 80.1% of Moroccan immigrants had access to TV channels through satellite cables. The results indicated that Moroccans also used other types of media such as listening to radio in Moroccan Arabic, and reading books and newspapers in Arabic. The results further revealed that English was the dominant language in the printed media and the majority of the Moroccan immigrants preferred reading in English rather than in Arabic. Jamaï further found that the majority of the Moroccan community favoured the audio-visual media because it represented their linguistic and cultural heritage through varied programs broadcasted from their home country.

2.5.6.2 Education

Most importantly, the use of a community language in education contributed to the maintenance and development of a language (Rouchdy, 2013; Rubino, 2010). Rouchdy (2013) studied the Arabic language among the Arab Americans, and she referred to the importance of teaching Arabic as a foreign language in some public schools as well as the increase in enrolments in Arabic classes at universities. Conklin and Lourie (1983) claimed that a low education level restricted social and economic mobility, but they agreed that educated community leaders were loyal to the community language.

In the same context, Gomaa (2011) carried out research on the maintenance and transmission of Egyptian Arabic. He found that a higher educational level of the

participants was among the essential factors for maintaining the Arabic language. He claimed that well-educated parents were more likely to be aware of the importance of Arabic for Egyptian and Islamic identity. Usually, well-educated parents had a positive attitude towards the maintenance of their community language.

2.5.6.3 Religion

Research on language maintenance refers to the major role that religion can play in maintaining immigrant languages (Baker, 2011; Clyne & Kipp, 1999; Clyne, 2005; Baker, 2011; Fishman 1991, 2000a). For example, Baker (2011) points out that:

The religion can be a strong and important vehicle for the maintenance of a majority and a minority language. The use of classical Arabic in Islam, Hebrew in Judaism, and German among the Protestant Old Order Amish in Pennsylvania illustrates that religion can be a preserver of language (Baker, 2011, p. 57).

Similarly, Fishman (1991) referred to the role of religion in the maintenance of community languages. He reported that classical religious texts such as the Koranic Arabic, Prayer book and Old Testament, had successfully maintained intergenerational language maintenance and transmission.

In the same context, Baker (2011) contended that in Arab and Islamic countries, religion played a significant role in restraining the expansion of English as a prestigious language and preventing it from penetrating a variety of domains.

Clyne and Kipp (1999) did research into the use of Arabic among Australians of Egyptian and Lebanese background in Melbourne. They found that the Arabic language has a strong link to religion within the Muslim community, since the Qur'an was revealed in the Arabic language. Their results also indicated that the Muslim community had been successful in maintaining the Arabic language and transmitting it to their children through teaching and literacy. In their survey data, they confirmed that Arabic is better maintained by the second generation of Muslim Arabic speakers than by the second generation

of non-Muslim Arabic speakers. The results indicated that religion is one of the motivating factors in maintaining the Arabic language.

A similar study was conducted by Gomaa (2011) about three Muslim families in Durham, UK. He found that Egyptian Arabic is well-maintained through weekend classes offered to Arab children by the Durham University mosque. The Durham University mosque does not teach children how to read and write in Arabic, but they do learn the verses of the Qur'an through memorization. According to the authors, religion is a driving force for the maintenance of the Arabic language among the Arabic speakers.

In contrast, Di Lucca, Masiero and Pallotti (2008) conducted a study on Moroccan adolescents in Italy. They found that the religion did not play any motivating role in the maintenance of Arabic among Moroccans as they were undergoing a high shift towards the Italian language.

To sum up, all the language maintenance factors mentioned in this section are seen to be essential for the retention and transmission of the community language when it is in constant contact with the majority language. The availability of some of these factors have a great impact on intergenerational transmission of community languages. These factors seem to work better and in favour of language maintenance when they are combined with each other. For instance, the role of the family at home is crucial for the maintenance of the community language but needs to be supported by other factors such as the role of the community, literacy using the community language and the media. As mentioned earlier, representation of the community language in the media, availability of religious institutions and the establishment of the schooling system all contribute positively to the maintenance of community languages. Moreover, commitment and positive attitudes of parents can create a proper home environment for learning the language and building cultural and religious identity.

2.6 Language Maintenance Theories and Models

In the literature, there are several theories and models of language maintenance, which could be relevant to this study to some extent. Most of these models include different social, demographic, political, and cultural factors that are influential in the maintenance of community languages. Some of the following models have been summarized and recognized by several researchers in their studies (Clyne, 2003; Pauwels, 2005). These models are still relevant in the field of language maintenance as they are used by many researchers in recent research (Baker, 2011; Hatoss, 2013). The implementation of these models underpins the current study and helps to examine its relevance accordingly.

2.6.1 Kloss's (1966) model

Kloss (1966) proposed a model based on the German-American immigrant situation and identified clear-cut and ambivalent factors affecting language maintenance. The clear-cut factors that promoted language maintenance included “early period of immigration; *sprachinseln* (linguistic enclaves); membership of a denomination with parochial schools and pre-immigration experience with language maintenance” (Clyne, 2003, p. 47). The ambivalent factors acknowledged by Kloss (1966) are those that may promote or hinder language maintenance. The first ambivalent factor is related to the educational level of the immigrant. Higher education levels can facilitate integration, and assimilation into the host country's culture and lower levels of education can lead to the isolation of individuals from the dominant culture prompting maintenance of the original language.

The second factor is the numerical strength of the group because a numerically large and strong community can create many opportunities for language maintenance (e.g., building schools and institutions). The third factor includes linguistic and cultural similarities between the minority and the majority groups. A relatively small degree of linguistic distance from the majority group facilitates the preservation and maintenance of the minority group's original language and culture. The fourth ambivalent factor is related to the view of the

dominant group towards the minority group's language. A hostile and suppressive attitude can lead to assimilation of the minority group but can also motivate a defensive maintenance of the original language and culture. The final factor refers to the sociocultural aspects of the group and is proposed to address other ethnic differences in language maintenance (Pauwels, 2005).

2.6.2 Giles, Bourhis and Taylor's (1977) model

In the same context, the three-factor model of “ethnolinguistic vitality” was proposed by Giles et al. (1977), including three status variables: demographic, institutional support and status factors. Demographic variables include numerical strength and geographical concentration of people. Institutional support factors refer to formal and informal representation in bodies such as the mass media, education, government services and religion. The status factors encompass economic, social and language status. These three factors contribute to the vitality and strength of ethnolinguistic groups. A group with small ethnolinguistic vitality is more likely to assimilate to the host language and culture. In contrast, high vitality groups are successful in maintaining their language and culture in multilingual contexts (Yagmur, 2009).

2.6.3 Smolicz's (1981) Model

Smolicz (1981) proposed a model of the ‘cultural core values’ based on empirical research on language maintenance in Australia. According to this model, each group had particular cultural values that were crucial to its continuous existence as a distinct entity. A language was considered as a prime core value for some groups but not for others. For example, language was a cultural core value for Greeks, Poles and Chinese in Australia, who were successful in maintaining their community language. The major core values such as family, language and religion represent the core values of Greek culture and the Chinese identity is represented in its Mandarin language (Clyne, 2003). In contrast, Dutch people lost their language in Australia because it was not a cultural core value for them. Language has usually been more effective as a core value when it has been connected with other core values such as religion

and historical consciousness and where such interconnected core values required the use of the language for particular purposes. For instance, Clyne (2003) pointed out that “Arabic, Greek and Macedonian had respective claims to authenticity as the language of the Qur’an, of the New Testament and European Antiquity, and the Slavonic Liturgy” (p. 65).

2.6.4 Conklin and Lourie’s (1983) Model

Another model, developed by Conklin and Lourie (1983), was based on the American immigrant situation. This model encompasses some of Kloss’s factors mentioned above to include those particularly relevant to the contemporary urban situation (Clyne, 2003). Conklin and Lourie (1983) made a distinction between factors that promoted language maintenance and factors that led to language shift. Conklin and Lourie (1983) have documented these factors into three sections: political, social and demographic factors; cultural factors; and linguistic factors. Table 2.1 demonstrates these factors, according to this model.

Table 2.1: Conklin and Lourie’s (1983) Model

| Political, social and demographic | Cultural Factors | Linguistic Factors |
|---|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Concentration of immigrants with the same language background. 2. Recency of arrival and/or continuing immigration. 3. Geographical proximity to homeland and ease of travel to homeland. 4. Permanence of residence. 5. Stability in occupation. 6. Social and economic mobility in mainstream occupation. 7. Low levels of education to restrict social and economic mobility; but educated community leaders with good English remain ‘loyal’ to their community language. 8. Ethnic group identity as opposed to identity through nativism, racism and ethnic discrimination. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community language institutions should be prevalent (i.e. Schools, community organizations, broadcast media, etc.) 2. Religious and cultural activities require to be conducted in the community language. 3. Ethnic identity must be strongly tied to the community language. 4. Emotional attachment to the community language giving self-identity and ethnicity. 5. Emphasis on family ties and community cohesion. 6. Education (mother tongue controlled schools). 7. Cultural and religious distance from the majority language | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community language must be standardised and must be in a written form. 2. Use of a Latin script. 3. Community language must have international status. 4. Literacy of the speakers using the community language. 5. Flexibility in the development of the home language |

Source: Adapted from Conklin & Lourie, 1983

As Table 2.1 indicates, the factors provided by Conklin and Lourie seem to be adequate and comprehensive for the maintenance of the community language. Additionally, these factors have been discussed by many other researchers (Baker, 2011; Clyne & Kipp, 1999; Gomaa, 2011; Küün, 2010). However, some of these factors have been challenged by Clyne (2003). The geographical proximity and the ease of travel to the homeland were not a guarantee for language maintenance according to Clyne. He claimed that these two factors could be distorted by other factors, such as the use of English in the homeland (e.g. The Philippines, Malaysia). Clyne (2003) also argued that using a Latin script is not a predictor of language maintenance. For example languages such as Macedonian, Arabic and Greek are among the well-maintained languages without using Latin script, while Dutch, German, Maltese and French are the least maintained languages.

2.6.5 Fishman's (1991) Model

Fishman (1991) has proposed the Graded International Disruption Scale (GIDS) which is made up of eight stages of reversing language shift. The formulation, 'Xish' refers to the language being lost, 'Yish' stands for spreading language, 'Xmen' are the people for whom Xish was (or still is) a community language, and 'Ymen' refers to people associated with the dominant language (Mesthrie et al., 2009). The following is the GIDS model as suggested by Fishman (2001, p. 466) to reverse language shift.

| STAGES OF REVERSING LANGUAGE SHIFT: SEVERITY OF INTERGENERATIONAL DISLOCATION |
|--|
| (Read from the bottom up) |
| 1. Education, work sphere, mass media and governmental operations at higher and nationwide levels. |
| 2. Local/regional mass media and governmental services. |
| 3. The local/regional (i.e. Non-neighbourhood) work sphere, both among Xmen and among Ymen. |
| 4b. Public schools for Xish children, offering some instruction via Xish but substantially under Yish curricular and staffing control. |
| 4a. Schools in lieu of compulsory education and substantially under Xish curricular and staffing control. |
| <i>II. RLS to transcend diglossia, subsequent to its attainment</i> |

5. Schools for literacy acquisition, for the old and for the young, and not in lieu of compulsory education.
 6. The intergenerational and demographically concentrated home-family-neighbourhood: the basis of mother -tongue transmission
 7. Cultural interaction in Xish primarily involving the community-based older generation.
 8. Reconstructing Xish and adult acquisition of XSL.
- I. RLS to attain diglossia*

Source: Fishman (2001, p. 466)

As is shown in this model, stages one to four are very important stages for transcending diglossia and increasing power sharing, while stages five to eight tend to attain diglossia. According to Fishman, the close connection between family, neighbourhood and community is the essence of the continued intergenerational maintenance and transmission of a language.

A critique of this model came from Mesthrie et al. (2009), who claimed that Fishman's segregative views, through encouraging the dominated groups to be independent by establishing their own schools and spheres of work, could create segregation within modern societies and oppose their pluralist ideals.

2.6.6 Edwards' (1992) Model

Another useful taxonomic-typological model was proposed by Edwards (1992). This model did not concentrate on the issues that present as factors of language shift, but it looked at distinctions between them (Clyne, 2003).

Edwards (1992) suggested different fundamental categories related to different linguistic minority situations. These categories included: the minority languages unique to one state (e.g., Breton in France); non-unique, but always a minority language (e.g., Basque in Spain and France); and languages which are minorities in one area, but a majority elsewhere (French in Canada and French in France). The second distinction is related to the same language speakers in different states; are they adjoining (Basque in Spain and France) or non-adjoining (French in Canada and French in France)?

The third distinction is related to the amount of spatial cohesion among speakers within a given state, and its impact on whether it is a cohesive

language community (Cree in Canada) or non-cohesive (Spanish in the United States). Additionally, Edwards (1992) developed three fundamental categories of variables: speaker, language, and setting.

A number of models discussed previously have been used by many researchers in the context of immigrant studies (Baker, 2011; Clyne, 2003; Othman, 2006; Pauwels, 2005) because of their significance in the field of language maintenance and shift. Thus, every language maintenance model has strengths and shortcomings. Some of the shortcomings have been outlined by Clyne (2003). According to Clyne, the models of Kloss and Conklin and Lourie are characterized by the limited chances of combining factors. Edwards' model is rather vague and unclear. The shortcomings in Giles's model are in the selection of constituents of ethnolinguistic vitality and the dependence on dual relations between the minority and the majority groups. Finally, Fishman's (1991) model's limitation is in its "quasi-implicational assumptions, including a linear relationship between the diglossia and power sharing factors" (Clyne, 2003, p. 69).

Apart from these common models which include certain tangible factors such as media, schools, education and religion, there are other intangible factors that contribute effectively to the maintenance of the community language, such as commitment and motivation (Hatoss, 2005b), loyalty (Abu-Haidar, 1994) and the will of the community language speakers (Edwards, 2010).

These intangible factors are essential to the community language maintenance and its transmission to the next generation. If these factors are not present among the community speakers, there will be no need for the tangible factors (Edward, 2010). For example, if both parents and children do not have a desire, loyalty and commitment towards the maintenance of their language, the presence of factors such as media, education and religion are fruitless (Edward, 2010).

To sum up, the above mentioned models and theories of language maintenance are diverse. This diversity includes the wide range of factors discussed above such as the demographic factors, socio-psychological factors, cultural factors,

and institutional support factors, etc. As it has been discussed in this literature, the presence of some factors may lead to the maintenance of the community language and the absence of some of these factors lead to language shift. For example, the attitude of the ethnolinguistic groups can be either conducive to language maintenance if it is positive or non-conducive for language maintenance if it is negative. Additionally, institutional factors such education and media can be in favour of language maintenance once they are available but their absence may cause a language shift minority languages. In this sense, it is hard to choose or determine which factors are more influential for the maintenance of minority languages. Based on these diverse factors and models of language maintenance, the researcher selected the most common factors that are frequently mentioned in almost all models and theories in this literature review. The combination of these diverse factors and models led to a comprehensive conceptual framework in order to frame this study and answer its research questions.

2.7 Research Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this current study is developed by the researcher based on the combination of the existing language maintenance theories and models discussed above. This framework serves as a guide to underpin this research and to help understand the different aspects of the investigated phenomenon (language maintenance). The model summarizes the combination of the most common factors in this study. These diverse factors that influence the maintenance of minority languages have been predominantly discussed by applied linguists and sociolinguists in the field of language maintenance as discussed previously in this chapter. Figure 2.1 illustrates the factors incorporated in this developed model.

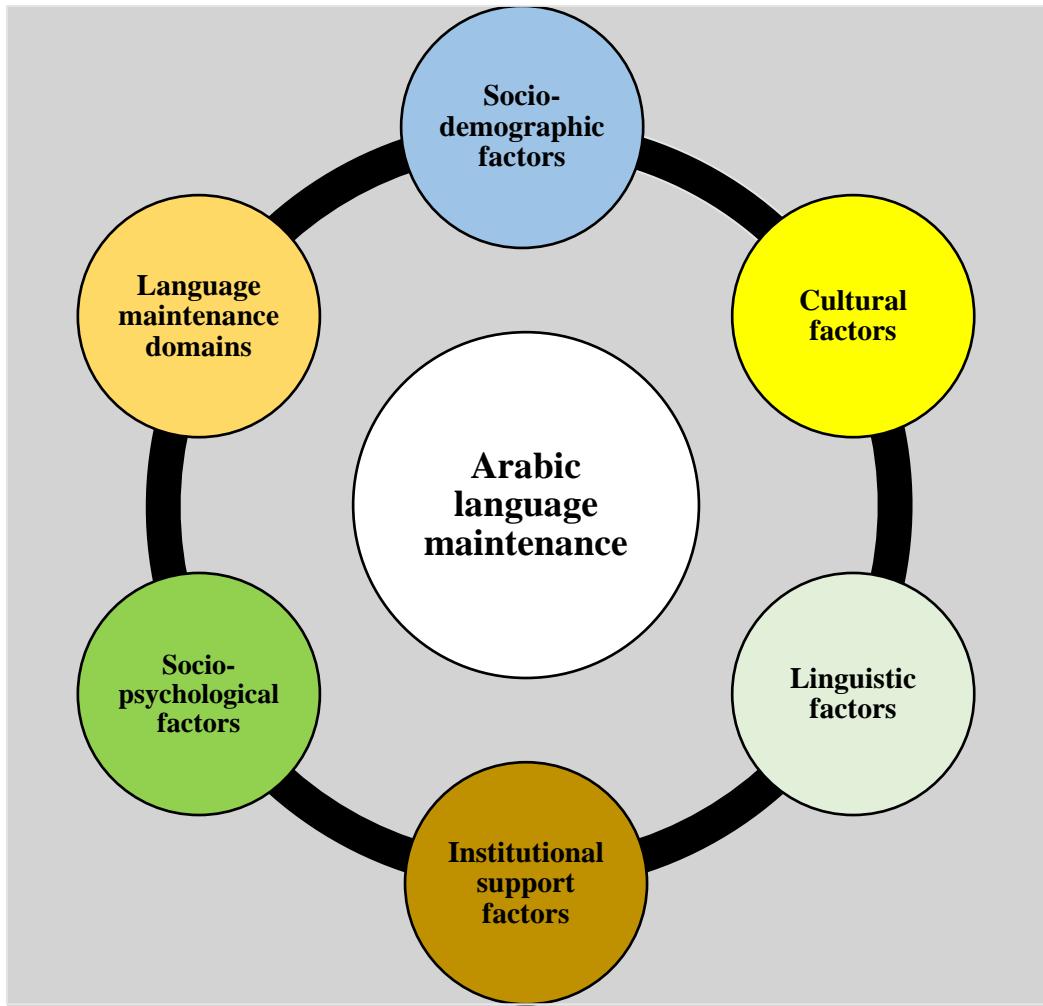


Figure 2.1: A developed conceptual framework of language maintenance from the existing literature

As Figure 2.1 indicates, there are six factors that were found to be either contributing to the maintenance of the community languages or impeding the maintenance of these languages. These factors include language maintenance factors, socio-demographic, cultural, linguistic, socio-psychological, and institutional support factors. This research is supported by these factors in order to understand the Arabic-speaking community under study.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a brief overview of the right of immigrant languages to be maintained in the Australian society after the abolition of the white Australia and subsequent assimilation policies. Multicultural policies came into effect to support and encourage all ethnolinguistic minority groups to speak

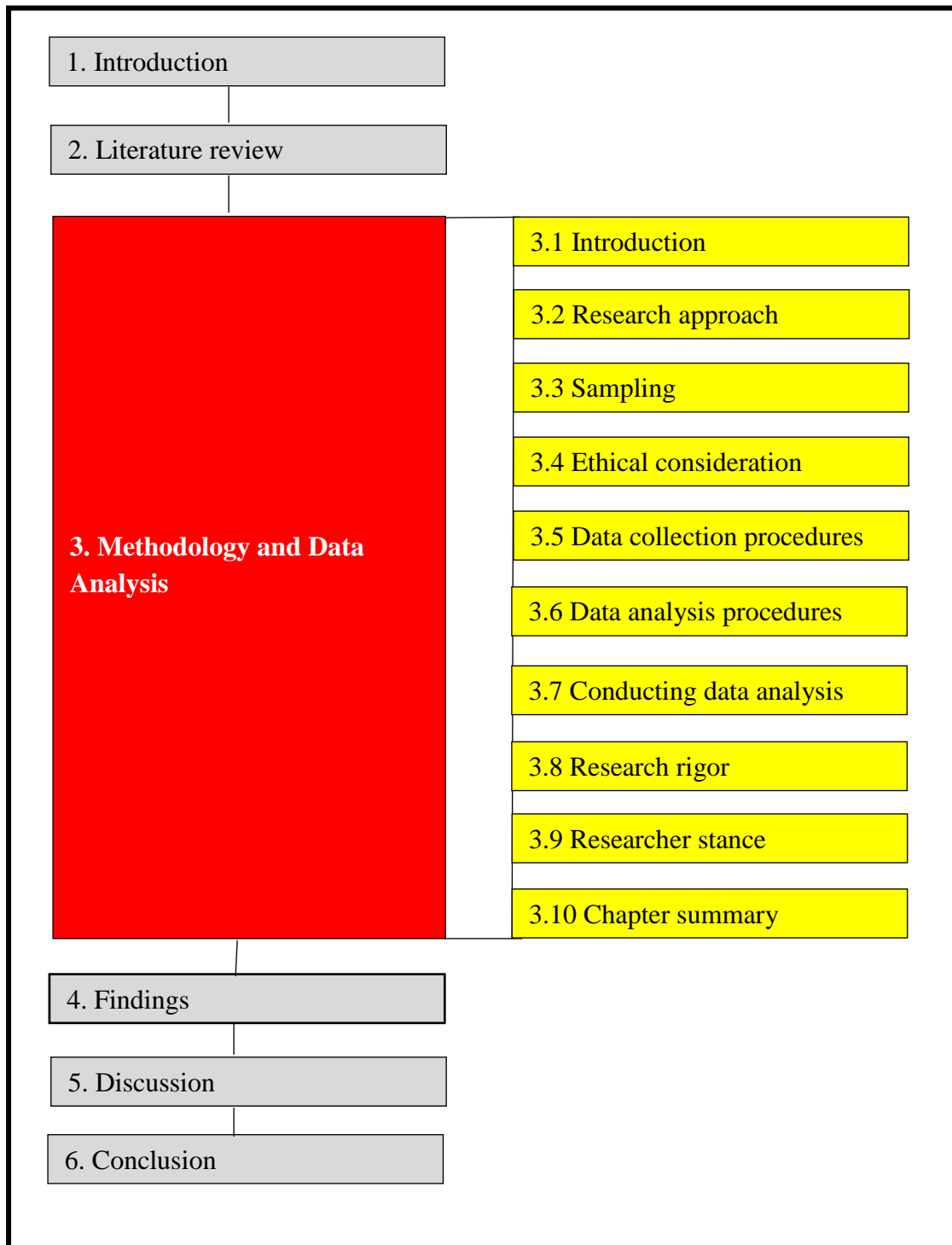
their native languages freely and preserve their ethnic cultures. This chapter has also reviewed the maintenance of Arabic language in different multilingual societies such as the USA, Canada, Europe, Asia, New Zealand and Australia to frame the study and compare it with other studies. Furthermore, the topic of language maintenance of the community languages has been studied in depth in Australia, relying on census data (Clyne, 2005; Clyne & Kipp, 1999). Most of the investigations have been focused on urban ethnolinguistic minority groups while little attention has been given to regional rural areas. Additionally, the most commonly used language maintenance models in the literature have been examined by the researcher to position the current study and they will be subsequently investigated and analysed in order to form a convincing argument for the conceptual framework. The review of the existing literature and language maintenance models and theories has assisted the researcher in developing the conceptual framework, interview protocols and the observational guide for this study.

The following chapter discusses the methodology and data analysis plan adopted in this study. The researcher describes the research approach, research participants, sampling strategies and the ethical issues that need to be considered in conducting qualitative research. Also, the researcher presents information in regards to data collection and analysis procedures, as well as information about the trustworthiness steps that were required to guarantee the credibility and validity of the research.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 3: A Highlighted Outline of the Methodology and Data Analysis



3 CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, a number of studies about language maintenance have been reviewed in order to position the current study, as well as to check its relevance to the theories and models brought by other researchers in the field. This chapter discusses the research methodology employed in this study for the purpose of investigating Arabic language maintenance among the Arabic speakers in the regional Queensland city of Toowoomba, Australia. This chapter also outlines detailed descriptions of the research design, sampling, ethical considerations, the researcher's role and data collection procedures. Additionally, the data analysis plan is briefly explained in the study. Furthermore, the strategies for validating the accuracy and credibility of the obtained information are rigorously considered. Finally, a chapter summary is presented.

3.2 Research Approach

In this study, a qualitative approach was applied to explore the challenges and perspectives of Arabic speakers towards maintaining their Arabic language. Creswell (2014) points out that, "Qualitative research is an approach to exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 4). The exploratory nature of this approach enables the researcher to understand the participants' experiences in dealing with the Arabic language within their community. The intent of this qualitative inquiry is to acquire an in-depth understanding of Arabic language maintenance within this cultural group rather than to generalize it to the overall population (Creswell, 2012, Liamputtong, 2013b).

The researcher adopted this exploratory inquiry for different reasons: first, the maintenance of the Arabic language is a real issue for many Arabic-speaking immigrants who live in Australia and desire to maintain and transmit this

language to their second generation children. Thus, this issue needs to be investigated to hear the participants' voices and allow them to share their experiences with the researcher. Second, Arabic language maintenance as a complex issue needs to be explored in detail by using qualitative methods (in-depth interviews, participant observation, and a research journal). Third, the nature of research questions necessitates the use of qualitative inquiry to explore the factors that may encourage or hinder the maintenance of Arabic language among the Arabic speakers of Toowoomba.

3.2.1 Characteristics of Qualitative Research

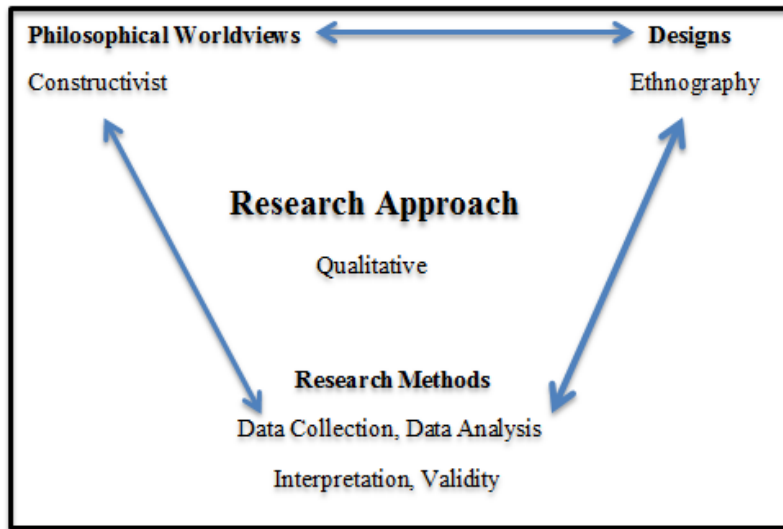
The most common research methods in the field of applied linguistics are: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods as noted by many linguists and researchers (Creswell, 2014; Dörnyei, 2007; Flick, 2007). The distinction is usually made between the quantitative and qualitative research for the visible difference between these two approaches, in which the former involves numerical data and the latter is based on non-numerical data (Dörnyei, 2007). Additionally, qualitative research can be distinguished from quantitative research in many ways as reflected in this current study. First, qualitative research takes place in natural settings unlike the quantitative research (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the Arabic speakers have been investigated in their natural setting (mosque) to see how they interact and which language they use during their gatherings. Second, qualitative research is distinguished from quantitative research in terms of its assumptions, in that it does not depend on setting up prior hypotheses to be tested at the final stage, but instead it develops theories while the inquiry is in process (Flick, 2008). Third, in qualitative research, the researcher is an in-built part of the study (Creswell, 2014). The researcher is considered to be a member of the field of study through his regular attendance or professional experience that reshapes the research (Flick, 2008). Finally, qualitative research allows researchers to hear the voice of those who have been marginalized in society and it enables the participants to express their feelings and experiences in their own words (Liamputtongs, 2013b).

The distinction between quantitative and qualitative methods has paved the way for the adoption of a new approach, which requires the combination or triangulation of these two methods in a single research, known as mixed methods research (Creswell, 2014; Dörnyei, 2007). This method is known for its strengths and pragmatism because it combines the objectivity of quantitative research and the subjectivity of the qualitative research (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). However, in the field of language maintenance, all three research methods have been used to investigate minority ethnolinguistic groups in the host country. Thus, every research method has strengths and weaknesses in its implementation, and the selection of each method is based on the nature of the research.

The use of the qualitative research is appropriate in response to the nature of this research which requires the exploration of the participants' experience and views about the maintenance of their community language. Also, this qualitative method can be considered to be pragmatic as pointed out by Dörnyei (2007), "My reason is purely pragmatic: because qualitative research gained paradigmatic status as a reaction against quantitative research" (p.30). Weaknesses of this method, can be mitigated by the implementation of rigorous strategies such as triangulation and member checking to guarantee the credibility and validity of this research (Creswell, 2014).

3.2.2 Qualitative Research Components

There are three components involved in this qualitative approach: philosophical assumptions, research design and research methods. Figure 3.1 illustrates the interrelation between these three components of the qualitative approach.



Source: Adapted from Creswell (2014)

Figure 3.1: A Framework for Research-The interconnection of Worldviews, Design, and Research Methods

As Figure 3.1 indicates, there is an interrelationship between the three components of the qualitative research approach. The first component in the framework relates to the philosophical worldviews that need to be considered by the researchers in their inquiries. This research is based on a constructivist worldview, which enables the participants to construct meanings of their experiences in regards to the maintenance of their language within their community. The second component is concerned with the implementation of the qualitative design. At this stage, the researcher adopts an ethnographic design to immerse himself in the participants' everyday interactions, using open-ended interviews, participant observations, and his personal journal to understand their experiences and interpret their actions. This design is considered to be worthy of this inquiry as it gives a voice to the Arabic speakers to share their perspectives and talk about their daily experiences in dealing with the Arabic language in their settings. The third component in the framework includes the research methods implemented in the study, which involve the data collection and data analysis procedures, interpretation and validity. This last component will be discussed in detail in this chapter.

3.2.3 The Qualitative Research Paradigm (Philosophical Worldviews)

This qualitative approach is based on a constructivist perspective to explore Arabic language maintenance among the Arabic-speaking community in the regional city of Toowoomba, Australia. The aim is to explore the language maintenance phenomenon through insiders' perspectives by talking and listening to participants as well as observing their daily actions in their natural settings. At this point, the researcher aims to understand language maintenance phenomenon through participants' subjective views to build his interpretations (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Table 3.1 illustrates the elements of worldviews related to the qualitative approach as suggested by Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

Table 3.1: Elements of Worldviews and Implications for Practice

| Worldview Element | Constructivism |
|--|--|
| Ontology (What is the nature of reality?) | Multiple realities (e.g., researchers provide quotes to illustrate different perspectives) |
| Epistemology (What is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched?) | Closeness (e.g., researchers visit participants at their sites to collect data) |
| Axiology (What is the role of values?) | Biased (e.g., researchers actively talk about their biases and interpretations) |
| Methodology (What is the process of research?) | Inductive (e.g., researchers start with participants' views and build "up" to patterns, theories, and generalizations) |
| Rhetoric (What is the language of research?) | Informal style (e.g., researchers write in a literary, informal style) |

Source: Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p. 42)

As Table 3.1 indicates, from a constructivist point of view, there are multiple realities and interpretations that can be extracted from the participants' views and experiences about the maintenance of their Arabic language. The researcher constructs the knowledge (Merriam, 2009), in which s/he relies heavily on the views formed by the participants during their daily interactions with others within their community. In this case, quotes from the participants' interviews are provided to illustrate different interpretations of their reality. Additionally, knowledge about language maintenance can be gained only if there is a rapport between the researcher and the participants. The researcher must interact extensively with the participants in their research sites to understand their world

and collect data from them. For example, through participant observations, the researcher was able to spend a considerable time with the participants to understand their actions and experiences in their natural setting. Besides, the researcher's role as "the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis" (Merriam, 2009, p. 15) in this qualitative inquiry requires from him to be actively engaged in critical self-reflection to control his biases and interpretations (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The researcher must examine the participants' views with a strong commitment away from his/her personal agendas (Liamputtong, 2013b). The process of qualitative research is entirely inductive; the researcher interprets the participants' views to generate a broad understanding of the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2014).

3.2.4 Ethnographic Research Design

Ethnographic research design was utilized in this study to explore the factors associated with the maintenance of Arabic language among the Arabic-speaking community. This design has evolved from the field of anthropology (Creswell, 2012, 2014; Flick, 2014; Liamputtong, 2013b). Ethnography is a popular method to study people's culture. According to Willis and Anderson's (2013) definition, "Ethnography is a research method that focuses on the scientific study of the lived culture of groups. The word is derived from two Greek words: (ethnos), meaning nation or people, and (graphein), meaning to write" (p. 86). According to Creswell (2012), this design is the most appropriate procedure "for describing and interpreting a culture-sharing group's patterns of behaviour, beliefs and language that develop over time" (p. 462). In this study, the implementation of ethnographic research is important to provide a detailed and holistic picture of the Arabic language maintenance phenomenon (Flick, 2014).

The rationale for adopting an ethnographic design is related to its strengths in the field of education. First, it allows researchers to immerse themselves in a setting with the participants and to generate a rich understanding of their social actions (Reeves, Kuper & Hodges, 2008). Second, the use of triangulation as a

technique to identify multiple data sources, such as participant observation, face-to-face interviews, and a research journal, is an advantage to explore language maintenance among Arabic speakers in several different settings and to provide more credible results.

In addition to these strengths, there are also a number of challenges that need to be considered in conducting ethnographic research. These challenges involve the difficulty to gain access to field settings as well as the time to build rapport with participants. However, this issue can be resolved with the support of a gatekeeper who can allow entry to the field and can assist in developing trust between the researcher and participants (Willis & Anderson, 2013). Second, ethnographic research is based on participant observation that requires spending a considerable amount of time in the research field to observe and interview the participants (Best, 2012).

The researcher applied ethnographic methods of data collection, including participating and observing the Arabic-speaking community's activities for six months, attending their meetings, celebrating festivals with them and interviewing 20 Arabic speakers to explore their perceptions and experiences in regards to the maintenance of their Arabic language.

3.3 Sampling and Research Participants

3.3.1 Research Site

Ethnographic study was conducted at the mosque in the regional city of Toowoomba which is located in South-East Queensland, Australia. The mosque is also known administratively as the "Islamic Society of Toowoomba (IST)".

This society has been well-defined by its founding president (Khan, n.d.):

The IST is a member of the Islamic Council of Queensland (ICQ), a forum of the Muslims in the state of Queensland in Australia. The ICQ is a part of the Federation of the Islamic Councils in Australia (AFIC), an umbrella organization of the Muslims of Australia (Khan, n.d.).

The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) offers a place of worship, known as the mosque, to the Muslim students and staff to perform their daily prayers and celebrate their religious events. The term *Mosque* is a more common name among Muslims than the IST. Therefore, it will be used throughout the entire study. The IST will be used only if it is mentioned by the participants during the interviews to ensure the validity of the results.

3.3.1.1 Access to the Field (Research Site)

It should be noted here that gaining entry or access to the research site is a bigger issue than in qualitative studies than it is in quantitative studies (Flick, 2009). This issue relates to the closeness of the researcher to the participants in dealing with qualitative research because it requires face-to-face interviews and participant observation, which involves spending a considerable amount of time in the research field.

To access the research field, i.e. the place where the research was conducted, the researcher made a written request to the director of the mosque. The reason behind this request was to get approval from the director of the mosque to enable the researcher to spend time in the field and interact with the participants for a period of time. The request letter was sent to the director of the mosque, and included information about the research topic, purpose, methods, benefits of the research and allocated time. The researcher received a response email from the director saying that a decision would be made at the next meeting of the mosque's committee. The researcher was invited after two weeks to attend a meeting with the participants and to discuss the current research. The director of the mosque requested people to stay for the meeting after the night prayer. During this first meeting, he introduced the researcher and gave the participants some details about the research project and asked all of them to support the current research. Also, he spoke about the importance of the research topic for Muslim immigrants and the Arabic speaking community to maintain their language and pass it on to their second generation children. In the end, he asked the Arabic speakers, especially those who were willing to participate in this research, to contact either him or the researcher directly. The researcher also

spoke for a few minutes at this meeting about the confidentiality and the protection of the participants from any harm. The Muslim Committee of Toowoomba mosque approved the research to be carried with the Arabic speakers at any time.

3.3.1.2 Access to Individuals

The researcher had no problem with meeting Arabic speakers at the mosque because they come regularly to perform their five daily prayers. All male participants were positive about devoting their time and getting interviewed at any time after the end of prayers. In contrast, female participants in this research did not attend the meetings since it is not appropriate to mix with male participants in line with Islamic culture. Moreover, women do not come regularly to pray at the mosque except for Friday prayers where a few of them usually come with their husbands. In this case, they were recruited differently with the help of a female research assistant to participate in this study.

3.3.2 Research Participants

The twenty participants in this study were Arabic speakers originally from different Arab countries and they speak Arabic as their mother tongue. The Arabic speakers were also united by Islamic culture, but they had their own sub-cultures based on traditions such as dress. The majority of the participants in this study, came to Australia to pursue their high studies as international students. Additionally, both female and male participants were accompanied by their spouses and children during their arrival to Australia.

3.3.3 Sample Sizes and Sampling Procedures

3.3.3.1 Sample Size

In this qualitative study, the sample size was determined by the concept of saturation. The latter is used to refer to the point when the researcher stops recruiting participants and collecting extra information from them since it will not offer him/her any new understanding (Flick, 2009; Liamputtong, 2013a). The concept of saturation in this study required the use of purposeful sampling,

which is the most frequent sampling strategy in conducting qualitative research (Creswell, 2012). The researcher was looking for the factors that may contribute to or impede the maintenance of the Arabic language within the Arabic speaking community in the regional city of Toowoomba. The sample included 20 participants who were drawn purposefully from the community membership list at the mosque.

3.3.3.2 Purposeful Sampling Technique

Merriam (2009) points out that, “In qualitative research, the most appropriate sampling strategy is non-probability sampling” (p. 83). A mixed purposeful sampling technique was used for recruiting 20 Arabic speakers from the mosque in the regional city of Toowoomba, Australia to participate in this study. This type of non-probability sampling requires the researcher to mix more than one strategy in line with the nature of the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). This study used a combination of a purposive and snowballing strategy aimed at better understanding Arabic language maintenance as a central phenomenon of the Arabic-speaking community. This mixed purposeful strategy is displayed in Figure 3.2:

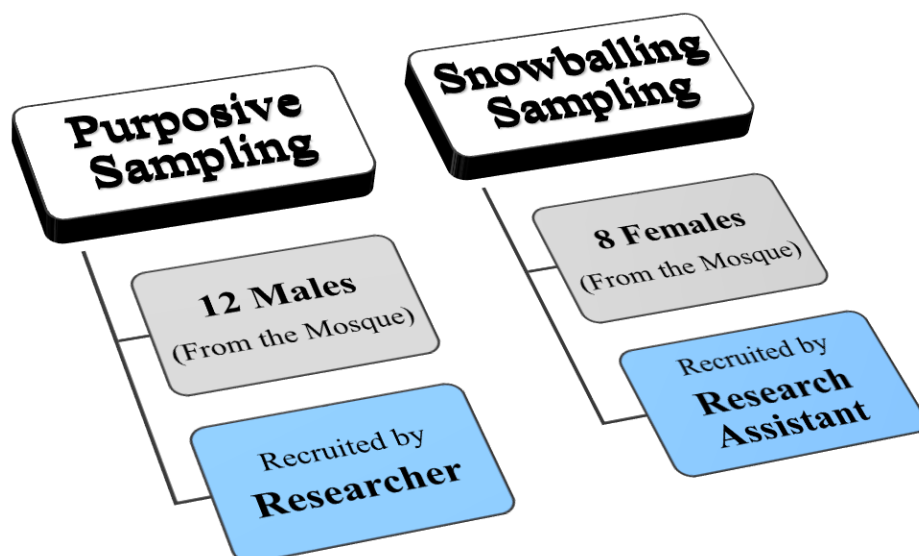


Figure 3.2: A Mixed Purposive Sampling Strategy

At first, as shown in Figure 3.2, the researcher conducted a purposive sampling technique to select 12 adult male participants from the membership list at the mosque. This list included the population of about 1000 male adult individuals who are members of the mosque by paying annual membership fees. It should be noted that the membership list includes not only Arabic speakers, but also non-Arabic speakers such as Indonesians, Malaysians, Pakistani, Bangladeshis, and Indians. In this case, only the first 12 Arabic-speakers were selected by order from the membership list, avoiding the non-Arabic speakers. The Arabic speakers represent the majority at the Mosque. Most of them come from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Libya.

The selection criteria for participation were: (1) adult first generation Arabic native speaker, (2) Arab in ethnicity, (3) married with at least one child. Only parents who met these criteria were requested to participate in this study. The unmarried members and parents without children were excluded from this sample due to the nature and purpose of this research. This study aimed to explore intergenerational language maintenance and transmission.

Second, eight female participants were recruited by a female research assistant using a snowballing technique. In this technique, each participant who agreed voluntarily to participate in this study was asked to identify other participants who met the selection criteria mentioned above and were willing to participate (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The snowballing technique was utilized due to the difficulty in finding female participants since they do not regularly come to the mosque. Additionally, there were other constraints such as the religious and cultural concerns among Arabic speakers. In view of that, the researcher was obliged to appoint a female research assistant to recruit, interview and observe female participants. The researcher is sometimes referred to as a primary researcher in this study to make a distinction when necessary.

This combination of more than one sampling strategy in a single study contributes to the validity and credibility of the research through the triangulation of data extracted from two different sampling methods (Johnson &

Christensen, 2012). This mixed purposeful sampling strategy was intended to provide rich and in-depth data about the maintenance of Arabic language rather than looking for a representative sample as in a quantitative study (Liamputtong, 2013a).

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Permission for conducting this research was gained from the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ). As mentioned before, permission from the director of Toowoomba mosque was obtained in order to get access to a research site and to interact with the participants. The researcher was mindful of ethical issues that would be considered with careful attention at every step of this research, including sensitivity and respect to individuals and research sites (Creswell, 2012). The following Figure 3.3 portrays the ethical steps that were considered during the process of this study.



Figure 3.3: Ethical Considerations

3.4.1 Informed Consent

According to the University of Southern Queensland ethical code, the informed consent from participants is a requirement to conduct research. The term informed consent is defined by Johnson and Christensen (2012) as follows: “Agreeing to participate in a study after being informed of its purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, alternative procedures, and limits of confidentiality” (p. 107). The researcher informed the participants about all aspects of the research before they chose to participate in this study. These aspects of the research as suggested by Johnson and Christensen include purpose, procedures, risks, benefits and confidentiality.

Both the interview questions and the participant information sheet were attached to the consent form in order to allow the participants to read and understand the research topic that they were consenting to. In addition, the participant information sheet that was written in both Arabic and English to enable the participants to have a full understanding of it, while the researcher also explained the aspects of the research verbally. The participants were given time to read the consent form, understand its content and then sign it before any recording of their responses took place.

3.4.2 Freedom to Withdraw

This area of ethical concern was clearly explained to the participants verbally and it was also included in the participant information sheet as well as in the consent form (see Appendix B). Participants in this study were informed that their contribution was entirely voluntary and they had the full right to withdraw at any stage during the study without any consequences. Finally, the researcher gave them a guarantee that the data would be collected only for the purpose of this study.

3.4.3 Confidentiality, Anonymity, and the Concept of Privacy

In this study, research participants' confidentiality was protected by concealing their identity and changing their names (Best, 2012). Pseudonyms were used instead of real names in the dissertation, or any ensuing publication, to protect

the confidentiality of participants. Additionally, the research participants were assured that their responses were kept confidential, and no one would have access to it (Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

In this qualitative study, data were gathered by using different research instruments including interviews, participant observation, and a research journal, in order to best answer the research questions as well as to learn more about the participants' perspectives and experiences. These three research instruments are an integral part of the ethnographic method (Kawulich, 2005). Observation and interviews are considered to be the fundamental methods of data collection in qualitative research because of their exploratory approach (Best, 2012; Creswell, 2012, 2013). The combination of the observation, interviews, and a research journal would contribute effectively to form a holistic perception of the phenomenon under investigation (Merriam, 2009). Figure 3.4 explains the data collection procedures implemented in this study.

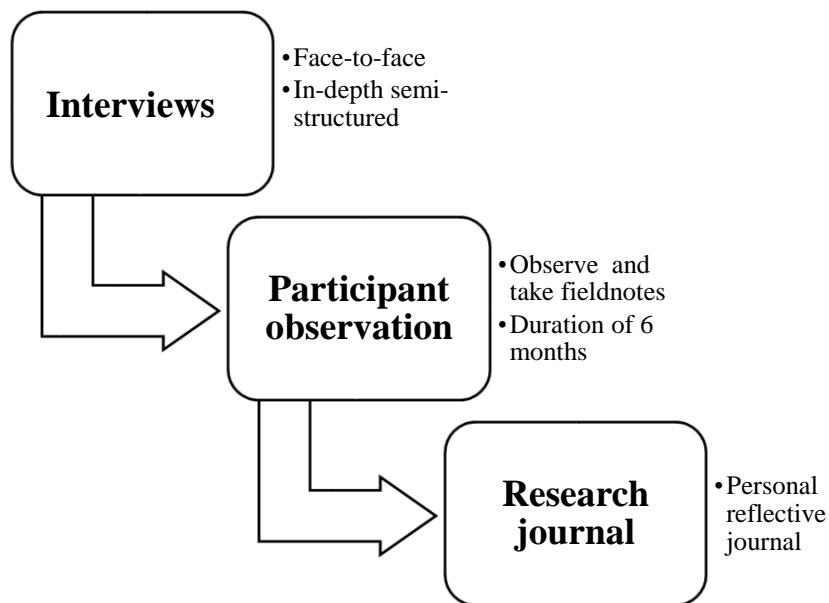


Figure 3.4: Data Collection Procedures

3.5.1 Interviews

Interviews are an integral part of qualitative studies, which can include other methods of data collection, such as observational notes and a research journal.

According to Merriam (2009), “in qualitative research, interviewing is often the primary source of obtaining data needed for understanding the phenomenon under study” (p. 114). In this study, data were first gathered using one-on-one interviews with the Arabic speakers who met the sample selection criteria discussed in the sample section. In-depth semi-structured interviews with 20 participants from the mosque were conducted to answer the research questions. The purpose of one-on-one interviews was to gather in-depth and rich data about participants’ views in regards to the maintenance of their community language.

3.5.1.1 Preparing an Interview Protocol

The researcher developed the interview protocol for the purpose of the study. This protocol covered all different issues that had predominantly been taken from the literature and the conceptual framework. The participants were asked a few demographic questions (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, a year arrival, education, religion, employment, etc.). In addition, there were other questions and issues related to language maintenance domains, participants’ attitudes, cultural identity and religion that needed to be explored through the interviews. During the interview process, the researcher probed whenever it was appropriate for the sake of receiving further information, elaboration and clarification from the participants about the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2012). The following is a sample of the interview protocol as suggested by Creswell (2013, p. 165).

Sample Interview: Protocol or Guide

Interview protocol project: Arabic Language Maintenance among the Arabic-speaking community in the regional Queensland city of Toowoomba, Australia.

Time of Interview: Usually conducted after the end of the prayers: 1.00pm, 4.00pm, 6.30pm or 8.00pm.

Date: From 15 August 2013 to 30 March 2014

Place: The mosque, parks and soccer fields, Toowoomba

Interviewers: The researcher and research assistant

Interviewees: Arabic speakers

The position of interviewees: Arabic-speaking parents who have children

Description of the project: this study seeks to investigate language maintenance among the Arabic-speaking community in the city of Toowoomba

Questions: (See Appendix C)

Thanks and assurance of confidentiality: The researchers thanks the participants for their time and effort to participate in this study and give them a guarantee that their information will be confidential and they will not be identified.

Source: Adapted from Creswell (2013)

3.5.1.2 Location and Time of the Interview

The mosque was the primary location for conducting all the interviews. Specifically, there were 20 face-to-face interviews with Arabic speakers undertaken by the researchers at the mosque's office. The interviews were scheduled after the end of the prayers to avoid any disturbance and noise. It is interesting to note that some of the participants, especially women, preferred to be interviewed in their homes, in order to be close to their children. The research assistant explained to them the ethical reasons for not conducting interviews at home. In the end, all the participants agreed to be interviewed at the mosque after the allocated prayer time.

3.5.1.3 Recording and transcribing the interviews

There are different ways or methods of recording interviews. As pointed out by Kvale (2007), "Methods of recording interviews for documentation and later analysis include audiotape recording, videotape recording, note-taking and remembering" (p. 93). In this study, all the in-depth interviews were recorded by using digital tape recorders. Liamputtong (2013b) contended that qualitative research necessitates that the interviews should be recorded for obtaining a detailed analysis. All participants in this study consented to being recorded. However, some female participants asked some questions about the protection of their identity and whether the researcher would listen to their interviews. The research assistant explained to them that she was the only one who would listen and transcribe, and that she would keep their recordings in a safe place. As mentioned earlier, participants were informed that their identity would be protected by providing a pseudonym rather than their actual names. At this

stage, each participant signed the written consent form prior to all the interviews.

In this qualitative study, the recording of the interviews ranged in length from 30 to 40 minutes, and all participants were given a choice to respond either in Arabic or English. In the end, all the interviews were conducted in English. During the interviews, the participants used some Arabic words in providing examples as well as for more clarification. The data were collected between 15 August 2013 and 30 March 2014. All the recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim to facilitate subsequent analysis. According to Merriam (2009), “Ideally, verbatim transcription of recorded interviews provides the best database for analysis” (p.110). The researcher received only transcripts from the research assistant who kept the original data in a safe password protected computer at an office at the University of Southern Queensland. It is recommended that the researcher should transcribe his/her data personally (Liamputtong, 2013b), but in this case it was religiously and culturally inappropriate for the researcher to listen and transcribe female participants’ recordings.

3.5.2 Observation

Observation is an important method of conducting qualitative research. It is regarded as the main qualitative instrument of gathering data according to Merriam (2009). It offers a first-hand account of the situation under study” (p. 136). In regards to the use of observation in research, many researchers (Creswell, 2012; Flick, 2009, 2014) suggest that researchers have to integrate all their senses including sight, hearing, feeling and smelling. There are two forms of observation, according to Flick (2009): non-participant observation and participant observation. The non-participant observation requires the researcher in this study to observe without being an active participant in the field, and he should not intervene in their daily activities. In contrast, participant observation allows the researcher to immerse himself in the field with the participants and take part in their activities and events.

In this research, data were gathered using participant observation in which the researcher conducted an ongoing observation for a considerable period to be close to the participants in their setting. According to Flick (2009), “participant observation is the central methodological basis for any ethnographic research” (p. 236). The researcher observes and joins in the activities in the field and records some field notes from the participants’ interaction to attain a better understanding of the central phenomenon. For this reason, many linguists consider the researcher who implements participant observation as an important instrument for data collection (Flick, 2011; Liamputtong, 2013b). In this research, the non-participant observation was used to get an understanding of the phenomenon under study from an outsider perspective. Similar to the interviews, the female research assistant was tasked to observe female participants. In this context, having a research assistant was an advantage to obtain a rich data and enhance the validity and credibility of the findings. Reeves et al., (2008) confirmed that the data gathered by many researchers may create a multifaceted range of perspectives.

3.5.2.1 Steps of Observation Process

The steps of the observation process were adopted from Creswell (2012) and are reflected in the current study.

1. *A selection of the site for observation:* the primary researcher conducted participant observation in many places such as the mosque, parks, food festivals and soccer fields. Therefore, most of the observational field notes were taken from the mosque, which is a meeting ground for Arabic speakers and non-Arabic speakers. The mosque was the best place to understand the language maintenance phenomenon where the researcher could observe the Arabic speakers and their everyday activities. Also, the researcher could see the participants' interactions in the Arabic language closely since they regularly come to perform their five prayers per day at the mosque. Additionally, many activities and functions took place at the mosque that needed to be observed such as a Friday sermon, Ramadan, feasts, a food festival, lectures, etc. In

regards to conducting observations of female participants, the researcher employed a female assistant researcher who speaks English and Arabic.

2. *The entry to the site*: the researcher and his assistant were familiar with the primary site (mosque) where they perform their prayers regularly and build rapport with the Arabic speakers.

3. *Start observing*: the researchers began observing and recording their field notes only as it related to those who participated in the interviews. The participant observation required the researchers to observe and participate as much as possible in participants' daily social events and celebrations while they were observing them. The observation took more than six months and involved living in the community and understanding their small world. This long-term engagement in the field strengthened the trust between the researchers and participants and contributed to the accuracy and validity of the findings (Creswell, 2012). Furthermore, the researchers prepared an observational guide for gathering the data. This guide included issues related to the language maintenance that needed to be investigated and observed systematically. In this active participation with the participants, the primary researcher needed to check if they were maintaining their original language or shifting to the majority language.

4. *Observer's role*: the researchers changed roles from outsider non-participants to become insider participants and participate in the activities of the community. The reason behind the changing roles was "to be subjectively involved in the setting as well as to see the setting more objectively" (Creswell, 2012, p. 215).

5. *Conducting multiple observations*: the researchers conducted multiple observations to achieve a better understanding of the research site and the participants. At first, they started with a general observation to describe the settings and the activities of the participants who were part of the interviews. Then, they engaged in focused observation. The researchers also conducted multiple observations over time to be narrowed in their focus on the important

issues related to the research, such as language, culture, and identity (see Appendix D).

6. *Means of recording*: the researchers took field notes during their observation in the research field. According to Creswell, (2012) field notes are defined as “text (words) recorded by the researcher during an observation in a qualitative study” (p. 216). Additionally, Merriam (2009) suggests that field notes should include the following criteria:

- a. The full description of the setting, the participants who contributed to this study as well as their daily activities in the field.
- b. Recording direct quotations related to what participants said in the field during their interactions with each other. These quotations are concerned with certain issues linked to the phenomenon under investigation.
- c. The researcher’s comments should also be included in the margins or in brackets. These comments are reflective thoughts of the researcher about the setting, participants and the phenomenon under study.

In this study, the researcher recorded his fieldnotes on the spot, especially very important notes, in order not to forget them. Sometimes, the researcher recorded his daily notes after finishing the observation because it was difficult to record notes while observing the situation in the field. In this case, the researcher just referred to relevant notes with keywords, and when he finished his observation, he wrote in detail what happened in the field. It is argued by Whitehead (2006) that the process of observing and recording notes at the same time is not an easy task because it may distract the participants in the field.

7. *Type of information to be recorded*: In this study, the information to be recorded related to the maintenance of the Arabic language within the Arabic-speaking community. For example, the interactions between parents and children, between children themselves, and between parents and other parents.

8. *Record descriptive and reflective field notes*: As has been mentioned earlier by Merriam (2009), the descriptive and reflective field notes about the study

should be recorded in detail. The researcher was able to record detailed descriptive field notes about different settings such as the mosque, parks, and soccer fields, in addition to information about various actions and activities carried out by the Arabic speakers, notably at the mosque. Reflective field notes were also documented to help reflect on personal opinions and judgments of the researcher in this study.

9. *Make yourself known, but remain unobtrusive:* Most of the participants know the primary researcher from his daily presence at the mosque and also from his charity work within the community. Hence, the researcher is not an outsider from the community, but rather an active member serving people within the community.

10. *Slow withdrawal from the field after observing:* At the end of the observing process in the field, the researchers thanked the participants for their contributions and informed them about the use of the gathered information in the research.

In addition to these steps proposed by Creswell (2012), the researchers also took into consideration some domains of observation to obtain a complete understanding of the Arabic language maintenance phenomenon. This domain of observation was taken from Whitehead (2006) and applied to this current study. Table 3.2 explains this domain of observation.

Table 3.2: Domains of observation in a social setting

| <i>Domains of Observation</i> | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Title of the project</i> | Arabic Language Maintenance among the Arabic-speaking community in the regional Queensland city of Toowoomba, Australia. |
| <i>Date of observation</i> | 15 August 2013 to 30 March 2014 |
| <i>Observer name</i> | Mostefa Abdelhadi and his research assistant |
| <i>Starting time of observation</i> | 15 August 2013 |
| <i>Ending time of observation</i> | 30 March 2014 |
| <i>The social setting</i> | Mosque: there are three halls at the mosque. One hall is for prayers and is divided into two parts (Two prayer rooms); the one in the front is the prayer room for men and the back room is for women. The second hall is for activities and events. The third chamber is a class for teaching children. |

| <i>Domains of Observation</i> | |
|---|--|
| <i>Physical environment</i> | The mosque is located in the main street close to the university |
| <i>Space and the objects in the setting</i> | The mosque is spacious. It includes a hall for the prayers, shelves for books, Minbar (pulpit) where the Imam of the mosque stands to deliver his sermon. |
| <i>Actors in the setting</i> | There are around 1000 people who come to the Friday prayers from different genders, races, and backgrounds |
| <i>Events</i> | There are many activities carried out at the mosque such as a Food Festival, Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr (to celebrate the end of Ramadan) and Eid al-Adha (called Feast of Sacrifice). |
| Time | The observation was conducted almost every day of the Maghrib (Sunset) and Isha (Night) prayers when many people attend. However, the focused observation was done at Friday prayers where all participants in the interviews would be attending the compulsory sermon delivered by the Imam of the mosque. |
| Individual behaviour | The observers were interested in observing the language and culture of the participants, particularly what they were doing and how they were interacting. |
| Activities | The observers were also participants in some activities with the members. Such as organizing the food festival, and helping with cooking during Ramadan with the participants. |
| Actor groups | Some participants in the setting were related to each other. For example, members who came from the Middle East and North Africa were linked through the language and culture. Other similarities also related other Muslims from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan to each other through culture and language. |
| Interaction patterns | Participants were different from each other with respect to the maintenance of Arabic. Some of them preferred to communicate with their children in Arabic to show the others that their children could speak Arabic fluently. Others addressed their children in English in front of friends, to send the message that their children were fluent and near or native speakers of English. |
| Language | Most of the activities of the community were carried out in Arabic and English, and interesting comments from the participants were recorded (content, participation, method, time, and rationale). |
| Non-verbal behaviour and metalingual properties in conversation | Gestures were observed and documented. |
| Expressive culture | Participants wore different traditional clothes that represent their culture and country. |
| Ideational element | Different behaviours and attitudes of the participants. |
| Goals, motivation, or agendas | Participants had the same goals within the community. |
| Broader social systems | The participants were influenced by the Imam's motivation to bring the community together. He encouraged them to bring their children and family to the mosque to get to know each other and do activities together. Family seemed to have an influence on the children to learn Arabic. |

Source: Adapted from Whitehead (2006)

3.5.2.2 Limitation of Observation

The limitations that the researchers faced in conducting the participant observation included the ones raised by Flick (2009, 2014). Flick (2009) argued that not all the phenomena under study can be observed. He gave the example of the biographical backgrounds of the participants, which are hard to get information about from observing them, for example age, marital status, number of children and educational level. He further reported that some situations can be seen only by chance or through careful attention to the selection of cases for observation. In the current study, this problem was solved by conducting additional interviews with the participants to obtain information about their backgrounds, experiences, and actions.

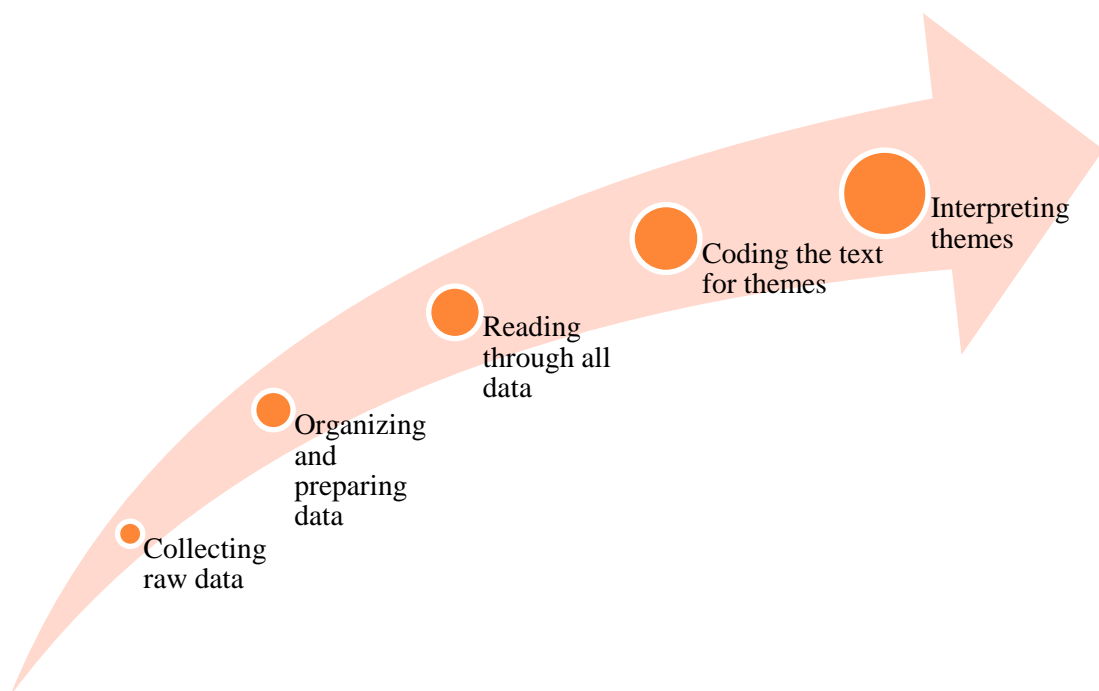
3.5.3 Research journal (Reflective journal)

In this study, the researcher used the personal reflective journal as a third type of data collection. This reflective journal was an unobtrusive source of information which described the researcher's personal thoughts including feelings, problems, and biases about the area of research (Creswell, 2009). By recording these personal thoughts, the researcher contributed to the validity of the research. Additionally, these reflective notes also contributed to the diversity and richness of the data collection.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis is the final procedure to give meaning to the gathered data (Merriam, 2009). Another definition about the purpose of data analysis is presented by Best (2012) who points out that, “ the aim of all data analysis is to assemble the data collected in a meaningful fashion to produce an explanation, allow interpretation and enable an appropriate inference to be drawn” (p. 152). In this respect, the aim of data analysis in this study was to describe the factors influencing the maintenance of the Arabic language among the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba. In the current study, the researcher adopted the same steps for analysing the data that are outlined in Creswell's (2014) plan of analysis. This plan involves going through several steps: (1) organizing and

preparing data for analysis, (2) reading through all the gathered information in order to acquire a general sense of it, (3) coding the data by detecting text segments and giving a code label to them, (4) representing the data in tables or charts to convey information about each participant, and (5) making an interpretation of the data and comparing the findings with information found in literature and theories (Creswell, 2014). Figure 3.5 refers to these steps starting at the bottom:



Source: Adapted from Creswell (2014)

Figure 3.5: Qualitative Data Analysis Plan

3.7 Conducting Qualitative Data Analysis

This section presents the steps of data analysis as suggested by Creswell (2014) in Figure 3.5. The researcher found this plan very comprehensive and an easy way of dealing with the big amount of raw data gathered. A thematic analysis was utilized in this study, which involved going through all of the following steps: organising, transcribing and coding the data, to extract themes and sub-themes which would represent the findings of this study.

3.7.1 Organising and Preparing Data for Analysis

As Figure 3.5 indicates, the researcher engaged in the first step of data analysis by organising and preparing the information collected from the interviews, participant observation and the research journal. This step refers to the transcription process of the multiple instruments of data collection.

3.7.1.1 Transcription Process

a. Transcription of Interviews

The transcription of data was done after each interview. The researcher adopted the simultaneous process of analysing the data, which required an early analysis of the gathered information while the collection of data was still in process (Creswell, 2012). The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, including every utterance from the participants, either formal or informal, to allow data analysis (Liamputtong, 2013b), as well as to enhance the trustworthiness of the data. The transcripts from interviews included different types of fillers like ‘Ah’, ‘Oh’, ‘Yep’, and ‘Yeah’ (Jamarani, 2012). There were also some Arabic utterances that could be easily expressed by the participants in their mother tongue such as Masjid (mosque), Qurqan (Qur’an), Dheen (religion), Salat (prayers), Akika (naming a newborn baby), Eid al-Fitr (the first feast after the end of Ramadan) and Eid al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice).

Similarly, the transcripts included some expressions that could be expressed spontaneously in the Arabic language, even though interviewees knew their equivalent meaning in English. These expressions are related to their religion, such Al-Hamdu Allah (thanks to God), Insha’Allah (by God’s willing), Masha ‘Allah (“God willed it”), Jazzakum Allah (may God reward you) and Allah ‘Azza Wa Jal (God Almighty).

There were some other issues involved in the interviews such as mistakes in grammar and structure, repetitions, the use of American words (e.g., wanna, gonna), coughing, sneezing, phone ringing and children's noise. These issues were indicated by the researchers on the transcripts to maintain the trustworthiness of the findings.

The researcher transcribed only the audiotape recordings belonging to male interviewees, and the research assistant transcribed all the female interview meetings.

Two summary sheet tables were developed to insert both data interview transcripts, observational notes and the research journal. These two tables were the primary source of the data to be used later in developing other tables based on information such as coding tables and decision audit tables.

b. Transcription of Participant Observation

Observational field notes that were recorded by the researcher followed the same steps as the interviews. These observational notes were written down manually in English and sometimes in Arabic. Only the ones that were recorded directly from the participants' interactions were written in Arabic, and then the researcher transcribed them in English. It should be noted that the researcher recorded some terms derived from Standard Arabic and they are related to some varieties of local dialects of Arabic. The researcher asked for their meaning in Standard Arabic. The participants spoke Arabic, but with different accents, and most of the terms were understandable for the researcher. For instance, when the Iraqi people greet other people from their country, they say “Shaku Maku”, which means “How are you” in English, but when they greet other people from the community who are not Iraqis, they just say “Salam Alaikum” which is the common greeting of Islam and means “Peace be upon you”. Most of the observational field notes were recorded by the researcher in the Arabic language since the majority of Arabic speakers use Arabic especially at the mosque. Participants in this study also speak English either with each other, with their children and with non-Arabic speakers. The researcher observed that Arabic is the most spoken language within the community because of the increasing number of Arabic speakers every year.

c. Transcription of research journal

The researcher’s personal journal includes some notes that were recorded during the interviews or consist of his reflections on conducting participant

observation. These notes were written in Arabic and English but mostly in English. The reflective notes that were written in Arabic were translated by the researcher himself, who is a qualified translator of Arabic and English.

3.7.1.2 Hand Analysis Process

In this ethnographic study, all the data collected from the interviews, participant observation and the research journal were analysed by hand using highlighting colours. According to Creswell (2012, p. 239), the “*hand analysis of qualitative data* means that researchers read the data, mark it by hand, and divide it into parts”. The decision to adopt a handwriting analysis was made for two reasons. First, the analysis by hand was found to be an effective method in this study since there were less than 500 pages of transcripts (Creswell, 2012). Second, using a software package (NVivo) requires proper training and is time consuming.

After transcribing all the data, the researcher played the tape for the last time to review the transcript and to avoid any misinterpretation of the participants’ ideas and thoughts (Liamputtong, 2013b). The second review would contribute to the validity and reliability of the results.

3.7.2 Reading through all the Data (Explore the General Sense of the Data)

This is a significant step in conducting data analysis during which the researcher has to give meaning to the gathered data by engaging in reading the generated data from the participant transcripts. Additionally, this stage of analysis requires the researcher to go through the “memoing” process in which he writes down some notes or memos to reflect on different issues about the study. Johnson and Christensen (2012) describe memoing as a useful strategy to record the relevant data revealed through the data analysis process.

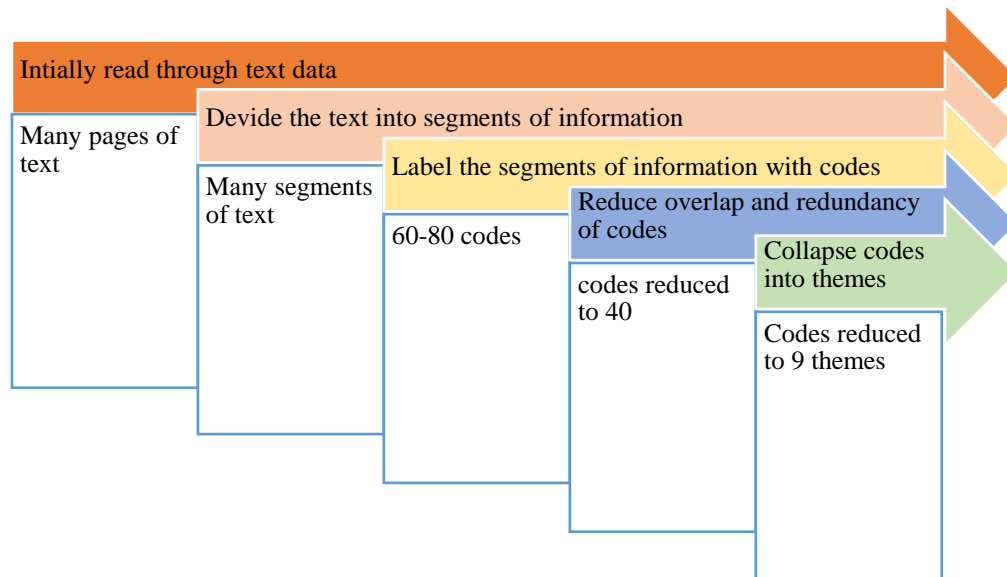
Furthermore, “memoing” is also perceived by (Hesse-Biber, 2012) as an important technique for data analysis during which the researcher should consider all the steps of the research analysis phase. Thus, the researcher engaged in taking notes and memos in the margins of each transcript as a strategy to generate the key ideas provided by the participants and other issues

related to the settings. The data analysis required a considerable amount of time to read and review all the transcripts from the multiple methods of data collection, including interviews, participant observation and the research journal.

3.7.3 Coding the Data

This is an important step in data analysis. Creswell (2012) points out that, “the process of coding involves aggregating the text or visual data into smaller categories of information, seeking evidence for the code from different databases being used in a study, and then assigning a label to the code”(p. 184).

In this study, the researcher followed Creswell’s visual model of the coding process that involves (1) making sense of data, (2) dividing the text into segments of information, (3) labelling segments with codes, (4) examining codes for overlap and redundancy and (5) collapsing these codes into broad themes (Creswell, 2012, p. 244). The following Figure 3.6 explains the coding process:



Source: Adapted from Creswell (2012)

Figure 3.6: A visual model of the coding process in qualitative research

As Figure 3.6 indicates, the researcher began first by reading the transcripts to explore the general sense of the data. Second, the researcher divided the text

into segments and giving each segment a label or a code. Third, the number of codes was reduced to avoid redundancy of using the same labels. Finally, the researcher constructed themes from the codes. The list of codes was given to an external coder to verify its relevance to the information on the transcripts. The use of an external coder improves the validity of the findings (Maree & Van Der Westhuizen, 2009). The participants' identity is protected by replacing their real names with acronyms such as (S1M) which refers to Subject One Male and (S13F) refers to Subject 13 Females. The following Table 3.3 is an example of the coding process adopted by the researcher (see Appendices E, F and G for more details of coding process).

Table 3.3: Sample of Coding Process of the interviews

| Coding (Interpreted meaning) | Text Segments (Significant Statements) | Themes and Sub- themes |
|--|--|---|
| The absence of Arabic schools | There is no Arabic school; they go to state schools, the majority of them going to state schools. (S2M) | The role of education using Arabic language The lack of Arabic schools |
| Teaching children at home using Arabic books Having access to Arabic books online | I teach them because I have books in Arabic at home, sometimes; I go to Arabic books online, like 'Apple' is 'Tofaha' in Arabic, 'Apple' in English always translation. (S4M) | Teaching through translation |
| Parents are the only teachers | It is just what you do; you are pretty much the only teacher they have when it comes to learning the language. You are the parents; you are the only teacher. (S5M) | Teaching Arabic at home by parents |
| Teaching children some short verses of the Qur'an | I have started teaching them the Qur'an and teaching them some of the short Surahs (verses) to memorize them. (S3M) | Teaching Qur'an for the children |
| Teaching Arabic to children by volunteers | My wife, she is a volunteer or she is working as a volunteer, she is teaching some kids in Arabic, ah, she picks one day, that is her ability to teach them one hour and half or two hours a week, and | The commitment of a volunteer teacher |

| Coding (Interpreted meaning) | Text Segments (Significant Statements) | Themes and Sub- themes |
|--|--|--|
| Encouraging children to read and listen to stories | for our kids at home, she tries every day to encourage them by reading a story or listening to a story, this is actually our strategy at home. (S1M) | Teaching strategies implemented by parents |

3.7.4 The use of codes to build themes

The number of codes was organized into several categories or themes. The word “Theme” according to Creswell (2012) refers to “similar codes aggregated together to form a major idea in the database” (p. 245). The combination of codes, such as “learning Qur’an”, “the role of the mosque” and “the religion encourages the learning of Arabic” helped to construct a theme: the impact of the religion on the Arabic language maintenance. The following Figure 3.7 illustrates how the codes construct a theme.

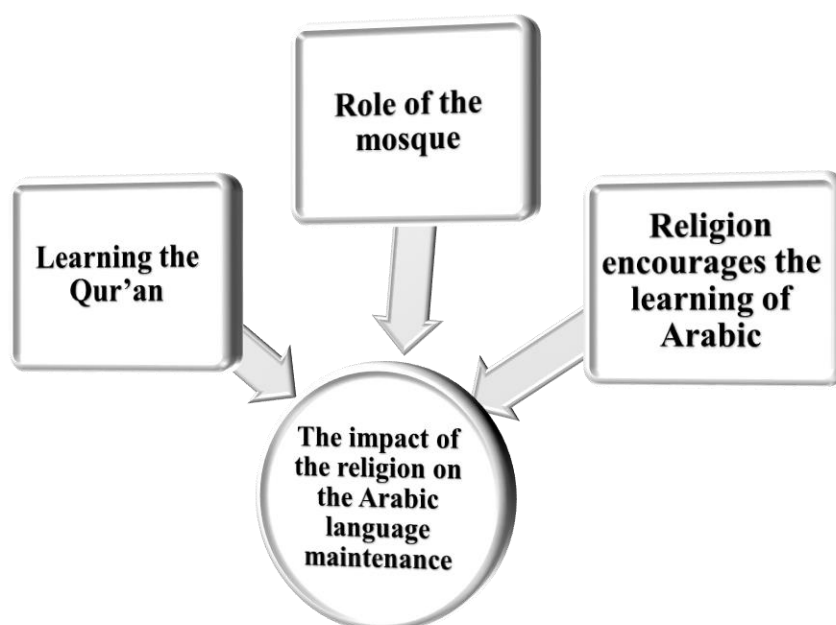


Figure 3.7: The use of codes to construct a theme

As it is illustrated in Figure 3.7, a theme is constructed with the use of multiple codes. The themes that emerged from the coding of several transcripts reflected

and represented the participants' views and experiences about the language maintenance of their community language. This method of constructing themes was applied to the rest of the themes in this study.

3.7.5 Combination of the initial themes of the three data collection methods

The completion of data analysis of the three qualitative data instruments interviews, participant observation, and research journal led to the emergence of several themes and sub-themes that represented the findings of this study. These themes were discussed continuously by the researcher and his supervisors for validation. Then, the themes were combined in order to group the similar themes to avoid redundancy. Furthermore, the combination of these themes provided a comprehensible understanding of the language maintenance phenomenon under study (see Appendix H for more details). Hence, the combination or triangulation of the extracted themes from all the sources of data led to the development of nine major themes and several sub-themes that are discussed in detail in the next chapter. These themes include: (1) language maintenance domains, (2) the role of education, (3) language positive attitudes, (4) the impact of the religion, (5) cultural identity, (6) the role of the media, (7) communication with relatives and friends overseas, (8) regular overseas visits, and (9) other strategies (e.g., solidarity and awareness).

3.7.6 Interpreting the data

According to Creswell's (2014) data analysis plan, the interpretation of the data is the last and crucial stage in data analysis in which researchers engage after concluding all elements of the coding process and designing the core themes. The purpose of interpretation is to make sense of all the data that have previously been collected from the research field. According to Bryman (2012), the researcher seeks to link the extracted findings with the research questions, as well as with the existing literature and theoretical framework relating to language maintenance. Interpretation of the results is summarized in detail in Chapter 5.

3.8 Research Rigor

The nature of this qualitative study, which relies mostly on observational and interview data, called for the implementation of certain strategies to ensure the validity and credibility of the research findings. Creswell (2009, 2012, 2014) has recommended the use of multiple strategies to assess the accuracy and credibility of the research findings. Some of the common strategies that ought to be considered in conducting qualitative research include (1) triangulation, (2) member checking, (3) using a rich (thick) description, (4) reflexivity by clarifying researcher bias, (5) spending a prolonged time in the field, and (6) using peer review (Creswell, 2014; Liamputtong, 2013b).

All these six strategies have been implemented to enhance the validity and credibility of the research findings. Triangulation was the first strategy to be used to increase the credibility of the findings and it refers to the combination of many forms of data (Liamputtong, 2013b). Member checking was the second important strategy to ensure the trustworthiness of the research. It is also known as *validation by the research participant* (Elliot & Timulak, 2005). Thus, the researchers needed to engage the participants to check and comment on the accuracy of the transcripts as well as the major themes, to ensure the validity of the research (Creswell, 2014). The third strategy implies that the researcher has to provide a rich description of the study such as a detailed description of the sample and settings as well as a rich description of themes and findings to ensure validation (Liamputtong, 2013b). This strategy is important for a clear understanding of the language maintenance phenomenon under study. Reflexivity was the fourth strategy to be considered by reflecting on research bias. The fifth strategy involved spending an extended time in the research field. Accordingly, spending this considerable time in the field contributed not only to the collection of a wide range of data, but also strengthened the trust between the researcher and the participants. Finally, the use of peer debriefing was the sixth strategy to be applied to add validity to the findings (Creswell, 2012, 2014). Liamputtong (2013b) points out that a peer can be a colleague who is familiar with qualitative research to check and review the

accuracy of the results. The following Table 3.4 is a summary of the research rigor strategies implemented in this study:

Table 3.4: Research rigor strategies

| | Data Collection & Analysis | |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------|
| Strategies | <i>Description</i> | <i>Use</i> |
| Triangulation | The researcher combined three forms of data collection: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and a research journal. | ✓ |
| Member checking | Five participants were given the transcripts and the themes to check and validate. | ✓ |
| Reflexivity | The researcher reflected on themes with the participants, researcher and participants' statements. Also, the researcher reflected on his bias that he could bring to the study. | ✓ |
| Rich and thick descriptions | The researcher provided much detail about the design, research site, participants, sample and findings (Themes). | ✓ |
| Prolonged time in the research field | The researcher spent six months in the research field. He built trust with all participants. | ✓ |
| Peer review | The findings of this study were given to a qualitative expert to check the link between chapters (codes and themes). | ✓ |

3.9 Researcher Stance

Being an immigrant myself, who came from a non-English speaking country to live in a multilingual and multicultural society, is an advantage in terms of awareness of the challenges that other immigrants face. Also, being an Arabic speaker and a member of the Arabic-speaking community helped a lot to strengthen the trust and facilitate the communication with the participants. This position of the researcher creates a sense of consciousness of any bias that he may bring to the research because of his experiences. In this case, the reflexivity was used for self-reflection around the credibility and authenticity of the accounts. The researcher's role is to offer the participants a clear explanation about the topic of the study and to build a sense of trust with the participants to be able to observe the research phenomenon.

The researcher's ability to speak Arabic and English was a great advantage, giving the interviewees the opportunity to select which of the two languages they were most comfortable being interviewed in. Additionally, the researcher had to establish a sense of trust and rapport with his participants to be able to observe the research phenomenon. The researcher's role also involved observing participants in the field and engaging in their daily activities, recording field notes, conducting face-to-face interviews and analysing and interpreting data. Additionally, adopting a role as an active member and participant in the activities and events of the community allowed the researcher to record and report in detail different realities constructed by the participants in this study. Finally, the role of the researcher was to act objectively when dealing with the information during the data analysis.

3.10 Chapter Summary

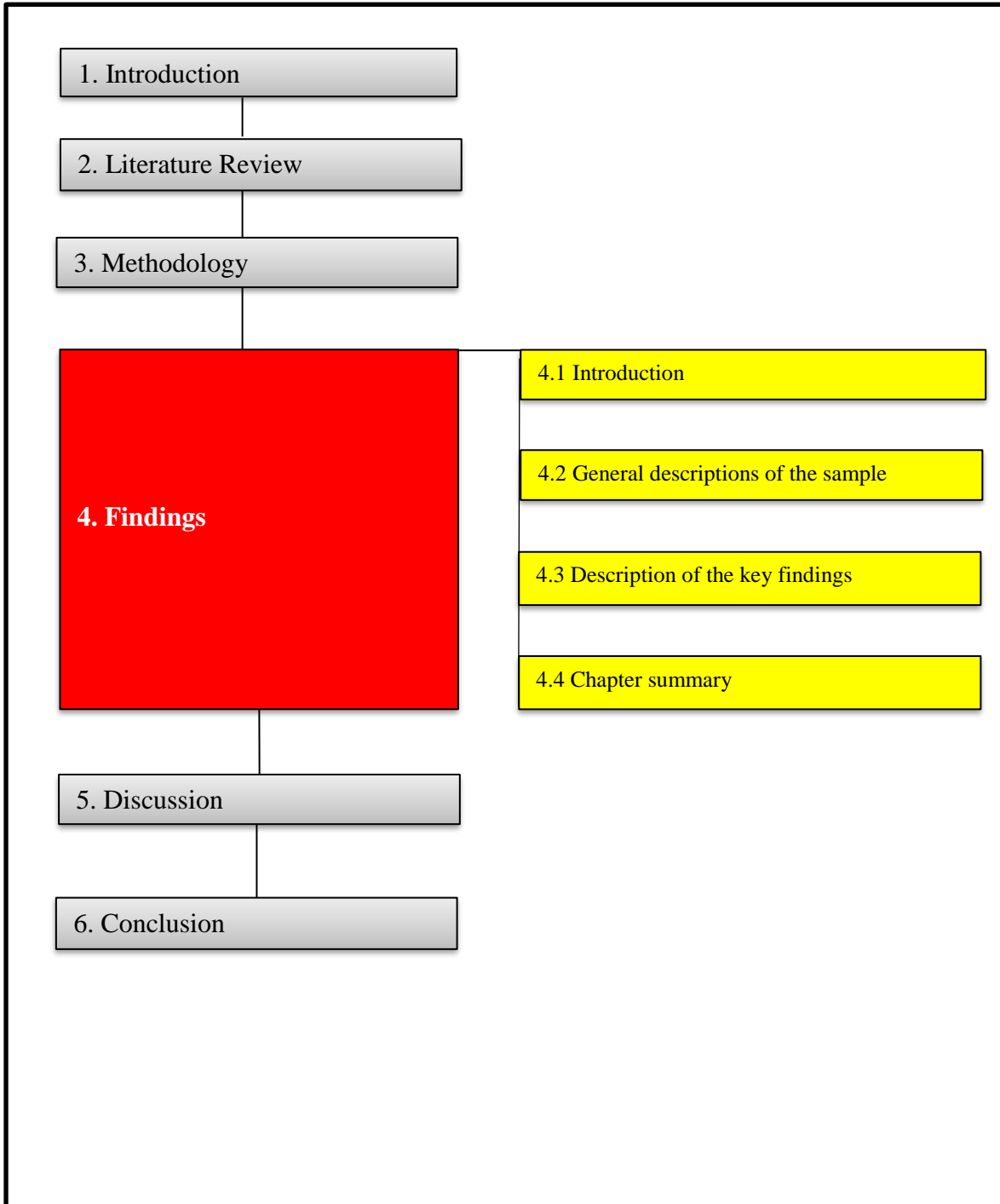
In this chapter, the researcher outlined information about the research approach and the research philosophy adopted for this study. Qualitative research was appropriate for this study in order to explore the central phenomenon in depth, and understand the participants' experiences. Ethnographic design was employed to learn and understand Arabic speakers' language, culture and experiences in their natural settings. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation and keeping a research journal aiming to answer the research questions. Thematic analyses were used to make sense of the collected information and to understand the phenomenon under study. Finally, multiple research strategies were undertaken to enhance the credibility and validity of the research, such as triangulation of data and member checking.

The subsequent chapter displays the qualitative results that were revealed by the implementation of various data collection methods such as in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and a research journal. Chapter 4 presents the key findings of the study. The results of the research include several major themes and sub-themes that emerged from the participants' responses.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS

CHAPTER 4: A Highlighted Outline of Findings



4 CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the methodological approach employed in this study was described by the researcher, including detailed descriptions of the research design, sample and ethical considerations. The researcher also outlined the data collection instruments utilized to answer the research questions. Thematic data analysis procedures were clearly stated and applied according to Creswell's (2014) analysis plan. The researcher outlined the multiple strategies adopted to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the research.

This chapter describes the qualitative results that were uncovered through the use of three data collection methods: in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and a research journal. As indicated in Chapter 3, the implementation of these multiple data collection methods ensures and increases the trustworthiness of the results (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 2009). A thematic analysis of the interview data, observational notes and a research journal created a significant understanding of the miscellaneous factors that contribute to the maintenance of the Arabic language in the Arabic-speaking community in the regional city of Toowoomba. In this chapter, the findings were structured around three main sections: 1) general description of the sample, 2) description of the themes and sub-themes and 3) findings summary.

4.2 General descriptions of the sample

The participants' demographic information was obtained during the interviews as it is not easy to collect this information with other data collection instruments implemented in this study. This information included gender, age, education, arrival year, occupation, the nationality of the participants and their spouses, and the number of children and languages spoken. These were important variables to be used to determine their impact on language maintenance. Table 4.1 is a summary of the participants' demographics:

Table 4.1: A snapshot of the participants' demographics

| Participants | Gender | Age | Years in Australia | Education | Occupation | Children | Country of origin | Languages spoken |
|--------------|--------|-----|--------------------|-------------|------------------|----------|-------------------|---|
| 1 | Male | 39 | 4 | PhD | Student | 5 | Libya | Arabic English |
| 2 | Male | 42 | 6 | PhD | Student | 2 | Libya | Arabic English |
| 3 | Male | 39 | 6 | PhD | Student | 4 | Libya | Arabic English |
| 4 | Male | 40 | 7 | High School | Machine operator | 3 | Morocco | Arabic French English Spanish Italian |
| 5 | Male | 42 | | BA | Butcher | 2 | Morocco | Arabic French German English |
| 6 | Male | 26 | 2 | BA | Student | 1 | Kuwait | Arabic English |
| 7 | Male | 30 | 5 | BA | Student | 2 | Saudi Arabia | Arabic English |
| 8 | Male | 35 | 1 | Master | Student | 1 | UAE | Arabic English |
| 9 | Male | 37 | 3 | PhD | Student | 3 | Iraq | Arabic English |
| 10 | Male | 33 | 6 | PhD | Student | 2 | Iraq | Arabic English |
| 11 | Male | 35 | 2 | Master | Student | 5 | Oman | Arabic English |
| 12 | Male | 36 | 1 | Master | Student | 2 | Oman | Arabic English |
| 13 | Female | 30 | 6 | BA | Student | 2 | Iraq | Arabic English |
| 14 | Female | 41 | 7 | BA | Student | 4 | Iraq | Arabic English |
| 15 | Female | 37 | 6 | PhD | Student | 4 | Iraq | Arabic English |
| 16 | Female | 34 | 4 | Master | Student | 2 | Libya | Arabic English |
| 17 | Female | 37 | 2 | Master | Housewife | 1 | Iraq | Arabic English |
| 18 | Female | 31 | 6 | Master | Student | 3 | Libya | Arabic English |
| 19 | Female | 29 | 4 | Master | Student | 3 | Libya | Arabic English |
| 20 | Female | 35 | 5 | PhD | Student | 1 | Libya | Arabic English |

4.2.1 Gender

The sample of this qualitative study comprised a total of 20 participants; twelve males and eight females. All the participants were adult first generation parents. This study did not intend to make a distinction or a comparison between male and female participants since there was no balanced sample, but rather to get a holistic understanding of the Arabic language maintenance from both genders' views.

4.2.2 Age and year of arrival

In this study, the participants' ages ranged from 26 to 42. All the participants came to Australia in the last decade between 2006 and 2013 (see Table 4.1 for more details).

4.2.3 Ethnicity, country of origin and languages spoken

Participants in this study came to Australia from various Arab countries, including the Middle East and North Africa. Seven were Libyan, six were Iraqi, two were Moroccan, two were Omani, one was Saudi, one was Kuwaiti, and one participant was Emirati (see Table 4.1 for more details). All participants were bilingual speakers of Arabic and English except for two (participant number 3 and 4 as shown in Table 4.1) who were multilingual. All the participants in this study were native speakers of Arabic, and Arab in ethnicity (i.e., Arab in race and Arabic is their mother tongue). English is their second language, and 90% of the participants learnt English in Australia during their studies.

4.2.4 Level of Education

In regards to education, 90% of the participants were still students during the time the research was conducted. Among them, 35% were undertaking Ph.D. studies, 35 % a Master's Degree, 25% a Bachelor of Arts Degree, and 5% had a High School Certificate.

4.2.5 Endogamous and Exogamous Relations

Arabic speakers represented endogamous and exogamous marital relations. There were only two male participants who were married to non-Arabic-speaking spouses. Their wives came from English-speaking countries: Australia and New Zealand. Exogamous relationships are not common in the Arab Muslim community for many reasons. One of the reasons is to protect and preserve the language, culture and religion for second generation children.

4.3 Description of the key findings (Themes and Sub-themes)

In this qualitative study, several themes (categories) and sub-themes (sub-categories) emerged from the analysis of transcripts related to the in-depth face-to-face interviews, participant observations and research journal. The themes represent major categories, and the sub-themes are relevant to these categories. The themes explain the factors influencing language maintenance as perceived by the Arabic-speaking community in the regional Queensland city of Toowoomba, Australia. These themes offer an understanding of the phenomenon under study and provide a response to the research questions.

Figure 4.1 summarises these themes:

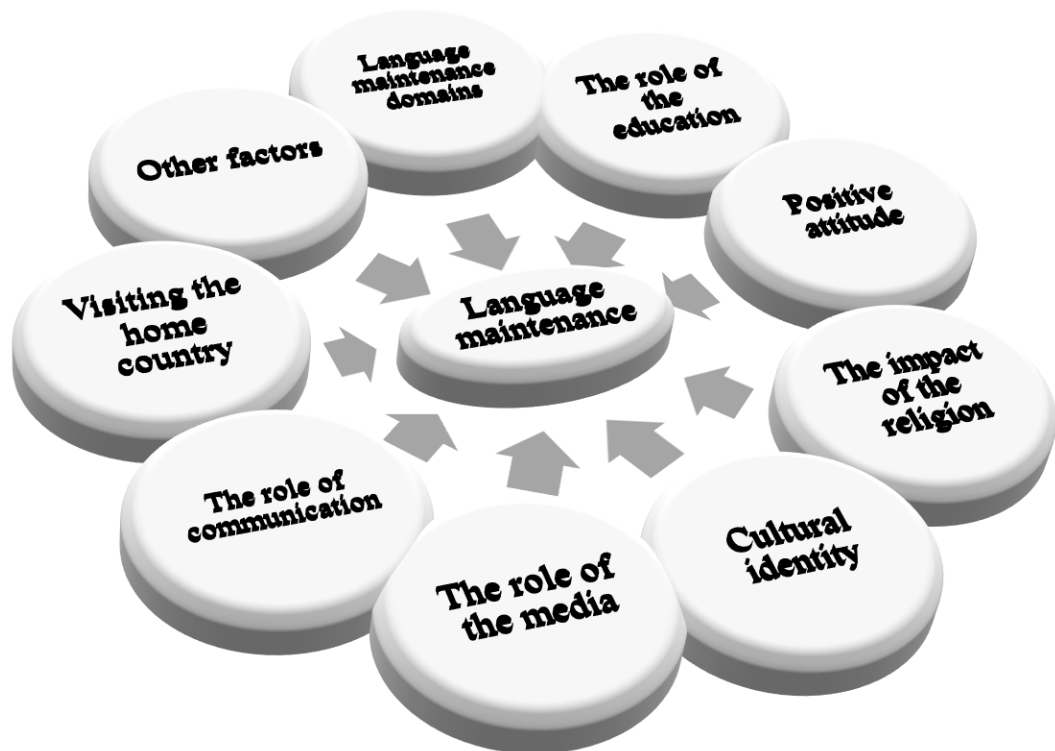


Figure 4.1: A visual model of the initial overarching themes emerged from data analysis

This figure depicts the major themes that were revealed through a thematic analysis of the collected data (e.g., interviews, participant observation, and the research journal). These themes were considered to be important factors influencing the maintenance of the Arabic language in the Arabic-speaking community. Also, they represented the findings of the current study.

Themes and sub-themes are presented separately in this chapter. The descriptions of themes from the interviews are presented first, followed by descriptions of themes that emerged during participant observations, while the last descriptions relate to the themes in the research journal.

4.3.1 Descriptions of themes extracted from the interviews

Nine themes were obtained from interviewing 20 participants. These themes emerged from the data analysis of the interview transcripts and reflected the

literature review and research questions. Several sub-themes emerged from these major themes. Five participants were asked to check if the initial themes conformed to what they said during the interviews in order to ensure the validity and credibility of the findings. In this section, the researcher provides a rich description of the participants' thoughts and experiences in regards to the maintenance of their community language. Table 4.2 is a summary of themes and sub-themes (see Appendix G for more details).

Table 4.2: Summary of themes and sub-themes extracted from interviews

| Themes | Sub-themes | Frequency |
|---|--|------------------|
| Language maintenance domains | The influence of the family | 19/20 |
| | Maintaining Arabic among friends | 19/20 |
| | Maintaining Arabic among neighbours | 10/20 |
| | The role of the Community in maintaining Arabic | 19/20 |
| The role of education in maintaining the Arabic language | Lack of Arabic schools | 20/20 |
| | Teaching Arabic at home | 20/20 |
| | Teaching strategies implemented by parents | 18/20 |
| | Teaching Arabic by volunteers | 15/20 |
| | Importance of Arabic schools | 20/20 |
| Positive attitudes toward Arabic language maintenance | Children's attitudes toward learning and speaking Arabic | 18/20 |
| | Motivating children to learn Arabic | 20/20 |
| | The attitude of the majority groups toward Arabic-speakers | 7/20 |
| | Language loyalty | 20/20 |
| | The positive attitudes towards the majority language | 18/20 |
| The impact of the religion on the maintenance Arabic language | The role of the religion (Islam) | 20/20 |
| | The role of the mosque | 20/20 |
| | The benefits of Arabic and Quranic classes | 2/20 |
| | The use of Arabic and English at the mosque | 20/20 |
| Maintaining Arabic for cultural identity | The importance of the culture | 20/20 |
| | Culture shock | 12/20 |
| | Challenges and difficulties in maintaining the culture | 20/20 |
| | Distinctiveness of the Arabic culture | 14/20 |
| The influence of the media in the maintenance of Arabic | Poor representation of Arabic in the Australian media | 20/20 |
| | The use of satellites (dish antenna) to access Arabic channels | 20/20 |
| | Learning Arabic language through TV programs | 20/20 |
| | The influence of the Australian media on Arabic language | 15/20 |
| | Regular overseas communication | 20/20 |

| Themes | Sub-themes | Frequency |
|---|--|-----------|
| Communication with relatives and friends in the Arabic language | The use of technology for communication with relative and friends (Internet communication) | 20/20 |
| | Arabic is the language of communication | 17/20 |
| Visiting the home country | Visiting relatives and friends | 10/20 |
| | Challenges in visiting the home country | 15/20 |
| | Emergency visits to the home country | 7/20 |
| | Instability in the home country preventing regular visits | 13/20 |
| Other factors | Solidarity among Arabic speakers | 20/20 |
| | Parents' commitments | 20/20 |
| | Parents' will and awareness | 20/20 |

Theme 1: Language maintenance domains

The Arabic speakers maintained the Arabic language in a number of domains. Language domains included home/family, friends, neighbours and the community. These language maintenance domains contributed effectively to the maintenance of the Arabic language. According to all participants, these language domains were considered to be very important factors in the maintenance and transmission of the Arabic language to the second generation children. Each language domain is discussed as a separate sub-theme or subcategory in this chapter. Figure 4.2 refers to the theme of language maintenance domains and its related sub-themes.

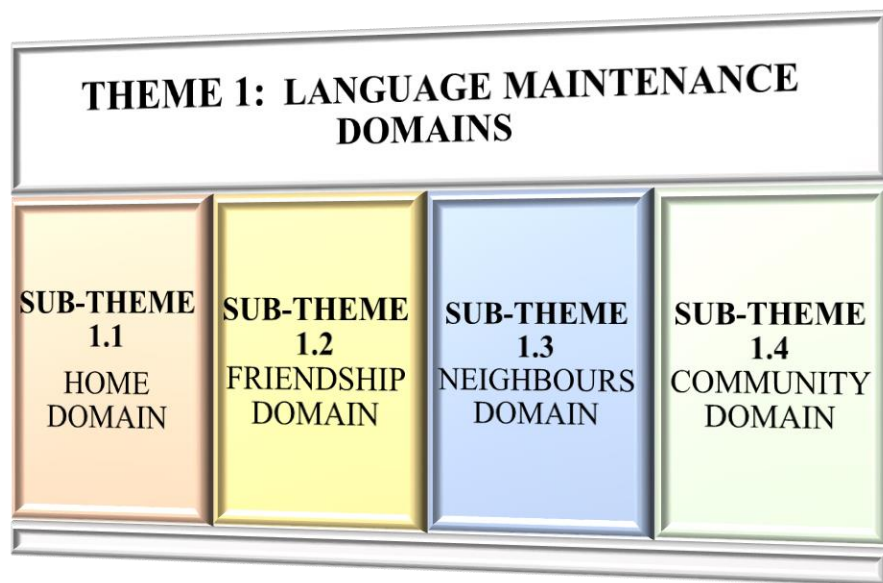


Figure 4.2: Language maintenance domains

Sub-theme 1.1: Home/Family domain

In response to the question: What languages do you speak at home with your children?, data analysis of the transcripts revealed that the home was the best place for intergenerational language maintenance and transmission of Arabic among the Arabic speakers living in Toowoomba. The role of the family at home played a significant role in Arabic maintenance. According to all participants, the Arabic language should be maintained at home within the family to pass it on to the second generation children. Table 4.3 illustrates language maintenance in the home/family domain.

Table 4.3: Language maintenance in the home/family domain

| Participants | Arabic only | | English only | | Mix (Arabic & English) | |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------|---------------------|------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Male n=12 | 6 | (30%) | 0 | (0%) | 6 | (30%) |
| Female n=8 | 1 | (5%) | 1 | (5%) | 6 | (30%) |

As Table 4.3 indicates, six male participants reported that they spoke only Arabic at home. There was only one female member who spoke Arabic with her children at home because she was the only housewife who stayed at home all the time looking after her children. Also, the data analysis showed that there

was one female Arabic speaker who reported that she spoke only English at home. There was a balance in number between male and female participants who tended to speak both Arabic and English with their children at home according to the participants' responses. In general, six male and six female participants spoke a mix of Arabic and English at home, but as they reported, Arabic was the dominant language within the family. English was usually used to help children with their homework.

A-Speaking Arabic only

The male participants expressed their views about the use of Arabic language only at home. They said that their children were exposed to English everywhere outside the home environment, especially when they went to school through interactions with school peers. For this reason, they considered the home as the only place where children could learn Arabic. The following excerpts from the male participants reported their daily use of Arabic within the family:

To be honest, I speak Arabic at home. I need to, I need to give my kids the Arabic language because they are studying in the school English, the street is English, everywhere outside of the house is English. ... So I have, I must talk the Arabic language at home to teach my kids. (S3M)

Arabic definitely. We can't say 100%, 99% we speak Arabic, and because my wife, you know, I would love to practice this language in front of my child from the beginning, so he knows that we speak Arabic, and he should learn Arabic and so on. (S8M)

With my children, I try always to speak with my children Arabic because I want them to learn Arabic, because they are learning English at school, they can go and have friends speaking English, they can speak all time English, but if in this age, they are young and small, if you do not give him time to speak Arabic when he grow up, they will be lost, you cannot get Arabic, it is hard. (S4M)

To each other at home, Arabic language because I am always encouraging them to speak Arabic... because all day, they are at school, and they are speaking English. At this stage, they are very good with the English language. They got all the experience, the pronunciation, but still need to learn Arabic as well, because as I said the older one is eight and the second one is seven years. So at home, I am encouraging

them to speak Arabic, learn Arabic, sometimes I encouraged them to watch Arabic programs. (S9M)

All the comments made above by the Arabic-speaking fathers referred to their commitment to speaking Arabic with their children at home to help them acquire the language quickly. It seems clear from the data analysis that male participants are more likely to maintain their Arabic at home than female participants.

Another male participant reported that the Arabic language is the only language spoken at home with his family because his wife did not speak English. He said:

Yeah, yeah, I never speak with them in English because my wife, she does not speak English and, uh, also my kids, although you know the eldest son [Name] he is going to school, he is studying English, but I never speak English to him because I feel he will just acquire English at school, and just I speak at home I speak with him in Arabic. (S12M)

The statement above confirms the theories in the literature about the benefits of intermarriage within language communities. This participant was a bilingual speaker who found himself speaking only his language with his monolingual Arabic-speaking wife. Moreover, he chose to speak Arabic only with his children, despite their familiarity with English.

It was unexpected that there was only one female out of eight who mentioned that she spoke Arabic at home with her family. Usually, intergenerational maintenance and transmission of the community language is based on the role of women at home as they do not go out much in the Middle Eastern Muslim culture. She said:

I speak Arabic, some words of English, but all the time in Arabic. (S17F)

B-Speaking English only

Results from the interviews revealed that there was only one female participant out of eight who reported that she spoke just English with her daughter at home. She said:

When I talk with my daughter we speak in English I can see that her first language is English. Even how her chin moves in English letters rather than Arabic letters. (S20F)

As the statement above indicates, there was only one female participant who stated that English is the first language of communication within her family. That is why there was no equal views between males and females. Also, this study is not focusing on the comparison between males and females rather to explore their experiences and views about the phenomenon under study.

C-Speaking Arabic and English

About 12 participants mentioned that they spoke both Arabic and English, but their focus was always on the Arabic language as their children could learn English outside the home surroundings. There were an equal number of Arabic speakers who spoke both Arabic and English, six male and six female participants. The following are statements supporting the male participants' opinions about their choice of using both languages:

It is a kind of mix, my kids, they speak, my older son and daughter they speak to each other in English, they speak with mix mixed Arabic and English, they speak with their mother and little brother in Arabic. (S1M)

Totally in Arabic, but I am trying to teach my kids English because my daughter, she will go to school next year. So, I enrolled her in Childcare four months; she learns some from, because my stay in Australia is only for four years, for studying and go back to my country. So, my priority is to keep Arabic as mother tongue because as you know Arabic is very important for us because Qur'an is revealed in Arabic, and it is important to know Arabic well, to understand the religion. (S7M)

Both [Arabic and English], the focus is on Arabic. I want my children to be a native Arabic speaker. It is hard to be native Arabic speakers while they live in an English native country, but I am trying my best me and my wife to teach them to be native Arabic speakers. Yes, because I believe that from the childhood if they did not learn the language, they will never improve this language. So, with the presence of the kids, many times I use Arabic. (S10M)

Female participants' perspectives about the use of Arabic language at home are indicated below in their statements. They reported that they spoke both Arabic and English within their family environment.

Yeah, I speak Arabic and English yeah. Because I told you I am studying part-time ah, they go to childcare ah the whole week so you know they are still young, so they acquire the English, so quickly. So that is why I am trying to speak with them Arabic as well as English to them so they can balance both of them. But the most important one for me is Arabic because I am focusing on Arabic... because I know they will get so so good in English because all the communities, the TV is English, they got childcare English. (S13F)

Now we speak Arabic and English. Ah, my kids always mixing the language, both languages in one sentence sometimes (laughter). (S14F)

Arabic always. Just sometimes a few words ah, I miss our Arabic language like some words. Like we say, Bucher, and sometimes a few English words come into our Arabic language (laughter). (S16F)

Mix because they are now at school. My eldest is in Grade 3, and now they mix languages when they speak to each other at home. I try to speak to them in Arabic now so that they do not forget the Arabic language. (S18F)

Sub-theme 1.2: Neighbours domain

Analysis of the data extracted from the interviews revealed that Arabic speakers used both Arabic and English with their neighbours. They reported that they spoke Arabic with the Arabic neighbours and English with non-Arabic speaking neighbours. Table 4.4 shows the maintenance of Arabic language in the neighbours' domain.

Table 4.4: Language maintenance in the neighbours' domain

| Participants | Arabic only | English only | Mix (Arabic & English) |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Male n=12 | 1 (5%) | 7 (35%) | 4 (20%) |
| Female n=8 | 3 (15%) | 3 (15%) | 2 (10%) |

As shown in Table 4.4, four participants (one male and three females) from the entire sample reported that they spoke Arabic only with their neighbours, 10 participants stated that they spoke just in English because all their neighbours

were non-Arabic speakers, and six used both Arabic and English with their neighbours.

A-Speaking Arabic only

As illustrated in Table 4.4, the Arabic-speaking parents who spoke only Arabic with their neighbours were few. One male out of twelve reported that he spoke only Arabic with his neighbours. There were three female participants who indicated that they used only Arabic with their neighbours. The following excerpts reflect the male and female participants' views about the use of Arabic in the neighbours' domain:

Ah for me in my neighbourhood, I just have only one, you know my neighbours, I am familiar with only one family and who speaks Arabic. Yeah, they speak Arabic, the other neighbours; I didn't try to speak or just to mingle with them. (S12M)

I used to last year. I have an Arabic neighbour; he is from Iraq and his wife with kids. They live about two years on the second floor. So we are there all the time, especially at the weekend. So we speak pure Arabic. It is hard to use English with the wife because she is a housewife and she is just holding a high school degree so she has no English background. (S15F)

Yeah! Yeah, we have Libyan neighbours on both sides so I speak Arabic all the time. (S16 F)

As is shown in the statements above, there is no equal number between male and female participants who spoke Arabic language only with their neighbours. As mentioned earlier, this study did not look at differences or variations between genders but it tends to understand the language maintenance phenomenon from the participants' experiences and views.

B-Speaking English only

As shown in Table 4.4, half of the participants (7 males and 3 females) mentioned that they spoke only English with their neighbours. The reason for speaking English only was the lack of Arabic-speaking neighbours in the areas where they resided. The following statements explain their thoughts:

No, I do not have any Arabic neighbours, I actually have some Asian neighbours and we do speak English, Ah, I have English neighbours and we speak English. (S5M)

They are Australians and speak English. If they non-Arabic speakers, of course, I speak in English. Australians and other different nationalities, I can communicate with them in English. (S6M)

No I don't have Arabic neighbours. They are all like um Australians or different cultures but we do speak English. We speak English with them. Some are from Philippines, some from China or something like that. So I speak with them in English. I got Australians as well. So I have to speak English with all of them. (S13F)

English. This one lady beside is from Malaysia, so we speak in English and the other one is an Australian old man who is very friendly. (S19F)

C-Speaking Arabic and English

As illustrated in Table 4.4, the number of Arabic speakers who reported that they spoke a mix of Arabic and English with their neighbours represented 30% from the entire sample. The following are statements extracted from the participants' comments:

We have some neighbours speaking English, and some neighbours speaking Arabic. My neighbours Arabic, I speak to them Arabic, my neighbours English, I speak to them English because they can't understand Arabic. Sometimes, they ask me about my culture. My neighbours from Australia asked me about my culture, about my country, where it is in Morocco, how is beautiful, can we go online, can see the map, can see photo of Morocco, that is very interested my neighbours. (S4M)

My neighbours, they speak English as a mother tongue. I have one next to me, he is talking Arabic, and he is from Saudi Arabia. (S7M)

With female participants, only two females out of eight mentioned that they spoke both Arabic and English with their neighbours. The following excerpts reflect their thoughts:

Well, ah, I have Arabic neighbour, one Arabic neighbour and one English neighbour. I am talking what language to them. Yes, yes. We have a Sudanese family who is speaking Arabic and I also have English family here, ah my son always plays with him who is speaking English. (S14F)

Actually, now I live among Arabic people from the same my country, from Libya, so we speak Arabic. I have English neighbours, Australian neighbours, but not communicating with them a lot, but when I see them, I speak with them English, to greet them. That is it. (S18F)

Sub-theme 1.3: Friendship domain

This sub-theme is another important domain for Arabic language maintenance. It is clear that living in multilingual societies like Australia requires that Arabic speakers use both English and Arabic in their everyday interactions. Therefore, the vast majority of the participants mentioned that they spoke the Arabic language with Arabic-speaking friends and English with people of other nationalities. Table 4.5 refers to the use of the Arabic language in the friends' domain.

Table 4.5: Arabic language maintenance in the friends' domain

| Participants | Arabic only | English only | Mix (Arabic & English) |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Male n=12 | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 12 (60%) |
| Female n=8 | 1 (5%) | 0 (0%) | 7 (35%) |

As Table 4.5 indicates, 19 out of 20 participants which included 12 males and seven females and represented 95% of the Arabic speakers in this study reported they spoke both Arabic and English in the friends' domain, while only female participant reported the use of Arabic only, and none reported the use of English only with friends. The majority of participants were students, and this was the reason both languages were used side by side.

A-Speaking Arabic and English

As illustrated in Table 4.5, the number of Arabic speakers who reported that they spoke a mix of Arabic and English with their friends was 95% of the entire sample. Participants' opinions about speaking Arabic within the friends' domain are reflected in their statements from the interviews. Most of them mentioned that they spoke both Arabic and English. They tended to speak Arabic with Arabic speakers and English with non-Arabic speakers. The

following excerpts reflect both male and female participants' opinions and thoughts:

Ah, it is based on where, when we meet, if we are from Arab countries, we are going to speak in Arabic, whether if anyone from another nationality, we speak in English. (S1M)

It depends on, if these friends are Arabic, so I am talking to them in Arabic, if they are Indians, Bangladesh or they are Australians, so there is no choice, I have to speak to them in English. (S2M)

Ah, well it depends on what language they can speak, because if they are Arabic I will speak to them in Arabic, but if they are ah English, I will speak to them in English. Ah, yeah, yeah. I have my best friend. She is an old Australian lady. She is my neighbour; she was my neighbour in the old house, but we are still friends, still really good friends. She sometimes came here and spent the night with the kids. She is sleeping here, yeah. She is very lovely; she helps me a lot, even with my study. She looks after the kids while I was at the lecture at the Uni. (S14F)

Ah in the Uni [University] all English because the centre I am working in they are all Australian people or other nationalities despite Arabic. And ah, I have some friends, they are housewives from Iraq, but I just occasionally meet them. Not always. But most of the time English. (S15F)

Friendship is one of the essential factors for the maintenance of the Arabic language for Arabic-speaking people. Participants felt better expressing themselves in Arabic than in any other language. One participant said in this regard:

Ah, if they are Arabic. My Arab friends speak Arabic. It's easier for me and them as well. We can talk like quickly (laughter). I have English friends, but not like Arabic friends. I have more Arabic friends. (S13F)

When asked, "What languages do you speak with your friends? Almost all participants reported that they spoke a mix of Arabic and English because they lived in Australia, and they had non-Arabic speaking friends. Only one female participant (S17F) reported the use of Arabic only with her friends.

Sub-theme 1.4: Community domain

In response to the question: Which languages do you use within your community?, the analysis of the data extracted from the interviews revealed that the majority of participants spoke mostly Arabic in gatherings. The English language was spoken as well, but not as much as Arabic. About half of the sample reported that they spoke Arabic in their dealings with other people from the same background. Others mentioned the use of both Arabic and English because sometimes, they had to speak with non-Arabic speakers who were part of the wider community (Muslim community). It should be noted that the Arabic-speaking community gathered at the mosque, which was the meeting ground for all the communities and included the Arabic-speaking community and the non-Arabic speaking community. The following Table 4.6 shows the Arabic language use in the community domain.

Table 4.6: Arabic language maintenance in the community domain

| Participants | Arabic only | English only | Mix (Arabic & English) |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Male n=12 | 5 (25%) | 0 (0%) | 7 (35%) |
| Female n=8 | 5 (25%) | 1 (5%) | 2 (10%) |

As Table 4.6 indicates, about half participants (five males and five females) reported that they spoke only Arabic, nine participants spoke a mix of Arabic and English and only one female participant used English only. No male participants reported the use of English only in the community domain.

A-Speaking Arabic only

As shown in Table 4.6, there was an equal number of male and female participants who spoke Arabic only within their community. When they got together at the mosque or elsewhere, they preferred to speak in the Arabic language. The majority of the Arabic-speakers at the mosque came from different Arab countries where Arabic is the mother tongue. The following excerpts reflect the thoughts of both male and female participants:

Ah, Arabic. We speak Arabic. Especially in my community, Libyan community, we are talking in Arabic. ... Background Arabic, purely

Arabic. You know ah the human like to talk sometime with the mother tongue. (S3M)

We have a community here in Toowoomba from Arabic country... Yeah, a big community, we are talking Arabic... We meet at the mosque. At the mosque, after we finish praying, you can have a group of 10 people, we all talking, that from Arab Saudi, that from Dubai, that of Kuwait, that from Ordon (Jordan), from different Arabic countries and different cultures, different Arabic people. (S4M)

Arabic! Just Arabic in our community? Yeah, I speak Arabic, just Arabic. Sometime you find many females like my friends, most of them came with their husbands to study. So most of them can't speak English very fluent. (S13F)

Arabic all Arabic. Just the children are speaking in English with each other. (S16F)

B-Speaking Arabic and English

Almost half of the Arabic speakers mentioned that they spoke a mixture of Arabic and English within their community because they had many non-Arabic friends in the wider community. The following statements are extracted from the participants' views:

It is mixed as I mentioned before, the community is multi-culture from different countries, so we prefer to speak English, but if we sit together from Arab countries, we prefer to speak Arabic because it is easier, while if anyone attend among us we switched to English. (S1M)

That's it depends, as I said before, it depends, it depends on the person who you are talking with, or the group you are talking with, if they are mix from many countries, they are talking different language, so the English can be the same language for all of them, we can communicate with them, but if they are, all of them are Arabic, so we are talking in Arabic, sometimes, there is number of them are Arabic but just one, he is non-Arabic, so we have to use the English language because the majority of them are students, they can understand English, but this person, maybe he did not know Arabic, so we are going to use English language. (S2M)

Ah, when we are gathered here in Toowoomba. Toowoomba is a pretty small place when it comes to diversity of the ethnic people that is in it. Ah, we usually speak Arabic with the people that they come from Arab countries, and for the other people, we just have to use English because they can't speak the language. (S5M)

In Arabic with our Arabic friends and English with others. (S19M)

In Arabic with our Arabic friends and English with others. Our children all talk to each other in English. (S20F)

During the interviews, as illustrated in the comments above, the participants used both Arabic and English in their community, especially in their gatherings at the mosque. But, it was noticeable that they spoke Arabic most of the time and English only if they met non-Arabic speakers. Table 4.7 is a summary of the language maintenance domains where Arabic is used by the Arabic speakers of Toowoomba:

Table 4.7: Summary of language use in different domains

| Participants | Home/Family Only | Neighbours Only | Friends Only | Community Only |
|--------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Male | 6 Arabic (30%) | 1 Arabic (5%) | 0 Arabic (0%) | 5 Arabic (25%) |
| | 0 English (0%) | 7 English (35%) | 0 English (0%) | 0 English (0%) |
| n=12 | 6 Mix (30%) | 4 Mix (20%) | 12 Mix (60%) | 7 Mix (35%) |
| Female | 1 Arabic (5%) | 3 Arabic (15%) | 3 Arabic (15%) | 5 Arabic (25%) |
| | 1 English (5%) | 3 English (15%) | 0 English (0%) | 1 English (5%) |
| n=8 | 6 Mix (30%) | 2 Mix (10%) | 7 Mix (35%) | 2 Mix (10%) |

As Table 4.7 indicates, Arabic language was used among all participants (males and females) across several domains. In the home domain, six male participants used Arabic as the only language of communication within the family, while there was only one female participant who reported the use of Arabic language only at home. It seems clear from the data analysis that Arabic language was well-maintained by male participants at home. Then, with neighbours, the results from the table show that there was only one male and three female participants who used Arabic only with their neighbours. In regards to friends' domain, there were only three female participants who spoke Arabic only with their friends, while there was no single male who used Arabic only in this domain. All the male participants reported the use of both Arabic and English in their friendship domain. Furthermore, Arabic language was also used across the community domain, in which there was a balanced number of female and male participants who used Arabic only in this domain and this number represents a half of the sample.

Theme 2: The role of education in the maintenance of Arabic language

The role of education in the Arabic language was another potential factor about which all participants agreed that learning the Arabic language, notably at school, helped in the maintenance of their language. Education in Arabic is a major theme that appeared in the analysis of the interview data and it included several sub-themes such as the lack of Arabic schools, the importance of Arabic schools, teaching Arabic at home, teaching strategies and teaching Arabic by volunteers. Figure 4.3 is a summary of theme 2 and its related sub-themes emerging from data analysis:

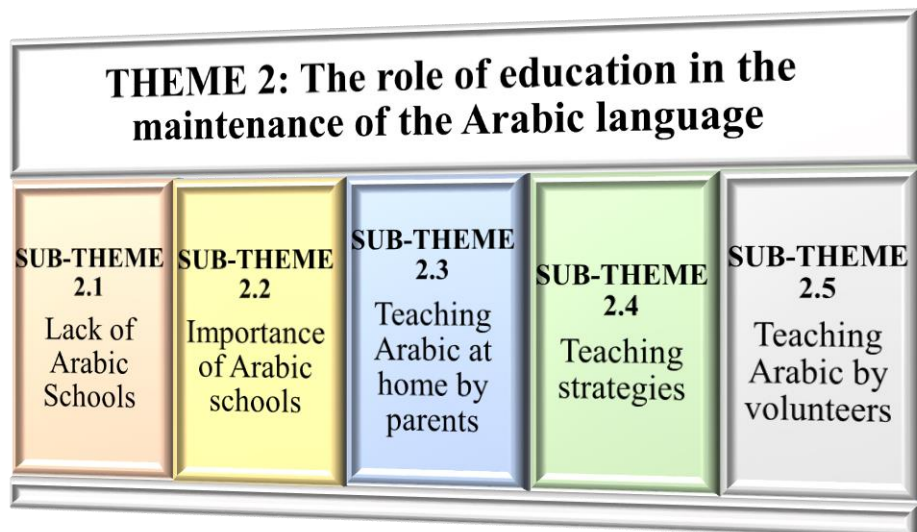


Figure 4.3: The role of education in the maintenance of the Arabic language

Sub-theme 2.1: The lack of Arabic schools

This sub-theme emerged in all participants’ transcripts during the interview analysis in response to the question: Do your children learn Arabic at school?, all the participants in this study reported the lack of Arabic schools in the regional city of Toowoomba and their children went to English state schools. The following statements are examples reflecting the participants’ thoughts about the unavailability of Arabic schools:

There is no Arabic school; they go to state schools, the majority of them going to state schools. (S2M)

No, there is nothing in Toowoomba; there is no facility in Toowoomba that helps children to learn Arabic as a language, unfortunately. (S5M)

No, because they go to childcare, so all in English. (S13F)

According to these statements, it seems that English was the only medium of instruction in Toowoomba state schools since there were no Arabic schools or even an Arabic subject to integrate into the English curriculum. Conversely, some other participants said that there were other community languages taught along with the English language, such as Indonesian, Chinese and Japanese language.

No school, what is the problem in Toowoomba, because Toowoomba is a small town, the government of Australia can look about that because at school here, kids, some teachers teach Chinese, Japanese. But if some people, we have Somali people, a big community in Toowoomba, an Arabic community in Toowoomba, come from Sudanese, Arabic people, from Libyan, from Algeria, from everywhere. (S4M)

I would really prefer my children to study Arabic at the school. Like there is lesson in Indonesian class and there is ah, I forgot what other language, but they do not teach Arabic at the school and I thought that was a little bit ah worry me, make me worry me. (S14F)

If they can include Arabic at schools. It is like my friend said that she is teaching Chinese in primary schools, and I found it strange that they do not teach Arabic. (S19F)

The participants above raised a significant concern in which some community languages were taught in Toowoomba while the rest were deprived of bilingual education. This type of education was not accessible for all the immigrant languages in this multilingual and multicultural society. The few languages mentioned by the participants were all Asian languages with great economic influence and benefits in Australia. This concern was part of the research problem of this study.

In the same context, participants indicated another issue: the availability of Arabic and Islamic schools in big cities such as Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney, but not in small regional centres such as Toowoomba. The following excerpts expressed their thoughts:

Not in Toowoomba, maybe in Brisbane or the big cities Sydney or Melbourne. (S2M)

No, no, Arabic school, no, not at all. I think there is in Brisbane but not here. (S10M)

No. No, they do not have. Not in Toowoomba. I hear some friends have it in Brisbane or down in Sydney. They have their own Arabic curriculum and Arabic lessons and religion and Muslim lessons but not in Toowoomba. (S15F)

These comments highlighted the difference between the regional areas and the big cities in terms of bilingual education. Arabic schools exist in big urban cities, but not in regional and remote areas. This implies that Arabic-speaking children who live in urban cities have more opportunities to learn the Arabic language than those who reside in rural areas. This sort of problem puts some parents under the pressure to find a solution to how to get access to Arabic education. Some Arab families refused to join their friends in rural areas while others wanted to leave their community to go to the big cities. The following participants' statements explained this concern:

I know that some Arabic families, they do not prepare to come to Toowoomba or USQ [university name] because there is no Arabic school here. That is also another community concern. That is a big concern when we always meet other parents; we talk about this concern because that is a really big problem. (S14F)

I am thinking of going to another city where there are Arabic schools, and my son will be five years old soon, and I want him to learn Arabic. We are here to be developed, not to lose our religion; I need him to read the Qur'an and perform the prayers. (S17F)

I have to depend on myself [in teaching his children]. Otherwise, I have to live in big cities; they have Arabic schools. (S10M)

From this potential concern about the education in Arabic, it was apparent that the Arabic-speaking families were conscious of the importance of the education in their native language. The last comment was made by a male participant (S10M) who demonstrated his sense of responsibility by relying on himself to teach the Arabic language to his children because he had no choice in the absence of Arabic schools.

Sub-theme 2.2: The importance of Arabic schools

Despite the lack of Arabic schools in the regional city of Toowoomba, all the participants admitted to the importance of teaching Arabic as well as the importance of having Arabic schools. The latter could provide great help to the parents seeking to transmit the Arabic language to their children. The following excerpts reflected the participants' desires and views about the importance of having Arabic schools in Toowoomba:

If there are Arabic schools, it is going to help the parents, is gonna to help the children, is gonna to help even non-Arabic speakers who are interested to learn Arabic, which is a good opportunity for them to learn Arabic, this is many advantages at this point actually. (S1M)

It is very important to have Arabic school. At least I want my children to maintain their Arabic. Look, they will be affected by TV, radio, school, street, shopping, transport, so how they learn Arabic? If it is the only home environment, it won't be enough; however, it will be great and helpful if we have Arabic schools, to help at least shared the job with us. (S10M)

In the same sense, some of the statements made by the participants focused on the importance of bilingual education, to teach English alongside with the Arabic language. The following two participants identified the importance of both languages:

Yes, actually, if there is a school that has Arabic class, it will be very helpful because the boys or girls, they will get both the language and both languages are important, the English language is important to communicate with English speakers, and the Arabic language is good to communicate with the Arab people speakers. Yeah, it is important. (S9M)

Yes, I think so. Very important. Yeah, because it is their mother tongue, what's it called? Their first language I like them to be fluent I like them to be fluent in English as well, but like I told you Arabic is the most important things here in Australia and like I told you English is here so it is very important to keep them speak Arabic. (S13F)

In short, the interview analysis revealed that all the participants desired to have Arabic schools, or even an Arabic class included in the Australian educational curriculum as a form of bilingual education in their city. This sub-theme appeared to be paramount for all the participants since education was one of the challenges they still faced in Toowoomba.

Sub-theme 2.3: Teaching Arabic at home by parents

In response to the question: Since there are no schools, what do you do to teach your children?, several participants asserted that teaching Arabic to their children is the responsibility of the parents at home. Parents have to become teachers, and they have no choice but to teach Arabic to their children to fill the gap in Arabic teachers as well as Arabic schools. Excerpts from interviews are presented below:

It is just what you do; you are pretty much the only teacher they have when it comes to learning the language. You are the parents; you are the only teacher. (S5M)

At the weekend, especially at the weekend, after lunch, my wife is doing some schedules for them to teach them the Arabic language for different subjects, I mean science, Qur'an, Math. (S9M)

Some participants reported that teaching Arabic at home was very important, but that they found it a very hard task. Home does not provide classroom interaction where the children can meet and engage in conversation. The following statements from the interviews reflect participants' thoughts:

... Ah, I have got friends that have children at school age, and they try and teach them at home Arabic, but they do not apply themselves like they do at school. I feel it is very helpful if they find Arabic like at school with other kids, and they will like experience a real class with a teacher, and they will acquire so quickly. At home, it will be hard (laughter). (S13F)

Yeah, that's good you know because I have some Libyan friends, and they are trying to teach their children Arabic and you know life is busy, so it is difficult to keep that up so if it was at school that would be an advantage. (S16F)

Actually, I decided on the weekend; ah give them some activity to write letters, some words, now this one is very good in writing Arabic letters, it still took time, because they will continue their learning in Libya when we are returning. (S18F)

Participants identified in their statements above that teaching children at home was not an easy task. According to them, the home education could never replace the interactive role of the classroom environment, but it could narrow the gap of its absence by providing their children with some Arabic classes at least on the weekend. This was a daily challenge for the Arabic-speaking parents in Toowoomba, trying to teach Arabic to their second generation children at home.

Sub-theme 2.4: Teaching strategies implemented by parents

Participants in this research were responsible parents who implemented different teaching strategies to maintain the Arabic language and transmit it to their children. Translation is one of the teaching strategies used by the Arabic-speaking parents as illustrated in the participants' statements below:

You can show these things, its name, that named by Arabic and these things, when you say "sit down" by Arabic or "coming" by the Arabic language, she can understand that we use the Arabic words to learn these basic words. (S2M)

Yeah, mostly I have made some simple classes for them at home, yes to teach them the alphabet, the Arabic alphabet, and how they can learn the numbers; they can say them in English (Telephone rings). And, uh uh I like that even I have started them the Qur'an and teaching them some of the short Surahs (verses) ah to memorise them. (S3M)

I teach them because I have books in Arabic at home, sometimes; I go to Arabic books online, like 'Apple' is 'Tofaha' in Arabic, 'Apple' in English always translation. (S4M)

One of the participants reported a different teaching strategy than the rest of the participants, which was based on reading stories. He also taught his children

how to read the Qur'an properly. He stated that children can learn through daily practice. He said:

Well, with cooperation with my wife, we are giving them some reading stories at home and doing also some reading practice sometimes besides Qurqan [Qur'an] practice, and actually it is not easy for them to read the language since they are practicing it every day. (S11M)

Another teaching strategy mentioned by half of the female participants in this study was starting with letters (Alphabet). The following are female participants' statements describing their teaching strategy:

His dad has started to print some Arabic letters to him so he can start to follow and be familiar with that. In childcare, they start to show them the English letters so just we have started to show him the Arabic letters as well. (S13F)

Actually, I decided on the weekend; ah give them some activity to write like letters, some words, now this one is very good in writing Arabic letters. (S18F)

We start to teach them Arabic at home and start to show them the letters. (S19F)

Face-to-face conversation and Arabic cartoons and showing her letters. (S20F)

Another participant noted the importance of teaching writing to the children. According to him, writing was far more important than speaking only. He stated that many children of immigrants could speak, but unfortunately, some of them could not read and write. He said:

So, I think it is, and if you are going to achieve them, in my experience here, if you try to make them writing by heart, so you give them words and write it... For instance "kafya halluk", that means "How are you", ah, write it. Writing is more important than speaking because I have seen some samples here, they speak Arabic, but they have forgotten to write in Arabic and even if you give them a book they cannot read. That is why I am focusing on writing and reading. That gives them experience in practising the Arabic language rather than verbally. (S1M)

Three participants reported that they taught their children by using the Arabic books from their home country to follow the same teaching curriculum adopted there. The following excerpts from these participants express their thoughts:

...because my father, he was the grandfather of the boys, he sent them Arabic subjects, books, which is some of the subjects that are already depending on the Iraqi school. (S9M)

Well, I tried my best. I even took some books from my country ah to teach them Arabic I tried my best with them and I didn't do a really good job. (S14F)

Well, first of all I have contacted my family in my home country and they have sent me a link of the Minister of Education and they put the Arabic curriculum on the web. So I print it out and take it home and tell them they need to spend an hour every weekend learning Arabic. (S15F)

The teaching strategies mentioned above by the participants such as translation, teaching writing and reading, the alphabet, books, and adopting Arabic curricula from their Arab countries, reflected their efforts and challenges to maintain their community language and transmit it to their children in an English dominated environment.

Sub-theme 2.5: Teaching Arabic by Arab volunteers

The lack of Arabic schools in Toowoomba created a sense of solidarity and collaboration within the Arabic-speaking community. Some volunteer teachers showed their enthusiasm to help the children of the community and teach them the Arabic language. The following excerpts from the transcripts explain that:

My wife, she is a volunteer or she is working as a volunteer, she is teaching some kids in Arabic, ah, she picks one day, that is her ability to teach them one hour or half or two hours a week, and for our kids at home, she tries every day to encourage them by reading a story or listening to a story, this is actually our strategy at home. (S1M)

... As far as I know there are some you know some families here who just hold Arabic classes. Yeah! So you can take your son to, you know, to these houses and there are some Arabic teachers who can just teach him for one hour yeah. Yes, because they do not find Arabic here so there are some people are looking for opportunities, just not to forget

Arabic you know, so they some people trying to make classes for Arabic in order to help others. (S12M)

There are some women who are trying to teach the children Arabic and teach the other citizens to speak Arabic and teach them how to read the Qur'an. (S16F)

The analysis of the interview data revealed that members of the Arabic-speaking community are working together with their available means to teach their children the Arabic language at home. All participants commented on the role of education using Arabic. This theme seemed to be imperative for all the participants. All of them expressed their desire to have Arabic or bilingual schools where their children could learn Arabic.

The complete participants' descriptions related to theme 2 are incorporated into Appendix J.

Theme 3: Positive attitudes toward Arabic language maintenance

In response to the interview question: What is your children's attitude towards learning and speaking Arabic?, participants described their attitude and their children's attitude towards learning and speaking the Arabic language. This theme has many sub-themes, including children's attitudes toward learning and speaking Arabic, motivating children to learn Arabic, the status of the Arabic language, language loyalty, encouraging children to learn English and the attitude of the majority groups toward Arabic-speakers. Figure 4.4 is a summary of this theme and its related sub-themes emerging from data analysis:

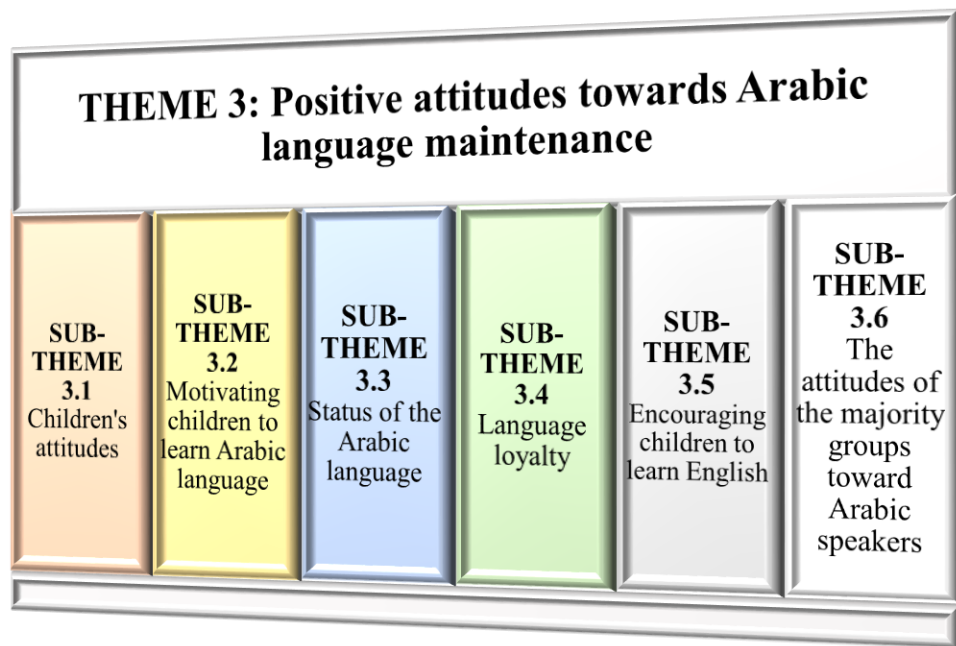


Figure 4.4: Positive attitudes towards Arabic language maintenance

Sub-theme 3.1: Children's attitudes toward learning and speaking Arabic

This sub-theme represents the parents' perceptions about their children's attitudes. They reported that their children had a positive attitude towards learning and speaking Arabic. Children's attitudes were influenced by the role of the parents at home who could make their children either interested or reluctant to learn the Arabic language. The following are participants' statements about children's attitudes as responded by their parents:

Ah, I think this point is based on the teacher who is the parents nowadays, you can make them interested, and you can make them bored. You know what I mean... We had an experience of teaching, especially my wife, and picking an easy thing, doing somewhat is called poems, which is Anashid [poems], this make them interested too, for example in the letters there are some poems, so they memorize it very quickly. (S1M)

Yeah, they are very encouraged to speak Arabic, they like Arabic, they like speaking Arabic very well, they are very interested in Arabic, and never someone or my kids tell me, no, we are in Australia, we have to talk in English. Always want to learn Arabic. (S4M)

One of the participants reported that his children were motivated to learn Arabic because they saw him as a good example for learning as he was still studying himself. He said:

... and also because they are always looking at me, I am studying, and I encouraged them to learn. Now, they look like an independent. At the weekend, they know that there is a time for learning, and this time is especially for the Arabic language, so when I give them some notebooks or something, they are asking, oh, this is for Arabic class. I said yes, this is for you and you know what you have to do. They said O.K., we know what we have to do. (S9M)

Another participant commented that her daughter responded most of the time in Arabic but sometimes spoke English. She said:

Most of the time she answers me in Arabic, but sometimes as I told you she is trying to answer me with both like instead of saying “Yes” and “No” in Arabic she says it in English. Yeah! But my daughter now is confused between Arabic and English, and I can see it sometimes. (S16F)

Sub-theme 3.2: Motivating children to learn the Arabic language

Parents’ positive attitudes towards the maintenance and transmission of their mother tongue to the second generation children was noticeable in their daily efforts and motivation. Parents were aware of the importance of keeping the Arabic language active amongst the children. They all agree that children should be motivated to learn Arabic as a first language. The following two excerpts are examples reflecting the participants’ views:

Yes, this is the whole point of trying to transmit my culture to these children here is to communicate with them in Arabic. So, I am pretty much doing my best to talk to them in Arabic, but of course they spend a lot of time in Kindy, and of course in Kindy everything is in English, and there is no other chance like I can have with them to speak to them in Arabic, but just at home, but the encouragement is there, and the will is there, and the passion is there. It is just up to them and see how they respond to that, and luckily it is good, is going well. So I see that there is a good quiet response from my children when it comes to learning a little bit of Arabic. (S5M)

Actually for me it is important, and I need to keep it in my family, as you know we are living here in Australia, particularly in Toowoomba, so the surrounding or the circumstances around us, all it is English

language: TV programs, schools, universities, shopping, all of these are in English, so for me especially I need to focus, to focus on Arabic language at this stage. Why? Because the boys or the children, maybe will forget it, and I have one of my friends, his boys, they cannot speak Arabic, they forgot everything by Arabic. So it is very important because the kids if you are not there with them, or if you do not encourage them to learn something, they will lose everything, they will lose everything. (S9M)

Results from the interviews revealed that some parents used incentives, in the form of prizes, to motivate their children to learn the Arabic language. For example, the following statement was made by one of the participants about the way his wife encouraged the children to learn Arabic by taking them for a drive and giving them money to buy ice-cream. He said:

For example, [the name of his child] who is the smallest one, 7 years old, sometimes he said my father, today I am very tired and I cannot study Arabic, just my wife when she tell him, O.K [child's name], take a rest after that, if you write I will buy an ice-cream for you or I will let your father to drive you by the car to go shopping and he will buy something good for you, or I will give you one dollar and you can keep this one dollar in your pocket and after that every week or every day, you will write something in Arabic, you will have one dollar and at the end of the week, maybe you have 10 or 15 dollars. You can buy anything, you like. So this strategy actually, it is very helpful, because after that he will say O.K mum, I will go and write Arabic, but now I need you to show my father my writing. (S9M)

Similarly, another participant reported that she motivated her children by giving them some gifts such as toys. She stated:

Also, I encourage them by sometimes giving to them activity, like Qur'an, if you can read two Surahs or one Surah from the Quran, I will give you like this, I give you a gift. We give them some special gifts what they need, because when they study at school, they see some special things, and they wanted some toys and some like this, and we need to give it to them when they do some activities to encourage them. (S18F)

Sub-theme 3.3: Status of the Arabic language

The high status of the Arabic language among all Arabs and Muslims contributed effectively to its maintenance and transmission through many generations. All the Arabic-speaking parents shared their thoughts and views

about the importance of the Arabic language among the Arabic and Muslim community. Data analysis of all 20 transcripts of interviews revealed that Arabic is the language of the religion and the language of the sacred Qur'an. Their views about the status of the Arabic language are expressed in the following excerpts:

Arabic is the language of Islam. So it is very important because you read the Qur'an in Arabic. (S19F)

The Qur'an has been written and kept in Arabic, and so it will keep Arabic forever. (S20F)

The identity of Islam was written in Arabic, the Quraan Karim [Sacred Qur'an] is written in Arabic. And when you are going to do Salat [perform prayers] you, you must talk or say what you have to say in Salat by Arabic. So all of that things ah, I think can maintain the Arabic language. Ah, if you need to make a good ah good communication with Allah to get good reward and good benefit for yourself, you should ah understand the language that you need to talk by ah in front of Allah 'Azza WA Jal [God Almighty], you know what I am saying? So, ah at that point every single Muslim, even he is not Arabic, he will try to learn and to understand Arabic to know what he is saying in front of Allah. Yeah, like that I think. (S3M)

In addition to the high status that Arabic holds in Islam, it is also a rich, accurate and strong language that can be used for effective expression, as illustrated in the following statement:

I said it is a complete language, Ah, but the English language is a good language, easy language, but the Arabic is more effective in the expression for the things. Ah, It is more accurate and it is devolved, compared with the English language, this is my own, when you are talking about something, you can describe these things or explain in details, and it is clear and it is better than English actually, grammatically, it is stronger than English that what I think, I think the Arabic language is better than English. (S2M)

Sub-theme 3.4: Language loyalty

The positive attitude of the Arabic-speaking parents was visible in their loyalty to their Arabic language. Language loyalty as a sub-theme appeared in all participants' views, in which they showed their loyalty and commitment towards the maintenance and transmission of Arabic to their second generation

children. The following statements from the participants' transcripts reflect their thoughts in regards to their loyalty to their language:

As parents, I have to keep that (Arabic), because I grew up with my parents, they are teaching me Arabic, I grew up with that, my parents teach me Arabic, the same, I have to teach my kids Arabic, and they can go away with Arabic. (S4M)

Yes, the priority is the Arabic language because as I said before, it is very important to keep the Arabic as a mother tongue to understand the religion because the Qurqan 'Qur'an' revealed in the Arabic language. (S7M)

I believe that the Arabic language is not only a language for us, it is the cultures, it is the language that tells people who we are, represents us. So, we should keep going in this language. We should encourage our children, encourage our community to be aware of this language, because the Arabic language nowadays, it becomes very important not only for the Arabic people where you can see the number of the majority people is increasing in studying the Arabic language all over the world, because the number of the Arabic people especially the Muslim people have been increased. So people try to feel the awareness of this language, so they have to teach their people and they believe that in a few years, they are going to see a class or this language will be taught in some of the foreign countries as an official language for the students. (S8M)

It is part of our culture and our religion as well. If I want our kids to keep practice our religion and to acquire our values and our customs then they really need to understand Arabic. It's very important to me. Also I think that if I go back home I want them not to be behind in their Arabic language so I want them to be fluent in Arabic as well so they can speak with other children and they can get opportunities back home if they want to work when they get back home. (S13F)

As mentioned above, the Arabic language is very important for Arabic speakers because it represents their culture and identity, and because of its connection with religion as a language of the Qur'an. Additionally, Arabic is now spoken by Muslims all over the world, mainly in their prayers and supplications. Furthermore, the language is taught in some foreign countries. The loyalty of Arabic speakers is apparent through their language maintenance efforts in motivating and encouraging their children to learn Arabic.

Sub-theme 3.5: Encouraging children to learn English

The majority of participants in this study were positive towards learning the English language. They mentioned that they supported and encouraged their children to learn English side by side with Arabic, and to be proficient in both languages. Their positive attitudes towards learning English were due to the absolute need of this language at school. The following excerpts reflect the participants' thoughts:

... Also, I teach them English as well, because if I do not teach them English how they go to school, it is important to teach them two languages. (S7M)

I encourage them to use the Arabic language as well as the English language. Ah, my biggest concern that my kids will not be proficient in one language. Ah, they can't talk both languages in really good level. Well, of course, it is important. To be honest in my opinion, it is important to use both languages, even in the home and ah at school whatever they use to communicate with ah another person. (S14F)

Ah, you know because she is already talking Arabic, so I am encouraging her speaking English. Because when we go outside to a clinic by bus, and she does not understand the English words. So, I want her to understand English, so I am encouraging her. I am already talking with her in the Arabic language at home. (S16F)

The fact that all the participants lived in this multicultural society, it seemed natural that they had to deal with both Arabic and English in their everyday interactions. From their comments above, it can be concluded that the participants wanted their children to achieve an adequate level of proficiency in both languages.

Sub-theme 3.6: The attitudes of the majority groups toward Arabic speakers

This sub-theme appeared to be very important and all the participants shared their stories with the researcher about their experiences with non-Arabic speakers. Table 4.8 depicts the participants' views on the attitudes of the majority non-Arabic speaking groups towards speaking Arabic in public.

Table 4.8: Participants' perceptions on the attitudes of the majority of non-Arab speakers towards Arabic

| Participants' Views | | Supportive | Non-Supportive | Mixed Attitudes |
|---------------------|------|------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Male | n=12 | 4 (20%) | 2 (10%) | 6 (30%) |
| Female | n=8 | 3 (15%) | 2 (10%) | 3 (15%) |

As Table 4.8 indicates, seven participants (four males and three females) reported that the non-Arabic speakers were supportive of Arabic speakers, four participants were not supportive and nine out of twenty participants stated that some of the Australians were friendly and supportive, while some were not supportive, and would become annoyed when hearing other languages than English.

A. Supportive attitudes

Seven out of twenty participants (four males and three females) stated that the non-Arabic speakers had a positive attitude towards Arabic speakers and their language. The following are excerpts from some of these participants expressing their views about the supportive attitudes of the majority groups.

I do not see any disappointing on speaking Arabic, sometimes they smile, sometimes they ask you what does it mean, how do you see that in your language, which is very good point actually, that is the advantage here in Australia, you do not see any disappointing when you speak Arabic with the kids or your friends. (S1M)

I think Australia is a multicultural, they can accept people to talk to their children in other languages. Ah, I have not seen any problem. (S7M)

Nothing special, very normal because I think Australia is multicultural language, so it does not matter if they hear my language. (S14F)

They are so friendly... they do not let us notice that. They are so friendly. (S16F)

Yeah, yeah! Maybe that happened when we are shopping, and Australians will look at us, but I think they accept different cultures. I think they are very positive towards different cultures and languages. (S20F)

Another participant shared his story about his experience with an Australian man while he was speaking Arabic with his wife. He stated:

Actually, I had one experience regarding to this question, last year when I was at the hospital, ah, sometimes, I was talking with my wife in Arabic because my wife she cannot speak English but she can understand but she cannot speak. So one of our friends in the hospital, he was listening to my language which is Arabic, he said, oh, you are talking two languages, why are you talking to your wife in Arabic not English, I told him because my wife, she cannot speak English but she can understand English, now she understands what you say but she cannot speak. Also, sometimes, I need to deal with my wife and my children in Arabic to listen to me, I am speaking with them in Arabic, I need them always at all the time remember the Arabic language, and they need to keep both of the languages in my family. Then, the Australian [man] said O.K that is good, you are very lucky because now you speak two languages. For me, it is very hard to talk two languages. He was very happy, and he said if you can help me or teach me one or two words at least, to say to my wife today, I got one word in the Arabic language. (S9M)

All the comments above reflect positive attitudes of non-Arabic speakers and towards those who desired to practise their languages. These participants found the majority groups in Australia very supportive and friendly. Some of the comments referred to Australia as a multicultural society where people were open to other cultures and languages.

B. Non-supportive attitudes

Only four participants (two males and two females) from the entire sample claimed some difficulties when they spoke Arabic to their family or friends in public in front of non-Arabic speakers. The following participants' statements expressed their experiences with non-Arabic speakers:

I went to Coles [shopping centre] with my friend and we are speaking in Arabic and he [Non-Arabic speaker man] told me you are in Australia, you are not in your home, and I said I am in public, I am not in your house. I think it is three times happened to me. Actually, we avoid speaking Arabic like in Train because we find signs sometimes; speak in English, in Victoria Transportation. (S6M)

We were in the shops and we had been laughing at a matter in between us and an old woman she said to us "Excuse me? You don't have to

... speak in Arabic in the middle of English-speakers. This is rude”. I was shocked. I thought “Sorry. We didn’t mean to. This is a private between her and me. We are not laughing about you”. (S15F)

Another participant reported that sometimes she had to switch between English and Arabic with her husband and that they used English when dealing with the Australians or other non-Arabic speakers. She said:

I feel that they are surprised or like this is a strange thing when they hear us speaking Arabic and actually outside, especially in the public places, we decide between us, mixed language not Arabic language, but when speak with Australians people like in shops, directly speak English, yeah, not Arabic, yes. (S16F)

As mentioned above, there was an equal number between male and female participants who reported negative attitudes of non-Arabic speakers towards the use of Arabic language especially in public places.

C. Mixed attitudes (Supportive and Non-supportive)

Data analysis of the semi-structured interviews as indicated in Table 4.8, revealed that nine participants talked about mixed attitudes of the majority groups in Australia. They reported two types of behaviour in regards to non-Arabic speakers. Some were friendly and supportive and others would be annoyed when hearing Arabic in public areas. The following statements from the participants explain their reactions:

Look ah I have seen all the cases. Some of them don’t like to use your mother language. Some of them come to me and ask me “what kind of language that you are talking now?” Ah like that all the categories of that situation. (S3M)

Ah, it depends on, some people, like educated people, are happy and supportive, some people are not. They said you are in Australia you need to speak English. ... Yes, I had one. I had one actually, he looks like he is a very uneducated person, he is a very rude person, and I think he is Aboriginal or something like that, he speaks English fluently. We were in the park, and I was speaking to my children in Arabic and he said no, and he said the F words [swears], you need to speak English and I was arguing with him, however, I found him, is very, very uneducated person, very rude person, so it is better to leave him. (S10M)

Not all Australians feel happy. From my experience, I found that some people, they are not happy that I speak my language, and some people are very excited to hear me speaking a different language. It is mixed. Some people did not like. When I was in Brisbane, and I was talking in the train to my husband in my language and one of the passengers was very angry he said that you are in an English speaking country you have to speak in our language. If you want to stay here, you have to speak English. He was not speaking with us just to himself you have to talk in our language do not have to speak in your language, and I got scared when he started (laughter). (S13F)

This emerging theme from data analysis appears to be significant for the participants in this study as they were able to tell their stories about their experiences and challenges as they related to their language, children and other non-Arabic speakers. The positive attitude towards the maintenance of the community language is one of the most important factors that has been discussed in literature and investigated in this study in order to answer the research questions.

Theme 4: The impact of religion on Arabic language maintenance

In response to the interview question: What role does the religion play in Arabic language maintenance?, participants described the impact of religion on the maintenance of their language. This theme includes four significant sub-themes, as the participants perceived them: the role of religion, the role of the mosque, the benefits of Arabic and Quranic lessons and the use of Arabic and English at the mosque. Figure 4.5 demonstrates theme 4 and its four related sub-themes emerging from data analysis:

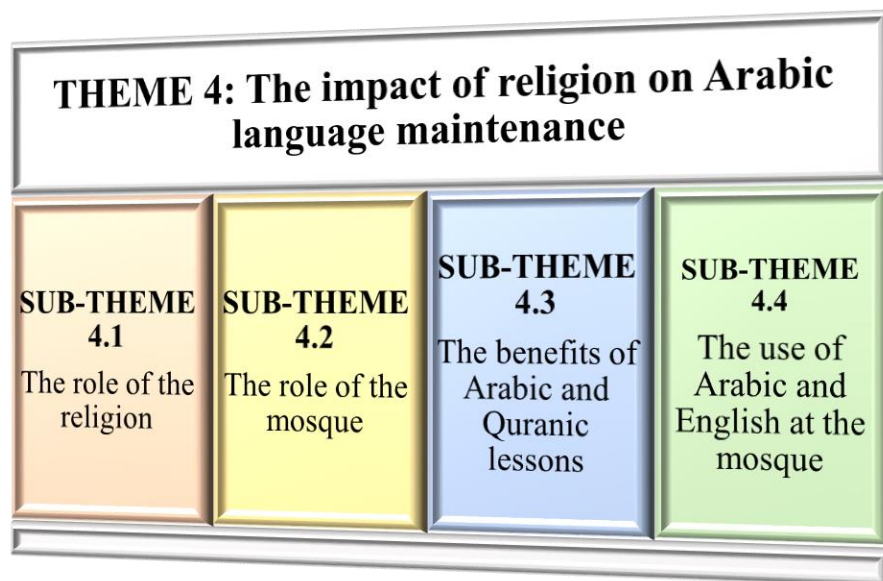


Figure 4.5: The impact of religion on Arabic language maintenance

Sub-theme 4.1: The role of the religion (Islam)

All the participants referred to the importance of religion in the maintenance of Arabic. Their responses asserted the great influence of religion on the maintenance of the Arabic language. The following excerpt from one of the participants confirms this:

The Islamic religion has Qur'an, which is an Arabic book, so the language is very important to understand and to do ah the religion, ah whatever they require you the religion and for that reason it is very important to know the Arabic so you can do whatever the Islam tell you to do. (S5M)

According to the Arabic speakers in this study, religion plays a critical role in maintaining language because it is the language of the Qur'an. Throughout the transcripts, all the participants talked about Arabic as the language of the Holy Qur'an. One of the participants said:

Yeah, you know when we speak of religion, we speak of the Qur'an. The Qur'an has been written and kept in Arabic, and so it will keep Arabic forever. The mosque is teaching the Qur'an. So my daughter and other children go there to learn the Qur'an and Arabic. (S20F)

One of the participants admitted the importance of Arabic learning to understand the religion (Qur'an) and he mentioned that every Muslim has to know Arabic even if he or she is not an Arabic speaker:

Any Muslim will be very ashamed if he cannot read the Qur'an. Even I know many people from Indonesia, Malaysia, and India, they can recite the Qur'an very well, some of them did not understand what these words mean or these phrases meanings, but they can recite perfectly because they have already read the Qur'an when they are children, so they notice the Arabic because it is the basic... All the books related to the religion and the practice of Islam. (S2M)

One of the participants also noted that the religion encouraged all the Muslims to learn not just Arabic, the language of the Qur'an, but other languages as well. He said that:

Our religion actually, our religion always encourages us to learn different language not just keep one language, no. It encouraged us to learn a different language, why? Because we will be able to communicate with others, we will be able to understand others, yeah, it is not close to just Arabic, no, and there is a lot of encouragement, a lot of motivations to support us to learn other languages. (S9M)

All the comments made by the participants above expressed their views about the importance of the religion for all Arabs and Muslims in the world. All of them reported the firm connection between the Qur'an and the Arabic language. The latter is the language of the Qur'an, and this is one of the reasons that the participants wanted to maintain and preserve it for their children to be able to practise their religion.

Sub-theme 4.2: The role of the mosque

The mosque plays a crucial role in the maintenance of the Arabic language in the Arabic-speaking community. All the parents' interview responses reflected on the role of the mosque in keeping the community together. The following excerpts illustrate participants' views on the role of the mosque:

Yes, the mosque plays a major role in this regards, because you know, this is the place where all people are gathering there, and the place where this can be the umbrella for these types of activities rather than

any other place because it is related especially to the language, Arabic language as well as their religion. (S2M)

The role of the mosque is a place of worship, and most of the performance of the prayers, here is getting done in Arabic, and only when it comes to making speech on Friday and stuff like that, the English language is present for translation but obviously the rest of the performance of the prayers done in Arabic. (S5M)

Based on analysis of the transcript, the mosque was not just a worship place, but also a place of learning and practising the Arabic language with other Arabic speakers from the community.

In addition to what has been said regarding the vital role of the mosque, two male participants expressed their thoughts about the role of the mosque and raised their concerns in regards to the teaching programs and the shortage of the lessons offered by the Muslim community at the mosque. These two participants expected to see more activities at this religious institution to protect the Arabic language and to benefit the children of the community. Their thoughts are reflected in the following comments:

Seriously, the role of the mosque here in Toowoomba does not offer that much, he offers sometimes, they offer some classes like two days, three days a week, people they can go to these classes, they can study, have a lecture, they can understand which is really important. But, my demand is to see more of this kind of lectures, being increasing, why not every day, why only two days a week, why only two hours, not enough. If you want people to feel the benefits of this language, you should keep them studying and learning day by day. (S8M)

The mosque educates people from religious perspectives; however, we have some Arabic language teachers here, especially for children. But it is not enough, not enough at all, very basic things, because people are volunteering without materials, without a real community guide, without a plan, you know what I mean? Just teaching them, (coughing), (sorry), they just they came to the mosque and taught them very basic Arabic, O.K, not supported at all. (S10M)

Sub-theme 4.3: The benefits of Arabic and Quranic lessons

All the participants stressed the reliance on the mosque to provide their children with classes in Arabic language and Quranic lessons. They all referred to the benefits of these classes in helping children maintain their language. The

Muslim community of the mosque offered the Arabic and Quranic classes every weekend and during school holidays.

Actually, recently they have been very active and they are doing some competitions in Quran memorizing, and doing some competition also I think, they are holding Arabic classes here and they are very active actually. (S11M)

Yes. They run classes for children, to teach them Arabic language, so this is good. They have some difficulties because there is not enough staff to teach so many students. (S16F)

The mosque is teaching the Qur'an. So my daughter and other children go there to learn the Qur'an and Arabic. (S20F)

It should be noted that some participants were interviewed before the availability of Arabic and Qur'an lessons at the mosque. As a result, they expressed their wishes to have such classes provided by the mosque. The following comments express their thoughts:

If there is Qur'an lesson; it is going to be a good supporter in terms of keeping the Arabic language. (S1M)

Ah, no, in Toowoomba there is no such things [Arabic or Qur'an lessons] like that. I have not seen so far any initiatives or any schools or anything like that established here in Toowoomba. Ah, probably in the near future, I am thinking that it will happen because they are just in process of buying a big Mosque. So that will be an opportunity of having a small school for children to learn inside the Mosque. (S5M)

At the early stage of the interviews, there was no permanent classes for teaching Arabic and Qur'an as reflected in participants' responses. Then, before the end of data collection, the Muslim community established their mosque and hired a teacher to run the Arabic and Quranic classes for the children.

Sub-theme 4.4: The use of Arabic and English at the mosque

English language was also present at the mosque especially during the Friday sermon when the Imam had to switch between Arabic and English to convey his message to those who were not Arabs and did not fully understand the spoken Arabic. The following excerpt from one of the male participants commented that:

Only when it comes to making a speech on Friday speeches and stuff like that, the English language is present for translation, but obviously the rest of the performance of the prayers is done in Arabic. (S5M)

As mentioned earlier in theme 1, sub-theme 1.4, half of the participants spoke both Arabic and English during gatherings within their community. Most of their gatherings usually took place at the mosque where the Arabic-speaking community used both languages. They spoke the Arabic language with Arabic speakers and English with other Muslims at the mosque who did not speak Arabic.

Theme 5: Maintaining Arabic for cultural identity

This theme describes the role of the Arabic language as an essential part of reshaping the participants' cultural identity. It includes four sub-themes: culture shock, the importance of culture maintenance, challenges and difficulties to maintain the culture, and the distinctiveness of the Arabic culture. Figure 4.6 displays this theme and its related sub-themes emerging from data analysis:

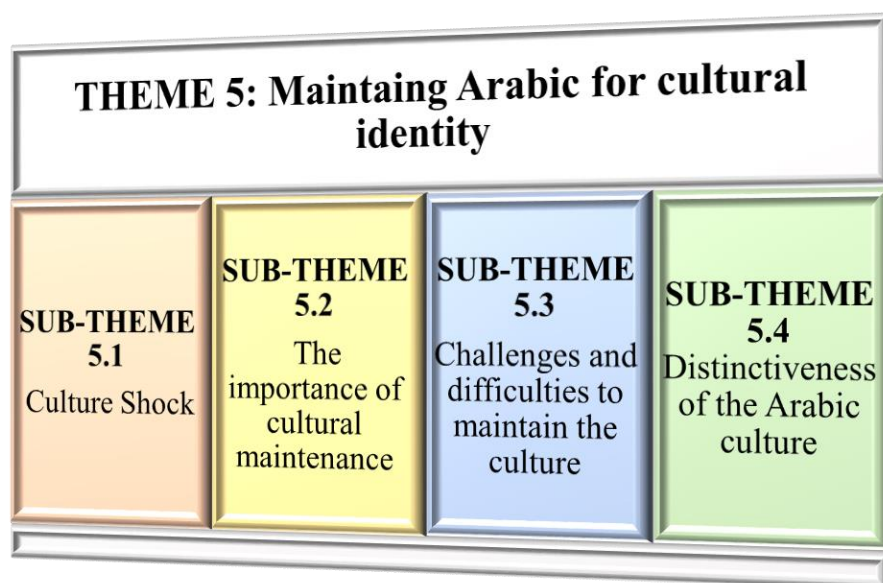


Figure 4.6: Maintaining Arabic for cultural identity

According to the participants, the maintenance of the language reflects the maintenance of their culture and identity. This theme seems to have a reliable connection to most of the major themes as it was reflected in the participants'

views about the maintenance of culture. For example, the maintenance of the culture requires a positive attitude of both parents and children, and cultural identity can be maintained through interactions between people of the same community. Emotional attachment to the home country is maintained through regular visits, communication with relatives overseas, and through religion by reading the Qur'an and attending Arabic classes; all of these are part of reflecting the speakers' identities. Table 4.9 illustrates male and female opinions about the maintenance of their cultural identity as drawn from interviews.

Table 4.9: Maintaining Arabic for cultural identity

| | Maintaining Arabic for Cultural Identity | |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| | <i>Benefits</i> | <i>Consequences</i> |
| Participants' Opinions | Culture is a part of life | <p>Loss of language leads to the loss of personality, identity and religion.</p> <p>Children are going to miss out if the Arabic culture does not reach them.</p> <p>More attention should be paid to Arabic by the community.</p> <p>More attention and care should be given to Arabic as a culture, as a religion, and as language.</p> |
| | Sharing the culture with the host culture (differences and similarities) | |
| | Culture is part of personality, background and identity. | |
| | Showing the culture to the children (Celebrations, Feasts, and Fasting in Ramadan). | |
| | Arabic culture is a rich culture spread all over the world. | |
| | My culture has existed for 40 thousand years. | |
| | A sign to reflect our nationality, to reflect our behaviour, to reflect our religion. | |
| | To link children to their culture, to their history and to their religion. | |
| | Islamic culture is very important for us; you can see our culture reflected in our clothes, food, and communication. | |
| | Cooking our traditional food. | |
| | Emotional attachment to the home country through the culture. | |
| | To distinguish Arabic people from their language. | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>It is the columns that my family and home are built on.</p> <p>It is a beautiful culture.</p> <p>To keep in touch with our family by internet and Facebook.</p> | |
|--|--|--|

Sub-theme 5.1: Cultural shock

Half of the participants described their culture shock experiences, especially during their first year in Australia. They reported some issues related to adjustments, language barriers and cultural differences. The following excerpts from participants' views reflect their experiences:

Yeah! There was a quite a challenge when we came here because the system is different regarding how to find apartment and house or flat. It takes quite a long time, but after three weeks, it becomes ok. We know the system, and everything becomes normal. (S1M)

Ah, actually when you come for the first time, especially English language was not that good. At the beginning, you will discover many things new, you face some difficulties to communicate with these people because of the problem of the language, but it does not take a long time, until you can learn some basic words, some communication, special words used in the Uni [University], in the hospitals, in the markets. ...Yes, it is a different culture, different culture, especially from Arabic background and Islamic background coming here, some people did not understand many things, but as I said, the people know. Many students are coming from different backgrounds, so they can understand these differences between people so that they can accept that. (S2M)

To be quite honest, it is a bit hard because I came from a completely from different culture and language. The culture when I came here found completely different regarding the way of wearing clothes, the way of talking, the way of eating food, this kind of stuff, and also in the same time, I have seen that between themselves, the Australians actually they try, so I feel that I am from different culture because they try to mix and integrate between themselves, but I feel that I am alone, that is why it is a bit different culture for me. (S10M)

One of the female participants shared her story with the researcher and expressed her scary experience in her early days in Australia. She confronted many challenges as illustrated in her comment:

Yes of course, I felt very like ah scary, different culture, different religion, different language, everything different, so different. No family, just me and husband and yes, it was everything like ah scary for me. Even the English like ah as I told you the language I was like you knowing some words or something like that. But it is too hard, you live in a country like they all speak English. I found it hard. (S13F)

Despite these potential concerns at the beginning of settlement in Australia, the participants got over these cultural adjustment and language issues in a few weeks or a few months after that they became accustomed to their new life.

Sub-theme 5.2: The importance of cultural maintenance

In response to the question: How important for you to keep your culture?, all the participants in this study reported the importance of maintaining their culture and their cultural identity. They were all aware of the necessity to transfer the culture to the next generation and to help their children become attached to the Arab Islamic culture. The following are participants' statements explaining their thoughts and experiences about the importance of cultural maintenance:

Yes, of course, I think it is important, because any nation has, like to keep his culture, it is a part of your life. You know what I mean, I think it is important for them as well to know, to share even, for example I got many friends from here, from Australia, they ask me about my culture, they asked me what do you have. So, we learn from them, and they learn from us, so we share different cultures, we can see the difference and similarities between people and between nations. (S1M)

Ah! Well, yeah, it is important as well like ah really it is not the culture itself what is important for me is to keep them on the right path. I want to keep them to grow my kids to grow up in the proper way. So I try to teach them the correct manner whatever it is from my culture or another culture. Because my big concern is that to learn what is the good and what is the bad thing, so they try to keep in the right way... Yes, Arabic is a language as I said it is a religion, it is language, it is studying Arabic, it is something that is really important, and I think ah but unfortunately that did not pay that attention from anywhere or anyone here. It should be more attention ah pay more attention for Arabic as a culture and as religion and as language. (S14F)

In the same context, the majority of the Arabic speakers in this study explained the cultural events and celebrations to their children to keep them attached to their parents' culture. The following two excerpts explain their thoughts:

Yes, actually, always I am explaining to my kids what that occasion is, what we are doing here and what the meaning of this in my home country is even if they did not participate in those things. For example now, in (Eid al-Fitr) after Ramadan or during Ramadan and ah when I am breaking fast I am telling them I was fasting and now it is breaking fast and this is the whole month, 30 days and we should do that and why we should do that, and I have to explain all that. And that Eid, at Eid prayer, I am taking them with me to the prayers, and I am telling them, this Eid and this is a special prayer, and we have finished a whole month of Ramadan, like that, so always I am tracking our culture and religious occasions. (S3M)

Yeah! Because we have, it is very important for me (Laughter), is more than everything, my culture is Arabic because traditions, because we have celebrations, too many things in Arabic, we show everything, you show your kids how you go with Arabic, that is my culture is Arabic, I show everything about my culture in Arabic, we have celebrations like Eid (Feast), like Ramadan, the Prophet Mohammed (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) birthday, too much that in Arabic. (S4M)

These cultural and religious celebrations reflected the participants' identity as Arab Muslims. Arabic is the language they used in their celebrations and gatherings. All participants in this study admitted that Arabic is the representation of their cultural identity. The following two examples from the participants confirm that:

... Your language is a part of your personality, your background, your dignity if I can say that, so, if you lost your language you lost a lot of things, because you know, it is in the personality. (S2M)

It is intertwined with the language. So they are both the core of your personality to shape your identity. If you want to keep the culture, you have to keep the language. Both of them, they are much intertwined, they depend on each other. Exactly, it represents me who am I. Where I am from? What I am doing, what is my position? (S10M)

The comments made above indicated the importance of the language to reshape the participants' cultural identity. The last comment offered by participant

(S10M), about the overlapping relationship between the culture and the language, was supported by another participant in this study. He reported in the following comment that the maintenance of the language could result in the preservation of the culture. He said:

It is important for me to keep that culture. If you keep the language, you gonna keep the culture alive, that is for sure. Yeah! Yes, yes, exactly, that the whole meaning of learning that language because the culture sits beneath the language itself, if you wanna translate that culture to that little boy, you gonna have to get him speak the language (S5M)

Another male participant claimed that the culture was not as important as the religion and the Arabic language. He said that the language was the one thing that should be kept to preserve the religion. The following comment reflects his views:

The culture is in my opinion less important than the religion. If the culture is against your religion, you have to change it smoothly or change this action to something not against your religion. Ah, I think culture is more important but less than Arabic, I think if you keep Arabic language this can help you to keep your culture. (S7M)

As the statements above indicated, Arabic language is very important in maintaining the cultural identity of the Arabic speakers. Arabic is the symbol and the core of their identity as Arab Muslims. The maintenance of the language leads to the maintenance of the culture and the cultural heritage. All the participants in this study mentioned that the Arabic language is the core value for their culture and this latter needs to be maintained through the practice of their cultural and religious celebrations.

Sub-theme 5.3: Challenges and difficulties in maintaining culture

Some participants admitted that they faced some difficulties in maintaining their culture in the host country. For example, one male participant said:

It is very hard, to practise my culture, to practise my religion is very hard in this country, mainly because I am from different culture, and it is an Islamic culture, to be quite honest, and many people they do not like this. (S10M)

The statement made by this male participant reflected his views about the difficulty of practising his culture and religion because of the cultural differences between his home country and the host country. In this sense, the data analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that female participants faced more difficulties than male participants in preserving their culture. The following statement expresses the participant's thoughts on this:

I was a student representative, so the head of the department asked me to be in a meeting and some of the men there, they want to shake my hand, and I cannot refuse but this is not in our culture. I couldn't refuse because it was embarrassing for them, so I did not know what to do. Also, sitting beside me, it is sometimes so close. If I say I don't want to sit beside them, they will think they do not smell nice or something, so it is very difficult. (S16F)

Another female participant reported her struggle in finding a suitable Islamic dress. Her voice is represented in the following comment:

The first struggling, which is the clothes of the Muslim. It is hard to find long-sleeved [Islamic] outfit. So, I changed my style to some Australian dresses that are long-sleeved. Sometimes we have to manage yeah. (S15F)

Similarly, another female participant had some difficulty in finding Islamic clothing for her children. Also, she mentioned some cultural differences that her children faced when it came to the celebrations. She stated:

Yeah, actually, there are some difficulties, especially with my children in school, the clothes, sometimes; we do not find the Islamic clothes here, so we decided to take from them and like this, yeah. Also in school, especially my children, there are some celebrations here, they can change the child's mind. If I said, for example, now Valentine day, it is not in the Islamic culture, it is not good, we do not celebrate this day, like this, they can't understand, sometimes, they asked some questions why? Why? Because all of them do that, why? And they ask why? Why? Like this, yes, yes. (S18F)

All the comments made by the participants above reflected their thoughts about the difficulties of maintaining and preserve their culture in a different environment than their home country.

Sub-theme 5.4: Distinctiveness of the Arabic culture

The distinctive character of the Arabic Islamic culture, as illustrated by the participants in this study, is related to its richness, beauty and its connection with the religion. For example, the following comment made by one of the participants reflected his thoughts about the history and the richness of the Arabic culture that needed to be transmitted to the new generation children through the Arabic language.

My culture has existed for 40 thousand years, a long time, a long time ago and has spread all over the place in Europe and these children they have a big rich culture that they need to have access to, and that access cannot just be in English. It has to be in Arabic. (S5M)

One participant commented on the importance of the Arabic Islamic culture, and the Arabic speakers were distinguished from their cultural clothes, food and their language of communication. The following comment was made by this participant:

The Islamic culture is very important for us; you can see our cultural clothes, food, communication, yeah. So, it is very important Arabic culture, how can you know the Arabic people? I think it is from their language because they speak Arabic and if they are not speaking Arabic. We will say that they are not Arabic people even if they wear Islamic clothes, yeah, so it is very important, the Arabic language. (S18F)

Another expressed her thoughts about the Arabic Islamic culture and her intention to transfer her culture and cultural values to her children. She stated:

It is so important. Not only for me, but I would like to transfer this culture to my own children. It is a beautiful culture. How we treat our family and old people, our grandparents. It is the columns [platform] that my family and home are built on. (S20F)

This theme emerged to be paramount for all the participants since it represented who they were. The connection between the language, culture and their religious beliefs reshaped their identity and made the Arabic-speaking community very distinctive.

Theme 6: The influence of the media on the maintenance of Arabic language

Data analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that all the participants in this study commented on the influential role played by the media in maintaining the Arabic language. The role of the media is an overarching theme that encompasses four emerging sub-themes. These sub-themes include: (1) the poor representation of Arabic in the Australian media, (2) the use of satellites to access Arabic channels, (3) learning the Arabic language through TV programs, and (4) the influence of the Australian media on the Arabic language. The following Figure 4.7 depicts this theme and its related sub-themes emerging from data analysis:

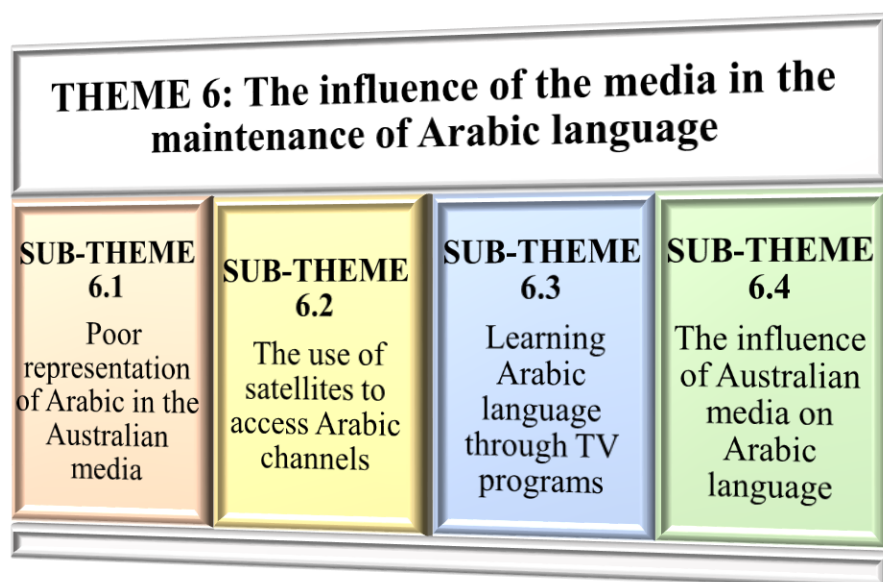


Figure 4.7: The influence of the media in the maintenance of Arabic language

Sub-theme 6.1: Poor representation of Arabic in the Australian media

The researcher asked the participants if their language was represented in the Australian media. All the responses suggested that the Arabic language is not well- represented in the Australian media, except for a couple of minutes of Arabic news broadcasted on the national Australian channel SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) via news organisations such as Dubai News and Al-

Jazeera News. The following statements from Arabic-speaking parents commented on the poor representation of Arabic:

No, I do not know why the government does not look after, only we can watch the news on TV sometimes in Arabic like SBS and Al-Jazeera. On SBS sometimes, they show news that in Arabic. (S4M)

No, I do not have any access to Arabic channels, and there are hardly any newspapers here in Australia that does the Arabic newspapers or things like that. (S5M).

No, I do not think so, there is only one channel... It comes in the morning; it is Dubai Channel. (S6M)

No, actually there are no Arabic programs, no. I just get access to local channels in Australia, in Queensland, Toowoomba and channel 7. (S10M).

The four statements above begin with the negation “No” are illustrative of all the participants in this study. The few minutes of Arabic news presented by the Australian local television address adults only, not the children of the community. According to all participants, English is the dominant language in the Australian media. To have access to the Arab media, the parents were obliged to find ways based on their own efforts by looking for an alternative to this media issue. The majority of them were obliged to buy a device that could give them access to Arabic channels through a satellite cable.

Sub-theme 6.2: The use of satellites to access Arabic channels

This sub-theme expressed the participants’ voices about finding an alternative to the poor representation in the media. All the Arabic-speaking parents in this study reported the use of satellite cables and the Internet to access Arabic channels. The following two excerpts express the participants’ thoughts:

At this point ah the media, Al-Hamdu Allah [thanks to God], there are many ah, a lot of ah Arabic ah channels that can ah can broadcast here. Not ah broadcasting in Australia but from the Middle East and North Africa. But they can reach Australia through the Internet and satellites. Yes. Always I watch Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya and all of the different ah Arabic channels. (S3M)

No, no, unfortunately, there is not, what you gonna do, you have to set up a decoder box or something like that to get TV from abroad because

it costs money to do that. It is a bit expensive to be able to install that device to get channels from overseas, from abroad and stuff like that. Of course, the computer is the only source of information that you need to have to be able to have to be staying in touch to whatever happening in the world, in your region. (S5M)

One of the participants reported that all Arabic students have access to Arabic channels using satellites:

The Arabic channels, yeah, even there is, you can go to the internet. There is yeah, I think all Arabic students; they have satellite for the Arabic channels. (S2M)

Another participant had access to Arabic channels, but her children liked to watch cartoons in English as they did not have cartoon channels in Arabic all the time. She said:

Yes, I do have my satellite, so I do have Arabic channels... my kids are always watching cartoons in English and sometimes when I am turning to Arabic channels because I don't have Arabic kids channels I feel they are not happy with Arabic channels, they are most happy with the English channels. (S13F)

Another female participants reported that she used to have a satellite cable in her old house and now she is using a smart TV instead to access all Arabic channels. She said:

We do not have satellite here but we have had satellite at the last home but now we solved that problem with the smart TV. (S14F)

Data analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that Arabic speakers in the city of Toowoomba use their own means to get access to Arabic channels through the use of satellite cables, smart TV and the Internet. The use of media is one of the most important factors for the maintenance of Arabic language.

Sub-theme 6.3: Learning the Arabic language through TV programs

Access to the Arabic language via satellite TV channels helps the children learn the Arabic language through a variety of programs. The following excerpts express the participants' thoughts on this:

Satellite! Yep, in Arabic, sometimes, I put, I have the DVD, I get Simsim [Simpsons] in English and I put that on TV, I turn online

Simsim in Arabic, same episode, same episode, that is in English and that in Arabic and they will learn. (S4M)

Yes, I have access, I have a satellite, and there is around 12 channels... all in Arabic, yes, and my boys actually both of them, they know what time or which time is the best to see this program because for example for the Dubai channels there is one program presented about the forests, about the animals by Arabic. So boys like this one, so it looks like a science class because now they are learning, and they are receiving information by Arabic. For example, the report about the cats or lions or elephants, so they are receiving this information by the Arabic language. They have already received this information at school by the English language. So they will match both of the information so that they will keep both of the languages. So they will receive more information. (S9M)

Sub-theme 6.4: The influence of the Australian media on the Arabic language

The Australian media can sometimes have a negative impact on children's learning of the Arabic language. Children spent considerable time watching cartoons in English, which makes their Arabic very poor as responded by their parents. The following excerpts from the participants reflect their thoughts on the effects of the Australian media:

They like ah English cartoons. Yes, they only watch English cartoons. Especially Dora. (S14F)

I think the media, the cartoons, that is what makes the Libyan children not know how to speak Arabic properly. I think the parents need to divide the time between Arabic and English cartoons. I think the cartoons are important and I have a friend who is a teacher and she tried to do that with her kids and even though they did not understand it they watched for a bit and then said "boring". Even though they are Arabic, they find the Arabic cartoons boring. (S16F)

According to the statements above, the children got used to English media by watching English cartoons most of the time. Arabic speaking parents started to feel worried about the influence of English in the media which affected the children's competence in Arabic as well as their culture.

Theme 7: Communication with relatives and friends in the Arabic language

The ability to communicate with relatives and friends in the Arabic language was shown to be paramount for the Arabic-speaking community since communication allowed them to be in close touch with their family and friends overseas. All participants in this study expressed their thoughts and feelings about their need for daily communication with their family and relatives overseas, and its importance in keeping their Arabic language skills active. This theme represents the participants' descriptions and views of the communication with relatives and friends abroad. It includes three sub-themes or sub-categories extracted from the careful analysis of participants' statements (see Table 4.2 for more details). These sub-themes are: (1) regular overseas communication, (2) the use of technology for communication with relatives and friends, and (3) the language of communication. Figure 4.8 summarises this theme and its related sub-themes emerging from data analysis:

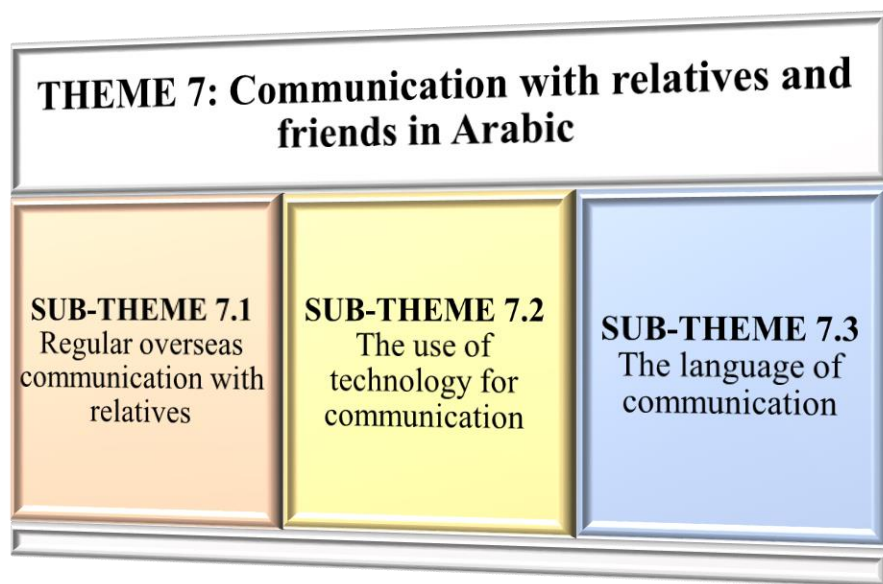


Figure 4.8: Communication with relatives and friends in Arabic

Sub-theme 7.1: Regular overseas communication

This sub-theme was mentioned by all the participants when commenting on their regular communication with their relatives and friends as part of maintaining the Arabic language and allowing its transmission to the second

generation children. Table 4.10 illustrates information about the number of Arabic-speaking participants who regularly communicated with their relatives or friends overseas.

Table 4.10: The number of participants who regularly communicated with their relatives and friends

| Sub-theme 1 | | Communication with relatives in Arabic | | | |
|--------------|------------|--|-------|----|------|
| | | Yes | | No | |
| Participants | Male n=12 | 12 | (60%) | 0 | (0%) |
| | Female n=8 | 8 | (40%) | 0 | (0%) |

As shown in Table 4.10, all participants in this study reported that they were in close touch with their relatives and friends outside Australia through regular communication in order to maintain their Arabic language. The following excerpts from the interviews express their thoughts about their regular communication with their relatives and friends:

Yes, to practice and actually now the communication is good, we call our family weekly or over a fortnight, so they usually speak together. (S1M)

Yes, I do have my family back home. Yes, I am still in touch. I am always talking to my mom via Skype, and I get to see them. So, I can see them, and they can see my kids. (S13F)

The ability to communicate with relatives and friends contributes to creating an environment for learning and practising the language. Participants responded that their children can see and talk to their relatives overseas through social media such as Skype.

Sub-theme 7.2: The use of technology for communication with relatives and friends

Participants in this study used new technology (Internet) as a medium of communication with their relatives and friends. This type of communication was varied and included the telephone, Skype, Viber, Tango, and Email. Such media of communication was useful in helping the Arabic speakers to be in

close touch with their relatives and friends in the home country. Table 4.11 refers to the use of technology among the Arabic-speaking community.

Table 4.11: Participants use different technology for communication with relatives and friends

| Sub-theme 2 | | The use of technology for communication with relatives and friends |
|--------------|---------------------|--|
| Participants | Male n= 12 (60%) | Internet, telephone, Facebook, Viber, Email (Yahoo, Hotmail), MSN, Tango |
| | Female n=8 (40%) | Telephone, Skype, WhatsApp |

As shown in Table 4.11, both male and female participants depended on the use of available technology in their communication. The following statements refer to the different types of social media used by participants during their communication with relatives and friends overseas:

Ah yeah, phone and ah, social networks. Yeah! Skype or Viber. Ah yeah, something like that, through the internet. No, I think it is enough just the phone and social communication. Yeah, they (children) like to use the phone ah yeah, especially if we got connected to the internet which is ah, less expensive, they can spend more time talking so they like that one, talking and there are ah, the facilities of watching their faces now they can see the video and see their relatives there as well. Yeah. It's good. That keeps them connected (S3M)

I speak to them in Arabic, yep... through Skype. Yeah, using Skype, sometimes use Yahoo, sometimes Hotmail, MSN, talk to them online. (S4M)

I used telephone, Skype, WhatsApp and Viber for communication. (S14F)

The participants as mentioned above use different types of technology to communicate with their relatives and friends overseas. The use of new technology is an important instrument to strengthen ties with the family and to preserve and maintain the Arabic language.

Sub-theme 7.3: The language of communication

All participants reported the use Arabic language in their communication with their relatives and friends living overseas. Table 4.12 summarizes the participants' descriptions of the language of communication.

Table 4.12: Language of communication

| Sub-theme 3 | | Language of Communication | | |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| | | Arabic only | English only | Mix (Arabic and English) |
| Participants | Male n=12 | 10 (50%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (10%) |
| | Female n=8 | 7 (35%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (5%) |

As Table 4.12 indicates, 10 males and 7 females which represents 85% of the Arabic speakers in this study used only Arabic language as a medium of communication with their relatives overseas. Only three participants (two males and one female) mentioned the use of both Arabic and English in their communication with their relatives and friends in their home country.

The following statements from the interviewees express their thoughts about the use of Arabic language as the only medium of communication with their relatives and friends in the home country:

Yeah! All of my family at ah my home country, Libya; yeah, actually, because it is ah Arabic country, not one of them speaks ah English. All of them are speaking Arabic. (S3M)

Arabic (laughter) of course, because they are not good in speaking English and sometimes if my mom [mother] see me talking in English on Skype she says, “What are you talking about? Why do you talk to them in English? You should speak in Arabic to them. They will forget their language.” So I say that I speak both of them (Laughter). (S13F)

Arabic in Arabic it is all in the Arabic language because they are Arabic, so I do not want them to have a bad feeling. (S14F)

Only two males and one female participant reported that they used both Arabic and English to communicate with their relatives and friends overseas. The following are comments from the male participants expressing their thoughts about the use of both languages:

Ah, to be honest, sometimes in Arabic and sometimes in English. (S1M)

Arabic, they do not know speaking English (Laughter). Even I have some friends in Britain, England, or Malaysia or America, when we communicate with them, we communicate in the Arabic language. We

did not use the English language. Ah, a little bit, we use the English language, a little bit. (S2M)

The following comment was made by a female participant about the use of both Arabic and English in her communication with relatives and friends overseas. She mentioned that her keyboard included English letters only. In this way, if she wrote, she had to write in English.

Yes, in Arabic and sometimes in English because my keyboard is in English. (S20F)

This participant lived in an English speaking-country where English was everywhere, so she raised the issue of the keyboard which was in English only. The conclusion that can be drawn from this analysis is that Arabic language is the most common used language for communicating with relatives and friends as responded by the participants in this study.

Theme 8: Visiting relatives and friends in the home country

The need to visit relatives and friends in the home country was found to be one of the most important factors contributed effectively to the maintenance and transmission of Arabic language to second generation children as the participants believed. Even those who had not yet had a chance to visit their home country regarded frequent travelling to see the extended family overseas as crucial, especially for the children to practise the Arabic language and learn about the culture. This theme emerged from the participants' descriptions derived from the following sub-themes: visiting relatives and friends, challenges to visit the home country, emergency visits to the home country and instability in the home country preventing visits. Figure 4.9 is a summary of theme 8 and its related themes emerging from data analysis:

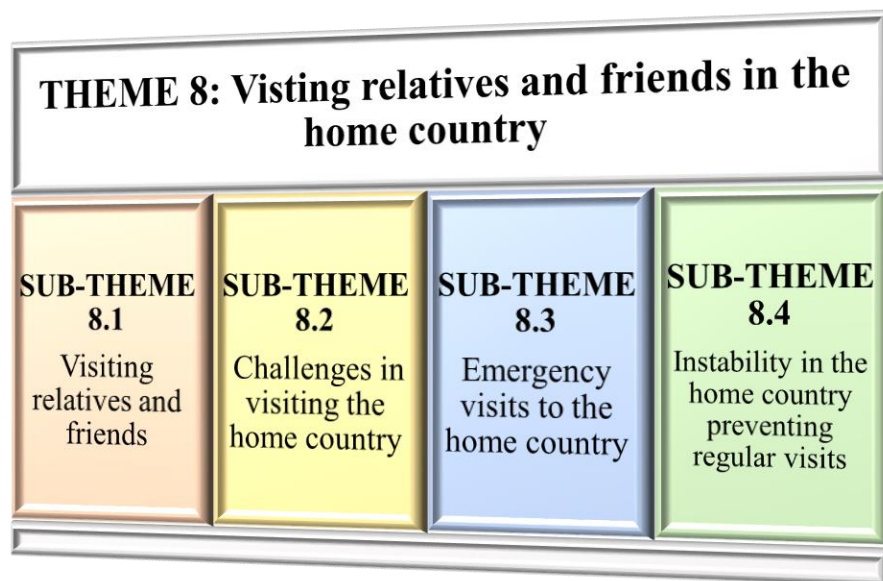


Figure 4.9: Visiting relatives and friends in the home country

Sub-theme 8.1: Visiting relatives and friends in the home country

In response to the interview question: How often do you and you children visit your home country?, Table 4.13 describes the participants’ visits to their home country in order to provide an Arabic environment for their children where they can practise their Arabic.

Table 4.13: Number and percentage (%) of participants’ visits to the home country

| Sub-theme 1 | | | Visiting the home country | | | |
|---------------------|--------|------|---------------------------|-------|----|-------|
| | | | Yes | | No | |
| Participants | Male | n=12 | 7 | (35%) | 5 | (25%) |
| | Female | n=8 | 3 | (15%) | 5 | (25%) |

As Table 4.13 indicates, about half of participants (seven males and three females) reported that they visited their home country while the other half did not have the opportunity to go home for a holiday with their children. The following statements from the interviews reflect the participants’ perspectives about home country visits:

I have been here five years in Australia. Yes. I went ah twice, two times, to Libya. Yeah, both of the times I went there. The first visit, after two and a half years, I went ah for a normal visit to visit my family and see the relatives and the friends. (S3M)

I went back to my home, but my kids never go back... Yeah, but next year, I am trying to take my family to see my family in Morocco. To practise Arabic, playing together, fun, when my kids are coming to Australia are happy, and they always want to go to visit family in Morocco. (S4M)

Ah, we do that often, yes, because it is very important for us to keep close to them and not be away from their country, from their culture. So, we visit them every three months, we go back, every four months, we spend two weeks, three weeks with our family to get in touch with their kids and with their relatives and their cousins and so on. (S8M)

I told you I came here in 2008, and I just went last Christmas to my family after four years here, so I stayed there two months and came back in February. (S13F)

The participants' comments made above expressed their motives to visit their home country, which included enabling their children to stay for a couple of weeks or months to practice Arabic with their relatives. The regular visits to the home country foster their children's language competence through the daily interactions with their relatives.

Sub-theme 8.2: Challenges in visiting the home country

On the other hand, some participants were not able to visit their home country with their children. They had their reasons for this, such as the long distance, the cost of traveling and study commitments. The following statements from the interviews reflect the participants' views about these challenges that obstruct them from visiting their home country:

Because money, because in Australia, you are working, and you get expensive bills to pay, you have to save, save, save money, it takes you longer, it is nothing easier. (S4M)

My children are only four years old, so I did not have a chance to take my children to Morocco yet. I hope it will happen very soon Inshaa' Allah [By God's willing]. I travel as I can the last trip that I have done, was about four years ago. So, it has been four years, and I am due for another one. (S5M)

Once every four years, yes, very far. Of course, I am taking my kids, but it is very hard because we are very far from the world. You know, traveling 14 hours with the kids, it is not easy. (S10M)

Well, since I came I did not go back, I mean last year, because it was a long trip, very far from, and I prefer to complete the three semesters. (S11M)

These sort of challenges were considered as a big challenge for some participants. Also, these challenges may deprive second generation children from having a chance to practice their Arabic language in the Arabic environment with relatives overseas.

Sub-theme 8.3: Emergency visits to the home country

One of the male participants mentioned that he went to visit his country when his mother-in-law passed away. He said:

The second one [visit] for a special occasion, a relative when my mother-in-law has passed away, so we went to the funeral that is it. (S3M)

Sub-theme 8.4: Instability in the home country preventing regular visits

One of the female participants reported the reason for not going to visit her relatives overseas, which was due to instability and war in her home country. She said:

We are planning for that, but because we do not know what is happening to our country. (S16F)

Due to these challenges, half of the participants in this study did not have the opportunity to travel to their home country with their children. As mentioned earlier in the previous themes of communication with relatives and friends, these communications gave them a sort of relief by keeping them in constant contact with the home country.

Theme 9: Other Factors Influencing the maintenance of Arabic

In addition to what was reported by the participants above, other influencing factors contributed to some extent to the maintenance of the Arabic language

emerged. These factors include solidarity, commitment and the will of the Arabic-speaking community. Figure 4.10 summarises these sub-themes:

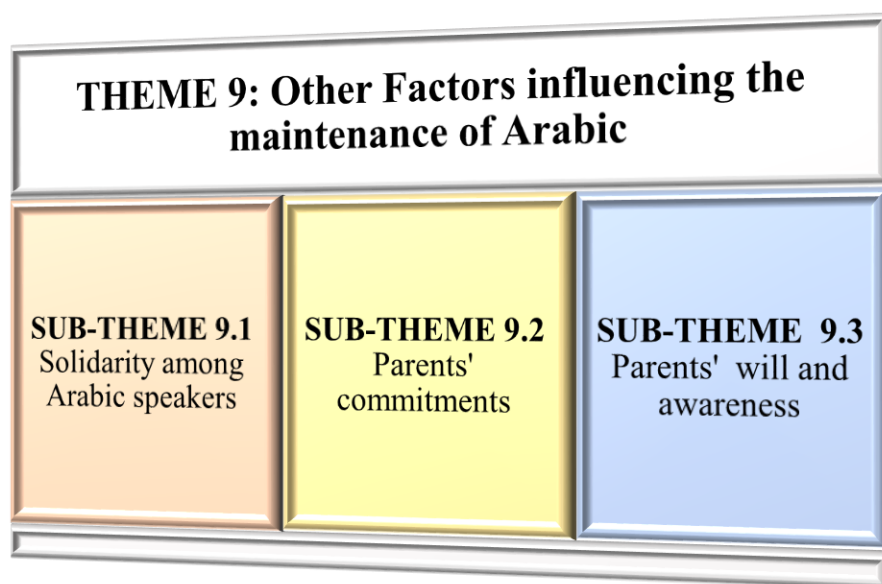


Figure 4.10: Other factors influencing the maintenance of Arabic

Sub-theme 9.1: Solidarity among Arabic speakers

The participants in this study demonstrated a sense of solidarity within their small community. They tended to support each other as a unified group. The following two statements are examples of this solidarity among participants:

I really prepare to give some supports for the students that come to study here. I hope there will be some support here. (S14F)

When I go to work, I leave her [daughter] with Arabic family, and when she comes to us, she speaks what she learns there. (S20F)

The two statements made by these two female participants demonstrated a sense of solidarity within the Arabic-speaking community. One female is ready to provide support for the newly arrived students and the other participants leaves her child with an Arab neighbour to learn Arabic.

Sub-theme 9.2: Parents' commitments

The commitment of the Arabic speakers in this study was visible from their stories when they spoke about their challenges and experiences to maintain

their original language and transfer it to their children. They encouraged their children to learn the language and the culture. The following participants' statements express their thoughts and commitments:

We should encourage our students, our kids, our people to be aware of this language, to study more about this language, not just only to talk in Arabic language, no, to go deep in this language and deeper and deeper and that can only be done by increasing the number of people who they can talk in Arabic. (S8M)

I need to prove my language, prove my culture through the maintaining, through using both language and culture... for the kids because as I said if I did not use how they learn. So there is no maintenance. (S10M)

Sub-theme 9.3: Parents' will and awareness

Similar to commitment, the will and the awareness of the Arabic-speaking parents made the difference in their children's life. For example, one participant indicated:

But the main thing in all of this, is the will of the parents. The will of the parents, if the father or the mother is speaking the language at home with the children, I think that is very important. (S5M)

Another participant expressed her awareness and sense of responsibility as a mother in using her mother tongue with her family and friends. Her awareness about the maintenance of her language was apparent from her insistence to speak Arabic only in her surroundings. She indicated:

... If I want to communicate with my country, with my family, my friends over there, I have to use Arabic. No way to use a single English word. For Muslim and Arab people basically. We do not have to forget this language. (S15F)

According to this participant, Arabic was the only means of communication with relatives and friends, especially those who lived overseas. This participant also noted that Muslims and Arabs should not forget the Arabic language because it reflects who they are, and they are recognized by their language.

Similarly, another participant showed her sense of awareness and responsibility as a mother in the following comment:

... If I work here, I feel that we will lose something here. So, I must stay home and try and maintain this beautiful language and culture. (S20F)

The awareness of this female participant is seen in her worries about losing her mother tongue. She was aware of the importance of her language and culture and it was her choice to stay at home to maintain and transmit her language and culture to her children, instead of working and neglecting her first priority as a mother.

In a nutshell, factors such as solidarity, commitment and the parents' will and awareness were seen to be significant for the intergenerational maintenance and transmission of the Arabic language.

The findings of the first part of the data analysis reflected the participants' thoughts and perspectives about the maintenance of their community language under the daily pressure of the host country language. The careful analysis of the interview transcripts of the participants entailed nine themes and several sub-themes which represented the answers to the research questions. These emerged themes are seen as the factors contributing to the maintenance of Arabic language among the Arabic-speaking community in the regional city of Toowoomba.

4.3.2 Description of themes extracted from participant observation

In addition to the themes extracted from the interviews, there were also other themes derived from the long extended participant observation in the field of study. The researcher spent almost six months in the field, participating in some of the participants' activities and celebrating their national and religious events (see Table 3.2). These themes also represent the findings of this study, and have contributed to addressing the research questions. The majority of the categories represent the factors contributing to the maintenance of Arabic language within

the Arabic-speaking community under study. Additionally, these themes emerged during the period of data analysis and they confirmed what the participants mentioned during the interviews, and enriched the data supplied by them. The researcher provided a detailed description of their social settings, participants, their interactions, language, culture, and attitudes. Table 4.14 summarises the themes and sub-themes:

Table 4.14: Summary of themes and sub-themes from participant observation

| Themes | Sub-themes | Frequency |
|---|---|------------------|
| The use of Arabic in several domains | The use of Arabic between friends | 18/20 |
| | The use of Arabic within the community | 20/20 |
| | The use of Arabic among the family members | 20/20 |
| Teaching Arabic language at the mosque by the Imam | Offering Arabic classes by the Muslim committee of the mosque | 20/20 |
| | Weekend and holiday classes for the children of the community | 20/20 |
| Parents efforts to maintain Arabic for their children | Motivating children to speak in Arabic | 15/20 |
| | Bringing children to the mosque to learn Arabic | 18/20 |
| The significant role that the mosque plays in the maintenance of Arabic and Islamic culture | The committee of the mosque organises different cultural competitions | 20/20 |
| | The role of the mosque in organizing activities such as reciting the Qur'an | 20/20 |
| Cultural activities implemented by the Arab community | Competition of Qur'an organized by the community of the mosque | 20/20 |
| | Lectures delivered by Islamic scholars and university teachers. | 20/20 |
| Arabic speakers are in frequent communication with the relatives overseas | Communication with relatives | 10/20 |
| | Communicating with friends | 10/20 |
| Summer holiday visits to the home country | Visiting the home country during the holiday | 10/20 |
| The group solidarity of the Arabic-speaking community | Building institutions | 20/20 |
| | Opening shops and restaurants to serve the community | 10/20 |
| | Attending events organised by the community | 20/20 |
| | Charity in Ramadan (feeding people) | 20/20 |

4.3.2.1 Theme 1: The use of Arabic in Several Domains

During the analysis of the interviews, the participants spoke about their use of the Arabic language in several domains, including family, friendship, and

community as shown in Table 4.2. English was also used when necessary. Data analysis of observational notes revealed that Arabic speakers mostly spoke Arabic when they got together in their community. Also, they spoke English with non-Arabic speakers at the mosque. The non-Arabic speakers refer to other Muslims such as Malaysians, Indonesians, Pakistani, Indians and Australians who have a limited proficiency in Arabic to be used in performing their prayers. The participant observation was conducted primarily at the mosque and some notes from parks and soccer fields where the participants in this study usually gathered. The participant observation confirmed what was said during the interviews. The following is a descriptive statement from the participant observation at the mosque, and the abbreviation “OC” refers to Observer Comment reflecting on some observations in the research field:

The participant observation of Arabic speakers in the mosque revealed that Arabic-speaking parents who participated in this study speak the Arabic language in their daily interactions with other speakers from the same background mostly. Also, they speak English with non-Arabic speakers who come to perform their daily prayers. (OC: *Non-Arabic speakers who always come to the mosque are from different countries such as India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia, Somalia and Eretria. Some of these speakers can read Arabic but they do not speak it as they have their own mother tongues*). The researcher observed that Arabic speakers sometimes shift between Arabic and English when they speak to each other, especially students when they were talking about assignments and university issues. Some parents brought their children with them, especially during Friday prayers to play and mix with other children. (OC: *Friday prayers are compulsory where the sermon is delivered in one hour by the Imam of the mosque who is the leader of the prayers and the preacher*). The majority of the parents speak only Arabic with their children. There are only a few parents who speak English with some Arabic words with their children. The reason is that these children are not exposed to the Arabic language much at home because their mothers are not Arabic speakers. Most of the children at the mosque especially those who go to school or kindergarten speak English to each other. It is observed that most of the children are able to speak Arabic very well but their preferences go to English when they get together. (OC: *This preference of using English by children resulted from the influence of the school or the English speaking environment*).

It was also noticeable that Arabic-speaking parents in this study preferred to use their language to express themselves rather than English. This observational data was in line with what they mentioned in the interviews. Table 4.15 summarises the language domains where the Arabic language is used according to the observational notes in the research field.

Table 4.15: The use of Arabic in several domains that emerged from the participant observation

| Language Domain | Addressee | Setting | Language | Topic |
|-----------------|---|---|----------------------------|---|
| Family | Parents and children | Home/ Mosque | Arabic, English, Mix | Miscellaneous |
| Friendship | Friends | Mosque, parks and university soccer fields | Arabic, English, Mix | About studies, work, soccer, politics |
| Neighbours | Neighbour | Mosque | Arabic, English, Mix | Meeting with neighbours Attending Food Festival Neighbours invited |
| Community | Arabic speakers and non-Arabic speakers, Imam of the mosque | Mosque | Arabic, English, Mix | Celebrating Ramadan Celebrating religious feasts Cultural activities Cooking and inviting people for dinner at the mosque |
| Religion | Arabic speakers and non-Arabic speakers, Imam of the mosque | Mosque | Arabic, English, Mix | Reading and reciting the Qur'an Interpretation of the Qur'an Miscellaneous lectures |
| Education | Imam, Arabic speakers (majority) and non- Arabic speakers | Mosque | Arabic | Teaching Arabic Teaching the Qur'an Reciting the Qur'an |

As Table 4.15 indicates, the participants in this study used the Arabic language in several domains, including family domain among parents and children and among the children themselves. Also, Arabic is used among neighbours and friends as well as within the Arabic-speaking community. Additionally, it is observed that Arabic speakers in this study used Arabic in other domains such as religion and education. These last two domains are related to each other

because Arabic is a language for worship and for teaching and learning religious education at the mosque such as teaching the Qur'an to the children of the community.

4.3.2.2 Theme 2: Teaching Arabic Language at the Mosque by the Imam

In addition to findings from interviews about the teaching of Arabic to children, participant observations in the field confirmed the significant role of teaching in the Arabic language. The participant observer noticed that the parents were aware of the role of learning the Arabic language. The majority of the parents brought their children to the mosque to learn and practice Arabic with other children of their age. The following statement is extracted from participant observation at the mosque:

The mosque is a place to worship God and perform prayers. Many Arabic speakers go to the mosque every day to pray including the participants in this study. The Muslim community manages to have Madrasa (Informal teaching class) at the mosque. The teacher is the Imam of the mosque. Arabic-speaking participants in this study bring their children every weekend, on Saturday and Sunday at 3.30 pm to learn Arabic. The class is about 2 hours from the afternoon prayer till the sunset prayer. The Imam of the mosque has designed a teaching program to cover the necessary issues for learning the Arabic language, such as reading, writing, and counting in Arabic, and he also teaches the children short verses of the Qur'an and how to recite them correctly. (OC: *Madrasa is for everyone at the mosque, including non-Arabic speakers from India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and Australia.* The mosque also offers Arabic classes during the children's school holiday; all Arabic-speaking parents including the participants in this study prefer to enrol their children for the holiday to achieve a proper level in Arabic.

4.3.2.3 Theme 3: Parents' Efforts to Maintain Arabic for their children

Parents played a significant role in the maintenance of the Arabic language. Their positive attitude towards maintaining Arabic and preserving it for their children was noticeable in their everyday actions.

The participants in this study speak the Arabic language with their children when they come together at the mosque. It was observed that some the participants make sure that their children are sitting next to them while they are praying or listening to the sermon. Also, their positive attitude and desire to teach Arabic to the children is apparent

in their free time to bring them to Madrasa to learn Arabic and memorize the Qur'an.

4.3.2.4 Theme 4: The major role of the mosque in maintaining Arabic and Islamic culture

This theme appeared to be the core of the learning and teaching process. The mosque had a great influence on the maintenance and transmission of the Arabic language. This is not just because it offered classes, but because it was the centre of all activities, events and celebrations.

Many Muslims including the Arabic speakers in this study gathered together at the mosque, they celebrated Ramadan at the mosque, and also the two feasts: Feast at the end of the Fast, known as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice). Also, the Committee of the mosque invited Arabic speakers to deliver lectures to the people. The researcher attended two lectures with Arabic and non-Arabic speakers. The speaker was an Associate Professor at the University of Southern Queensland and was an Arabic speaker who spoke Arabic as his mother tongue. The first lecture was addressed to the students because it was "About how to do research". The speaker spoke only in English because the lecture required the use of English and also for everyone to understand, since there were many non-Arabic speakers as well. The second lecture, delivered by the same professor, was about "critical thinking". It was observed that some of the participants attended with their children most of the events at the mosque especially the religious celebrations. The participants spoke Arabic with their children and other friends from the same background and they spoke English with other Muslims who did not speak Arabic.

Table 4.16 summarises the significant role of the mosque in the daily life of the Arabic-speaking community.

Table 4.16: Role of Toowoomba Mosque

| Role of the Toowoomba Mosque | |
|--|--|
| Activities | Aims |
| Teaching Arabic to the children of the Muslim community | To keep the Arabic language alive and transfer to the second generation children. Children learn how to write, read and count in Arabic. They learn how to recite the Qur'an correctly |
| Interpretation of the Qur'an to Arabic and non-Arabic speakers | The Imam of the mosque offers lessons about the interpretation of the Qur'an |

| Role of the Toowoomba Mosque | |
|--|---|
| Inviting key speakers to give lectures to people | The committee of the mosque invites some scholars to come and give lectures at the mosque that can benefit people |
| Organizing events and activities at the mosque | Open Day, Food Festival, BBQ gatherings and camping |
| Celebrating religious events | Ramadan, Feast after Ramadan, Feast of Sacrifice and the Prophet's Birthday |
| Selling Halal meat and bread for the community | The mosque's committee is in charge to provide the Muslims with halal meat and bread |
| Conducting religious marriages | The Imam is a marriage celebrant and a counsellor for the wedding or divorce issues |

4.3.2.5 Theme 5: Religious and cultural celebrations and events held at the mosque

The researcher conducted participant observations at the mosque during the time of data collection while he was a member of the community. Many activities take place in the mosque where people celebrate their cultural and religious events such as Ramadan (fasting), feasts, food festivals and newborn baby as shown in Table 3.2. The researcher observed the Arabic speakers in this study during the whole month of Ramadan, where all participants came to pray and share dinner with other Muslim people. These activities and functions represented their identity as Arab Muslims. In these functions and events, the researcher focused on the language that the participants used in their communication.

4.3.2.5.1 Celebration of Ramadan

Arabic speakers and most Muslims in Toowoomba gathered at the mosque after the Night Prayer for a dinner waiting for the announcement of the first day of Ramadan. They enjoyed the dinner with their family, and they were very excited to start fasting. The beginning of the first day of Ramadan is based on the moon sighting, which sometimes is very hard to see in Toowoomba. The Arabic speakers and the Muslim community received the information from the Islamic Council of Brisbane declaring that Ramadan was held the next day. Muslims fast from dawn till the sunset (*OC: Fasting means no food, no drink and no sexual intercourse with their wives during the day, from 5.00am to 5.30 pm*). Arabic speakers prepared for this month; they cooked for almost 200 people at the mosque. They wrote their names on the list of supplying meals. (*OC: The list or schedule contains names and nationalities of people cooking for the 30 days of*

fasting, for example: Day 1, 1st day of Ramadan, the Iraqi community, Day2, 2nd day of Ramadan, Saudi Arabia, etc.) It was observed that people cooked at the mosque, and they used its facilities such as gas, cooking stove, big pots, plates and spices. They brought only their cooking ingredients such as sheep or goats, chickens, bags of rice and vegetables. The mosque's community supplied juice, milk, water, dates and plastic cups. Only men were in charge to cook the big meals at the mosque and women prepared only sweets at home.

The researcher observed during the time of data collection that many Arabic speakers stayed at the mosque between the afternoon prayer and sunset prayer, praying and reading the Qur'an. Then, some of them waited to break the fast at the mosque, and others preferred to break the fast at home with their wives and children. Once the sunset, the caller called for the prayer, and people started breaking the fast with milk and dates, before they prayed. After the sunset prayer, they sat in groups of 4 or 5 waiting to be served dinner. There were some volunteers who served them dinner, and these volunteers would eat later. The Arabic speakers ate and talked at the same time. It was observed that Arabic speakers always gathered and sat with people of the same background to use Arabic in their conversations; other nationalities like Indian, Indonesian, and Bangladeshi sat with their own people to chat in their mother tongues. Some Arabic speakers brought their children with them in praying, and they had dinner with other children. Also, some neighbours and friends from other denominations were invited to share the meal with Muslims. Arabic speakers at the mosque used Arabic amongst themselves and children, and some English, mostly when they addressed non-Arabic speakers. Additionally, after the night prayer, there was a video lesson to watch and discuss in both Arabic and English because of the mixture of attendance. Some videos were about the benefits of fasting, and charity during Ramadan in helping the poor. On the 27th day of Ramadan, there was a competition of reciting the Qur'an by the children, organised by the Muslim committee of the mosque. Every child would get a prize by the first day of the feast and the end of Ramadan. The first five children got iPads for memorising and reciting long verses of the holy Qur'an and those who recited short verses got some toys and a school bag.

4.3.2.5.2 Celebration of Eid al-Fitr (The feast of breaking the fast)

Arabic speakers and the majority of Muslims in the city of Toowoomba came to the mosque for early Morning Prayer. Most of them brought their wives and children. The researcher, during the period of data collection, observed their beautiful traditional clothes that represented their culture and traditions. It was observable that some of them were carrying dishes of sweets, fruits and meals. The mosque's committee bought dates, juice and water while the food was brought by people. Some of the mosque's neighbours and religious denominations were

invited to attend the feast and share the happiness with the Muslim community. People put the food on the tables aside and started praying and reading the Qur'an until the time of the sermon. The sermon began at 7.00 am and finished at 8.00am. The Imam was talking about the benefits of fasting during Ramadan, and this feast was a reward for such a sacred act. After that all people started greeting each other, talking and sharing the meal until 11.00am. It was observed that most of the Arabic speakers were talking in the Arabic language, but the majority of their children were using English because they were playing with other children from their school who came from different backgrounds.

4.3.2.5.3 Food festival

Arabic speakers and the Muslim community organized a food festival at the time of the research. They invited all the neighbours, friends from multi-faith denominations, the University vice-chancellor and the academic staff. They set up many food tents and stalls. They served different varieties of food representing their diverse cultures and traditions. These traditional foods included Iraqi food, Saudi Arabian food, Turkish, Indian, Indonesian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi food and coffee. (*OC: The money from the sales of food goes to the fund of the mosque to support the teaching of Arabic and the Qur'an to the children of the community*). Arabic speakers bring their children and wives. The mosque hired a game for children to play. The festival started at 9.00 am and people started coming in big numbers around 10.00 am to buy and taste different food and sweets. Saudi Arabians were serving free Arabian coffee with dates, and they were displaying their traditional clothes for women and men. Some Arabic speakers got dressed according to their cultures, especially the Saudi Arabians, who were all in a white gown and red scarfs and Libyans in their traditional pants and vests. The participants were using Arabic when they talked to each other and English was also used to communicate with the non-Arabic speaking guests who came to attend the festival. Their children used Arabic with their parents and English when they talked to other children.

4.3.2.5.4 Muslim open day

The Muslim community in the city of Toowoomba organised an open day at the mosque, and they invited students, university staff, neighbours, friends and some leaders from different church denominations. (*OC: The open day is once a year, and it is held at the beginning of the academic semester to help the newly arrived students and to bring the community together*). Also, there were some books and leaflets to give to the guests about Islam and Muslims. This day also aimed to educate people about the true teaching of Islam and raise awareness amongst the community. (*OC: The image of Islam has been interrupted by misconceptions and stereotypes that the media promote*

these days, which is why the mosque organises this event once a year). The organisers of the open day aimed to facilitate the integrity between Muslims and non-Muslims and promote understanding and peace in the city of Toowoomba. The English language was mostly used because people came from different backgrounds to join Muslims and Arabic speakers. Also, the people in charge on this day responded to the various questions in the English language. The Arabic language was only used between the Arabic speakers.

4.3.2.5.5 Newborn baby party

This event took place at the mosque whenever a member from the community had a new baby. *(OC: This party is to give a name to a newborn baby, the father has to name him/her baby, and he is obliged to slaughter a sheep and feed people).* The Imam of the mosque announced this happy news at the Friday prayers and invited everyone to come to dinner and to celebrate and congratulate the father. The father and his friends started cooking at the mosque after the sunset prayer, and the dinner would be served late after the night prayer. The meal is always rice, meat and salad. People were requested to stay for dinner. After the end of the night prayers, the Arabic speakers stayed at the mosque chatting in the Arabic language and waiting to be served dinner. They only used English in the presence of non-Arabic speakers. The food was served, and people sat in groups of four or five to eat. Arabic speakers were talking in Arabic, and the non-Arabic speakers used either their language, like Indian and Bangladeshi, or spoke in English. *(CO: Many languages are spoken at the mosque, but the Arabic language is the most spoken because of the numbers of speakers).* After the food, the people in the mosque started going home, but some of the Arabic speakers were still talking for a while.

4.3.2.6 Theme 6: Frequent communication with relatives and friends overseas

Arabic speakers are usually attached to their home country, relatives and friends. They communicate all the time with relatives and friends:

The researcher observed that one of the participants who participated in the interviews was walking around and talking on his phone. He was talking with a soft voice and a group of other Arabic speakers were standing in a group and talking. Then, the researcher decided to join them and they told him that the participant who was talking on the phone just received a call from his cousin informing him about the loss of his brother in an accident. The participant was talking to his relatives for over 40 minutes. After he finished talking, the researcher approached him to present sympathy and asked him what happened.

He was planning to go home and see the family and stay a month with them to share their sadness.

4.3.2.7 Theme 7: Summer holiday visits to the home country

The researcher's observational notes at the mosque revealed that many Arabic speakers, including those who contributed to the interviews, were not around. Their absence could be seen especially during the Friday prayers, which is a compulsory prayer that requires the presence of everyone. Some of the Arabic speakers go every year to their home countries to visit their relatives and come back either to finish their studies or return to their jobs. However, not all Arabic speakers have the chance to go for a holiday with their children. The reasons are varied and include the financial cost of traveling with four or five kids, the distance between Australia and the Arabic countries, and sometimes the time because of their children being at school. Other reasons include political reasons; some Arabic speakers were under protection visas and were not allowed to travel at the time of the data collection. However, all the Arabic-speaking parents desired to take their children to visit their relatives overseas and to interact with other children and practise the language.

The analysis of the observational notes revealed information about the themes and sub-themes which represented the findings of this study and answered the research questions. These emerged themes, as shown in Table 4.17, entailed the factors contributing to the maintenance of the Arabic language among the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba. These factors include language maintenance domains, the role of the mosque, teaching Arabic language at the mosque, etc. The findings or the themes that emerged from the participant observation confirmed the participants' thoughts during the interviews.

4.3.3 Description of themes extracted from the researchers' personal journal

The research journal involves some notes that were taken in the research field during the interviews and participant observations. This journal is the third form of data collection used by the researcher. The researcher recorded his information about the participants during the interviews and participant observation. The information was related to their actions and views about the phenomenon under study. Interviews and participant observations were the main source of data and the research journal was a secondary source to be

implemented in this study in order to triangulate the data and enhance the credibility of the findings. Table 4.17 includes the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the researcher's journal in his reflections and descriptions of the participants' actions.

Table 4.18: Themes and sub-themes emerging from the personal journal

| Themes | Sub-themes | Frequency |
|--|---|------------------|
| Solidarity and the commitment of the community | The role of the community in bringing people together | 20/20 |
| Cultural activities organised by the community | Social activities took place during the month of Ramadan | 20/20 |
| | Teaching how to recite the Qur'an correctly | 20/20 |
| | Competitions in reciting the verses from the Qur'an | 20/20 |
| The spirit of the brotherhood in the community between Arabic speakers and non-Arabic speakers | Non-Arabic speakers are interested in learning Arabic from the Arabic speakers | 20/20 |
| | Non-Arabic speakers do not feel offended in listening to the Arabic speakers | |
| Parents bringing their children for weekend Arabic classes | Children come after school hours and during the weekend and holidays to the mosque to learn Arabic | 20/20 |
| Communication in the community | Children tend to speak English more than Arabic with their friends, they switch to Arabic only with their parents | 15/20 |

The presentation of the results that ensued from different data collection methods revealed the development of several themes and sub-themes. These themes or categories represented the participants' experiences and views about the maintenance of their community language in their settings.

4.4 Summary of findings

The findings presented rich information derived from participants' experiences in dealing with the Arabic language in a non-Arabic city. The major themes emerged from a careful analysis of the semi-structured interviews, and participant observation, and the research journal contributed to building a holistic picture of the community under study. Moreover, results extracted from the data analysis portrayed the diverse factors that helped in the maintenance of the Arabic language within the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba.

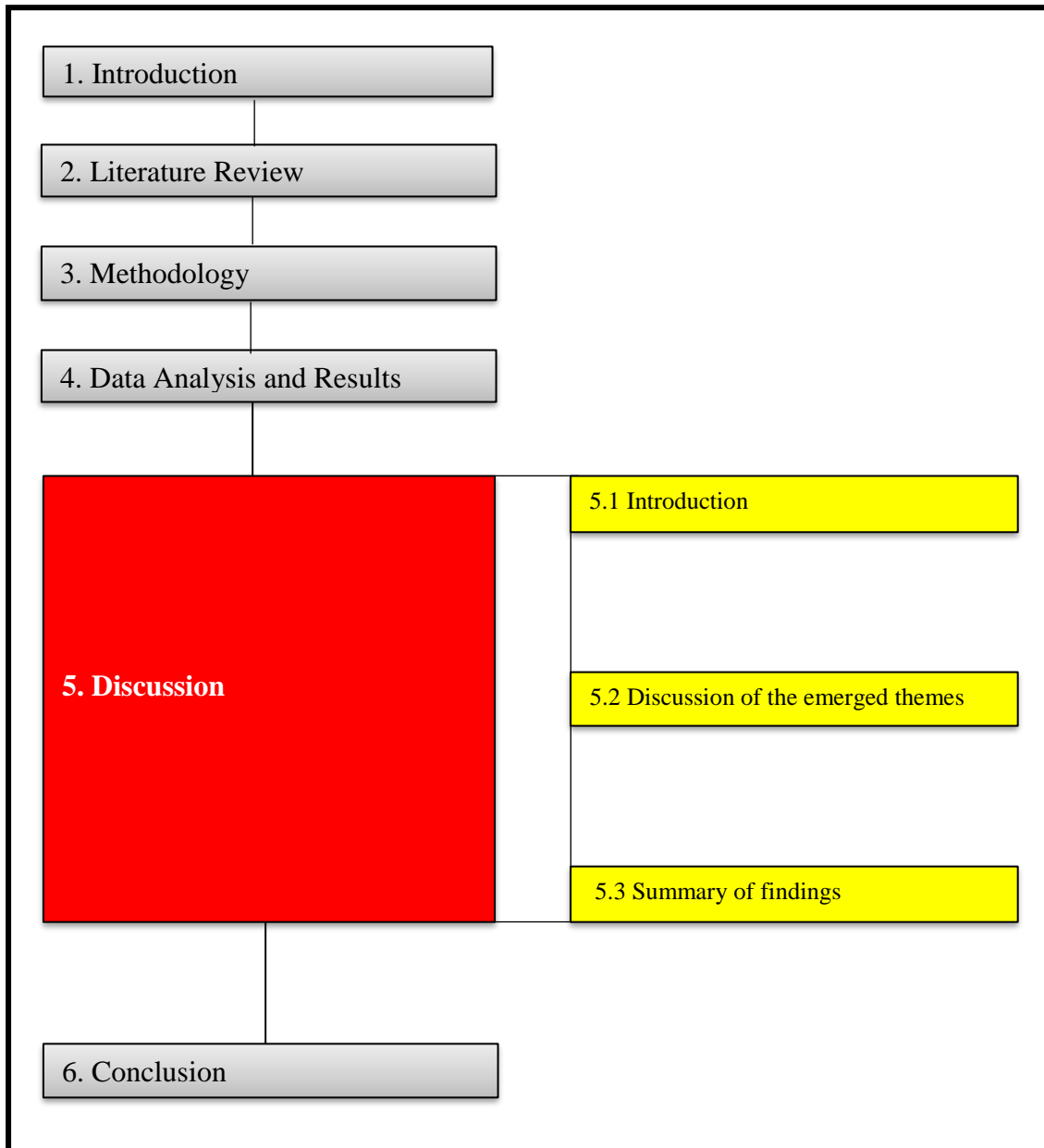
The triangulation of the themes from the three aforementioned qualitative forms of data collection revealed no discrepancy between the themes. On the contrary, all themes were found to be similar and completing each other, and reflecting the participants' thoughts and experiences about the maintenance of their community language. Furthermore, this triangulation contributed to increasing the credibility of the findings. The themes extracted from this qualitative inquiry helped to provide the answers to the research questions.

In the next chapter, the results are discussed, and interpretations are provided of the experiences and challenges of the Arabic-speaking community in the regional city of Toowoomba. The findings are linked to the existing literature and a conceptual framework to check their relevance.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

CHAPTER 5: A Highlighted Outline of Discussion



5 CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This study investigated the maintenance of the Arabic language within the Arabic speaking community in the regional city of Toowoomba, aiming to identify factors contributing to such maintenance. The researcher sought to capture the daily life of the participants and provide rich ethnographic descriptions, analysis and interpretations of this community. This chapter discusses the significant key findings by examining the themes and sub-themes that were identified in relation to the maintenance of Arabic in this community. Nine themes emerged from the participants' transcripts which described their views and perspectives about their first language. Accordingly, these themes are considered to be the core factors or determinants for the maintenance of Arabic language within the Arabic-speaking community. At the same time, these themes are responses to the research questions.

5.2 Discussion of the key findings (Themes and Sub-themes)

In order to answer the research questions of this study, this discussion chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section refers to factors contributing to the maintenance of the Arabic language. These factors include socio-demographic factors, language maintenance domains, socio-cultural factors, institutional support factors, socio-psychological factors, social network factors and other factors such as group solidarity. The second section portrays the Arabic speakers' challenges and recommendations in regards to the maintenance of their community language.

5.2.1 Factors contributing to the maintenance of Arabic language

This current study encompasses many factors such as individual, group and societal factors that contribute, not just to the maintenance of Arabic language among the first generation parents, but also refers to language transmission to second generation children. Some of these factors have already been investigated in the existing literature and reflect on the current situation of the Arabic language in its regular contact with the host language and culture.

Figure 5.1 summarizes these factors as the major themes for a better understanding of the language maintenance phenomenon.

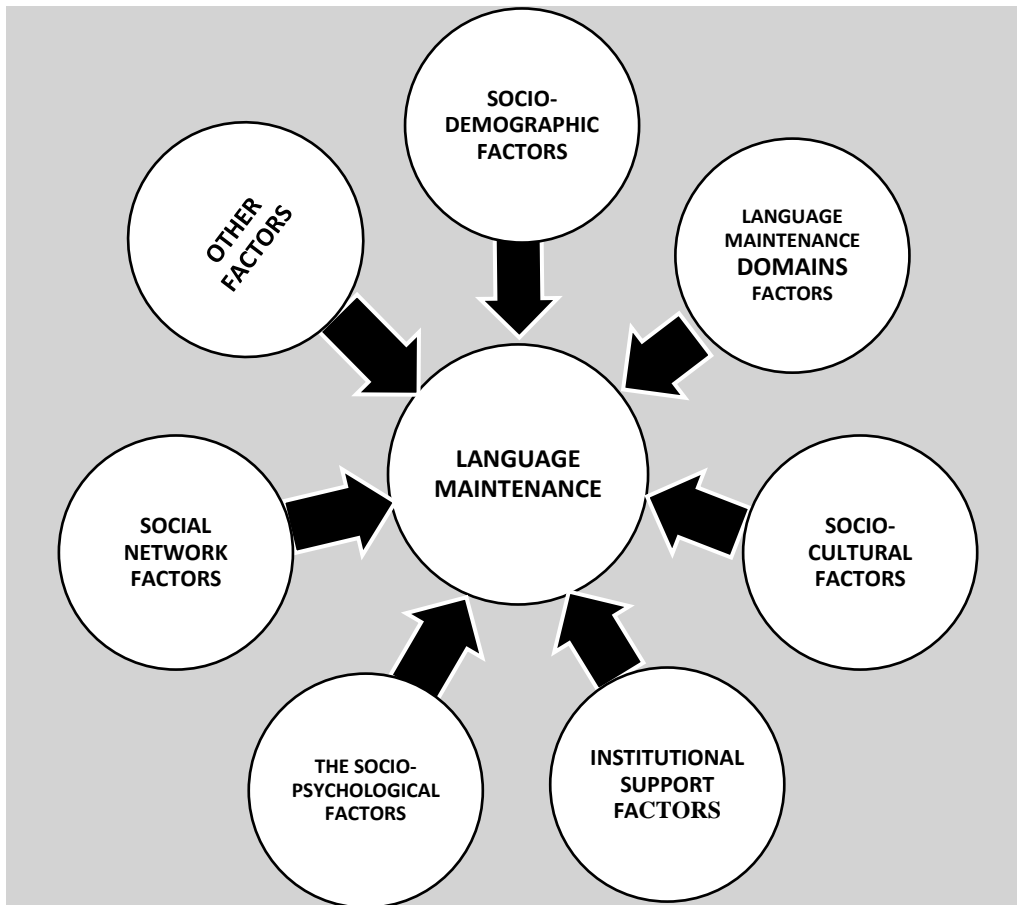


Figure 5.1: The final key themes revealed from the findings

This diagram represents all the factors influencing Arabic language maintenance that were identified in this study. All of these factors include the major themes as presented earlier in Chapter 4. These factors are interrelated, and they are more efficient when they are combined together. Most of these macro factors that encompass several themes are discussed extensively in the literature that addresses language maintenance models and theories. However, there are some micro themes (sub-themes) underneath the macro themes that are new findings of this study. These new micro themes refer to volunteer women teaching Arabic language at home and volunteer women doing the job

of a nanny in Australia and looking after the Arab children. These micro themes are part of the socio-cultural factors.

5.2.1.1 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Research on immigrant languages has revealed that socio-demographic factors may influence the maintenance of community languages either positively or negatively (Clyne, 2003, 2005; Holmes, 2013; Namei, 2012). These factors include the concentration of the Arabic-speaking community, time of arrival and duration of stay (recent arrival), gender, age and patterns of exogamy and endogamy. Figure 5.2 summarises these socio-demographic factors:

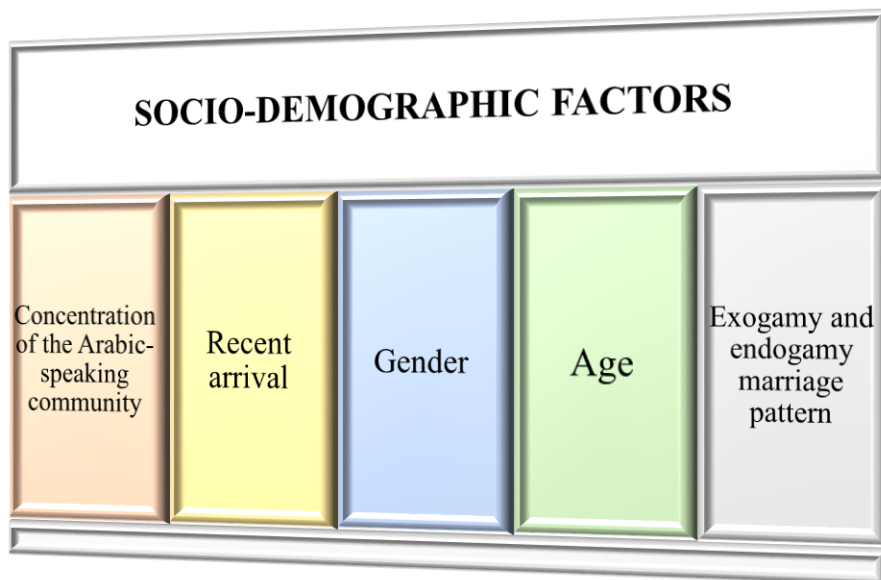


Figure 5.2: Socio-demographic factors in Arabic language maintenance

5.2.1.1.1 Concentration of the Arabic-speaking community

Concentration refers to the number of speakers who live in one place and use their community language in their everyday interaction, as opposed to dispersion where there are not enough people to speak the community language. According to the researcher's observational notes, the majority of the Arabic speakers in the city of Toowoomba reside between the mosque and the university. They are not as numerically established as in big cities like Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane (ABS, 2011), but the size of the Arabic-speaking community is gradually increasing, especially with the arrival of new

international students and their families. Additionally, most of these students decided to settle down in Australia for many reasons such as building a good future for their children, job opportunities and escaping from war zones and instability in their home countries, especially students from Libya and Iraq. This geographical concentration in numbers contributes effectively to the maintenance of their Arabic language as well as to its transmission to the second generation children. This finding is consistent with Holmes (2013), Lee (2013) and Sanchez-Castro and Gil's (2009) findings. They found that the geographical concentration of the community in one area allowed for the maintenance and transmission of the community languages. Furthermore, these results align with Jamaï (2008) who reported that the French language is well-maintained in Quebec, Canada because of the high concentration of its speakers. However, outside Quebec, there is a shift in Canada to English due to the low concentration of French speakers.

It should be noted that the numerical strength of Arabic speakers in large groups allows them to establish their institutions such as building a big mosque in order to fit the growing number of people and teaching Arabic classes to the children. Additionally, some new shops and restaurants are established and run by Arabs and non-Arab Muslims, such as Egyptian restaurants, Somalian stores, Iraqi restaurants, Turkish restaurants, Indian restaurants and Bangladeshi restaurants. This is similar to Holmes's (2013) findings which showed that the Greek community in Wellington, New Zealand was able to establish shops for the Greek people to provide them with some imported goods from Greece. Furthermore, this view is consistent with Kloss's (1966) model which claimed that the numerical strengths of the community language speakers may allow them to build their institutions (e.g., schools) that serve their language. However, this finding contradicts Arfi's (2008) findings, who claimed that numerical strengths of Algerians in France seems to be a shift factor towards the French language rather than a maintenance factor.

5.2.1.1.2 Recent Arrival

Studies on language maintenance show that the recent arrival of immigrants contributes to the maintenance of community languages more so than less recent arrivals (Clyne, 2005; Hatoss, 2005b; Sanchez-Castro & Gil, 2009). Most of the Arabic speakers in the regional city of Toowoomba are recent arrival immigrants who came in the last decade. The majority of the Arabic speakers arrived in Australia to pursue their studies, and a few of them arrived under a refugee status. It was observed from the research that all the Arabic speakers are fluent in Arabic language as well as some of their children. This finding is consistent with Clyne (2005), Hatoss (2005b) and Sanchez-Castro Gil's (2009) findings, who argue that recent arrival speakers are often successful in maintaining their community languages. Similarly, this finding also matches Turjoman's (2013) findings who stated that the mothers who have recently moved to live in the US are more successful in teaching Arabic to their children than those who immigrated longer ago. This result also matches with several language maintenance models such as Conklin and Lourie's (1983), Fishman's (1991) and Kloss's (1966) who claimed that the newly arrived immigrants are more likely to maintain their original languages than those who immigrated early to the host country.

5.2.1.1.3 Gender

Research that has been done on community languages revealed that gender is an influential socio-demographic factor determining either the maintenance or shift of the community language (Clyne, 2005; Rubino, 2010). In this study, male participants were more likely to maintain their Arabic language than female participants at home. Results indicated that there was only one female participant out of eight who reported that she spoke Arabic only with her children at home, and the rest tended to speak mix of both Arabic and English. This finding contradicts Clyne's (2005) findings who argued that females are more likely to maintain their language than males at home, particularly amongst immigrants who came from the Middle East. Clyne's claims relate to the fact that most of the statistics and investigations took place in urban cities where the

majority of immigrants from the Middle East reside, while this research is investigating Arabic language in a small regional area.

5.2.1.1.4 Age

In this study, there is a significant variation in language maintenance between the age groups within the same family. Older parents are more successfully maintaining their Arabic language than their younger second generation children. The interview and participant observation data revealed that the Arabic-speaking parents are more proficient in the Arabic language than their children. Results showed that children tend to adopt English in most of their interaction, especially outside the home environment. The reason behind that is clear. Parents came to Australia as adults, unlike their children who were born here, or they came with their parents at an early age. Also, the Arabic-speaking children are exposed to the English language with their peers at school. This finding is consistent with Hatoss et al.'s (2011) research which found that the loss of the language is prevalent among the young children who migrated with their parents at an early age. This also parallels many studies that found that language maintenance is very common among the first generation, while the shift to English is prevalent among the second and third generation children (Clyne; 2003, 2005; Fishman, 1966). It is important to mention at this stage that most of the Arabic-speaking children in this study can speak Arabic, but they prefer English as they are more proficient at it than Arabic because of the influence of the school environment.

5.2.1.1.5 Exogamy and Endogamy Marriage Pattern

Researchers have found that the maintenance of community languages could be affected by exogamous or endogamous marriage. Exogamous marriage can lead to language shift, while endogamous marriage contributes effectively to language maintenance. In this study, only two participants reported that their wives were from a different ethnic background. These two exogamous marriages led to slower language shift to English among the children because English was the language of communication among family members. In this

case, English was the most spoken language in these homes because the wives were not able to understand or speak Arabic with their children. However, the children still had access to Arabic via their fathers as well as the Arab community at the mosque. It is indicated from the data that the exogamy rate is very small among Arabic speakers in Australia and specifically in Toowoomba. The impact of mixed marriage or exogamy has been investigated by Clyne and Kipp (1999). Their results showed that the second generation children of intra-ethnic marriages are most likely to maintain their community languages, based on those groups that have a lesser language shift in the first generation (Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan) and also second generation children from Turkey and Lebanon, who experience a lower shift because of low exogamy rates.

This finding matches Clyne and Kipp's (1999) findings, who found a lower shift among Arabic speakers because of high endogamy rates. This finding is supported by many other researchers such as Baker (2011), Holmes (2013) and Namei (2012), who argued that mixed marriage may lead to a shift from maintaining and transmitting the community language to the children because the parents speak a different language at home. However, this was not the case in this study because the Arabic-speaking parents were not in favour of mixed marriages according to their responses during the interviews.

It is worth noting that these socio-demographic factors, which include the geographical concentration of speakers, arrival year, gender, age, and patterns of exogamy and endogamy are congruent with the theories and models of the existing literature as well as relevant to the conceptual framework factors. These socio-demographic factors were found to be very important components in the formation of the conceptual framework of this study, due to their contributions to the maintenance of Arabic among the Arabic-speaking community in the regional city of Toowoomba.

5.2.1.2 LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE DOMAIN FACTORS

The maintenance of the Arabic language among the Arabic-speaking community in this study was based on its constant use in several domains. These domains are considered paramount for the maintenance of any community language and they include home/family, friendship, neighbours and community. Figure 5.3 portrays these language maintenance domains.

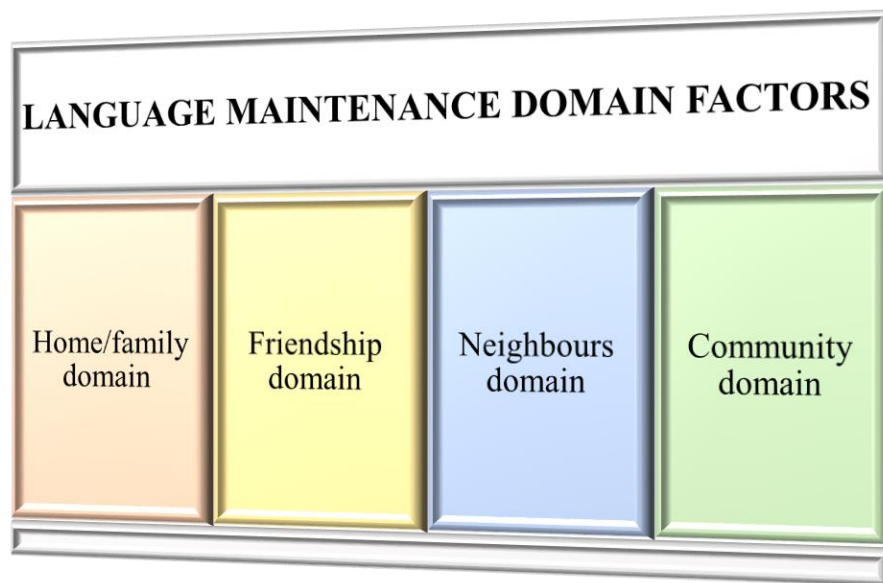


Figure 5.3: Language maintenance domain factors

As indicated in the interviews and participant observation, Arabic-speaking parents consider language domains to be crucial factors in the maintenance of their community language. The majority of the participants reported the use of Arabic in several domains and it was not restricted only to informal, intimate domains such as family, friends, and community. Arabic was used in teaching, religion and the media. Hence, the use of Arabic in multiple areas increases its importance and motivates children to learn and speak it. As noted by Appel and Muysken (2006), the value of the minority languages may decline if they are used only in very limited domains.

Furthermore, Arabic speakers in this study tended to speak a mix of Arabic and English with different people within various contexts. This is natural in

multilingual and multicultural societies, where both the majority and minority languages are in constant contact. Thus, Arabic speakers speak English with non-Arabic speakers and Arabic with Arabic speakers. This shift between two languages, Arabic as a mother tongue and English as a dominant language, is referred to as the code-switching phenomenon. It refers to the linguistic ability to speak both Arabic as a mother tongue and English as a second language. The mastery of both Arabic and English allows the Arabic speakers to switch from one language to another with different people and in different contexts. Benrabah (2013) claims that the continuous use of code-switching in everyday interaction is a sign that the majority language (English) will not eliminate minority languages. This claim applies to the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba where both languages are used side by side without a great negative impact from the dominant language due to the competitive role of Arabic.

5.2.1.2.1 Home/Family Domain

Based on the majority of participants' statements, the home/family factor is the best strategy for the intergenerational maintenance and transmission of Arabic. The majority of Arabic-speaking parents focused more on speaking Arabic at home within the family than English, in order to facilitate the intergenerational transmission of the language. This finding is supported by several researchers and advocates of minority languages (Hatoss, 2013; Clyne, 2005; Fishman, 2001, Gomaa, 2011; Othman, 2006; Pauwels, 2005). Pauwels (2005) reported that the family is an essential domain for the development of the community language. Also, Fishman's (1991, 2001) model indicates that the intergenerational transmission of the community language at home is needed for its maintenance. Stage six in Fishman's model is relevant to the maintenance of the Arabic language among the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba, amongst whom intergenerational use of Arabic in the home, family, neighbourhood and community takes place on a regular basis in daily interactions because of its importance and value among this community.

More support for the importance of the home as a factor in the maintenance and transmission of the community language to the second generation was found by Hatoss (2013) who stated: "Still, home language use is the most important factor in intergenerational language maintenance" (p. 73). Similarly, Gomaa (2011) noted that the home is the best factor for the maintenance and transmission of the Arabic language because it allows for its constant use in peoples' everyday lives.

Additionally, Othman (2006) in his investigation into the Arabic-speaking community in Manchester, Britain, reported that 'home' is the most significant and effective domain for the maintenance and transmission of Arabic language to second generation children. This is due to the fact that children are constantly motivated to speak in Arabic with their parents in order to maintain family functionality. This finding is consistent with Clyne and Kipp's (1999) who pointed out that "home has been the key element of language maintenance, if language is not maintained in the home domain, then it cannot be maintained elsewhere" (p. 47).

It is noticeable from reviewing the participants' transcripts that all the Arabic speakers were trying to bring up their children bilingually, but with a little more focus on Arabic. According to the participants, both Arabic and English were used within the family at home, but more concentration was given to the Arabic language. They wanted their children to reach the status of native Arabic speakers. They also believed that their children should be exposed to the language at a very early age to acquire the language.

According to the community under study the home/family domain was not just a central factor for the maintenance of the community language, but also for the promotion of bilingualism through the use of both Arabic and English. The use of both Arabic and English side by side in a multilingual and multicultural society will contribute to the maintenance of the Arabic language. This finding is in accordance with Fishman (1989), who found that the community language can be easily maintained when it is used side by side with the dominant

language of the host country in a number of domains in the host country. It is also consistent with the results of Qawar (2014) who found that Arabs in Quebec used Arabic side by side with English and French in different domains and for different purposes.

5.2.1.2.2 Friendship Domain

Data obtained from the interviews and participant observations revealed that Arabic speakers of Toowoomba had a strong connection with each other which allowed even the children to build solid friendships with other children from the community. Being away from the homeland had strengthened the friendship among the Arabic-speaking parents and this was reflected in their children. Similar to this finding, the study conducted by Gomaa (2011) about the maintenance of Egyptian Arabic in Durham, UK, found that friendships between Egyptian families contributed to the maintenance of their language. The interactions between these families, through exchanging visits and celebrating some events and religious feasts together, provided an opportunity for the children to get exposed to the language.

The participants reported that the use of both Arabic and English with their friends depended on different situations. They spoke Arabic with people whose culture and language was similar to their own. At the same time, they tended to speak English with other friends who were not able to understand Arabic. The language choice is usually determined by the people to whom you are speaking. Parallel to this finding, a study conducted by Othman (2006), about the Arab community in Manchester found that Arabic is the perfect language choice in the friendship domain of Arabic speakers. He also found that Arabic speakers switched to English in the presence of non-Arabic speakers. Also, he mentioned that, when Arabic speakers speak in Arabic, they translate their discussion to non-Arabic speakers in English. According to Othman, this shift between Arabic and English is related to cultural pressure. Some Arabic speakers feel ashamed to speak in English to each other as they are native speakers of Arabic. During participant observation, the researcher observed that if an Arab spoke in

English, his friends asked him to speak in Arabic as he is an Arab. Additionally, it is inappropriate for Arabic speakers to use Arabic in the presence of a friend who is a non-Arabic speaker. This shows respect to the one who does not understand Arabic to make him feel comfortable and welcome amongst them. Such behaviour is derived from religious teachings in the Arabic context.

This finding is consistent with Dweik et al. (2014) who found that the Arabic speakers of Vancouver in Canada used a mix of Arabic and English when talking to their friends. They spoke Arabic with Muslim Arab friends and English with other non-Arab Canadian friends. This finding is also in line with Sanchez-Castro and Gil's (2009) research about Spanish language use among two different Spanish communities. They reported that the Spanish language was maintained in the friendship domain, where it was used among Spanish friends, while English was used with non-Spanish friends.

Furthermore, according to data from the observational notes, it was noticeable that, in social relationships, the Arabic language was well-maintained by adults but not by children. The young children spoke English mostly with their friends at the mosque, in the parks and at the soccer fields. The reason for this is that the majority of the children in Toowoomba go to the same school, the Darling Heights State School, where they meet every day and communicate in English. This finding corresponds with Sanchez-Castro and Gil's (2009) findings that age has the greatest influence on language choice. They also found that 70% of young Salvadorians under the age of 25 used English with male friends and 80% under 25 years old were using English with female friends. The results indicated that young Salvadorians tended to use more English in their friendship contacts with non-Spanish speakers for many reasons related to work or school.

To sum up, the participant observation suggests that Arabic speakers have to deal with both Arabic and English in the host country. Therefore, the Arabic speakers tend to speak Arabic more than English in their everyday interactions with friends. The researcher observed that Arabic-speaking parents spoke

Arabic more than English with their friends. The observational notes confirmed what ‘Subject 13 Female’ (S13F) said during the interview about the Arabic language, namely that it was much easier than English to use with friends of the same background. In contrast, their children spoke mostly English with their Arabic-speaking friends and non-Arab friends. In this context, it seems that the parents found it much easier and comfortable to communicate in their original language, while their children preferred to communicate with their friends in the host country language in spite of their mastery of Arabic.

5.2.1.2.3 Neighbours Domain

Few studies have dealt with the maintenance of the community language among neighbours. The Arabic language is also used to a lesser extent in the neighbour domain. As reported in Table 4.4, only 20% of the participants spoke Arabic with their neighbours, compared with 50% who used just English in their communication with their neighbours. The reason for not using much Arabic in this domain is the non-existence of Arabic-speaking neighbours where the participants resided. In the same sense, a similar study conducted by Dweik et al. (2014), about the maintenance of Arabic in Vancouver, Canada, found that Arabic was used by 71% of Arab-Canadians when they spoke with their neighbours. They also reported that only 8% used the English with their neighbours and about 21% of Arabic speakers used both Arabic and English when talking to their neighbours. The current study’s finding is not consistent with Dweik et al.’s (2014) findings in terms of the number of speakers who speak Arabic with their neighbours. The Arabic language is more commonly used by the Arab Canadians in Vancouver than Arab Australians in Toowoomba in their neighbourhoods. This significant gap may be related to the difference between the Arabic speakers who live in regional and rural areas and the Arabic speakers who reside in cities, where they have access to facilities such as media and Arabic schools.

Some of the participants who worked or studied left their children with Arab neighbours to look after them. These neighbours do the same job as nannies in

Australia, but in an informal way without any training or qualifications. Parents are happy to have their children minded by the Arab neighbours because they can learn the Arabic language and culture from them. In return, the parents pay an hourly fee as gratitude for the service of minding their children. This kind of group solidarity between neighbours was beneficial for the children, as they stayed in an Arabic home environment where they could learn, not just the Arabic language, but also the discipline and the etiquette of the Arab-Islamic culture. This type of solidarity within the community is a contribution to be added to the existing theories and models as well as to reshape the conceptual framework of this study.

5.2.1.2.4 Community Domain

Fishman (1991, 2001) refers to the support of the community for intergenerational language maintenance and transmission. He argues that without support from the community, the transmission of the community language would be impossible. In this sense, the Arabic-speaking community that is a part of the Muslim community is active through the role of the mosque. It is observed from the research field that Arabic-speaking community members maintain their contact with other members of the community from different backgrounds and cultures at the mosque. The community conducts most of the events and functions that assist in preserving the Arabic language and culture for the next generation. Furthermore, it is observable from the participant observation, that the Muslim Arab community organised during the month of Ramadan a competition of reciting the “Qur’an” for both children and adults, and they gave a valuable prize to encourage the children to learn Arabic and the Qur’an. This observation confirms what the participants said during the interviews about the supportive role of the Muslim Arab community in bringing the community together.

Furthermore, the Arabic language was well maintained within the community through the functions and celebrations that took place in the mosque and that were organised by the Muslim community members. For example, the Muslim

community of Toowoomba celebrated religious feasts such as Eid al-Fitr (the end of the fast) and Eid al-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice). During these feasts, it was observed that all Arabic-speaking parents and children interacted with each other in the Arabic language. However, children used both Arabic and English when they played together, especially those who were friends at school. The common use of English between children was influenced by the school environment where English was the medium of instruction. This finding is consistent with Gomaa's (2011) finding, contending that the Egyptian participants in Durham maintained their Arabic language through the daily interaction with other Egyptians within the same community. Gomaa argued that the Egyptians were able to maintain their Arabic language through many activities and celebrations organised by the Egyptian society, such as religious festivals and picnics where children could play together.

To sum up, Arabic language is mostly used and maintained at home and in the community domain, rather than via the friendship or neighbour domain. This is related to the great efforts made by the Arabic-speaking parents to maintain and transmit their community language to their children. The home is the best environment for intergenerational maintenance and transmission of language. The community plays an important role in keeping the Arabic speakers connected to each other by engaging them in different activities and functions, such as cooking at the mosque and inviting people to dinner. This finding is consistent with Fishman's (1991) model which indicated that the community languages should be maintained in the home and the community in order to survive.

5.2.1.3 SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS

The socio-cultural factors and their impact upon language maintenance have been investigated by many researchers in the field of language maintenance (Kloss, 1966, Smolicz, 1981), including more recently (Clyne, 2003, 2005; Pauwels, 2005). Some of the socio-cultural factors that emerged during the data

collection were: Arabic as a symbol of identity, Arabic language as a core value, and cultural distance. Figure 5.4 summarises these factors:

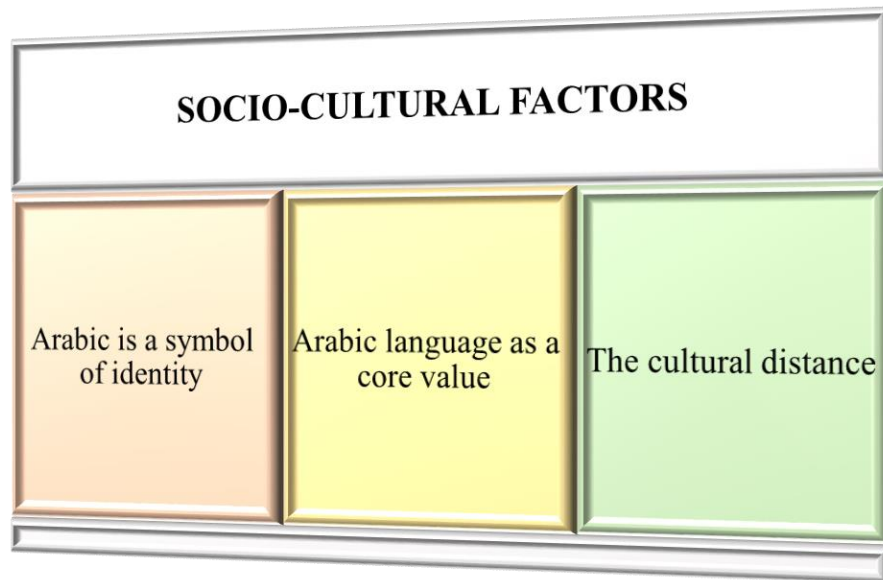


Figure 5.4: Socio-cultural factors in Arabic language maintenance

5.2.1.3.1 Maintaining Arabic for cultural identity

5.2.1.3.1.1 Arabic as a symbol of identity

The Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba attempt to maintain their cultural identity. The data analysis of the interviews revealed that the Arabic language is a badge of identity for the Arabic-speaking community as reflected in their thoughts in Chapter 4. Most of the participants in this study reported that Arabic language was part of their personality, background, culture and identity (see Table 4.9). Additionally, the observational notes recorded from the research field confirmed what the participants stated during the interviews; that Arabic language is considered the symbol of all Arabic speakers' identity and the loss of the language may affect their identity as Arab Muslims. This finding corresponds to Fishman's (1991) research, in which it is stated that the loss of a language leads to the loss of identity and religion, while the maintenance of a community language may retain cultural and religious identity and strengthen "group vitality" (Giles et al., 1977). This finding is similar to Dweik et al.'s

(2014) findings, who contended that Arabic is a national language and a symbol of identity for the majority of Muslim Arabs of Vancouver, Canada. Also, Arabic represents the participants' childhood and cultural heritage.

Furthermore, the findings of this study show that the Arabic-speaking community maintains its cultural identity through the practice and use of the language in a number of cultural activities such as celebrations (Ramadan and Feasts), traditional dress code, music, food, family ties and attachment to relatives and home country. For example, some of the Arabic-speaking parents and their children came to the mosque wearing their traditional dress, which made them look different from the other members of the Muslim community. Every Arab country has its unique dress; for example, Saudi Arabians wear the long white dress called the '*Thobe*' in Arabic, and a white or red scarf. Arab females from Kuwait, UAE and Oman usually wear a white Abaya, which covers the entire body and a veil which covers the head and hair. These activities and practices construct their identity as Arab Muslims who live in the regional city of Toowoomba.

5.2.1.3.1.2 Arabic language as a core value

The Arabic language was well maintained and valued by the Arabic speakers in this study. Most, if not all, Arabic speakers considered the Arabic language to be of core value in preserving their ethnic and cultural identity. As pointed by Haddad (2004), "Arabic language may seem to be the strongest common bond among Arabs and an initial indicator of ethnic identity" (p. 7). This finding is consistent with Smolicz's model (1981) of core cultural values, in which Arabic was also considered as the core value for all Arabic speakers in this study because it represented their culture, religion and identity as Arab Muslims. Similarly, Holmes (2013) argues that community languages in Australia have been maintained by those speakers who regard their language as an essential element for preserving their identity. For example, Mandarin, Italian, Cantonese and Greek (ABS, 2011) are successfully maintained as original languages in Australia because these languages represent a core value of identity. Similarly,

the Arabic language is highly valued by the Arabic speakers throughout all Australia. It is the third most spoken language other than English in Australia, the first in Sydney and the first in Toowoomba (ABS, 2011). Hatoss (2013), in her research on many ethnolinguistic minority groups in Australia, including Hungarian, German and Dinka, claimed that language shift to the English language as a majority language was likely to take place when these ethnolinguistic groups did not value their community languages within the English-speaking environment in Toowoomba.

5.2.1.3.1.3 The cultural distance from the Anglo-Australian mainstream

The cultural distance from mainstream Anglo-Australia has a great influence on the maintenance of a community language (Clyne, 2005). The cultural distance in this study refers also to differences in cultures. For example, the Arabic language and culture are different from the English language and culture. This cultural distance effectively contributes to the maintenance and transmission of Arabic language amongst its speakers. The Arabic-speaking community has a distinctive culture that mostly derives from religious beliefs.

Most of the participants in this study also mentioned the experiences of culture shock in their early arrival days in Australia. Their culture shock experiences resulted from cultural distance and religious differences. Results from the interviews and participant observation revealed that the Arabic speakers had a distinctive language, culture, values, social norms and traditions that were entirely different from the host language, culture and values. Such differences and distinctiveness contribute effectively to the maintenance of cultural identity (Namei, 2012).

This finding is consistent with Clyne and Kipp's (1999) findings who found that Muslim Arabic speakers are more successful at maintaining their language than the Spanish people in Australia because of the cultural distance between the Arab world and Australia. This finding is also in line with Clyne's (2005) who reported that some community languages such as Dutch, German, Lithuanian, Latvian, Maltese and French are not well-maintained in Australia

because their culture is closer to the mainstream culture. In contrast, some community languages such as Macedonian, Turkish, Greek and Arabic are well-maintained in Australia because they belong to cultures that are different from the host culture being based on the Eastern Orthodox faith or the Islamic religion.

It is important to note that Arabic speakers are linguistically, culturally and religiously different than the host country's language, culture and religion. These differences contribute to the maintenance of the Arabic language on the one hand and to the diversity of Australian society on the other hand. The importance of Arabic as a symbol of identity, Arabic as a core cultural value, and cultural distance, were found to be crucial factors for the maintenance of the cultural identity of the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba. It is interesting to note that the socio-cultural factors discussed in these findings are relevant to the existing theories and models of language maintenance as well as to the conceptual framework developed. The analysis of these socio-cultural factors was found to be applicable to what has been said in the existing literature and an essential part of the proposed framework.

5.2.1.4 INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FACTORS

Institutional support factors such as education, media and religion were found to be important in language maintenance and shift. The availability of these factors usually leads to the maintenance of community languages and their absence may cause a big shift in, or loss of, these languages (Baker, 2011; Hatoss, 2013). Figure 5.5 depicts the factors that contributed to the maintenance of Arabic language within the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba.

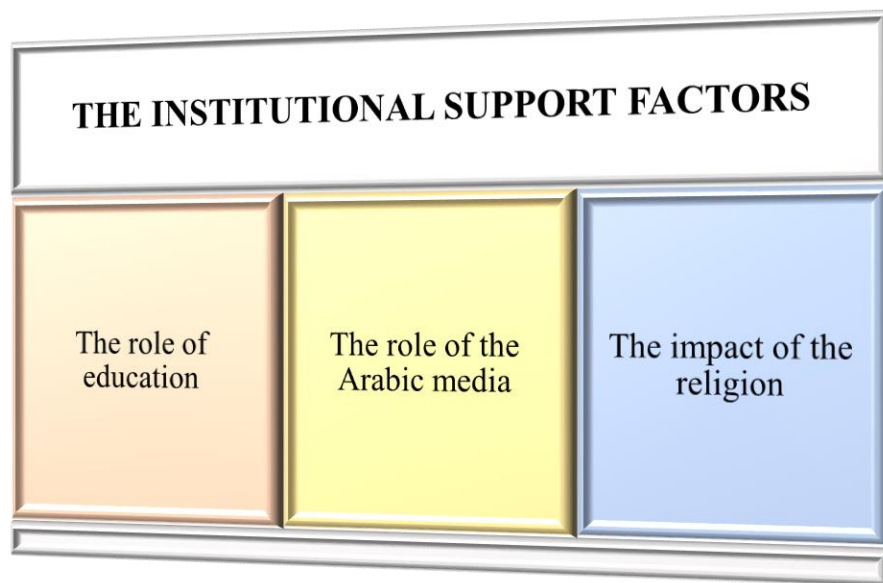


Figure 5.5: Institutional support factors in Arabic language maintenance

5.2.1.4.1 The role of education in the maintenance of Arabic language

All participants reported on the lack of Arabic schools in Toowoomba and that their children went to English schools. Some parents saw this as a significant issue for the future of their children. Kipp (cited in Barni & Extra, 2008) mentioned that “community languages such as Arabic in the Australian context are generally not well represented in their school sector” (p. 304). This claim has been confirmed by Hatoss (2013), who argues that the lack of institutional supports, such as schools, to teach the immigrant languages in Australia is a real issue facing the great desire of immigrants to maintain their languages.

In this study, some participants mentioned during the interviews that the Arabic language was being taught in big urban cities like Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. Most of these schools were private schools established by the Arab community in those areas. Arabic is also taught as a subject in some Australian state schools (ABS, 2011). Generally speaking, however, English is still the dominant language of instruction in Australia, and this can cause a decline in developing children’s home language (Verdon, McLeod & Winsler, 2014). Considering the status of Arabic, as the third most common spoken language in

Australia and the first widely spoken minority language at home in Toowoomba (ABS, 2011), it is not well-represented in schools throughout the host country.

However, despite the lack of Arabic schools in Toowoomba, parents were aware of the importance of education in the Arabic language. They brought their children to the mosque to benefit from after school classes and weekend classes. This finding is in line with Fishman's (1991) model in which the formal education of the group is a key factor in supporting the vitality of the community language. Also, it is a good opportunity for creating new institutions serving the maintenance of the language.

In the same context of education, it is worth mentioning that there are some volunteer teachers within the Arabic-speaking community who devote their time and efforts to teaching children the Arabic language. Most of these volunteers are educated women and they teach Arabic-speaking children for a few hours a week at their homes. Usually, they design their own programs based on the curriculum brought from their homeland to fit with the level of the children living here. They start with the basics such as the Arabic Alphabet, numbers, and memorization of some verses of the Qur'an, before teaching them how to write and read in Arabic. These female Arabic speakers' awareness of the importance of the Arabic language in their everyday life focused their attention to helping the children of the community maintain their Arabic language and culture.

To sum up, education is an important factor for the maintenance of the Arabic language, but it is not sufficient by itself, and it requires the involvement of other language maintenance factors (e.g., family and community) for success. Despite the absence of schooling in the Arabic language to serve the needs of this community in Toowoomba, Arabic language is still actively maintained with the support of the Muslim community at the mosque. This contradicts Baker (2011) to some extent, who stated that the non-existence of schooling in a minority language will negatively affect the survival of the language.

5.2.1.4.2 The role of the media in Arabic

Even though the Arabic language is not well-represented in the Australian media, all the Arabic-speaking parents mentioned the great importance of the Arab media in encouraging their children to have daily access to Arabic. The absence of the Arab media in the host country, such as television, radio or newspapers in Arabic, did not provide an obstacle to the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba as they found other ways to preserve their language for the next generation children. Participants tended to use their strategies to gain access to the Arabic language such as through the Internet and satellites. The exposure to the Arabic language through the media contributes to its maintenance and transmission among its speakers. This finding is supported by other findings in the field of language maintenance, such as Baker's (2011), Lee's (2013) and Pauwels' (2005), that show that the media play a significant role in the maintenance of the community languages. Pauwels (2005) pointed out that, "families who have access to these media can increase exposure to the community language for their offspring and potentially enhance and enrich the community language input" (p. 126). This finding is supported by Jamaï's (2008) findings who reported that the availability of satellite channels broadcasting in Arabic, radio broadcasting in Arabic and internet access put an end to the linguistic and cultural isolation of the Moroccan community in Britain.

Similarly, this finding is in accord with Al-Asmari's (2004) investigation into the use of Arabic in the media and the Internet by Arabic-speaking Melbournians. He found that Arabic speakers have access to Arabic media, including television and radio. The results also indicated that adult Arabic speakers were mainly interested in listening to the news and some religious programs, whereas young Arabic speakers were more likely to listen to music and comedy programs at home. Al-Asmari (2004) stated that the only way to have access to Arabic television programs was through Internet decoders or satellites. Additionally, he found that radio and television were paramount to

maintaining a stable connection with the community language and culture. This was also perceived by the participants of this study.

Furthermore, all the Arabic speakers used another form of media related to the use of the Internet. Most participants reported that they obtained access to some movies and games through the use of websites such as YouTube. Their children could also watch their cartoons via the Internet. Parents could read all the online Arabic newspapers related to their home country.

5.2.1.4.3 The impact of the religion on the maintenance of the Arabic language

The findings revealed that all the Arabic speakers referred to the crucial role that religion plays in the maintenance of their Arabic language. They reported that learning Arabic could maintain the religion and through the religion they could maintain their Arabic. This finding is consistent with Clyne and Kipp's (1999) results who found that religion was one of the influential factors in maintaining the Arabic language among the Arabic speakers. However, their results indicated that the Arabic language was more successfully maintained by the second generation of Muslim Arabic speakers than by the second generation of non-Muslim Arabic speakers, which this research was unable to comment upon since all the participants were Muslim Arabic background speakers.

By contrast, the finding is not in line with Di Lucca et al. (2008) who reported that religion was not an indicator for the maintenance of the Arabic language within the Moroccan community in Italy.

5.2.1.4.3.1 The role of the mosque

According to the findings of this study, the mosque plays an important role in maintaining the Arabic language. It is not just an ordinary place for prayers and worshipping God, but also a place of learning Arabic and Islamic education. It was observed that the majority of the Arabic speakers sent their children to the Toowoomba mosque to attend Arabic and Quranic classes after school and on the weekend. The Imam of the mosque teaches the children of the community for free. Therefore, some parents donate money to the mosque's fund in return.

These classes are held two days a week, for only two hours of teaching. It is noteworthy that there are other Muslim children from different countries who are not Arabs in origin, and they also attend the Arabic classes. The imam is the teacher who encourages the Muslim community, including the Arabic-speaking community to bring their children to learn Arabic at the mosque. The teacher at the mosque uses his teaching materials that fit well with all the learners. This finding is consistent with Gogonas' (2012) study about second-generation Arabic speakers in Athens. He found that the Arabic-speaking parents were very interested in maintaining their Arabic language by sending their children to the mosque to attend Arabic and Quranic classes. This finding is also in line with Gomaa (2011) who found that the mosque was a good replacement for the Arabic ethnic school in Durham, UK.

5.2.1.4.3.2 Activities and celebrations organized by the Muslim

Community at the Mosque

The mosque is the gathering place for Arabic speakers and all Muslims. The role of the mosque, as a theme, was mentioned many times in the participants' statements as well as in this dissertation as an indication of its primary role in the maintenance of the Arabic language. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, Table 4.16, the mosque provides several activities such as teaching Arabic to the children of the Muslim community, interpreting the Qur'an for Arabic and non-Arabic speakers, organizing events (Food Festivals and Muslim Open Day), celebrating religious events (Ramadan and Feasts), selling Halal meat and bread to the community, inviting key speakers to give lectures to people, and conducting religious marriages. All these activities have the benefit of bringing community members together where they can interact and socialize using the Arabic language. The mosque is always open to non-Arabic speakers and non-Muslims to come and learn about Islam and Muslims.

5.2.1.4.3.3 The use of Arabic and English at the mosque

According to the findings of this study, both Arabic and English are used side by side at the mosque because Muslims come from different backgrounds and

use different languages. The Imam of the mosque uses both Arabic and English to convey his message clearly to the Muslim community, including the Arabic-speaking community. The reason for using both languages relates to the fact that all attendees can understand English very well since they live in Australia, but some of them are not able to understand the content in Arabic. In such cases, the Imam has to switch between Arabic and English during Friday prayers in his sermon. This result is in line with Almubayei's (2007) findings about Muslim Arab-Americans. Her results indicated the presence of the code-switching phenomenon in the congregational Friday prayers in the US.

It is also worth noting, as stated earlier in the participant observation section that lectures are occasionally delivered by Islamic scholars as well as university teachers at the mosque in both Arabic and English. The teachers and religious scholars often use code-switching to convey their messages.

Furthermore, it seems clear that these institutional support factors, including the media, education, and the role of the religion, support the existing theories and models of the literature. These three essential components are part of the institutional support factors in the conceptual framework of language maintenance. Additionally, some of the micro factors appeared from the analysis of the data such as the volunteer teachers, new strategies of teaching Arabic to the children, strategies to get access to the Arabic media and the community activities can be seen as convincing arguments contributing to redesign the conceptual framework.

5.2.1.5 SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

The socio-psychological factors have been found to be crucial in the field of language maintenance, according to several linguists (Ayyash, 2014; Clyne, 2005; Fishman, 2008; Qawar, 2014). These socio-psychological factors include positive attitudes toward Arabic, positive attitudes towards English, and the attitudes of the majority groups toward Arabic. Figure 5.6 depicts these three factors:

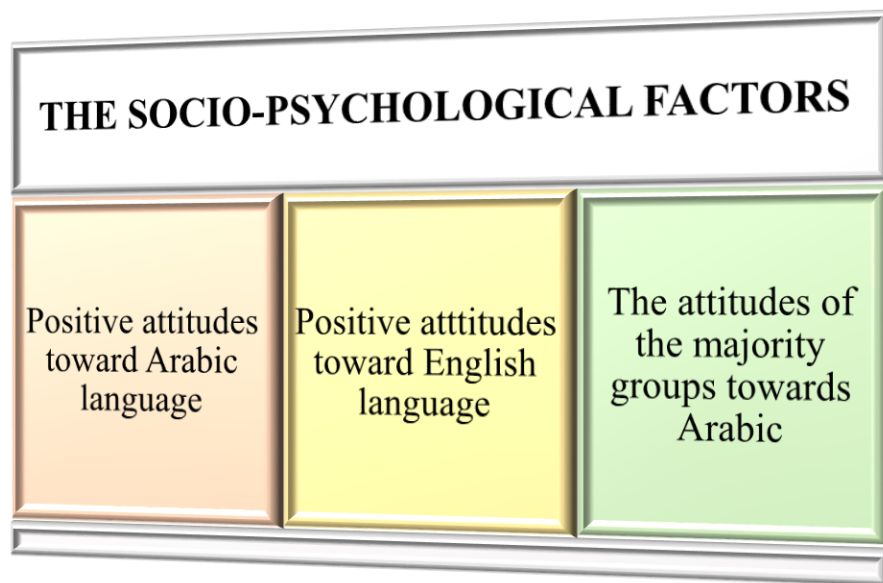


Figure 5.6: Socio-psychological factors in Arabic language maintenance

5.2.1.5.1 Positive attitudes toward Arabic language maintenance

Fishman (2008) noted that positive attitudes and motivation were among the strongest factors for the maintenance of the community language in the host country. In the same context, Ayyash (2014) refers to language attitudes as “language feelings”. According to him, positive attitudes or feelings towards the minority language may support the maintenance of this language, while negative feelings may accelerate the shift towards the majority language.

Positive attitudes towards speaking and learning Arabic language appears to be a major theme in the field of language maintenance and transmission of the community language. This theme is a key factor which may incorporate many of the other major themes that are discussed separately in this section, such as education, media and religion. For instance, a positive attitude of children towards their parents’ language motivates attendance at classes in Arabic, the watching of Arab media, and the reading of the Qur’an (see Appendix I for more details).

The analysis of the collected data (interview transcripts) revealed that the Arabic speakers in this study had a positive attitude towards the maintenance and transmission of their original language to their children. As discussed

earlier in this chapter, their positive attitudes were seen in the activation of the Arabic language in a number of domains (home, family, friends, community, education, media and religion). This finding matches with the results of Qawar (2014) who found that the Arabs of Quebec, Canada had positive attitudes towards the maintenance of Arabic language. Their positive attitudes reflected their constant use of the Arabic language in different domains such as family, religion and media. All participants in this study noted that the Arabic language was very important for them and they demonstrated their commitments and loyalty to maintaining the language and transmitting it to their children (see Appendix I for more details).

5.2.1.5.1.1 Motivating children to learn Arabic

Arabic-speaking parents in this study were positive toward their community language and wanted to preserve it for their children. They viewed it as a necessary language to maintain in the host culture and wanted to prevent it from being affected by any unexpected shift or loss. Indeed, participant observation confirmed the participants' responses during interviews. All the Arabic speakers supported Arabic language maintenance and their efforts were visible during their interactions and dealings with the Arabic language within their circle of family and friends and within the broader community. Children got motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically to maintain their mother tongue. Intrinsically motivated through their positive attitudes and desires to preserve their Arabic language, which makes them feel proud; and extrinsically motivated in order to satisfy their parents and get more opportunities in the future, such as better employment and education. Furthermore, Arabic-speaking parents wanted their children to be proficient in speaking the Arabic language to enable them to maintain contact with their family members overseas and also with the Arab community in Toowoomba. These results correspond with Park and Sarkar (2007), Wu (2007) and Verdon et al. (2014) who pointed out that motivating children to speak the home language contributes to maintaining close relationships with their family, especially those who do not speak English.

5.2.1.5.1.2 Intergenerational language maintenance and transmission

Arabic-speaking parents in Toowoomba experienced many challenges in maintaining and transferring the Arabic language to their second generation children. In spite of the lack of support from the government in terms of language maintenance, they did not give up, and demonstrated a positive attitude towards keeping the Arabic language alive for their children. Their positive attitude seemed obvious at both a personal level and the community level. At the personal level, the parents encouraged their children to speak Arabic at home as well as teaching Arabic using their own strategies. At the community level, parents regularly accompanied their children to the mosque to attend Arabic classes and interact with other children from the same community. This finding was consistent with Al-Asmari's (2004) research, in which it was found that the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne had a positive attitude towards maintaining its Arabic language and transmitting it to the second generation children. Al-Asmari found that the Arabic language was crucial for Arabic speakers for multiple reasons. First, for its connection with their religion since it is the language of the Holy Qur'an. Second, for linguistic, cultural and ethnic identity. Third, for communicating with parents and friends. His results also indicated that some young Arabic speakers were motivated to learn Arabic for other reasons such as to please their parents, to understand the Qur'an in its revealed language, and to get a good mark in the Arabic subject which is compulsory at school.

The only difference between the finding in this study and Al-Asmari's (2004) finding is that the Arabic language in Toowoomba is not present at schools, unlike Melbourne where it is a part of the Australian curriculum. This is the main difference between regional and larger cities in terms of language maintenance and transmission identified in this study.

5.2.1.5.1.3 Status of the Arabic language

The status of the Arabic language, either internationally or religiously, has contributed to some extent to the maintenance and transmission of this

community language to the second generation children. Hence, the Arabic language has an international status on a global level, especially in terms of the number of the speakers. The language is spoken by over 300 million people and used as by over 1.7 billion Muslims in their liturgical acts (Bale, 2010; Gadri & Moussaoui, 2015). During the interviews all of the participants spoke about the religious status of their community language. They referred to the Arabic language as a great language for its religious status and in terms of its value for Muslims all over the world. With regards to its religious status, all liturgical actions practiced by Muslims, such as the five daily prayers, must only be performed in the Arabic language. In Toowoomba, this applied not just to the Arabic speakers who know Arabic, but to all Muslims, including Arabs and non-Arabs. This finding is consistent with Rouchdy's (2013) and Hayati and Mashhadi's (2010) findings who have reported on Arabic being maintained by Muslim Arabic speakers because of its religious status.

This finding was also supported by Giles et al. (1977) in their model of ethnolinguistic vitality, claiming that the status of a language can contribute effectively to its vitality and maintenance. In the same context, Holmes (2013) gave an example of the French language in both Canada and the USA. She discovered that it is much easier to maintain French in these countries because of its international status and prestige. Within the Arab states, with a majority of Muslims the Arabic language holds a very high status because of its connection with Muslim beliefs.

This finding corresponds with Clyne's (2005) and Jama'i's (2010) research in which it is claimed that Arabic has a high and a privileged position among the Arabic and Muslims speakers. This high position comes from being the language of the Holy Qur'an.

There is no doubt that the international and religious status of the Arabic language has a significant influence on the Arabic speakers, which culminates in the maintenance of Arabic at a local and national level in Australia. Arabic is among the 10 top maintained languages in Australia (ABS, 2011). It is the

second community language after English in Sydney and the second in Toowoomba, after the majority language, English. The status of Arabic as an important sub-theme is relevant to the conceptual framework developed from the existing literature and language maintenance theories.

5.2.1.5.1.4 Language Loyalty

Marongiu (2007) points out that, “language loyalty is considered to be the most valuable feature of language attitudes with regard to the survival of minority languages” (p. 55). According to many people, language is seen as a symbol of loyalty (Baker, 2011), and this is the case for the community under study. It was observed from extended participant observation and interviews in the field that the loyalty of Arabic-speaking parents towards the Arabic language contributes to the intergenerational transmission of the language. Hence, all participants in this study showed their loyalty to their mother tongue, culture, religion and homeland. Their loyalty was apparent in their positive attitudes to maintaining their language and culture. This finding is consistent with Abu-Haider’s (1994) research on Algerian immigrants in France who displayed their loyalty to their Arabic language and were committed to transmitting their language to their second generation children. This finding is also in accord with Khadidja’s (2013) finding that the Kabyle minority group demonstrated a strong loyalty towards their Kabyle language and Tamazight culture through the use of their language in different social contexts, notably the familial settings.

5.2.1.5.1.5 Muslim community members’ attitudes towards Arabic

The maintenance of the Arabic language is encouraged by the Muslim community in Toowoomba. They provide Arabic classes for the children of the community. Also, they offer Arabic classes to non-Arab speakers to be able to read and understand the Qur’an. This community also provides lessons of the interpretation of the Qur’an to adults. These lessons are offered by the Imam of the mosque. The positive attitude of the Muslim community is also visible through a competition of Qur’an recitation between children of the community. Furthermore, there are many cultural activities that take place in the mosque

and are organized by the Muslim committee. This finding matches Jamai's (2008) work, who mentioned that the Moroccan community in Britain benefited from the Islamic Centre and its activities in promoting the Arabic language. One of the important activities is teaching children Arabic classes in the weekend and after school hours.

5.2.1.5.2 Positive attitudes towards the host country language

Arabic-speaking parents in the regional city of Toowoomba demonstrated a positive attitude towards learning the English language alongside the home language. Their positive attitude was seen in the field during the interviews with the participants. A majority of the Arabic-speaking parents wanted their children to get a high proficiency in both Arabic and the English language.

Similarly, the extended participant observation in the field confirmed that the Arabic-speaking parents afforded importance to the English language as most of them were students, and they needed English for their studies. The vast majority of the participants in this study tried to raise their children bilingually with a little more focus on Arabic because of its religious and cultural status for all Arabs. This finding matches Dweik et al. (2014) who found that Muslim Arabs of Vancouver were also positive towards learning and speaking English. The results indicated that the Arab-Canadian parents wanted their children to be proficient in the English language, which they regarded as a prestigious language. Furthermore, the results showed that all parents believed that the status of English as the official language of Canada contributed to unifying them with the rest of Canadians.

In the same context and in the same multilingual milieu, Qawar (2014) studied the Arabic community in Quebec. His findings indicated that the Arab-Canadians had positive attitudes towards Arabic as a mother tongue, French, and English. Qawar further noted that the English language represented the respondents' Canadian national identity, while French was the most prestigious and dominant language, and Arabic had an exalted status as the language of the Qur'an.

The positive attitudes of the Arabic speakers towards learning other languages were motivated by the role of religion. Islam, as a religion of all Arabs and Muslims, encourages the learning of foreign languages and seeking knowledge (Al-Abed Al-Haq & Al-Masaeid, 2009).

5.2.1.5.3 The attitude of the majority groups towards the Arabic language speakers

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, the participants reported different opinions about the attitudes of the majority groups in Australia. Some of the non-Arabic speakers were very supportive and opened up to the new languages spoken in Australia, while others were opposed to any language other than English. The positive attitude of the majority of Australians helped the community language to evolve and encouraged the Arabic speakers to use it freely in public places. At the same time, the negative attitudes of non-Arabic speakers towards Arabic speakers could create a sense of fear to use the community language. Some of the Arabic speakers preferred to use English to avoid negative reactions. This finding is supported by Clyne and Kipp's (1999) findings on pluricentric language groups in Australia, which included Arabic groups. The authors found that the attitude of the majority group was an ambivalent factor, in which the negative attitudes could either lead to assimilation or resistance, while positive attitudes could culminate in maintaining the diversity of languages.

To conclude, the socio-psychological factors discussed in these findings are relevant to the existing theories and models of language maintenance as well as to the conceptual framework of this study, developed from the literature.

5.2.1.6 SOCIAL NETWORK FACTORS

Social network factors included two important themes as revealed from the findings. The first theme was about communication with relatives and friends in the home country using Arabic. The second theme referred to regular visits to the home country. These two themes are discussed in detail and related to existing literature and models. Figure 5.7 displays these factors:

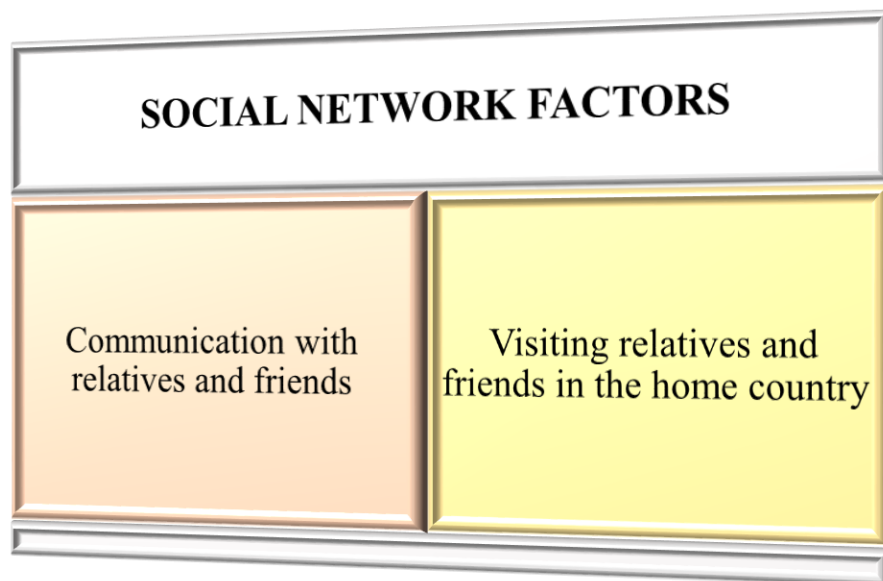


Figure 5.7: Social network factors in Arabic language maintenance

5.2.1.6.1 Communication with relatives and friends

Research on immigrants' languages has shown that maintaining good communication with family and friends in the host country may promote language maintenance and lead to its intergenerational transmission (Clyne, 2005; Sanchez-Castro and Gil, 2009). Data from this study showed that all Arabic speakers maintained regular contact with their friends and relatives overseas. This regular communication allows not only for the practising of Arabic, but also for finding out, in detail, news about family, friends, neighbours (weddings or funerals) and even the country (economic and political issues). Similar to these results, Sanchez-Castro and Gil (2009), in their research about the Spanish language, found that the majority of Salvadorians (90% of the sample) were in a close touch with their relatives and friends in El Salvador.

Moreover, this finding is supported by Chiakrawati's (2011) research about the Chinese who live in Indonesia. His results indicate that Chinese Indonesians are successful in maintaining close contact with their homeland China through their contributions to investments in their ancestral villages and towns where their relatives reside. This close relationship between the Chinese Indonesians and

their homeland China offers an excellent opportunity to maintain the Mandarin language as a medium of communication.

5.2.1.6.1.1 The use of Arabic as a medium of communication

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, 17 out of 20 participants reported the use of the Arabic language only in their communication with their relatives and friends overseas. Additionally, they used the Arabic language as a medium of communication either verbally or in writing. It should be noted at this point, that all the Arabic-speaking parents were aware of the importance of using Arabic language in order to keep in touch with relatives and friends in the home country on the one hand, while practising and maintaining the community language for their children on the other. In response to the question, “How many times do you speak to your relatives and friends in the home country?” some participants reported that they communicate with their family and friends overseas every day, some of them every week and others every fortnight.

5.2.1.6.1.2 The Use of Technology (Internet Communication)

All Arabic-speaking parents reported the use of new technologies to keep in touch with their relatives and friends in the home country. These new technologies included different media of communication such as Skype, email, Facebook, Viber, telephone, etc. In spite of the geographical distance between Australia and the Arab countries, the participants were very attached to their home country and they liked to maintain a close relationship with their relatives and friends. The use of new technologies, notably Internet communication, or what is called online communication, bridges the distance between immigrants and their home countries.

The results of the data analysis revealed that the Arabic speakers are in regular contact with their relatives and friends via the Internet as a medium of communication in order to maintain the Arabic language for their children. This finding is in line with Al-Asmari's (2004) study, which explored the importance of using new technology (the Internet) within the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne, as a tool for Arabic language maintenance. Apart from internet

communication, SMS (via telephones) was found to be a preferred method for the maintenance of Arabic. This finding is similar to Lee's (2013) findings who revealed that the Chilean community tended to maintain their Spanish language via communication with their relatives and friends through the use of the Internet. She found that Facebook, Skype and email played a significant role in maintaining ties with family overseas. Her findings also indicated that the Chilean community set up a Facebook group to be in touch with the Latin American community, which included all Latinos in Auckland, and the author herself also joined the group.

Furthermore, this finding is in accordance with the findings of Fitzgerald and Debski (2006) who investigated the use of Internet technologies by Polish-Australians in Melbourne. The results indicated that Polish-Australians used the Internet for different purposes such as communicating with their relatives, chatting with friends, on-line games, on-line banking, learning and doing research. They used different applications on the Internet such as the telephone, SMS, Chat, Video and Email. The latter was the most popular medium of communication among the Polish community in Australia. In addition, the authors suggested that children must be encouraged, by their parents as well as the ethnic schools, to have early access to the Internet using the community language.

5.2.1.6.2 Visiting the Home Country

Research on language maintenance has found that regular visits to the home country contribute effectively to intergenerational language maintenance and transmission (Clyne, 2005; Holmes, 2013; Namei, 2012; Pauwels, 2005). In the current study, regular overseas visits to the homeland had a great influence on the maintenance and transmission of the community language from one generation to another. All Arabic speakers noted the importance of frequent visits to their original country to enable their children to engage in the Arabic-speaking environment, to learn the language, and to expose them to the Arabic culture. This finding is supported by Holmes (2013) and Pauwels (2005), who

claimed that the frequent family visits contributed to the maintenance of the community language and created an opportunity to use the language and keep it alive. Holmes (2013) gave an example of the commitment of the Greeks towards their home country, notably the Greek girls who prefer to get married to local husbands from Greece during their visits. Pauwels argued that the individual and family visits to the home country offer an exceptional opportunity for children to immerse themselves in the community language, communicate with their peers, and become proficient in Greek.

As reported in the data analysis, only 50% of the participants had the opportunity to visit their home country, and most of them were males (35%) with female visitors visiting home only at 15%. The length of time that Arabic speakers spent with relatives overseas was between one month and four months. Additionally, the majority of the Arabic-speaking parents preferred to take their children with them to the home country to be exposed to the language and culture. This finding is consistent with Namei's (2012) study about Iranians in Sweden. Namei found that 47% of Iranian parents had a chance to visit Iran occasionally, 7% travels every year and 46% did not go to their home country. The majority of the parents who had a chance to visit Iran took their children with them and stayed between one and three months.

5.2.1.6.2.1 Challenges to visit the home country

As mentioned previously in this study, participants did not come from one country, but belonged to different Arab countries. All the Arab states are very far from the host country Australia and it requires time, money and effort to travel to see the relatives and friends. As reported in the findings, half of the participants did not have a chance to visit their home country. The participants mentioned many reasons, including "long distance", "the expensive traveling costs", and "the study commitments". Additionally, results indicated that more men had a chance to travel than women. Only three females out of eight had the opportunity to visit the home country, which was only 15% of participants in this study. This is due to the cost and distance, where wives prefer to stay with

their children, looking after them while husbands travel for quick visits to see their relatives.

5.2.1.6.2.2 Emergency visits to the home country

Regardless of the distance and the costs of traveling, some participants were obliged to travel suddenly for the emergencies in the homeland such as the funerals, sickness, and accidents. In the Islamic Arab culture, it is a duty to be with family in sad times to give relief. At the mosque, the Imam of the mosque usually announced the news if someone from the community had lost a relative overseas, in order to give condolences to him and support him. In this case, if a member of the community had lost one of his/her family and decided to take an emergency visit to his/her family, the other members would collect the money to cover the cost of traveling as a sense of group solidarity within the Muslim community.

5.2.1.6.2.3 Instability in the home country preventing regular visits

Another reason preventing the Arabic speakers from visiting their relatives overseas is the instability in their home country. Participants who come from Libya and Iraq reported the problem of safety in their countries which prevented them from traveling. This security issue led all the people who came from these two states, including the participants, to settle permanently in the host country.

5.2.1.6.2.4 The importance of the overseas visits

Overseas visits have many benefits as suggested by the Arabic-speaking parents in this study. The majority of the participants believed that frequent visits to the home country enabled their children to have access to the language and the culture of their parents. As well, the children have the opportunity to interact with their relatives, and play and enjoy their time with other children their age. Also, the children get used to Arabic because nobody will understand them or speak to them in English. One of the participants reported that his children started talking in English upon their arrival, but when none of their relatives understood them, they automatically switched to Arabic. Furthermore, the

second generation will have a sense of pride and self-esteem when they speak Arabic properly and they can understand native Arabic speakers.

This finding is supported by Namei's (2012) study, which showed the importance of overseas visits. He found that regular visits helped the students to improve their language skills, especially reading and writing to communicate with their relatives and friends in the Persian language.

To sum up, social network factors were seen to be essential for intergenerational transmission of Arabic within the Arabic-speaking community members under investigation. Communication with relatives and friends using Arabic helps the Arab-speaking community maintain family ties and to pass on the language to the subsequent generations. The use of diverse means of Internet communication, such as Skype, Facebook, and email, closes the gap of distance and contributes to the maintenance of the Arabic language. Language is also maintained via the regular visits to the home country where children can get exposed to their parents' language and culture. These social network factors are relevant to the theories and models outlined in the literature review, and they are also congruent with the conceptual framework.

5.2.1.7 OTHER FACTORS INFLUENCING ARABIC LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE

Solidarity among the Arabic-speaking people and awareness of their language contributed to some extent to the maintenance and transmission of this language to their second generation children. Figure 5.8 refers to these factors:

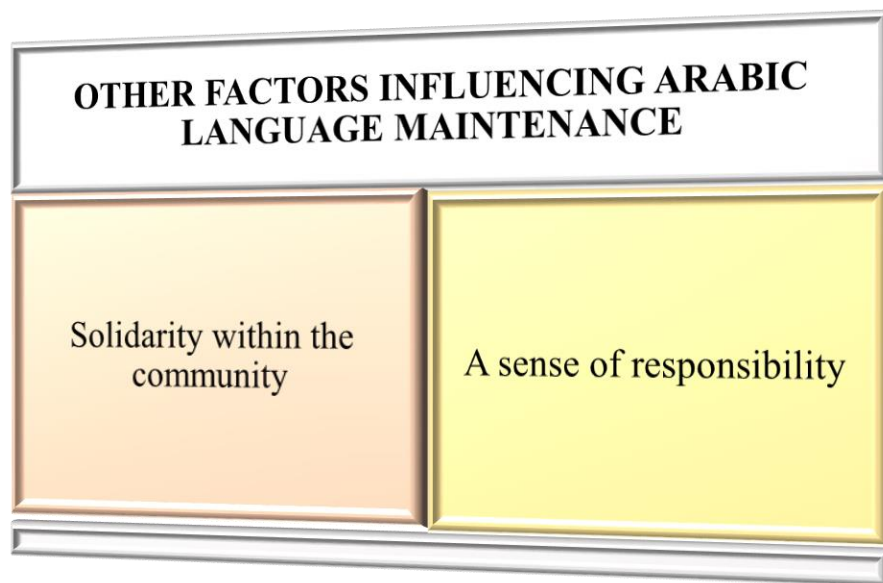


Figure 5.8: Other factors influencing Arabic language maintenance

5.2.1.7.1 Solidarity among the Arabic-speaking community

5.2.1.7.1.1 A group solidarity

Although the Arabic-speaking parents came from different Arab countries, speak diverse language varieties of Arabic and have distinguished sub-cultures, they are united by sharing the same religion and the dominant language (MSA) which serves as a lingua franca that everyone can use for communication. Thus, the Arabic language creates a sense of belonging and solidarity among the Arabic-speaking community as pointed out by Al-Sahafi (2015). The solidarity of the Arabic-speaking parents in Toowoomba was visible through their language maintenance efforts. The Muslim Arab community has succeeded in fundraising enough to build an institution for their children to learn Arabic and Islamic studies. This institution was a big church, and they turned it into a mosque to perform the daily prayers. Also, their solidarity is seen in their efforts to bring the community together through many events, activities and functions organized by the community. This community is also united during the fasting month of Ramadan by taking turns to cook and supply food for over 200 people at the mosque. Furthermore, the sense of solidarity is seen in the hard and sad times. In case of sickness, or family problems, welcoming new

Arab Muslim refugees, and particularly during funerals within the community, all the Muslim community, including Arabs, cooperate to collect money for the funeral and also to send the coffin overseas for burial. The community financially supports needy people and sick people. The Muslim community is available also during happy times such as a celebration of a new born baby, or a wedding. The Muslim community in Toowoomba offers continual support to its members.

5.2.1.7.1.2 Solidarity between Arabic-speaking children at school

As mentioned earlier, there is also a sense of solidarity between the Arabic-speaking children at school. Some Arabic-speaking parents reported that their children are often called upon to help the non-Arabic speaking teacher at school to convey his/her message to the newly arrived Arabic children who do not speak English yet. Some children can translate from English to Arabic and vice versa. The teacher found it very useful and was pleased that the Arabic children could help in explaining the instructions and clarifying the lessons for the newly arrived Arabic-speaking children.

5.2.1.7.1.3 Solidarity between women

There are four Arabic-speaking housewives who stay at home looking after some of the community children in Toowoomba. Most of the Arabic speakers leave their children with these housewives who do the job of a nanny. It is reported that some of the parents are students or workers, and they have to send their children to the Arabic nanny to get exposed to an Arabic environment and learn the language. Additionally, there are volunteer teachers who open their houses to teach children. Most of these volunteer teachers are women, and they help the children of the community without any charge. Some parents still help with some money, despite the refusal of the volunteers, as they are aware of the great service offered by these volunteers and their contribution to the maintenance of the Arabic language.

5.2.1.7.1.4 Solidarity between Muslims and Non-Muslims

The Muslim community in Toowoomba has strong ties with people from other non-Muslim faiths such as Jews, Christians, Buddhists and Hindus. They invite each other when having events, functions, and celebrations to bridge the gap between people and religions. During the time of this research, the Muslim community welcomed the non-Muslims during the food festival, open day, and for dinner during Ramadan, to strengthen the relationship and challenge some of the stereotypes about Islam and Muslims that have been promoted by the media.

Additionally, some religious people from different denominations and local Australian residents of Toowoomba joined the Muslim community to demonstrate a sense of solidarity during a second attack that led to the burning and destruction of the mosque. The mosque was lit twice in less than four months. Many people came to show support and denounce this dreadful attack on the Muslim community. This solidarity has been seen many times whenever there are media attacks against the Muslim community.

5.2.1.7.2 Conscious maintenance (A sense of responsibility)

All Arabic-speaking parents are aware of the big responsibility on their shoulders. They demonstrated their concerns about the transmission of their original language to second generation children. They are all aware of the fact that if the language does not reach their children, they are going to be monolingual speakers of the majority language. Also, they will not be able to communicate with their grandparents and relatives in their homeland. The children, at least, need to be brought up with two languages side by side in different domains. The Arabic speakers in Toowoomba are conscious of the importance of intergenerational language maintenance and transmission. Their conscious maintenance is visible in their actions to preserve Arabic in their next generation. These actions have been mentioned earlier such as the role of the family at home, teaching strategies implemented by the parents, and the role community members. This finding matches Holmes's (2013) findings who

contended that the absence of conscious maintenance will lead to the disappearance of community languages through generations.

5.2.2 Arabic speakers' challenges and recommendations to maintain the Arabic language.

Arabic speakers face many challenges relating to the maintenance of their language and culture. These challenges relate to the factors mentioned above such as education, family, community, culture, attitude and the media. In spite of these challenges, Arabic speakers' efforts to maintain their language and culture were clear from their statements during the interviews, as well as from the researcher's observations during the field work. Additionally, the Arabic speakers, at the end of the interviews, were asked to give their recommendations or comments about their future perspectives on preserving the Arabic language and pass it on to their second generation children. Table 5.1 is a summary of the participants' challenges, and recommendations.

Table 5.1: Arabic speakers' challenges and recommendations

| | Challenges | Recommendation/Opinions |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| <i>Education</i> | <p>Lack of Arabic schools</p> <p>The Arabic language is not part of the Australian curriculum</p> <p>English is the language of instruction in Australia</p> <p>There is no facility in Toowoomba that helps children to learn Arabic</p> <p>Teaching Arabic at home is not like school since there is no interaction between children</p> <p>There are not many Arabic books here It is very difficult to find Arabic books</p> | <p>There should be an Arabic language school.</p> <p>The most effective way is to have an Arabic school, Arabic native teachers, and Arabic curriculum.</p> <p>The Australian educational system should include Arabic classes within the State School.</p> <p>They can include all the Arabic speakers in one class.</p> <p>Parents should have a program for the children</p> <p>Reading is the most effective thing to learn by giving children some stories.</p> |
| <i>Community</i> | <p>Not enough functions held by the community</p> | <p>The community should care about these things and organise some functions for children to get to know each other</p> |

| | Challenges | Recommendation/Opinions |
|------------------|--|--|
| | | <p>Parents should send their children to the mosque to learn Arabic</p> <p>Organizing more competition between children to learn Arabic</p> <p>People are looking for opportunities not to forget Arabic</p> <p>People are trying to provide classes in Arabic to help others</p> |
| Family | <p>Exposing children to learn two languages is a big challenge</p> <p>Lack of time to teach children at home (study or work)</p> <p>The problem of distance and safety to visit their relatives overseas</p> | <p>Parents should focus on Arabic as a native language and English or whatever other language they are teaching them, should be the second language</p> <p>Teaching children two languages from the beginning</p> |
| Media | <p>Arabic is not well-represented in Australian TV channels</p> | <p>Parents should encourage their children by watching programs in Arabic</p> |
| Culture | <p>Culture shock</p> <p>Children will definitely be affected by the Australian culture (food, clothing, etc.)</p> <p>Identity Conflict (Australian culture and Arab culture)</p> <p>Children ask their parents many questions concerning the differences in culture</p> | <p>Parents should remind their children that they are facing a different culture</p> <p>Parents should pass their culture to their second generation children</p> <p>Parents must show their children that they still respect their culture, they still respect the language, the religion, and they still appreciate their native country</p> |
| Language | <p>The Arabic language is a hard language to learn</p> <p>Arabic is imperative to understand religion</p> <p>Some children are talking with their parents in broken Arabic</p> <p>If you have lost your language, you have lost everything; you lose your past as well as your future</p> <p>Dominance of English in all the domains (school, media, etc.)</p> | <p>Children need to be taught Arabic when they are still young, otherwise, they will have difficulties to understand, talk and write in Arabic</p> <p>Parents should do their best to keep the Arabic language for their children if they want to keep their religion</p> <p>Parents should teach their children the Standard Arabic</p> |
| Attitudes | <p>Some children find the Arabic language difficult, and sometimes they feel that they want to give up</p> | <p>Parents should find a way to make it (Arabic) easier, and use games to make it fun</p> |

| | Challenges | Recommendation/Opinions |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| | Some Australians do not like to hear us talking in Arabic; they get annoyed, and they may think that we are not talking nicely or we may be talking about them (It is a big challenge in practice) | Parents should encourage and motivate their children by using different strategies |
| <i>Visiting the home country</i> | Instability in the home country prevents regular visits The high cost and distance between the home country and the host country prevents regular visits | Parents should take their children every year to visit their home country and interact with their relatives Overseas visits are necessary for the children to practice the Arabic language and learn the culture |

5.2.2.1 Participants' Challenges

As mentioned earlier, it is not really an easy task for immigrants to maintain their community languages in the host country, especially given the greater dominance of the host language and culture on the one hand, and the lack of resources and support for community languages on the other. The statistical evidence refers to a tremendous shift towards the majority language and a decline of community languages in Australia (ABS, 2011, Clyne, 2005; Rubino, 2010). As shown in Table 5.1, Arabic speakers are regularly undergoing daily challenges of maintaining and transmitting their original language to their children. These challenges are represented on many levels related to the major themes that emerged in the findings of this study.

For instance, at the education level, Arabic speakers do not have Arabic schools that can teach their children Arabic language. Thus, the lack of schooling in the Arabic language is a significant concern for the Arabic-speaking community. The majority of the Arabic speakers in this study reported that their language maintenance efforts at home could never replace schools as there is no interaction between children. They also reported a lack of Arabic books in Australia and that these books are very expensive to obtain from overseas. It is interesting to note that the Arabic-speaking children learn Arabic language only at the mosque every weekend or during the school holidays. Arabic-speaking parents did wish that their children were taught in a formal way using an

official teaching curriculum and strategies, which happens in many countries and in private institutions in the big cities.

As mentioned earlier, the second challenge facing Arabic-speaking parents is the lack of Arab media. There is only half an hour of news via a Dubai Channel, broadcast by SBS, which does not help children at all. Most parents struggle to get access to Arabic channels for their children through the use of a satellite antenna. Others use the Internet to get access to some Arabic programs for their children and wives. It is obvious that education and the media are two important institutional factors for the maintenance of the community language. However, the Australian government is not able to satisfy the needs of all ethnolinguistic groups. In this case, Arabic speakers, like many other immigrants, are obliged to depend on their own strategies and resources to transmit their language to the second generation children.

Furthermore, at the cultural level, Arabic speakers face two challenges that affect their cultural identity. Among these challenges, the culture shock, especially in their early arrival days, as well as identity conflict are experienced by children. Also, there is an enormous difference between the Arabic Islamic culture and the Australian culture (in the form of dress codes, Halal food, and family patterns). Therefore, they have to deal with two cultures in their everyday interactions in the host country. Hatoss (2006) referred to the interaction of two cultures, the host country's culture (target culture), learnt especially at the school, and the home culture (culture brought from overseas). Some parents are regularly obliged to reply to numerous questions asked by their children about the differences in cultures, especially those who go to school.

At the psychological level, some parents stated that their children prefer to speak mostly in English because it is easy for them and they get used to it at school. Thus, the influence of schooling, using only English, affects Arabic-speaking children's proficiency in Arabic. Some parents reported that their children find the Arabic language difficult to learn because of the influence of

English in their everyday life. This does not mean that they do not have the desire to learn Arabic, but that their preferences naturally go to English. This issue was observable during the participant observation, where the children spoke to each other at the mosque mostly in English, and they spoke Arabic only when they addressed their parents. Their use of Arabic with their parents came either from fear or reward. Children who speak Arabic with their parents get rewarded with gifts, money or going for a picnic, while for those who refuse to learn Arabic or do homework, there is no reward. Some of the parents use this strategy to motivate their children to speak in Arabic. Moreover, some Arabic speakers face a big challenge in speaking Arabic in public because of the negative attitudes of some non-Arabic speakers.

Another problem at the level of the community relates to the lack of activities and functions organized by this Arab community. Most of the functions are occasional rather than regular. For example, the Food Festival, Open Day, Ramadan, and Feasts, are only once a year, which is not enough and the Arabic speakers need more consistent activities and functions for their children to practise the Arabic language. Additionally, unlike big cities like Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, the Muslim Arabic-speaking community of Toowoomba does not have Arabic institutions to help the children to keep their parents' language, cultural heritage, customs, traditions and values. It should be noted that there is only one mosque, which was bought just recently and this is not enough for Toowoomba's growing Arab and Muslim community.

Last but not least, the Arabic-speaking community members face a big challenge to visit their home country. Some of the Arabic speakers did not have a chance to go back for years because of the instability and war in their country of origin, especially those who came from Iraq and Libya. Others face the problem of distance and finance associated with taking their children overseas to visit their relatives. It is too far and expensive to travel from Australia to the Middle East or North Africa.

To sum up, it is important to note that regardless of these diverse challenges facing the Arabic-speaking community, the Arabic language is still present and well-maintained. All parents demonstrated a strong willingness and loyalty towards their language and culture. In addition, their group solidarity and collaborations are part of finding a way to pass on their language and culture to their second generation children. Hence, these challenges motivate them to value their language, culture and religion as well as make them a distinctive community.

5.2.2.2 Participants' Recommendations

After describing the challenges facing the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba, the participants supplied some suggestions and comments in the hope of overcoming these challenges in the future. As shown in Table 5.1, all participants commented on their hope for the future establishment of Arabic schools or at least the integration of Arabic language as a subject within the Australian national curriculum. They also shared opinions about the necessity of having Arabic native teachers and Arabic curriculum to teach the Arabic language to their children. At the same time, however, some of the participants suggested that the parents should have their programs and strategies to teach their children themselves at home as there are no schools, and Arabic is not part of the Australian educational curriculum. Others suggested that children need interactions and having Arabic schools would be the most efficient way of teaching them Arabic. The researcher, as a member of the community, suggests that the Arabic language should be introduced into schools, particularly in Toowoomba, in response to the growing number of the Arabic speakers.

Additionally, there were some suggestions concerning the community. The majority of the participants commented on the importance of organizing more activities and functions by the Arab Muslim community to encourage children to learn and practise the Arabic language. This could include for example providing Arabic classes and establishing competitions for children to motivate them to learn. The participants gave their opinions about the role of the family,

which is the fundamental platform for the transmission of the language. They suggested that the Arabic-speaking parents should teach their children two languages from the beginning. Also, they suggested that parents should focus on teaching Arabic as a mother tongue and English, or any other language they are teaching them, to be the second language.

To overcome a major challenge facing the parents, namely the unavailability of Arabic media within the Australian media environment, participants suggested that all Arabic-speaking parents should provide their children with access to the Arabic media via the Internet and satellite antennas. Also, parents should encourage their children by watching diverse programs in the Arabic language.

Some other suggestions were provided by the participants in terms of their culture. Some participants recommended that all parents should remind their children that they were facing different cultures in this multicultural society.

For that reason, parents should pass their culture to their second generation children to get them attached to their parents' home country and history.

Additionally, all participants in this study were positive towards the maintenance of their language and culture, and they shared their opinions and suggestions at the end of the interviews as a message for the benefit of other parents. One of the suggestions was addressed to all Arabic-speaking parents and encouraged them to find a way to make learning Arabic like a game, thereby making it much easier for their children. Also, they recommended that parents should encourage and motivate their children by using different strategies.

Finally, the Arabic-speaking parents offered some recommendations in regards to the maintenance of the Arabic language. They recommended that children needed to be taught Arabic when they were still young, otherwise they would experience difficulties in understanding, talking and writing in Arabic. They also suggested that parents should teach their children Standard Arabic at home. Some participants recommended that all the parents should do their best to

preserve the Arabic language for their children if they wanted to keep their culture and religion.

5.3 Summary of findings

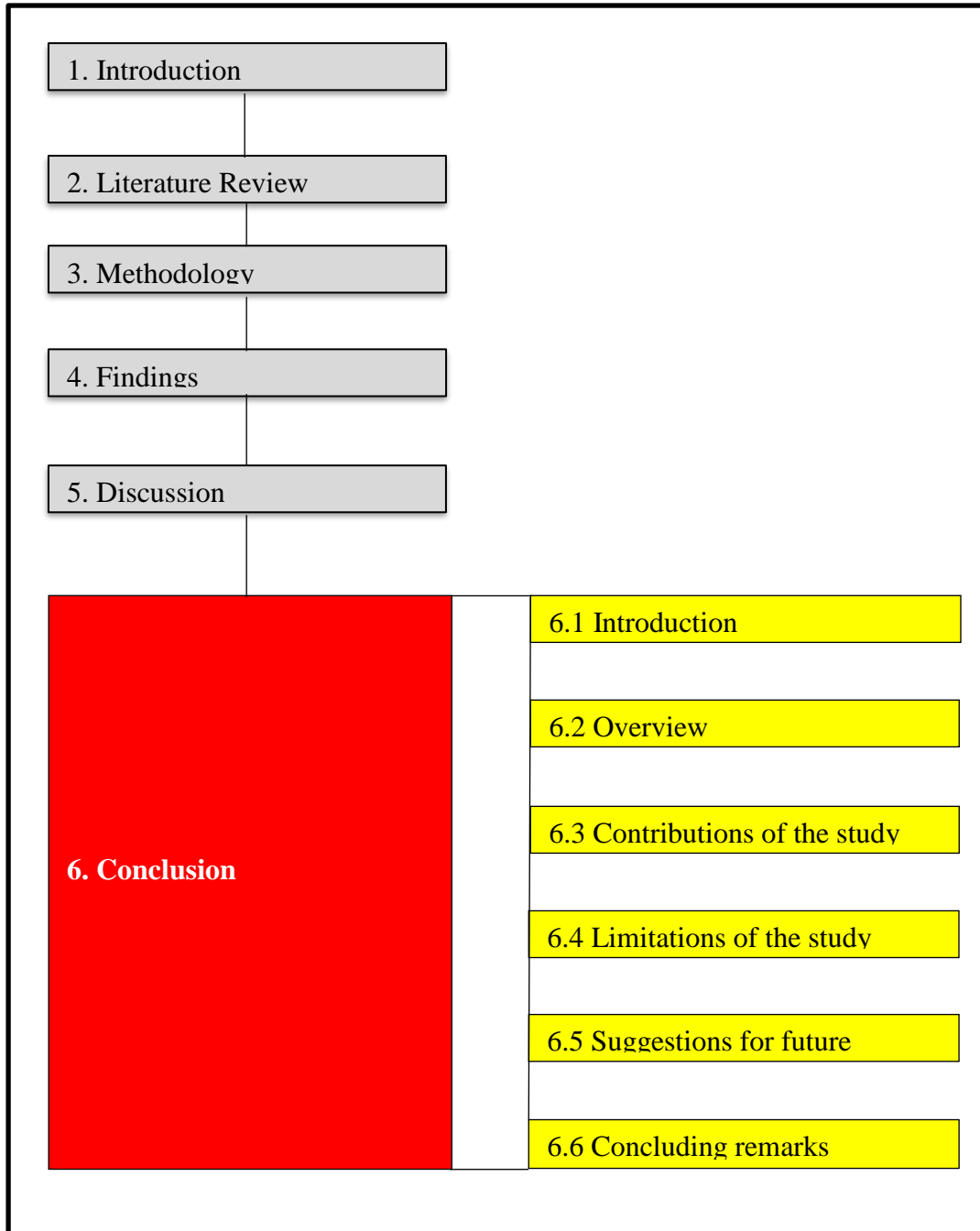
This chapter discussed the major themes of the findings in order to answer the research questions and explore in-depth the experiences of the Arabic-speaking community as a cultural group. This discussion of the findings was divided into two areas. The first area included a detailed discussion of the factors contributing to the maintenance of the Arabic language within this community. It is worth stating that most of these factors have been discussed in many studies, notably in the existing literature and theories of language maintenance. The second area referred to a set of challenges confronting the Arabic-speaking parents in the host country. This area also included some of the suggestions and opinions supplied by this cultural group about their future perspectives in terms of Arabic language maintenance and transmission to the second generation. Additionally, this discussion has revealed that some of these diverse factors work in favour of language maintenance, while the lack of some of these factors does not deeply affect this community. There was high maintenance among the first generation parents and a slow shift among second generation children. Children favoured English or spoke mostly in English outside the home environment, but this language preference was the natural preference in the host culture. To conclude, these findings confirm the existing literature and conceptual framework of this study.

The next and final chapter of this study presents the conclusion and recommendations in regards to the maintenance of Arabic language. In this chapter, the researcher summarises the findings, highlights the contributions and discusses some of the ethical and methodological limitations of the study. The final chapter also includes suggestions about possible future research and an overall conclusion of the study.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

CHAPTER 6: A Highlighted Outline of Conclusion



6 CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter, the researcher reviews the most important outcomes of the findings. First, the researcher gives an overview of the study, focusing on the current findings. Second, general contributions of this research, in terms of knowledge and practice, will be highlighted. Third, some ethical and methodological limitations confronting the researcher throughout the study are stated. Then, suggestions are provided for future research to inform linguists and educators about the urgent need to investigate small minority languages in some marginalized rural areas. Finally, a brief conclusion is offered to this chapter.

6.2 Overview

This qualitative study sought to provide an insight into language maintenance efforts, experiences and challenges faced by the Arabic-speaking community in the Queensland regional city of Toowoomba, Australia, and to explore the different factors that may contribute to, or impede, the intergenerational maintenance and transmission of the Arabic language within this community. This study also aimed to provide a holistic understanding of Arabic language maintenance among this cultural group rather than generalizing Arabic speakers throughout Australia.

It is observable that, in Australia as a multilingual and multicultural society, greater attention has been given to large and well-established communities rather than the smaller regional and rural communities. Most of the research on language maintenance has been conducted in big urban centres like Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane while small communities have been neglected in this respect. This study has shed light on the Arabic-speaking community in the regional city of Toowoomba to fill a gap in the existing literature and to give voice to this community; to share their thoughts and experiences.

The researcher implemented an ethnographic, qualitative approach to explore the participants' views in their natural settings about the maintenance of their Arabic language, as well as immersing himself in their everyday life interactions to observe their social reality, hoping to gain a holistic understanding of their cultural life. Thus, the researcher's focus was on the language and culture of this small community. Both descriptive and interpretive ethnography were used in this research to obtain information about what the participants said and had done to maintain their language. In addition, participants' views were documented on what they thought about the future of their community language, which is in a constant contact with the majority language. Additionally, the ethical requirements imposed on this kind of study contributed effectively to enhancing the validity of the findings. For example, the researcher appointed and trained a research assistant to locate and recruit female participants as part of showing respect for their cultural and religious demands.

In this ethnographic inquiry, the researcher adopted Creswell's (2012) analysis plan, which was considered appropriate and applicable to this study. The careful analysis of multiple instruments of data collection, including interviews, participant observation, and the researcher's personal journal, led to the emergence of several themes that formed the findings of this study. Additionally, the triangulation of data collection instruments increased the validity and credibility of the results. Also, the utilization of participant observation gave more validation to participants' statements during the interviews (Merriam, 2009).

The Arabic speakers identified many influential factors that assisted them in maintaining their community language. It is interesting to note that all these factors confirmed what was available in the literature and in language maintenance models and theories. These factors include socio-demographic factors, language maintenance domains, socio-cultural, institutional, socio-psychological, and social network factors, as well as some other intangible

factors such as the loyalty, commitment, and group solidarity. Hence, these factors represented the major themes in these findings, which then helped to answer the research questions of this study.

6.3 Contributions of the study

This research contributes to the field of language maintenance in multiple ways. First, this study has shed light on the language maintenance efforts and challenges of the Arabic-speaking community in the small, regional Queensland city of Toowoomba. This community succeeded in maintaining and transmitting their community language to the second generation children in spite of the lack of resources and without any help from the local government. As a result, this research can serve as a motivating step for other marginalized ethnolinguistic minority groups in Toowoomba specifically, and in Australia in general. It is hoped that they may take on the same challenges to protect their languages, and that they may learn from the experiences of the Arabic-speaking community.

Second, the study sought to remedy deficiencies in the context of language maintenance by concentrating on one of the marginalized regional communities in Australia. It expected to give them a voice to express their thoughts, share their experiences and enhance their awareness. It was the first research study to investigate the Arabic language maintenance phenomenon among the Arabic-speaking community in regional area in Queensland, Australia. Thus, this is a specific contribution that can be added to the existing literature.

Third, the interrelationship and interconnection of different language maintenance factors in these findings have provided a better understanding of the Arabic language maintenance among this community. Thus, these factors can also be reflected in other small communities of the same kind. Additionally, the overlapping relationship between these diverse factors gives the readers a holistic understanding of the language maintenance efforts and challenges of the Arabic speakers with regards to their community language and culture.

Fourth, this study could also alert the Australian government to the challenges of this community and stimulate them into giving more attention to small language communities, as well as to recognising the efforts made by small ethnolinguistic groups. For example, Arabic-speaking children are disadvantaged in the city of Toowoomba in terms of the availability of bilingual and Arabic schools. This study has found that there is an absolute need to include the Arabic language in the Australian educational curriculum for the growing number of Arabic speakers as well as for the status of Arabic.

Fifth, it should be noted that the availability of schools teaching the Arabic language may contribute effectively to the maintenance and transmission of the language as well as the culture. Also, it may contribute to the development of bilingual or multilingual Arab Australians who will be ready to represent their country at a high level, such as “international relations (including diplomacy and security) and international commerce (including industry, media, human resources, and so on)” (Temples, 2013, p. 8). In this way, Arab Australians could contribute to the development of their host country nationally and internationally as a result of language maintenance.

Sixth, the findings related to the maintenance of Arabic language in the regional city of Toowoomba are of value in enhancing the linguistic and cultural diversity in the Australian context. It may also contribute to the changing multilingual and multicultural structure of Australian society. Moreover, this study is intended to attract linguists’ and educators’ attention and to stimulate them to place more value on small isolated ethnolinguistic groups in their future research. At a practical level, this research may contribute to Australian multilingualism and multiculturalism by advocating the rights of small immigrant communities to be recognized.

Seventh, the findings may also raise awareness among the Arabic-speaking community about the value and high status of their community language. Arabic is considered a critical language for “its perceived importance for purposes of international diplomacy, global commerce, and national security”

(Temples, 2013, p. 7). The status of Arabic is a stimulus for the second generation children to value their parents' language.

Furthermore, the community is also assisting children to learn Arabic by organising Arabic and Quranic competitions between children for reciting and memorising the Quran and giving them valuable gifts to encourage them. Moreover, there is solidarity between families, as seen for example in the role of volunteer Arabic nannies who look after children in the absence of their parents. This provides an excellent opportunity to learn not just the language, but also to be exposed to Arabic Islamic culture. As stated earlier, education and community are very important for the maintenance of Arabic language. In small regional and rural communities, the community is small and the chance for education in the minority language is minor unlike in the urban centres.

Finally, this study also contributes to language maintenance theories by adding new factors to the existing literature. For example, the role of education is seen as a macro factor or a major theme in this study, which contributes effectively to the maintenance of Arabic language within this community. Additionally, under this macro factor, some new micro factors emerged from the findings to support the role of education. For instance, the contribution of volunteer teachers to teach Arabic is an important step that may cover the absence of bilingual and Arabic schools. Volunteer teachers contribute successfully to the maintenance and preservation of the Arabic language. Furthermore, another micro factor to be added to the role of education as a macro factor, is the reliance on Arabic-speaking children to help English teachers convey their messages properly to newly arrived Arabic-speaking children. These children are bilingual translators in the class, and they explain and translate the instructions and lessons to their classmates who do not speak English. In addition, some teaching strategies are implemented by Arabic-speaking parents to motivate their children to learn Arabic, such as teaching through translation, rewards, and repetition, amongst others.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The first observable limitation in this qualitative ethnographic inquiry is related to the generalization of the findings. The aim of this investigation, as mentioned earlier, was to explore the experiences and challenges of the Arabic-speaking community rather than to generalize to a larger population. However, some researchers (Creswell, 2005; Midgley, 2010) argue that some issues that have been explored in a single study can be transferable to other studies of the same context. For example, the participants in Toowoomba who face barriers to visiting their home country due to the high cost and the long distance between Australia and the Middle East can be extended to all the Arabic speakers in Australia since they come from the same places. As a result, this factor can be applied to other similar contexts (Midgley, 2010) like the African migrants who live very far from their host countries such as Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea, where the Arabic language is also spoken. In the same context, the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba mentioned the lack of institutions such as schools and media, a circumstance shared by other regional ethnolinguistic minority groups in this city. There are many things and issues that can be transferable either to all Arabic speakers in the whole of Australia or to other community languages facing similar kinds of challenges.

The second limitation is related to the selection of the sample. Due to ethical issues discussed, the researcher was obliged to appoint a female research assistant to recruit Arab female participants. With respect to the Arab Islamic culture, all female participants were interviewed and observed by the research assistant based on their request. This is the main reason that the researcher used the snowballing sampling method to locate and identify female participants through a research assistant. Additionally, it was not an easy task for the researcher to find a research assistant who could straightforwardly accept this stressful job. As mentioned earlier, the researcher had to provide training to the research assistant over a period of three days to carry out the interviews and participant observation with the female participants. Thus, this was time

consuming and meant much effort and stress for the researcher. However, the data collected by different researchers enhanced the validity of the findings.

In addition to the sample limitations, some female participants were very excited to participate at first but when they asked for their husbands' permission, they apologized to the research assistant for not being able to participate. The reason is that their husbands refused their participation in this study when they were informed that the primary researcher was a male, and the female research assistant was just doing the job on his behalf. Some of the husbands may have thought that the researcher would be able to listen to their wives' voices in the recordings.

The third limitation was that the majority of the female participants offered to get interviewed at their 'homes' and they were jubilant to invite the research assistant to their homes due to their generous culture. However, the research assistant explained to them the reason for not being able to interview them in their places because of the ethical considerations imposed on the researchers. Consequently, all the female participants accepted to be interviewed at the mosque, and some of them brought their children with them to play outside. Some noise made by children appeared in the recordings.

At the level of data analysis, as was mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, the research assistant was the one who transcribed the interviews in this study, and the primary researcher received only the written texts (transcripts). This could be seen as a limitation for many linguists as it is desirable that the same researcher needs to transcribe the revealed data. However, it is not ethically possible in this case due to certain cultural and religious restrictions mentioned above. In spite of this limitation, having this additional researcher proved to be more efficient for triangulations of data and the validity and credibility of the findings (Creswell, 2014; Reeves et al., 2008).

The fourth limitation also relates to the ethical code. This research was conducted only with Arabic-speaking parents, and excluded their children. The researcher obtained the information about the children's use of the language

and their attitudes towards Arabic only from their parents. However, during the participant observation, children were observed indirectly with their parents as they were with them most of the time either at the mosque or in other places such as parks and soccer fields. During the interviews, the researcher obtained permission from participants to observe them when needed.

The fifth and last limitation may relate to the similarities between the researcher and the participants in terms of language, culture, and values. For some people, these similarities could lead to a bias in dealing with the data. However, the cultural and linguistic similarities between the researcher and his participants are more likely to have led to a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation and to have enhanced the trust between the researcher and participants. Additionally, these similarities would have given the participants the courage to express themselves and speak freely about their experiences and challenges without fear towards a stranger. The researcher avoided any culturally sensitive questions that he was aware of. It is important to mention that the research assistant in this study came from a different linguistic and cultural background, and she was new to the Arab and Islamic culture. However, the linguistic and cultural difference of the research assistant did not affect the current study. On the contrary, it enhanced the validity and credibility of the findings with rich data.

6.5 Suggestions for future research

As mentioned earlier, diverse suggestions have been made by the participants about their perspectives on how to maintain their Arabic language and transmit it to the subsequent generation. Based on what the researcher has lived through and observed in the field throughout this research, some suggestions can be raised for future research.

First, the sample of this study includes Arabic speakers from only seven nationalities out of 22 Arab countries. The Arab world includes Arabic speakers from 22 countries who live in Australia, and no single study combines all of them. Future research may include all Arabic speakers in a big study that

requires time, funding and devotion. Additionally, future research could be conducted in some of these countries separately to see the variation in language maintenance and transmission between those states. For instance, there are some Arabic speakers from North Africa such as Moroccans, Algerians, and Tunisians. They are very few in number (less than 1300 speakers from each country), and they are not well-established (ABS, 2011). These small communities need great attention from educators and linguists.

Second, the regional area of Toowoomba is very rich in its linguistic and cultural diversity; there are over 250 spoken languages and numerous remarkable cultures (ABS, 2011). However, many of these small community languages such as Somalian, Eritrean and Tongan are marginalized. Future research is urged to save what needs to be saved and hear the voices of these small ethnolinguistic minority groups.

Third, as mentioned earlier, due to the limitation of interviewing Arabic-speaking children with their parents for ethical considerations, future research may include children as participants for a deeper understanding of intergenerational language maintenance and transmission. Additionally, some Arabic-speaking parents reported that their children were helping the Australian teachers at school to convey their messages to the newly arrived Arabic children who did not speak English. Some children can translate from English to Arabic and vice versa. The researcher recommends conducting research about schools attended by a majority of Arabic-speaking children to assess bilingualism among Arabic-speaking children.

6.6 Concluding Remarks

To conclude, the first generation Arabic speakers are successful in maintaining their community language in the regional Queensland city of Toowoomba, in spite of the lack of the significant supportive institutions such schools, media and cultural organizations. The second generation Arabic-speaking children can communicate in Arabic, but they tend to use the English language with their friends, especially those who are exposed to English at their schools where it is

the only medium of instruction. It should be noted that both Arabic language and English are used side by side in different situations and contexts. Arabic is mostly used in intimate domains, like the home among family members, for communication with relatives and friends overseas, and in religious practices, while English is used in formal areas such as education and the media.

Furthermore, it should be noted that all the language maintenance factors in this study appear to be important for the intergenerational transmission of Arabic. For example, the home is considered to be the essential factor for the maintenance of Arabic through constant communication and interactions between parents and children. Also, religion seems to have a great impact on the transmission of the Arabic language, as it covers for the absence of Arabic schools with its significant role in teaching children a few hours per week and during school holidays. There is no doubt that the will, commitment, motivation and the loyalty of the Arabic speakers to their native language, culture, and religion are the core factors for language maintenance and transmission. These findings also revealed that first generation Arabic-speaking parents are positive towards their language, which was displayed through their continuous efforts and challenges to maintain and preserve Arabic for the second generation children within their small community. Thus, the maintenance of the Arabic language is based almost entirely on the personal efforts of Arabic-speaking parents through the application of their strategies (teaching strategies) to transmit their language to the second generation children. Finally, this study confirms theories and models of language maintenance and the relevance of the developed conceptual framework of language maintenance in which most of the factors have been investigated and critically analysed. In addition some new factors helped to redesign the conceptual framework developed earlier by the researcher and were incorporated into a new conceptual framework based on the analysis of the data emerged from the participants' views in this study. The following diagram is the modified conceptual framework that can be used as a guide for future studies in the field of language maintenance.

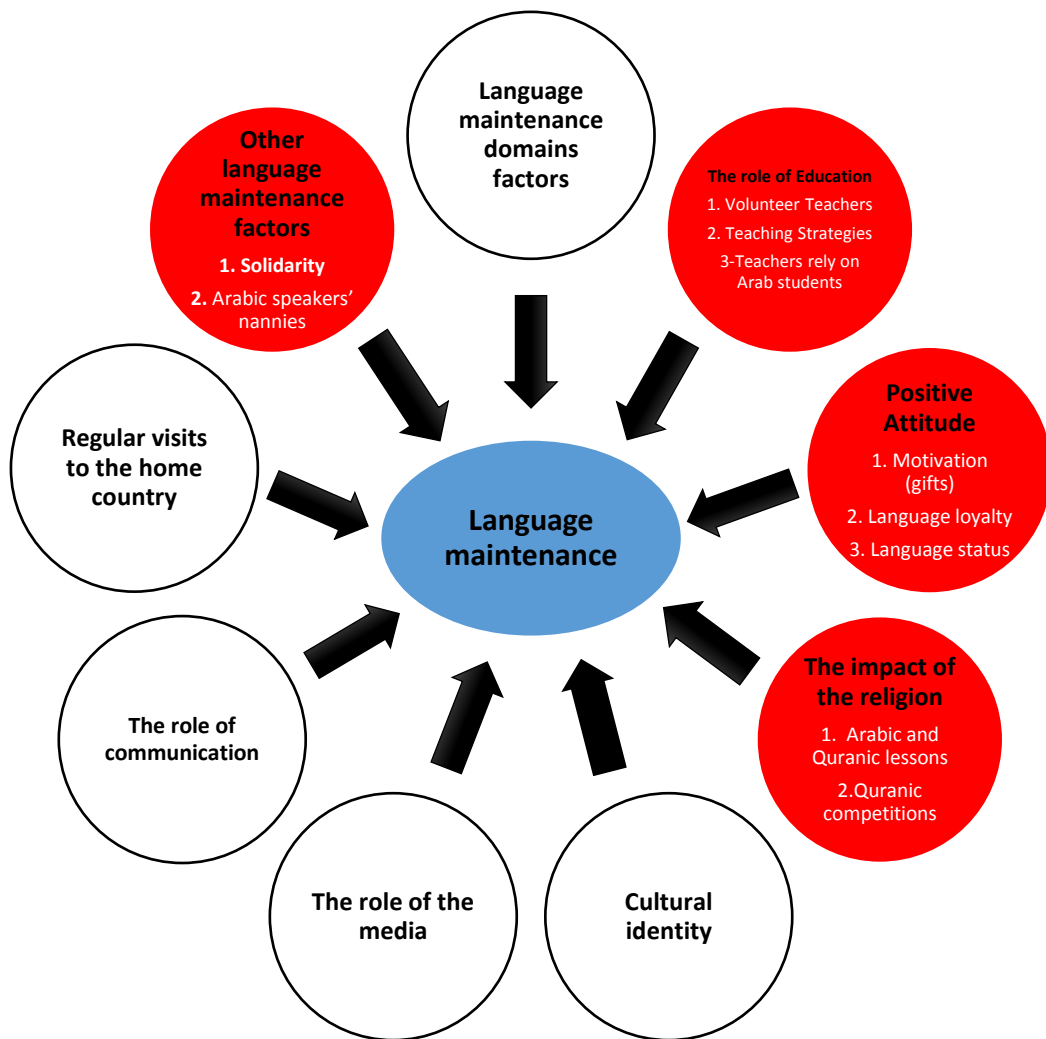


Figure 6.1: The final modified conceptual framework reflecting the research contributions

As Figure 6.1 indicates, some new contributions are added to the conceptual framework based on the experiences and views of the participants about the Arabic language maintenance. The new factors are highlighted in red referring to the new sub-themes that help to redesign the conceptual framework and to answer the research questions.

7 List of References

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8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A: Top 10 community languages in Australia, 1976-2011

| Language 1976 | Language 1986 | Language 1996 | Language 2001 | Language 2006 | Language 2011 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Italian 444,672 | Italian 415,765 | Italian 375,752 | Italian 353,606 | Italian 316,894 | Mandarin 336,178 |
| Greek 262,177 | Greek 277,472 | Greek 269,770 | Greek 263,718 | Greek 252,226 | Italian 299,829 |
| German 170,644 | Serbo-Croatian 140,575 | Cantonese 202,270 | Cantonese 225,307 | Cantonese 244,557 | Arabic 287,171 |
| Serbo-Croatian 142,407 | Chinese 139,100 | Arabic 177,599 | Arabic 209,371 | Arabic 243,661 | Cantonese 263,538 |
| French 64,851 | Arabic 119,187 | Vietnamese 146,265 | Vietnamese 174,236 | Mandarin 220,604 | Greek 252,211 |
| Dutch 64,768 | German 111,276 | German 98,808 | Mandarin 139,288 | Vietnamese 194,854 | Vietnamese 233,388 |
| Polish 62,945 | Spanish 73,961 | Mandarin 91,911 | Spanish 93,595 | Spanish 98,002 | Tagalog 136,846 |
| Arabic 51,284 | Polish 68,638 | Spanish 91,254 | Tagalog 78,879 | German 75,636 | Spanish 117,493 |
| Spanish 48,343 | Vietnamese 65,856 | Macedonian 71,347 | German 76,444 | Hindi 70,006 | Hindi 111,349 |
| Maltese 54,922 | Dutch 62,181 | Tagalog 70,444 | Macedonian 71,994 | Macedonian 67,833 | German 80,366 |

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing.

8.2 Appendix B: Participant information sheet and consent form



University of Southern Queensland

The University of Southern Queensland Participant Information Sheet

To: Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba

إلى: الجالية العربية في توومبا

Project Title: Arabic language maintenance within the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba, Australia

عنوان الدراسة: الحفاظ على اللغة العربية داخل المجتمع العربي في توومبا، أستراليا

Researcher: Mostefa Abdelhadi (USQ student number: 0050072983)

الباحث: مصطفى عبد الهادي (الرقم الجامعي 0050072983)

Principal Supervisor: A/Prof Henriette van Rensburg

المشرف الرئيسي: الأستاذ المشارك هنريات فان رنزيبرغ

Associate Supervisor: A/Prof Warren Midgley

المشرف المساعد: الأستاذ المشارك وارن ميدغلي

I would like to invite you to take part in this research project that has been designed to explore the factors that contribute to the maintenance of Arabic language within the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba, Australia.

هذه دعوة للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية المصممة للتعرف على العوامل التي تساهم في الحفاظ على اللغة العربية في المجتمع داخل أستراليا، توومبا في لبريا. لقد تمت الموافقة على هذه الدراسة من قبل الأشخاص والهيئات المعنية في جامعة جنوب كوينزلاند في أستراليا.

The study has been approved by the appropriate people and review boards at University of Southern Queensland-Australia.

Please read this Plain Language Statement carefully. Its purpose is to explain to you as openly and clearly as possible all the procedures involved so that you can make a fully informed decision as to whether you are going to participate. Feel free to ask questions about any information in the document. You may also wish to discuss the project with a relative or friend. Feel free to do this.

Once you understand what the project is about and if you agree to take part in it, you are requested to sign the attached Consent Form. By signing the Consent Form, you indicate that you understand the information and that you give your consent to participate in the research project.

1. Purpose of Research

The purpose of this study is to provide an insight into language maintenance efforts of Arabic speakers in Toowoomba, Australia, and to explore the different factors that contribute in the maintenance of Arabic language within this community.

This will provide information about the Arabic-speaking community experiences and motivations to maintain their Arabic language in an environment where English is the most spoken and prestigious language.

2. Procedures

This qualitative study is carried out using face-to-face semi-structured interviews and participant observations in order to explore participants' views and perspectives about Arabic language maintenance. The interviews will take place at the mosque's office. The interviews will be audio taped and will take 30-40 minutes. All interviews will be transcribed verbatim. Your privacy will be protected and no details of the interviews that might identify you will be included in the final report or when the study or part of it will be published.

3. Confidentiality

The collected data will be preserved in a locked closet placed in a designated area within the Administration of the faculty of Education. The questionnaires will be coded by the researcher; the confidentiality of the participants will be protected. The collected data will only be available to the researcher. All data stored on the researcher's computer will be password protected for confidentiality. The researcher is the only person who knows the password used. Interview data will be coded as per their questionnaire code to protect the participants' confidentiality. When the final report is written pseudonyms will be used when describing the participants' reports.

4. Voluntary Participation

Participation is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the study at any stage. Participants will be reassured that their anonymity and confidentiality will be protected. The interview data including the audio tapes and the transcripts Participants will at all times be reassured that their identity and confidentiality will be preserved. Your decision whether to participate or not, or to take part and then withdraw, will have no consequences. Before you make your decision to withdraw, please notify the principal researcher who will be available to answer any question you have about the research project. You can ask for any information you want.

الرجاء قراءة العبارات التالية جيدا والتي تهدف لتوضيح الخطوات المتبعة في هذه الدراسة بشفاافية وافتتاحية لتمكينك من اتخاذ القرار بالمشاركة في هذه الدراسة. الرجاء الشعور بالارتياح للسؤال عن أي جزئ في هذه الوثيقة. لك حرية الاختيار إذا رغبت بمناقشة الدراسة مع أحد أفراد اسرتك أو صديقك. لا تتردد في القيام بذلك.

في حال تم الإدراك التام لغرض الدراسة وقررت المشاركة فيها، الرجاء توقيع نموذج الموافقة المرفق. هذا التوقيع يشير لفهمك التام للمعلومات عن الدراسة وأنت موافقة على المشاركة فيها.

1. الغرض من الدراسة

الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو توفير نظرة ثاقبة حول جهود الحفاظ على اللغة العربية من طرف لعربيا المجتمع في، توومبا أستراليا، واستكشاف العوامل المختلفة التي تسهم في الحفاظ على اللغة العربية في هذا المجتمع .

وهذا سوف يوفر معلومات حول تجارب العربي المجتمع للحفاظ على لغتهم العربية في بيئة حيث اللغة الإنجليزية هي اللغة المرموقة والأكثر استعمالا.

2. الإجراءات

تتم هذه الدراسة النوعية من استخدام المقابلات وجها لوجه الشبه منظمه والملاحظات من أجل استكشاف وجهات نظر المشاركين حول الحفاظ على اللغة العربية. سوف تجري المقابلات في مكتب المسجد. سوف تسجل كل المقابلات بالصوت فقط، تتم المقابلات في مكتب المسجد وسيتم تسجيل المقابلات بالصوت فقط. مدة المقابلة 30-40 دقيقة. سوف يتم تدوين المقابلة على الورق كلمة بكلمة. سوف تتم مراعاة خصوصيتك على الدوام ولن يتم إدراج أية تفاصيل من المقابلة قد تدل على هويتك بأي شكل من الأشكال عند كتابة الرسالة أو عند القيام بنشر البحث أو أجزاء منه في مجلات علمية .

3. المرحلة الثانية سرية المعلومات

سوف يتم حفظ الاستبيانات والمعلومات المأخوذة منها في خزانة محكمة الإغلاق في مكان مخصص في إدارة كلية التربية. سيتم تشفير الاستبيانات (إزالة الاسم واعطاء رقم) من قبل الباحث. وسوف تراعى سرية المشاركات على الدوام. الباحث هو الشخص الوحيد الذي سيتطلع على الاستبيانات والمعلومات المأخوذة منها أو من المقابلات وسوف يتم حماية البيانات والمعلومات المخزنة في الكمبيوتر باستخدام كلمة مرور خاصة يحفظها الباحث فقط، ومن أجل سرية المعلومات سوف يتم تشفير البيانات والمعلومات من مقابلة كل مشارك باستخدام نفس رمز تشفير استبيان المشارك. عند تحضير التقرير النهائي للدراسة فسوف تستخدم أسماء مستعارة للمشاركين عند تضمين ما قالوا في التقرير.

4. إختيارية المشاركة

المشاركة اختيارية في كافة أجزاء الدراسة. وان لم ترغب بالمشاركة في أي جزء من الدراسة فلك حرية الخيار حتى لو كنت قررت المشاركة في البداية. وسيتم التأكيد للمشاركة في حال الانسحاب على المحافظة على سرية المعلومات وعلى عدم ربط أية معلومة بأسم المشارك. وإذا قررت الانسحاب بعد المقابلة، فسوف يتم سحب وإتلاف المادة المسجلة من على أشرطة التسجيل أو المدونة على الورق أو في الكمبيوتر. وسوف يتم باستمرار التأكيد للمشاركين على المحافظة على عدم كشف هوية المشاركين وعلى سرية المعلومات. إن مشاركتك (أو عدم المشاركة) في الدراسة أو أي جزء منها لن يؤثر بأي شكل من الأشكال عليك. الرجاء التحدث مع الباحث قبل اتخاذ القرار بالانسحاب من الدراسة. الباحث متواجد على الدوام للإجابة على أسئلتك حول الدراسة ويمكنك السؤال عن ما شئت حول الدراسة.

Sign the Consent Form only after you have had a chance to ask your questions and have received satisfactory answers.

الرجاء توقيع نموذج الموافقة على الدراسة فقط إذا تمت الإجابة على كل أسئلتك واستفساراتك بوضوح وبشكل مرضي.

5. Queries or Concerns

Your participation will be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or queries regarding the progress or conduct of this research, please feel free to contact the principal researcher.

5. المتطلبات أو الاستفسارات

نقدر مشاركتكم. إذا كان لديكم أي أسئلة أو استفسارات بشأن إجراء هذا البحث، فلا تتردد في حال وجود أية أسئلة أو متطلبات أو استفسارات الرجاء الاتصال بالباحث على:

Mostefa ABDELHADI,
Faculty of Education, University of Southern Queensland
Phone: 0421259948

مصطفى عبد الهادي
كلية التربية جامعة جنوب كوينزلاند
الهاتف ٠٤٢١٢٥٩٩٤٨

If you have any ethical concerns with how the research is being conducted or any queries about your rights as a participant, please feel free to contact the University of Southern Queensland Ethics Officer on the following details.

إذا وجدت أية استفسارات تتعلق بأخلاقيات البحث العلمي حول كيفية القيام بالدراسة أو في حال وجود استفسارات حول حقوقك كمشاركة في الدراسة الرجاء الاتصال بمكتب أخلاقيات البحث العلمي بجامعة جنوب كوينزلاند على العنوان التالي:

Ethics and Research Integrity Officer
Office of Research and Higher Degrees
University of Southern Queensland
West Street, Toowoomba 4350
Ph: +61 7 4631 2690
Email: ethics@usq.edu.au

وشكرا جزيلاً

Thank you!



University of Southern Queensland

The University of Southern Queensland Consent Form

To: Arabic-speaking community

Full Project Title: The maintenance of Arabic language within the Arabic-speaking community in Toowoomba, Australia

Principal Researcher: Mostefa ABDELHADI (USQ student number: 0050072983)

Principal Supervisor: Senior Lecturer Dr Henriette van Rensburg

Associate Supervisor: Senior Lecturer Dr Warren Midgley

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.
- I confirm that I am over 18 years of age.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential.

- I understand that the tape will be stored securely on my USQ computer which is password protected. Any paper records will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office in the Faculty of Education, USQ. These records will be stored securely for a period of 5 years. Signed consent forms and data that may identify participants will be kept in separate secure locations in my office.
- I understand that I will be audio taped.

Note: Female participants will be given the opportunity to be interviewed by female interviewer, in the line of Islamic customs.

I want to be interviewed by a female interviewer Yes No

Name of participant.....

Signed.....Date.....

If you have any ethical concerns with how the research is being conducted or any queries about your rights as a participant please feel free to contact the University of Southern Queensland Ethics Officer on the following details.

Ethics and Research Integrity Officer
Office of Research and Higher Degrees
University of Southern Queensland
West Street, Toowoomba 4350
Ph. +61 7 4631 2690
Email: ethics@usq.edu.au

8.3 Appendix C: Interview protocol (Questions)

A. Demographic Questions:

- 1-What is your gender?
- 2-What is your age?
- 3-When did you come to Australia?
- 4-How did you find the adjustment in Australia?
- 5-Are you married to Arabic speaking wife or other nationality?
- 6-Do you have any children? How many?
- 7-What do you do for a living?
- 8-What is your education level?

B. Language use and domain Questions:

- 9-What languages do you speak?
- 10-Which languages do you speak at home with your children?
- 11-Which languages do you speak to your wife? and how often?
- 12-Which languages do your children speak to you? and how often?
- 13-Which languages do you speak to your neighbours? and how often?
- 14-Which language do you use at work?
- 15-Which language do you use in the community?
- 16-Do you encourage your children to use Arabic?
- 17- Is it important for you to use Arabic?

C. Language maintenance Questions:

- 18- Do your children learn Arabic at school?
 19 -Is it important for your children to learn Arabic in schools?
 20-What is your children’s attitude towards learning and speaking Arabic?
 21- What motivates you to encourage your children’s use of Arabic?
 22-What is the attitude of the majority groups, for example English speaking Australians towards you?
 23 -How important for you to keep your Arabic language?
 24-How important for you to keep your culture?
 25-What do you do to keep your cultural heritage?
 26-Do you feel that knowledge of Arabic is important to your religious identity?
 27-What role does religion play in Arabic language maintenance?
 28-How do you maintain your Arabic language?
 29-Do you have access to media in your Arabic language?
 30-How often do you and your children visit your country of origin?
 31-What do you think are the most effective ways of maintaining Arabic in Australia

8.4 Appendix D: Conducting Observation

| Conducting Observation | | | |
|------------------------|--|---|--|
| Participants | General Observation | Focused Observation | Comments |
| 12 Males & 8 Females | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Setting -Type of people -Buildings (e.g., prayer room and classrooms) -General activities conducted at the mosque -Approximate number of people coming every day and during Friday prayer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Language -Culture and Sub-cultures -Activities related to language maintenance -Communication between parents and children -Communication between Arabs and non-Arabic speakers -Participants’ attitudes -Children’s attitudes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Only the participants who took part in the interviews were observed -The participants came regularly to perform their prayers at the mosque -Almost all the participants brought their children after school hour and during the weekend -Each participant was observed more than 10 times during the six month of data collection -Observation conducted every Friday prayers for three hours, and during the religious and cultural events such as Ramadan (for the whole month, two hours a day) Feasts (once a year for three hours), Food Festival (once a year for the whole day), Open Muslim day (once a year and took the whole day) -Researcher took notes only without recording the participants -Fieldnotes were documented during and after the observation |

8.5 Appendix E: The list of codes belongs to one theme (The impact of the religion on the Arabic language maintenance)

| List of codes | Themes (and other ideas) | Sub-themes |
|--|---|---|
| <p>1. The role of the Religion</p> <p>Reading or learning Qur'an is one of the most important things to keep Arabic language.</p> <p>The importance of writing in Arabic.</p> <p>Islamic religion has Qur'an in Arabic</p> <p>Arabic is very important to understand the religion.</p> <p>Arabic learning to practice Islam.</p> <p>Religion is encouraging us to learn other languages</p> <p>Encouragement and motivations in support of learning other languages</p> <p>Talking about the religion is talking about the Qur'an.</p> <p>Children are learning Qur'an and Arabic</p> <p>2. The role of the mosque</p> <p>The mosque is a place of gathering and activities</p> <p>Teaching Qur'an in the mosque.</p> <p>Activities provided by the mosque help to maintain the culture.</p> <p>Taking kids to the mosque</p> <p>The use of Arabic and English at the mosque on Friday.</p> <p>The role of the mosque in offering Arabic classes to the community.</p> <p>Mosque in Islam is that the basic unit to develop the community.</p> <p>Qur'an competitions at the mosque.</p> <p>Mosque is a place of gathering people.</p> | <p>The impact of the religion on the Arabic language maintenance</p> <p><u>Idea:</u> Some participants claim that writing in Arabic language is much more important than only speaking. This is due that some children can speak but cannot read and write. A good comment to be reviewed later.</p> | <p>Importance of Arabic to understand the religion</p> <p>Religion is in favour of learning other languages.</p> <p>The major role of the mosque in the maintenance of Arabic language.</p> <p>Teaching Qur'an in the mosque.</p> |

| List of codes | Themes (and other ideas) | Sub-themes |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Everyone is talking Arabic at the mosque</p> <p>3. Arabic and Quranic Lessons</p> <p>If there is Qur'an lesson; it is going to be a good supporter in terms of keeping Arabic language.</p> <p>Language competitions in Ramadan.</p> <p>Getting a prize from memorizing the Qur'an at the mosque.</p> <p>Learning about Arabic language and Islam.</p> <p>Teaching Arabic by the Imam of the mosque.</p> <p>Teaching children Arabic at the mosque.</p> | <p>Idea: During the first 10 interviews there were no Arabic classes at the mosque. That is why some participants talked about the lack of Arabic and Qur'an classes. Now, they are available at the mosque</p> | <p>Activities provided by the mosque to keep the Arabic language.</p> <p>Qur'an competition at the mosque.</p> <p>The role of Qur'an lessons to maintain the Arabic language.</p> <p>Encouraging children to memorize the Qur'an.</p> <p>Teaching Arabic at the mosque</p> |

8.6 Appendix F: Sample of coding process of the participant observation

| Coding | Text Segments | Themes (and Other Ideas) |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Attending Friday prayers</p> <p>Praying and reciting the Qur'an</p> <p>Listening to the sermon</p> | <p>Arabic speakers started coming to Friday prayers early, either individually, in couple or in a group of three and sometimes four. Some of them come walking to the mosque and some driving. When they get inside the mosque, they prayed two units prayer (OC: <i>They offer this two units as a Sunna "Teaching and practice of the Prophet Muhammed Peace and Blessing of Allah Be Upon Him"</i>). They sit waiting for the sermon to start. Most of the Arabic speakers recite some verses of the Qur'an, others say their own prayers. The sermon starts at 12.15 when the Imam entered the mosque from a different door and sit on his chair facing the people. When the sermon starts everyone is listening, they stop reciting the Qur'an or talking. The Sermon took between 35 and 40 minutes. Arabic</p> | <p>Religious activities conducted at the mosque</p> |

| Coding | Text Segments | Themes (and Other Ideas) |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------|
| delivered by the Imam | speakers came to the prayers wearing the best clothes they have. | |

8.7 Appendix G: Summary of themes and sub-themes extracted from interviews

| Coding | Themes | Sub-themes |
|---|---|--|
| Speaking mixed Arabic and English Using English in discussion -Speaking my own language. Talking in Arabic | Language maintenance domains | The influence of the family |
| | | Maintaining Arabic among friends |
| | | Maintaining Arabic among neighbours |
| | | The role of the Community to maintain Arabic |
| The Absence of Arabic schools. Teaching children at home. Teaching children through translation. Teaching children memorize the Qur'an. Teaching children how to write in Arabic. | The role of education in the maintenance of Arabic language | Lack of Arabic schools |
| | | Teaching Arabic at home |
| | | Teaching strategies implemented by parents |
| | | Teaching Arabic by volunteers |
| | | Importance of Arabic schools |
| My boys are very happy with the Arabic program. Doing 'Anashid' [poems] to make the children interested. Encouraging children to speak Arabic. They [Non-Arabic speakers] are friendly. They are positive towards different cultures and languages. Finding signs to speak English only. | Positive attitudes toward Arabic language maintenance | Children attitudes toward learning and speaking Arabic |
| | | Motivating children to learn Arabic |
| | | The attitude of the majority groups toward Arabic-speakers |
| | | Language loyalty |
| | | The positive attitudes towards the majority language |

| Coding | Themes | Sub-themes |
|---|--|---|
| <p>The importance of understanding the religion in Arabic.</p> <p>Children go to the mosque to learn Arabic.</p> <p>The mosque is teaching the Qur'an and Arabic.</p> <p>Arabic is the language of Islam.</p> <p>The Qur'an has been written in Arabic.</p> | <p>The impact of the religion on the maintenance Arabic language</p> | <p>The role of the mosque</p> |
| | | <p>Arabic and Quranic classes</p> |
| | | <p>The status of Arabic in Islam</p> |
| <p>-Having a bad chock because of the cultural difference.</p> <p>They [Non-Arab classmates] want to shake my hand and I cannot refuse, but this is not in our culture.</p> <p>Some celebrations here, they can change the child's mind.</p> | <p>Maintaining Arabic for cultural identity</p> | <p>The importance of the culture</p> |
| | | <p>Culture chock</p> |
| | | <p>Challenges and difficulties to maintain the culture.</p> |
| <p>There is only one channel which is Dubai channel.</p> <p>Installing a decoder via the internet to get access to Arabic channels.</p> <p>Many Arabic channels through the internet and satellite.</p> | <p>The influence of the media in Arabic</p> | <p>The influence of Australian media on Arabic language</p> |
| <p>Having a family overseas.</p> <p>Communicating with my family via Skype, Yahoo, Hotmail, and MSN.</p> <p>Using Tango to communicate with my parents.</p> <p>Speaking Arabic with them.</p> | <p>Communication with relatives and friends in Arabic language</p> | <p>Regular overseas communication</p> |
| | | <p>The use of technology (Internet communication).</p> |
| | | <p>Language of communication</p> |
| <p>It is important to keep the children close from their country.</p> <p>Not having a chance to take my children home.</p> | <p>Visiting the home country</p> | <p>Visiting relatives and friends</p> |
| | | <p>Emergency visits to the home country and</p> |
| | | <p>Instability in the home country prevents visits.</p> |

8.8 Appendix H: Triangulation of themes emerged from the three methods of data collection

| THEMES | Methods of Data Collection | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | <i>Interviews</i> | <i>Participant observation</i> | <i>Research journal</i> |
| 1. Language maintenance domains | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 2. The role of education in the maintenance of Arabic language | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 3. Positive attitudes toward Arabic language maintenance | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 4. The impact of the religion in the maintenance Arabic language | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 5. Maintaining Arabic for cultural identity | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 6. The influence of the media in Arabic | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 7. Communication in the Arabic language | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 8. Visiting the home country | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 9. Group solidarity within the community | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

8.9 Appendix I: Parents' and children's attitudes towards the maintenance of Arabic language

| | Actions and Motivational Activities |
|----------------------------|--|
| Parents' Attitude | <p>Talking to their children in various domains, notably at home, Taking their children to the mosque to pray and interact with other children, Enrol their children to learn Arabic at home, Providing access to the media in Arabic at home, Taking their children overseas to interact with their relatives, Providing the medium of communication to their children to communicate with their relatives, Visiting and inviting some friends from the same community at home to provide Arabic language interactive atmosphere, Dropping their children to Arabic speakers' nannies to learn Arabic, Motivating and encouraging their children to speak Arabic language at home and outside, Loyalty and commitment toward their community language, Preserving the language, culture and religion. To keep the identity</p> |
| Children's Attitude | <p>Attending Arabic classes at the mosque, Attending activities and celebrations (e.g., Food festival, Ramadan and Feasts). Attending Arabic classes given by volunteer teachers. Staying with the Arabic nanny to have access to Arabic language Coming with their parents to the mosque to pray, interact and socialize with other Arabic children, Watching Arabic channels and videos, Communicating with their grandparents and relatives overseas in Arabic.</p> |

8.10 Appendix J: Participants' statements from the interviews

| Themes | Participants' Statements |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Language Maintenance Domains</i> | <p>To each other at home, Arabic language because I am always encouraging them to speak Arabic... because all day, they are at school and they are speaking English. At this stage, they are very good with the English language. They got all the experience, the pronunciation, but still need to learn Arabic as well, because as I said the older one is eight and the second one is seven years. So at home, I am encouraging them to speak Arabic, learn Arabic, sometimes I encouraged them to watch Arabic programs. (S9M)</p> <p>I prefer to speak my own language... but sometimes when, meet some people, even they are Muslims or Australians, and you have to use the English language because this is the link between all the people from different language and background. (S2M)</p> <p>Ah, at this stage I speak with them English, but every now and then I try to find a way to introduce some Arabic words, ah, for some objects in the house or some actions that we do at home like opening the doors, like washing the face, like greeting people when they coming in and all that stuff, and this the only one way that actually manage to transmit my language, Arabic language to them. (S5M)</p> |

| Themes | Participants' Statements |
|--------|--|
| | <p>Arabic and sometimes we speak English for practice. (S6M)</p> <p>Yeah! Mostly we are talking Arabic. At the beginning of school, I was trying to force them not to speak Arabic in the beginning month, like three to four months. Nobody talk to me in Arabic. So I found that they start capturing the language, but everyone knows that you cannot communicate in the second language like the native language. I mean now, these days, after six or after one year of learning English, we are now talking in native language. So they want to express their feeling in English and Arabic. When the problem is related to the English matter, they started in English and usually when she wants to talk to me so what happened in school, she likes to tell me the things happened words by words, so she will talk in English and she adds some comments in Arabic. (S11M)</p> <p>We speak Arabic, but because we have been here for a while we use some vocabs [vocabulary] which are English, pure English. Even we forgot the meaning in Arabic (laughter), it is funny. Sometimes in the middle of the conversation I stop and talk "Just remind me what the Arabic word is for that?" And he told me "I forgot. Keep going in English. That's fine!" (Laughter). (S15F)</p> <p>Actually, you can say both. Arabic and English. My eldest daughter is familiar with English more. The youngest is familiar with both, but my middle daughter if you ask her in Arabic she is confused but if you ask her in English, she will do it. (S19F)</p> <p>English, because they are from Australia. (S1M)</p> <p>My neighbours here in Toowoomba, because my neighbours, they were like Australian and they were like some other nationalities, so it is a must, we have to speak with them in English, otherwise they do not understand. (S8M)</p> <p>To my neighbours, it is English yes; all my neighbours near the home, all of them are Australians. No, I do not have any Arabic neighbours. (S9M)</p> <p>No, the problem is that all my neighbours are English people, so I have to speak English. (S10M)</p> <p>No, I don't have Arabic. They are all like um Australian or different cultures, but we do speak English. We speak English with them. Yeah English because sometimes they don't understand, like some are from the Philippines, some from China or something like that, so I speak with them in English. Yes, multicultural. I got Australian as well. So I have to speak English with all of them. Yeah! (S13F)</p> <p>English! This one lady beside is from Malaysia, so we speak in English and the other one is an Australian, an old man who is very friendly. (S19F)</p> <p>Our neighbours, we speak to them in English. (S20F)</p> <p>To my friends? Who is Arabic I speak Arabic. My Arabic speakers yes ah, I am talking with them in Arabic, in Arabic. I am not thinking about to talk to with them in ah. Look, I have two types of friends. Some of them Arabic, some of them not Arabic. With Arabic [Friends], I speak Arabic, but with</p> |

| Themes | Participants' Statements |
|--------|--|
| | <p>the others, I am speaking English. But if they are mixed Arabic and English friends in the same place talking together, I speak English with them, because others cannot understand Arabic. (S3M).</p> <p>I have too many friends, I have too many friends from Arabic-speaking, my friends working with me at work, with Australians, I speak English, I speak with them English, but I have some friends at work, I teach them in Arabic. Australians like Shane, I teach him Arabic words, tell him Salam "Hello", Good morning "Sabah El-Kheir"... He learns, when he came to work, he said to me words in Arabic. Friends working with me speaking Arabic, I talk to them in Arabic. (S4M)</p> <p>The friends that I have here I speak to them Arabic, if they are Moroccan or if they are from other Arab countries, we try to communicate in Arabic language, but for the other friends that we have here, of course the major, the English language is the only way of communication here. (S5M)</p> <p>Some of them, they are Arabic and some of them, they are speaking English. So, I should, you know, speak with Arab people in Arabic and other friends talk to them in English. In Toowoomba, the community, we live around the university, and all the friends live around the university as well, so we meet with them most of the day. Yeah, yeah, and I think in Toowoomba is hard to learn another language, especially like a society we have in Toowoomba, so we meet Arabic people everywhere in Toowoomba, (laughter), sometimes, it is hard to learn another language, because sometimes, you need to stop talking Arabic and to change to English little bit to get another language. (S7M)</p> <p>Mainly with friends that who came from the same nation, from the same countries, I speak with them, to be honest in Arabic, we do not speak in English and sometimes if they are like, some Arabs who do not really understand that much Arabic, we try to talk to them in English, so that it is easier for them. But mainly we speak in Arabic. (S8M)</p> <p>To my friends, it depends because some of my friends are very good with the English language, but the others, no. I need to talk to them or to convey the idea that I need to discuss about it sometimes in Arabic. Some of them, some of them, yes, they are from my community, from Iraq country, but others from Emirates, Saudi Arabia. (S9M)</p> <p>We did some competitions in the last Ramadan to encourage the children and parents. We did two parts of this competition for adults and kids. And Masha'Allah, they did well. (S7M).</p> <p>With my friends, of course Arabic, but I found some friends, they like to practise English, so I practise with them English, I speak English but mainly it is all Arabic. (S10M)</p> <p>My friends are mostly Arabs, colleagues or students here. Actually, we are talking in Arabic because we found ourselves using some English words in the conversation, which is coming by just also automatic, we do not know how we put them, but sometimes to make the sentence is understandable to talk, so mostly even we talk in Arabic, we use some English words. Most of the time with Arabic friends, we are talking Arabic, I mean by non-</p> |

| Themes | Participants' Statements |
|---|---|
| | <p>Arabic people there no language that they can speak except English. (S11M)</p> <p>Mostly, well, it's in Arabic. Yeah, but sometimes we try to speak in English, but sometimes we find ourselves just code-switching to Arabic naturally. (S12M)</p> <p>Arabic... just a few words in English. (S16F)</p> <p>Ah, it depends on my friends. I have Australian friends, So English, but with Arabic friends, Arabic. (S18F)</p> <p>Arabic with my Arabic friends, but when I meet the student females we use some English words. Sometimes when we are at university, the Arabic words run away from us and we just use the English one. (S19F)</p> <p>Arabic with my Arabic friends, but when I meet the student females we use some English words. (S20F)</p> <p>Arabic, when we have Arab Muslim people, we speak Arabic sometimes, we have Asian Muslim people, and we speak English. (S10M)</p> <p>In Australia, of course, English, we can say English is number one in communicating with the other, but if the person is speaking another language, you get yourself talked in Arabic of course. (S11M)</p> <p>Yes, mainly Arabic you know even sometimes when we just talk with you know Arab students sometimes we try to speak in English, but as I told you naturally we just go back to Arabic I don't know although we have to sometimes speak in English you know but. (S12M)</p> <p>It depends if we are gathering at the Islamic Centre, sometimes making 'Aqiqa' (Naming the new born baby) and invite people to come to 'Aqiqa', you know the majority of people here speaking Arabic, I think this can help Arabic people to keep their language as a mother tongue and I think it is very important to keep Arabic as a mother tongue. (S7M)</p> |
| <p><i>The role of education in the maintenance of Arabic language</i></p> | <p>We do not have school in Toowoomba teaching Arabic. No school, that's what is the problem in Toowoomba, because Toowoomba is a small town, the government of Australia can look about that because at school here, kids, some teachers teach Chinese, Japanese. But if some people, we have Somali people, a big community in Toowoomba, Arabic community in Toowoomba, come from Sudanese, Arabic people, from Libyan, from Algerian, from everywhere, you have to speak with teachers in English language. I give you love to have teachers Arabic at school like what you have, I give you an example, in the USA, Mexican people, they do not speak English very well, they speak Spanish, Brazilian people speak Spanish, it is Latino, Latino country. Latino, they speak Spanish, but at school like day-care, like day-care, like schools, they are getting, they get a teacher, he speaks Spanish and speaking English because these kids does not speak English, they speak Spanish at home, because from Mexico, they speak Spanish. What is the teacher job? Tell them what Spanish means in English. To translate them at school, that's why they grow up with two languages: Spanish and English, Spanish and English. We have to do that in Australia. (S4M)</p> |

| Themes | Participants' Statements |
|--|---|
| | <p>No, they told me there is at the Masjid “The mosque”, there is like some decisions, they are just starting, teaching Arabic, Qur’an, Tafseer [interpretation], twice a week. From the community... It can offer classes twice... because it helps, it is my background; it relates to my religion. (S6M)</p> <p>Not really, but maybe somebody that can teach him the language, If can find yes, that is what I would love to, to show him the strength of the Arabic language, on the other hand, you know he can learn English anytime, but if he grows with the Arabic language, it won’t be any problem for him to learn any other language. (S8M)</p> <p>No, no, unfortunately in Toowoomba, in Darling Height School, there is no Arabic subject to learn for the students... here, they are attending Darling Height State School, all the subjects of English, English language, they use the English language, and there is no Arabic course in this school. (S9M)</p> <p>No, no, Arabic school, no, not at all. I think there is in Brisbane but not here. Not in Toowoomba. (S10M)</p> <p>No, no, we do not have, [Son’s name] he is now 5 years old and actually I was planning to let him learn English here in Australia, but I could not join him to the Prep, so I put him in the Crèche. So while he is there, they are talking to him in English, he captured the English. Now when you are talking to him in English, even very fast, he knows what you are saying but he is not talking. So even he is back home, my kids speaking Arabic, he now can capture some words from the community, English words from the community around him. Yeah, yeah, they way here, the schools are teaching, they are using very attractive way and interesting all the day and the kids like this (S11M)</p> <p>No, because they go to childcare so all in English. (S13F) I always think about my daughter. When she joins school here they don’t speak Arabic. And all children will always follow their teachers. If I work here I feel that we will lose something here. So I must stay home and try and maintain this beautiful language and culture. (S20F)</p> <p>Well, before they started talking themselves, before they started speaking because the only four years old, you use a lot of Arabic language and of course the children they start picking up things when they are very little. When they grew up and they reach four years old, ah, the children, the children brain has changed and it is developed to actually trying to pronounce the words and eventually when you keep saying the words two times, three times, four times, the child knows exactly what he wants like his shoes. To pick up his shoes, he knows that when you say (Hida’), he knows that his shoes automatically. When you are going out, you do not have to use an English word for shoes, just gonna have to tell me in Arabic the word “Shoes”, and he knows exactly what it is. (S5M)</p> |
| <i>Positive attitudes toward Arabic language maintenance</i> | <p>Actually for me it is important and I need to keep it in my family, as you know we are living here in Australia, particularly in Toowoomba, so the surrounding or the circumstances around us, all it is English language: TV programs, schools, universities, shopping, all of these are in English, so</p> |

| Themes | Participants' Statements |
|--|---|
| | <p>for me specially I need to focus, to focus on Arabic language at this stage. Why? Because the boys or the children, maybe will forget it and I have one of my friends, his boys, they cannot speak Arabic, they forgot everything by Arabic. So it is very important because the kids if you are not there with them, or if you do not encourage them to learn something, they will lose everything, they will lose everything. (S9M)</p> <p>Actually for me it is important and I need to keep it in my family, as you know we are living here in Australia, particularly in Toowoomba, so the surrounding or the circumstances around us, all it is English language: TV programs, schools, universities, shopping, all of these are in English, so for me specially I need to focus, to focus on Arabic language at this stage. Why? Because the boys or the children, maybe will forget it and I have one of my friends, his boys, they cannot speak Arabic, they forgot everything by Arabic. So it is very important because the kids if you are not there with them, or if you do not encourage them to learn something, they will lose everything, they will lose everything. (S9M)</p> |
| <p><i>The impact of the religion on</i></p> <p>Arabic language maintenance</p> | <p>Yes of course, because the language is Arabic and the mosque everyone is talking Arabic. For myself, I only went to the mosque two or three times only because I am very busy with the kids and study. But I found the mosque is very important because this is the only time we can get the people all together and all talk in Arabic. (S14 F)</p> <p>I think maybe for my kids would be the most important because I already know the language and at my age, I will not forget my language but I think it is very important for my kids to go to the mosque and speak Arabic with other kids and hear other people most of them Arabic. (S13F)</p> <p>The Arabic language is very big language; it is a language of the whole Muslim people, this is the language of the holy Qur'an, it is the language of our religion, it is the language of half of the population of this world, and this is the language of "Ahl el Janah" [People of the Heaven]. (S8M)</p> |
| <p><i>Maintaining Arabic for Cultural Identity</i></p> | <p>Yes, yes, this is a very good question because the identity of the person that lives in the country abroad is his language and if you cannot pass it on to your own children, these children they gonna miss out, they gonna miss out a big time. Ah, I am trying my best to do just that because that will give them an identity of who they are, and later on in life, they will have commitment to search further for the background and to be able to communicate with their own background family back home or maybe the community here that they gonna grow up with. So, it is very important for me, it is important to me actually trying to get them to speak Arabic. (S5M)</p> <p>My background, my culture and my religion, it relates to my religion. Yep, it is not just related to my culture, it is related to Islam, to my religion, which American, English, they must learn Arabic to understand the religion, the Islam. (S6M)</p> <p>Ah, the culture is in my opinion less important than the religion. If the culture is against your religion, you have to change it smoothly or change this action to something not against your religion. Ah, I think culture is more important but less than, I think if you keep Arabic language this can help you to keep your culture. (S7M)</p> |

| Themes | Participants' Statements |
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| | <p>It is very important, it is very important to keep Arabic cultures, otherwise, especially when you have kids, you know, you want to show them that you still respect your culture, you still respect your nation and you still respect the language, the religion that you came from. So it is very important to communicate and that cannot happen unless you communicate with some of the people that they are similar nation or similar culture of your country. (S8M)</p> <p>Yes, yes, according to my culture or my background, yes, it is very important, it is very important, because we always need Arabic language, as you know, we are Muslim people and it is very important to learn Arabic, as I said to do our five prayers per day, reading Qur'an and also it looks like a sign, a sign to reflect our nationality, to reflect our behaviour, to reflect our religion. For me especially, it is very important. (S9M)</p> <p>It is intertwined with the language. So they are both the core of your personality to shape your identity. If you want to keep the culture, you have to keep the language. Both of them, they are much intertwined, they depend on each other. Exactly, it represents me who am I. Where I am from, what I am doing, Ah, What is my position in this people? You know what I mean need to prove my language, proves my culture through the maintaining, through using both. You know what I mean (Language and culture). Exactly! For the kids because as I said if I did not use how they learn. So there is no maintenance, back to the maintenance is the core of our study, not just for our study but of our global life. You know what I mean. (S10M)</p> <p>That is very important, it is very important. I was putting my expectations that they will affect by the Australian culture definitely when they reach here, but usually and always I am just reminding them that we are entering another culture, we are entering another religion. The people here are not like people in our place, they are not wearing what we are wearing and they are not eating what we are eating, I have been fighting with them not to eat anything just except the halal things and they understand that actually, and I consider the culture and I am trying to not let them forget their culture but to learn about the other cultures and respect it. (S11M)</p> <p>Yes, because even as I told you it is part of culture and identity, so people do not want their kids to learn just English but also Arabic as a part of their culture and identity. Yes, it is. It is part of my identity and I noticed that some people are just forgetting their mother tongue and trying to teach their kids English or the language of the country where they live. So I don't you know in this way children once they grow up they will forget about their culture about their history, so if you are doing just teaching Arabic or your mother tongue, you are just trying to keep them or link them to their culture to their history and to their religion so it is also very important. (S12M)</p> <p>It is very important because we are Muslim people. So the Islamic culture is very important for us, you can see our cultural clothes, food, communication, yeah. So it is very important. Yes, yes, because (pause and thinking), because Arabic culture what, how can you know the Arabic people, I think it is from their language because they speak Arabic and if they are not speaking Arabic, we will say that they are not Arabic people even if they wear Islamic clothes, yeah, so it is very important, the Arabic language. Ah, listen to Arabic channels, to have knowledge about the Arabic media, what happens in our country and meet Arabic people and</p> |

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| | <p>connect with them from time to time and read the Qurqan (Qur'an), you know, yeah and also keep in touch with our family, yeah, by internet, Facebook like this, yeah. (S18F)</p> <p>Very important, I feel like the culture is very important and even here I find that I am still attached to my country like we are at home. I feel very comfortable and at peace. (S19F)</p> <p>It is so important. Not only for me, but I would like to transfer this culture to my own children. It is a beautiful culture. How we treat our family and old people, our grandparents. It is the columns that my family and home are built on. First of all keeping in contact with people from the same culture. Arabic and Islamic cultures. We have families interacting together and that is all we can do over here. (S20F)</p> <p>I have experienced some culture shock because everything is different, the season where here is summer and it is winter there, the difference in timing, the driving. (S6M)</p> <p>Ah, actually when I arrived in Australia, at that time I cannot speak any English, so Al-Hamdu Allah, I start studying English in an institute in Toowoomba City, another English language institute. And Al-Hamdu Allah, my English is a little bit improved. Yeah, yeah, and I saw Toowoomba people not friendly, not that I imagined can correct me when I made mistakes, when you say something wrong, they do not worry about your English, so they understand what you mean, it is O.K. The culture is totally different in compare to my culture in my country, so as you know our culture and our religion, you know woman should wear Hijab and in Australia I do not see this, except Muslim people. (S7M)</p> <p>I mean, at the beginning. It was a little bit difficult to settle, especially when you bring your family with you. It was not really easy, but with the time, it becomes easier and easier, especially when you communicate with some of your friends over here and your people, so it makes it a little bit easier for you. Basically, as definitely, because usually this is not my official language, you know, and I came from Arabic community and it was really difficult for me from the beginning, but still, you know, try to find your path in Toowoomba by going to some of the Arabic community and to ask some of Arabic people, so they can understand and they can help you in some cases and so on. Basically, wherever you go, I mean, you will never find, the same culture that you already have in your country, but is not that difficult, they have some similarity, some of the cultures, but so far, it is so good, it is not really hard to manage to settle. (S8M)</p> <p>Actually, the first three months, I had a very bad shock here because of the culture is different, and as you know my family was big at that time, I have two boys and my wife as well. So when we came here in Australia, it looks like a very big shock for us to see different cultures, different community and also at that time I could not find any person or any friend who should support me at that time. So it was very, very hard experience first three fourth months. The language in that time actually, my English language was a little bit, not enough to communicate with Australian people or with the others. It was a beginner user. So here in Australia, it is very important to communicate with people, it is already there are</p> |

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| | <p>different people, different cultures, but the English language will collect all of them and you can understand them, you can discuss with them, you can communicate with them as well by English language. (S9M)</p> <p>To be quite honest, it is a bit hard because I came from a completely from different culture and language. The culture when I came here found completely different regarding the way of wearing clothes, the way of talking, the way of eating food, this kind of stuff, and also in the same time, I have seen that between themselves, the Australians actually they try, so I feel that I am from different culture because they try to mix and integrate between themselves, but I feel that I am alone, that's why it is a bit different culture for me. (S10M)</p> <p>Well, of course, that is natural and I was expecting this kind of difficulties, but I can say, It was not a difficulty, it was actually, I mean a matter of time to adjust to put my kids at school and adjust myself with the time, and food and finding a suitable place to put them close to the school, and that was in the beginning, and it was actually a few months only and later on I enjoy staying here. It was not actually in the beginning, the community was very lovely and the people are helping you when you meet them, they knew that you are a foreigner; they try to help even with a sign. For me it was not a problem with the language itself, but my kids were suffering in the beginning. When I joined them in the schools, I still remember my daughter coming and crying at night saying that I have no friends here, I cannot talk to anyone, and what kind of school is this. So just it was in the beginning, I just take care her, and she could not even find anyone to talk because the kids are not talking, so how they could communicate with each other. So it was in the beginning and later on, she was fine. (S11M)</p> <p>Yeah, it appears after one year, I feel good to live in Australia, but the first year it was very difficult for me. Because different country, different culture, different environment also, everything different, different houses. The connections also different and I remember when I live here; I lived not near Arabic family. So that year, it is quite new Arabic family not too much, it was very difficult after that I started to learn about this country and to see the country and how people live and after that I was very good... Yes, yes, everything because I came from Islamic culture, Islamic country and here, everything difficult the clothes, the eating, There is something halal, haram, so it is very difficult, yeah but after that it was OK. They are lovely people here, Australian people. (S18F)</p> <p>Well, the first difficulties here how you can deal with the new environment here and the new culture which is completely different from my home country. Ah, as you know I am an Arab-African and here is a Western country and the people are ah yeah an English speaking country. Also I have got ah barriers with the language ah yeah with the English language. I have started to study English here to minimize this ah or make this problem and then I started my study. (S3M)</p> <p>First time, I came to Australia, I speak English, but my language was not very well, but I need, I came to a new country, new culture, new people, every time, I have to manage with them, I have to talk in English, if do not understand someone, I will tell him, excuse me, pardon me, what you mean, what do you mean? And after that I will get better to learn English</p> |

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| | <p>from people. Of course, here, you feel more charges because I grew up in an Arabic country, I grew up with the family together. Here, in Australia, I see the family not together, that is what is different in culture, everyone lives alone, kids live alone and parents live alone, that is something new, what is going on in this world. (S4M)</p> |
| <p><i>The influence of the media in the maintenance of Arabic Language</i></p> | <p>There is radio channels ...In Arabic, yeah, from Sydney, I have got one of my friends, she finished her education in Wollongong University and she started working in one of the channels, which is, yeah yeah, you can, there is some channels, here in Toowoomba, no, I did not actually Here, just regarding internet, I mean at home, but in big cities, I am not sure about Brisbane and Gold coast, but in Sydney, there is Arabic channels in the radio, just go and put the number of the channels Television, just through the satellite Receiver, yeah, it is not exactly satellite, it is through the internet. (S1M)</p> <p>Yeah, yeah, there is dish... Satellite, yeah, yeah Yeah, yeah, especially for children, some channels for the kids, and they present programs for the children, and yeah (S2M)</p> <p>My kids? Yeah especially when I came here for the interview I change the channel to cartoon in Arabic. (Laughter) - Yeah to keep them busy and to watch TV, the cartoon in Arabic. Not the one in English. Because it is enough for them, now they just came from the school from 9 o'clock to 3 o'clock so it is enough for English and now its time for switch off. (S3M)</p> <p>No, we do not, but we have at home, yeah, we can get Arabic, we can watch online movie in Arabic, yeah, you can watch on line Arabic movie, you can have channels in Arabic like Al Jazeera, for kids like Simsim, you can have Simsim in English and Simsim in Arabic. The kids can watch Simsim in Arabic, the same episode in English Yeah! Through TV channels, Yeb (S4M)</p> <p>The only thing as I said is pretty much the computer (S5M)</p> <p>They provide some Arabic channels, satellite connected with internet, more than 300 channels (S6M)</p> <p>Yes, I have access to Arabic language from YouTube, I have friend of mine here, he has a TV, they have a receiver Arabic channels, and I think it is easy to get that but I do not know why, I forgot why I did not have it.(S7M)</p> <p>To be honest, it is not really easy. It is really hard, I do not see that much of Arabic channels that can be access. Unless, unless you have your own access, you should purchase some of the satellite that can get access to Arabic channels, which cannot be afforded by everyone because it is very expensive. So I wish if there are some channels that can offer Arabic and can be easy to access by all the community. At least, this one of the important aspect, so people can hear Arabic language, even if you are not with them they can hear it when they are sitting at home. But I use some of the other media like radio, stereo that I brought with me which is not really sufficient. I have my own access because I have a big satellite to be able to my family and my kids and wife to have an easy access to some of the Arabic</p> |

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| | <p>channels, so they can understand, they can be close to their culture and to learn the language and try to avoid missing some of the words (S8M)</p> <p>Yes, I do, I have a satellite and it is only four channels All English...Ah, English Yes, may times, because the Arabic ones when they came to here, when we get them from the satellite here, this not for cartoons, not for children, mainly for politics, O.K, but English ones, are for special for children. We always fight between us (S10M)</p> <p>I do not receive any Arabic media here. She is not watching these days, she got no time to do it, but the kids themselves are watching English. I encouraged them to watch them because they are practicing English by watching this. Also, I am getting some entertainment Here, I am not waiting them to watch it in Australia because they do have programs for Arabic present here and I expect that. Yes, they have. Just very few, I do not actually like these stuff. I put for them Arabic Alphabet letters and English Alphabet letters and they practice it, I mean (S11M)</p> |
| <p><i>The communication with relatives and friends in Arabic Language</i></p> | <p>Ah, the majority through the Skype. Oh no, actually, just sometimes emails. (S1M)</p> <p>Yeah, phone, or Facebook, or something, but almost using the phone. We use the Skype; we communicate sound and video, video call. Yeah! She can, but she said the Arabic word, (Laughter). Text message in Arabic. (S2M)</p> <p>Sometimes, we use a video call, we use a Tango and it is very good, sometimes I use Tango and the majority of friend of mine, they use Tango to contact their parents. (S7M).</p> <p>Yes... through mobile phone, Skype, yes, many different programs for example Viber. (S9M)</p> |
| <p><i>Encouraging Children to learn Arabic</i></p> | <p>Yeah! I recently started to encourage her to speak Arabic. When I go to work I leave her with Arabic family and when she comes to us she speaks what she learns there, even Arabic cartoons. She just would like to learn Arabic because her mum and dad speaks Arabic. And her Arabic friends speak Arabic so she would like to insert herself in the conversation. (S20F)</p> |