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Arabic and Globalization

Understanding the Arab Voice

Arabic and Globalization

Understanding the Arab Voice

PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan Tilburg University
op gezag van de rector magnificus,
prof. dr. W.B.H.J. van de Donk,
in het openbaar te verdedigen ten overstaan van een
door het college voor promoties aangewezen commissie
in de aula van de Universiteit

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Mum, Ahmed, and Sergio, you gave me wings

Ad and Jan Jaap, you gave me voice

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Note on transliteration

The transliteration system used in this study is adapted from ISO 233-2:1993(E), Arabic language – Simplified transliteration. Since the study is concerned about overall linguistic resources available to the participants, differences between Arabic varieties are crucial to the corpus analysis (see Chapter 4). The adaptation to ISO 233-2:1993(E) system incorporates major differences among the pronunciation of different Arabic dialects found in the data. In contrast to the system, I apply these changes:

- 1 The definite article /a/ (ال) is not always represented as al-. It is represented as pronounced by the participants: either al-, el-, il-, or assimilated as-s, es-s, or is-s.
- 2 The foreign expressions and sentences are written in the orthography of the original language. For instance, expressions like ‘good luck’ and ‘thank you’ are written in the English orthography, while expressions like ‘merci’ and ‘donc’ are written in the French orthography.
- 3 The emphatic value of the short vowel /a/ is represented by /ạ/ and that of the long /ā/ is represented by /ạ̄/.
- 4 The long low non-emphatic *imāla* is represented by /ê/, while its short counterpart is represented by /é/. The long high-rise emphatic *imāla* is represented by /â/, while its short counterpart is represented by /á/.
As occurred in the data, *imāla* is the fronting and raising of long /ā/ towards emphatic /â/ or non-emphatic /ê/, and of short /a/ towards emphatic /á/ or non-emphatic /é/. The difference between the emphatic or non-emphatic categories is regional. Lebanese and Tunisians tend to shift towards /é/ and /ê/, while Syrians and Iraqis tend to shift towards /á/ and /â/.
- 5 The variants /e/ and /o/ or /i/ and /u/, respectively, are added since they reflect regional variations. The /e/ represents the close-mid front short vowel, while /ē/ represents its long counterpart that is typical in the word بيت /bēt/ in Egyptian Arabic. The /o/ represents the rounded back short vowel while /ō/ represents the long counterpart.
- 6 The diphthong /ew/ is added (typical of the pronunciation of the word حلو /ḥilew/ in Iraqi dialect).
- 7 The symbols /g/ and /ž/ are added to the affricate /ǧ/ to represent the different variations of the pronunciation of the letter ج. The /g/ is typical of Cairene (Egyptian) Arabic, where the /ž/ is typical of the Levantine varieties.
- 8 The symbol /dʒ/ is added to /d/ to represent the variant pronunciation of ض character.
- 9 The symbol /z / is added to /z/ to represent the sibilant variant of ظ.

- 10 The emphatic variant of /l/ sound (typical in the pronunciation of the word الله /al-lāh/) is represented by /l̥/.
- 11 For clarity and practical reasons, the hamza is represented by /ʔ/. The ISO system does not represent the hamza in initial position since the presence of an initial vowel in the transliterated word is enough to indicate an initial glottal stop. However, I add the ʔ if it is pronounced in words that start with a consonant because this reflects dialectal variations. For example, this is found in the pronunciation of the word كتير pronounced /ʔiktīr/ in some Levantine varieties.
- 12 Arabic names are transliterated as pronounced without capitalization. This is to reflect the variants in dialects when pronouncing different names. Foreign names are written as per their spelling in the language pronounced.

The table below provides a representation of the transliteration symbols used in the study. For consistency with Arabic terminology, the table uses the letters and terms used in the Arabic writing system. For features that appeared in the data but do not have a representation in the Arabic writing system, a close description of the sound features is provided.

Transliteration symbol	Arabic letter / feature
ʔ	ء
b	ب
t	ت
t̥	ث
ʒ - g - ġ	ج
ħ	ح
ħ	خ
d	د
d̥	ذ
r	ر
z	ز
s	س
ʃ	ش
ʂ	ص
dʒ - ɟ	ض
ṭ	ط
z - ʒ	ظ
ʿ	ع
ġ	غ
f	ف

q	ق
k	ك
l - l	ل
m	م
n	ن
h	ه
w	و
y	ي
a	non-emphatic vowel <i>fatha</i> (َ)
ā	emphatic vowel <i>fatha</i> (ً)
ā	non-emphatic long vowel <i>fatha</i>
ǎ	emphatic long vowel <i>fatha</i>
i	short vowel <i>kasra</i> (ِ)
ī	long vowel <i>kasra</i> (ٍ)
u	short vowel <i>damma</i> (ُ)
ū	long vowel <i>damma</i> (ٌ)
e	close-mid front short unrounded vowel
ē	close-mid front long unrounded vowel
o	low back short rounded vowel
ō	low back long rounded vowel
é	short non-emphatic <i>imāla</i>
ê	long non-emphatic <i>imāla</i>
á	short emphatic <i>imāla</i>
â	long emphatic <i>imāla</i>
ŋ	nasal
ew	diphthong

Abbreviations and definitions

SA – Standard Arabic

Considering the exploratory nature of the study, the term Standard Arabic (SA) is preferred to Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) since it does not have previous attributes to the variety of Standard Arabic used. The term is also preferred to the Arabic one *Fusha* because it is clearer in the English context. However, MSA and *Fusha* are maintained in literature reviews where the original study uses the terms.

SA is used to refer to features of Arabic that are commonly perceived as higher levels of the language compared to the dialect. For linguistic differences of Arabic varieties, see Cotter and De Jong (2019), Holes (1995), Owens (2001), and Versteegh (1997).

ND – National Dialect

The term refers to the expected Arabic variety of the speakers based on the country they belong to.

NND – Non-national Dialect

The term refers to the Arabic variety that is not expected to belong to the speakers based on the country they belong to.

FL – Foreign Language

The term describes a code that is not commonly perceived as originally Arabic.

LWE – Loan Words and Expressions

A type of FL occurrences that are on the word or phrase level. These occurrences are not complete thought units expressed in a FL.

FS – Foreign Stretches

A type of FL occurrences that are utterances expressing complete thought units by the speakers.

CI – Communication Instance

A conversation between at least two people happening on the screen. A span of the CI depends on the continuation of the topic and the main participants involved (see Section 4.4).

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Introduction

1.1 The challenge

Sociolinguistically, the world has not become a village.

(Blommaert, 2010, p. 1)

The above opening statement of the first chapter of Blommaert's *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization* sets the challenge of this study. Globalization affects new modes of communication that work beyond the traditional fixed ideas of space and time, bringing people, along with their histories, biographies, and linguistic resources to new multi-layered and multi-trajectorial levels of contact. Sociolinguistically, however, this cross-border contact affected by globalization requires scholars to revisit old notions about language use, structures, patterns, and repertoires, and, accordingly, to stretch the limits of current frameworks in order to understand and analyze multilingualism and the dynamics of language change (Blommaert, 2010).

Looking at cross-border communication in the Arab world, sociolinguists, therefore, need to take into consideration its long history, several languages, multiple varieties and ethnicities, and its constant political, economic, and social changes. In order to understand the nature of communication in this new mobile cross-border setting, sociolinguists need to look at language as a mobile resource that moves horizontally as well as vertically across time and space – where horizontally is the normative and vertically is the order of indexicalities of identity, belonging, and social roles (Blommaert, 2010). It would be indeed misleading to examine communication across the vast stretch of the geographical space, referred to as the Arab world, by using a single fixed traditional framework.

The study takes the pan-Arab TV show, *The Voice* or *ʔaḥlā Ṣōt*, as a case study for cross-country communication in the Arab world. On the one hand, Bassiouney (2015) argues that media may propagate a collective identity, stereotypes, or create a myth. In so doing, there might be an elimination of differences and distinctive individual characteristics in favor of building this collective identity. Pintak (2009) calls pan-Arab media an 'imagined watan (Arabic word for homeland)' where all Arabs share their common aspirations, disappointments, and hopes, especially after the Arab Spring that started in 2010. Kraidy (2006) even argues that there is a variety called 'white Arabic' that helps in the creation of this united virtual pan-Arabism. On the other hand, mass media is claimed to enforce a sense of nationalism after the same Arab Spring (Temlali, 2011). Since this drastic social change happened from bottom to top, many varieties of Arabic are heard on TV reflecting a high sense of pride in one's own country. Moreover,

there is an increasing recognition of ethnic language varieties in the Arab world such as Siwi in Egypt, Tamazight in Morocco, and Kurdish in Iraq.

In sociolinguistic terms at least, it seems the power of globalization in creating the so-called 'global village' is, thus, questioned. In his *TEDxAix Talk*, specialist and recognized speaker on cross-cultural intelligence and awareness, Alfandary (2015), asks whether it is because English is a globalized language and that it is easy to learn, that we understand our communication on the global level. Similarly, is it because Arabs come together on a pan-Arab show that is globalized from a European or international model, that they mutually communicate on the same level of intelligibility, or do they have to adopt specific strategies to keep the communication running for commercial and national reasons? The cultural context of each individual is different, and that is why Alfandary assumes globalized communication does not mean we are global. Explaining that in sociolinguistic terms, Blommaert (2010) argues that by studying the mobile resources in a globalized communication setting, we are studying as well power, hegemony, and inequality of distribution of resources seen through the lens of language.

The concern of this study is to try to understand how different languages and multiple varieties interact when the diverse elements of Arab people meet. Would there be a collective identity or contending identities? Would there be a hierarchy of unequally distributed linguistic resources? Would there be an adopted strategy to unite or to underpin individuality or nationalism? What about the diaspora communities? Which belonging would they manifest in a globalized pan-Arab setting?

With these questions in mind, the study starts an explorative data-driven endeavor to reveal and understand the intertwined dynamics of diversity on the linguistic and the social levels in cross-country communication in the Arab world. Exploring language choice is at the heart of the analysis, through which communication strategies and intelligibility across Arabic dialects are investigated. Language as well is the gateway to understand indexes of identity in this super diverse setting. Analysis of linguistic features and communication strategies reveals the identities that are projected on the individual, national, pan-Arab, and universal levels.

The present first chapter is followed by the chapter 'Studying Arabic'. Following the five major Arabic dialectal regions, Chapter 2 brings highlights from selected countries to reflect the scope of diversity as well as the contentions of linguistic varieties that exist on the level of each of the countries presented. The chapter discusses elements of diversity and superdiversity, especially in the context of pan-Arab media. The chapter ends with a critical overview of the study of Arabic sociolinguistics.

Chapter 3 presents the theatrical concepts that guide the analysis and the interpretation of the data. The chapter starts by discussing Blommaert's (2010) ideas on the sociolinguistics of globalization. Then follows a presentation of the theories that guide the answers of the three research questions: polylingualism, receptive multilingualism, crossing, code switching and community of practice.

Chapter 4 introduces the study, the research questions, source of data, and methodology. Each of the Chapters 5, 6, and 7 presents the answers to the three research questions, respectively. The treatise ends with a conclusion in Chapter 8. Guided by a usage-based approach, the study contributes to the literature of sociolinguistics of globalization, Arabic sociolinguistics, and communication studies.

Chapter 2

Studying Arabic

... the tectonic plates of the Arabic language as a means of communication are certainly shifting.

(Holes, 2011, p. 143)

With a special focus on Arabic sociolinguistics within globalization, this chapter presents a multifaceted review of the situation of Arabic sociolinguistics. The aim of this review is to present a current situation of the field and set the direction and purpose of the present study.

This chapter has four sections. The first section sheds light on the dynamics between dialect/language and the political, historical, and/or economic developments in the Arab world. This highlight represents the five main dialectal regions of the Arab world and the selection of the countries presented is guided by the countries represented in the data of this study. The section reveals the extent of diversity on the level of each country and region. The second section discusses this diversity and the role of media, especially pan-Arab media, in providing a platform for manifesting this diversity and how the choice of linguistic features is employed to reflect this diversity. The third section is, therefore, a literature review of cross-country communication on pan-Arab TV shows. The chapter ends with a fourth section that introduces a critical bird's-eye view of the recent situation of the field of Arabic sociolinguistics. This is mainly guided by a review of the last chapter of the second edition of *Arabic Sociolinguistics* (Bassiouney, 2020). The last section paves the way to the theoretical concepts presented in Chapter 3 and helps the researcher to avoid the pitfalls that are criticized in Bassiouney's review.

2.1 Mapping meanings and identities of Arabic

This section draws some sociolinguistic profiles of each of the major dialectal regions of the Arabic language, a review lacking in Arabic sociolinguistic literature. For a description of the linguistic features of various Arabic dialects, see Cotter and De Jong (2019), Holes (1995), Owens (2001), and Versteegh (1997).

These brief profiles highlight the diverse indexicalities, social values, meanings, policies, ideologies, and identities related to the diverse languages and dialects that interact in each region/country. The review provides examples from selected countries aiming to cover the five main geographic dialectal regions: the Arabian Peninsula, the Levant, Egypt and Sudan, The Maghreb, and Iraq. As mentioned, the selection takes as

well into consideration the data as a reference point in order to help in the interpretation of the analysis in the following chapters.

This interesting infographic map from Qatar Foundation International, published in 2018, provides a broad visualization of the diversity of Arabic dialects. The map ‘takes the common question of “What are you doing?” to show how widely it varies throughout the Arab world. Dialects transcend political and natural borders; therefore the areas presented should be viewed as a fluid and ever-changing approximation’ (Qatar Foundation International, 2018).

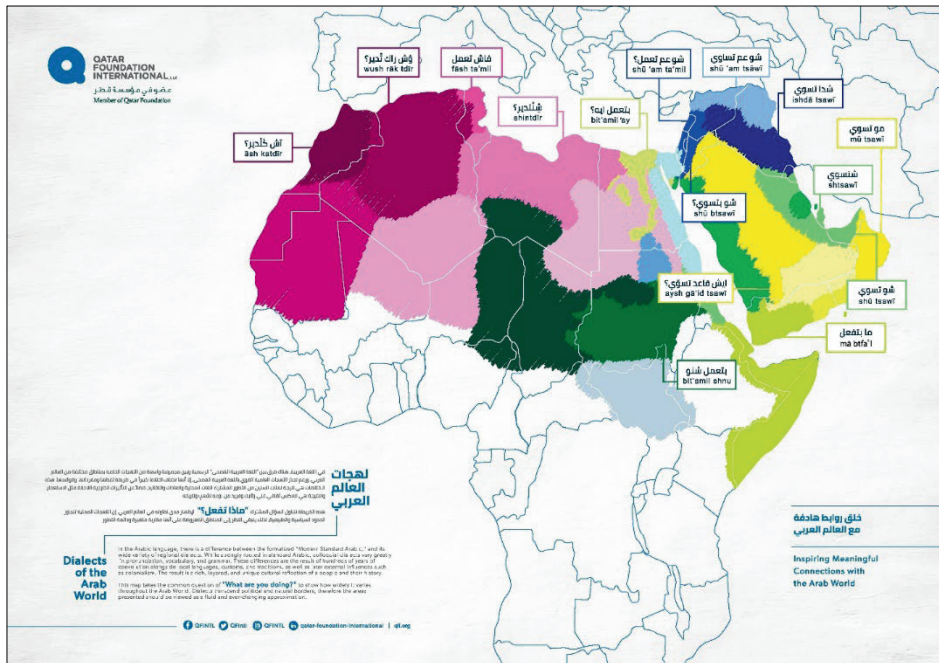


Figure 2.1 Infographic map of Arabic dialects (Qatar Foundation International, 2018)

In broad sociolinguistic terms, two main common features exist across the Arabic speaking countries, diglossia (see De Ruiter & Ziamari, 2018, for a review) and the use of foreign colonial languages. First, following Ferguson’s (1959), Arabic is categorized as a diglossic language where two levels exist, The High and The Low. Each of these two levels serve different functions in the community. Second, due to the history of western occupation of the Arab world that affects social structure and education systems, previous colonial languages such as English, French, German, and Italian play a role in mapping the linguistic situation in various Arab countries indexing social hierarchies, class, education level, and identity. The following review delves deeper into the linguistic situation of selected countries in order to show the nuances of interactions and dynamics between language, ideology, and identity indexicalities.

An important thing to note regarding the below review is that a variable discussed in relation to a certain country does not mean the variable is only specific to this country. The review focuses on what is salient in each region/country and what has been researched. This would help as well highlight gaps in literature to which this study can contribute.

2.1.1 Highlights from the Arabian Peninsula

According to the *World Population Review* (2022), the Arabian Peninsula is the largest peninsula in the world. The peninsula is home to over 77.9 million people in seven countries: Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (on the east), Oman (on the southeast), Yemen (on the south), and Saudi Arabia (at the center). According to *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Nijim, Ochsenwald, Rentz, & Serjeant, n.d.), the Arabian Peninsula is located in the extreme southwestern corner. The vast majority of the population are ethnically Arabs and nearly all speak Arabic. Dialectal variation exists but does not bar mutual intelligibility.

Cotter and De Jong (2019) summarize the classification of the varieties of the Arabian Peninsula. Citing Versteegh (1997), they state that the dialects of the region can be classified into four separate groups. First, Northeast Arabian: dialects of the Najd; the 'Anazī, which includes that of Kuwait, Bahrain (Sunnis) and the Gulf states, the Šammar dialects and the Syro-Mesopotamian Bedouin dialects (including the Bedouin dialects of northern Palestine and Jordan). Second, South(west) Arabian: dialects of Yemen and the Shi'ite Baharna of Bahrain. Third, Hijazi (West Arabian): Bedouin dialects of the Hijaz and Tihma. Fourth, Northwest Arabian: dialects of the Negev, Sinai, southern Jordan and northwestern Saudi Arabia.

Holes (2011) provides a brief sketch of the contemporary sociolinguistic situation and the changes that took place over the last 40 years. He asks the question: 'What do the speech-patterns in the Gulf of today – at home, at work, and mediated through television, radio and the internet – tell us about who the people of the Gulf think they are or wish to present themselves as being?' (p. 129-130).

By conducting a fieldwork for ten years, Holes (2011) looks at four linguistic phenomena by which he traces the changes in the linguistic situation in the Arabian Gulf region as effects of processes of globalization. The four phenomena are: first, a recession of the sectarian, tribal, or communal dialects in favor of a homogenized Gulf variety; second, Arabic-English switching among younger people; third, the impact of the communication with labors from the Indian sub-continent and Southeast Asia; and fourth, what he calls the 'death' of written Arabic among younger generations in the Gulf.

Holes (2011) starts with a historical overview of the demographics of the area drawing examples from Bahrain and Oman. He concludes that throughout the history of the Gulf region, there have been two varieties: Arabic and Bedouin. These two dialects correspond to social structures, employment patterns, and different cultures. In Bahrain, the divide was further religiously based separating the Sunni Arabs from the

Bedouin Shi'a Baharna. Due to conflicts and social segregation, the schism was deep that some would claim they are not mutually intelligible. The same divide exists in Oman but without a religious dimension. According to Holes, the conflict in Oman was brought to peace by the hands of Sultan Qaboos.

In contemporary times, after 30 or 40 years of Holes's (2011) first research, this clear division in the dialects of the Gulf have now receded, yet not totally vanished. He cites two recent PhD theses that demonstrate this new reality in the Gulf, namely Al-Qouz (2009) and Hassan (2009). The two theses have found that Bedouin young generations in Bahrain and Kuwait have shifted to features of urban Arabic found in the city. However, Holes (2011) argues that this shift might be for public interactions, but not in homes as well. He narrates his interaction with a taxi driver during his visit to Bahrain in 2009. The driver, although from the village, was speaking with Holes using sedentary features. However, when he responded to a phone call from his wife, he used Bedouin dialect features. Holes concludes, therefore, that young adult Bahraini Shi'a, are bi-dialectal. However, generation after generation, peer pressure may change them into mono-dialectal in favor of what is de facto the socially dominant dialect. Holes elaborates further:

What I am calling the 'socially dominant' dialect in Bahrain is now also the regionally dominant one in the Gulf. With minor variations, it is spoken in relaxed public speech contexts from Kuwait in the north to the UAE in the south, and is even now making inroads into Oman, where the historically prestigious dialect, that spoken in the Capital Area, was originally very different. On TV and radio, it is this homogenised form of speech which is heard in Gulf soap operas, talk shows and vox-pop interviews. (Holes, 2011, p. 134).

Moreover, Holes (2011) draws the attention to a tendency in media to use this homogenized form of speech. He cites shows where, at the time where characters are supposed to be Bedouins from the 1930s, Bedouin speech features are absent and the characters on TV speak with urban Arabic dialect features. According to him, one of the main objectives of these shows 'is to create the sense of a shared past and a continuity of culture across the generations at a time when the pace of change in the real world is disconcertingly rapid. The past, it seems, is a safe haven, even if it is a rose-tinted fiction that papers over the social cracks and old grievances' (p. 136).

The reasons of this change, as he suggests, trace back to four factors. First, easy and affordable physical communication allows the population to move freely along the Gulf states. Second, media and TV-satellite channels broadcast across the Gulf countries in a dialect that is, in many times, different from the audience's dialect. Moreover, the internet allows another channel of contact between the Gulf populations, which is ranked second after the Egyptians in the use of the internet and social media platforms. Third, the high investment in education allows an open environment of different Gulf nationals and, consequently, dialects and varieties. Last, following the decline in dependence on farming and other traditional jobs, new employment patterns introduce labors from the Indian subcontinent while younger Gulf generations have started to

assume office jobs. This in all, in addition to government policies to overcome fragmentation, has created more open and mixed social networks that encourage the abandonment of local linguistic features, at least in public spheres, in favor of the prestigious variety of the Arab ruling elites. Holes elaborates that in the Gulf there are no big urban cities from where the variety can take its prestige (as in the case with Cairene in Egypt, Damascene in Syria, Muslim Baghdadi in Iraq). For that reason, 'a homogenised form of the local dialects is in the process of formation, based on the speech of urban areas such as Kuwait City, Manama, Doha and Dubai' (Holes, 2011, p. 138). This homogenized form is seen as a reflection and a reinforcement of the connections between these cities especially with the formation of the Gulf Cooperation Council in mid 1980s.

Holes (2011) then shifts to describe the case of code switching (CS) or borrowing from different languages. First, I would like to cite his description of the linguistic situation early in the 1970s to show the scope of diversity back then:

When compiling an etymological glossary of Bahraini Arabic based on fieldwork I did in the 1970s, I found evidence of borrowing from twenty-seven different languages, from Swedish to Malayalam, and a time depth of three millennia, with a sprinkling of farming terms which seem to have come into Gulf Arabic directly from Babylonian Akkadian, the ancient language of Mesopotamia. But the main contributing languages without a doubt have been Persian, the languages of India and, most recently, English. At one time, it was not in the least unusual for Gulf Arabs to speak two or three languages apart from Arabic. Goldsmiths had strong commercial links with India, the source of much of their raw material, and often had an excellent spoken command of several Indian languages. Persian was widely understood, certainly in Bahrain and the southern Gulf and, of course, until the very recent past many Omanis had a better command of Swahili than they did of Arabic. Cultural and linguistic contact with non-Arab cultures has left a deep impression on Gulf Arabic and continues to do so, although the nature and extent of the influence has changed. The advent of the oil industry in the mid 1930s gave Gulf Arabic a mass of English borrowings, and not only in the area of technical vocabulary. (Holes, 2011, p. 138)

In contemporary times, the linguistic situation in the Gulf is witnessing an invasive phenomenon of CS between Arabic and English, especially among young females. In Doha, Dubai, Bahrain, or Kuwait it is normal to hear conversations that have one or two utterances in Arabic, then one or two in English. Holes (2011) notes that it is not the stilted schoolbook English; rather it is the idiomatic fluent American accent English. Users of this type of CS mostly belong to high middle classes. Their early schooling was in English-medium education, after which they moved to study in an English-speaking country, mostly the USA. This class exists in other Arab countries as well such as Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan. They also share a complex about their lacking knowledge of Arabic language and a feeling of pride in their mastery of English. According to Holes, they are also well represented in the media, banking, law, journalism, and multinational companies.

In an answer to the question what this code says about the new generation in the Gulf, Holes answers that there is an unquestionable pride in the development achieved in the Gulf. However, at the same time, there is a great showing-off for leading a Western/Americanized lifestyle while still wearing the national traditional clothes. Holes comments that there is indeed an uncomfortable feeling of an identity crisis in the Gulf. He sees a reflection of that in media:

Culturally, the popularity of TV shows like Abu Dhabi's 'Poet in a Million', now in its fifth season, in which young vernacular poets from the Gulf compete with one other in the manner of 'the X-Factor' or 'American Idol' to produce the best Arabic colloquial poem on any subject, bears witness to a public hunger for the revival of art-forms which are associated with an older Gulf identity from a simpler, purer and more innocent age. The prime-mover behind this show is the heir apparent of Abu Dhabi, who seems to be more aware than most that, contrary to the philosophy of neighbouring Dubai, man does not live by shopping alone. (Holes, 2011, p. 140)

The third aspect of the description of the change in the linguistic situation in the Gulf is the rise of a new pidgin Arabic by effect of the big presence of laborers from South Asia, especially India, the Philippines, Pakistan, or Bangladesh. The affluence in the Gulf brought manual laborers from these countries to assume jobs, which the rich Gulf people do not wish to do. Most of these laborers are very poor and know no English, let alone Arabic. In order to communicate for business purposes, a pidgin Arabic developed. It is a very simplified form of the language, for instance most inflections for gender and number disappeared, and the past tense is lexically expressed by the *ḥalāṣ* (meaning 'finished'). Holes argues that this pidgin does not have a big influence on the Gulf Arabic. Yet, it is widely noted and used, more by outsiders. In addition to this, Gulf individuals who know no or little English have reported using this pidgin with foreigners who know no Arabic. He draws the attention to the situation of the nannies who raise the kids in the Gulf household. These nannies speak a type of accented form of English, and they influence the kids in these households. Consequently, the kids are brought up speaking more English than Arabic in the homes.

In his concluding remarks, Holes (2011) reflects on the situation of Standard Arabic (SA). He contends that Arabic in the Gulf is far from dying. However, as he describes it and mentioned at the beginning of this chapter: 'the tectonic plates of the Arabic language as a means of communication are certainly shifting' (p. 143). He reports on the position of SA that although still highly respected and cherished, it is not a work functional language, or the language of communication on social media or among friends. He argues further that the enhanced education and eradication of illiteracy and the spread of electronic media and globalization processes, increase public exposure and passive comprehension of SA, even among the older or less educated generations.

It is important in this review to bring a highlight from the linguistic situation in Saudi Arabia, the country of the media group who owns the show of this case study. In order to understand the sociolinguistic situation in Saudi Arabia, Alotaibi (2020) agrees with

Al-Shammary (1989) that there are three points to be taken into consideration. First, there is the status of Saudi Arabia as the place of origin of Islam, the guardian of the two holy shrines of Mecca and Medina, and the place where the Quran was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Second, the Arabian Peninsula is the origin of Arabs and the Arabic language. Third, Arabic in Saudi Arabia was not exposed to colonial powers and their languages, as was the case in other Arab countries. These religious, cultural, and historical factors have affected the priorities of language policies and planning in the country.

For a long time of the history of Saudi Arabia, English or any other foreign language (FL) were ignored, focusing only on studying the Arabic language. It was not until the 1970s with the discovery of oil, the introduction of multinational corporations, and the close ties between Saudi Arabia, the US and Western countries that learning the English language became a necessity for communication, even in formal and official spheres (Omar & Ilyas, 2018). Therefore, in education, discussing studying a FL solely concerns the English language which is the medium language in higher education for scientific subjects, such as medicine, engineering, and computer science (Alotaibi, 2020, p. 40).

Omar and Ilyas (2018) explore the attitude towards CS of two languages, Arabic and English, 'which has so far remained neglected in the domain of sociolinguistics in the Saudi context' (p. 80). They cite Al-Rawi (2012) saying that CS has become so common in Saudi Arabia that upper-class and educated middle-class parents are proud of raising bilingual kids. They argue that CS takes place without any attempt to circumvent it to stick to one language. The study reveals that speakers, irrespective of age, gender, or the academic role, resort to CS to conceal their imperfections of the English language. In informal situations, the participants of the study prefer to use the colloquial Saudi dialect, whereas in formal situations they resort to English, not SA. However, in some informal situations in academia, CS is very useful to bring people from different ethnic and national backgrounds to introduce themselves and discuss hobbies and interests. Nevertheless, elites still highly respect SA and treat it with dignity. They use SA to discuss topics of intellectual interests.

Looking deeper, Omar and Ilyas (2018) observe that there is an attitude of bilingual speakers to morph into another identity by using a different speech pattern that fits their personal, ethnic, or cultural situation. This implies that CS allows individuals of different ethnic communities to express the spaces they occupy in their ethnic groups. Moreover, when in academia, these bilingual speakers express a level of stress to build an academic rapport with their peers and teachers. On social media, the study reports that female users tend to code switch more than male users. Interestingly, Omar and Ilyas (2018) did not find any stigma associated with CS, nor was there any hesitation felt by the bilingual participants of their study. Nevertheless, they report a marked ethnic boundary when the speakers switch between two languages. The analysis, carried out from the angle of us-them dichotomy, reveals that the use of the native language, Arabic, is an in-group code, signifying the 'us' code for informal occasions or personalized statements; while English is used as an out-group code, indexing the 'them'

code in more formal and objective expressions. This attitude is more popular among expatriates than among Saudis.

Blum (2014) records another effect of globalization and the development of multinational businesses on the linguistic landscape in Jeddah by analyzing street signs and billboards. She concludes that mixing of Arabic and English has become a commonality in the street signs where English followed by Arabic translation in similar typographic are used to represent corporate identities. Blum further contends that:

When reviewing the signage within any linguistic landscape, the overall presentation of textual information indicates language hierarchy and dominance. As in the case of Jeddah, often times the Arabic language and letterforms take priority over English language and Latin text because of its national connection. This structure is presented in municipal signage, such as highway and street signs, where Arabic appears first, followed by the English translation. In other examples, there appears to be no hierarchy system, since the typography from both languages is intermixed in a chaotic display of information. (Blum, 2014, p. 16)

The above highlight on the sociolinguistic situation in the Arabian Peninsula reveals a changing dynamic between the linguistic features and the identities they index. Globalization, oil industry, employment patterns, and education play a highly important role in transforming the associated meanings and values of the languages and varieties of the region.

What is even more crucial is the role of the media in enhancing this change and creating a unified variety that appeals and promotes the political and economic cooperation between the Gulf countries as described in Holes review above. The media representation of Bedouin characters from 1930s as speaking with sedentary linguistic features raises questions on the existing policies of the media. In their way to create unified diverse Gulf countries, media appeal to a unified language code that, in its way, underplays communal and ethnic differences.

The effect of globalization on SA in this review attracts the attention as well. It is interesting to see English being favored instead of SA in Saudi Arabic in some formal settings. It seems the respect and dignity, which the standard variety of Arabic enjoys, are not enough to make it the natural choice in formal situations and academia. They also do not prevent a feeling of pride and showing off bilingualism or a Western lifestyle.

2.1.2 Highlights from the Levant: examples from Lebanon and Jordan

Suleiman (2006) reviews three regions in the Arab world where building the nation, the politics of identity, and their relation to the Arabic language interact. These regions are Lebanon, Israel/Palestine, and Jordan. He says the role of Arabic in nation building has not been only missing from research on language variation, but also on Arabic anthropology, particularly the dichotomy of modernization versus authenticity and westernization versus tradition. He thinks reviewing the role of Arabic in the politics of identity and nation building is important for several reasons. First, nation building and

state building are two important sociopolitical projects in the Arab world in the modern age; second, language is one of the milestones of these two projects; third, language is a core subject of the ideological and political conflict; and fourth, conflict has been an 'endemic part of the political culture' (Suleiman, 2006, p. 126) in the Middle East. He chooses these three regions because they reflect a deep human geography as well as the interplay of the geopolitical powers in the conflicts across the Middle East. At the end of his review, Suleiman concludes with a reflection on interregional and cross-linguistic issues that are relevant to the Middle East and North Africa. For the review pertaining to the data of the current study, the cases of Lebanon and Jordan are presented.

According to *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Barnett et al., n.d.), Lebanon occupies a small stripe of land on the east shore of the Mediterranean. The country has an estimated population of 7,660,000 people. The country is one of the most densely populated countries in the Mediterranean area and enjoys a high rate of literacy.

Although Lebanon shares many cultural characteristics with the rest of the Arab world, it has special features that distinguish her from other Arab countries. Throughout history, its rugged, mountainous geography has become an asylum for diverse religious and ethnic groups, and for political dissidents (Barnett et al., n.d.).

According to Suleiman's (2006) review, a central debate over language and identity has been going on in Lebanon since mid-19th century. Christian Lebanese writers, such as Ibrahim Al-Yaziji and Germanus Farhat, rebelled over the status of Arabic as exclusively connected to Islam. In their attempt to protect Christians from foreignization, they advocated the introduction of Arabic as the bond of national group identity, extracting it away from being solely linked to Islam, and subsequently to the Ottoman Empire and the process of Turkification. This was seen as a conflict between two notions of self-definitions: one based on Arabic and the other is based on Islam. For the Arabic-based self-definition notion to succeed, Arabic has to be untied from Islam and more links should be built in order to make Christians feel home with the language. However, the linguistic situation started to change when France assumed power in Lebanon in 1920. More linguistically constructed identity battles were fought, the most prominent one was in the field of education.

In 1926, France amended the constitution stipulating that French was an official language of Lebanon alongside Arabic. French became the language of instruction in mathematics, science, and social sciences. Private schools had to follow these amendments, with the exemption of the English medium schools. As a result, French became the language of the affluent classes regardless of their religious affiliations. For the Maronites and the Catholics in particular, French became loaded with national identity meanings in a way that competed with Arabic and its group identity. As for English, it remained the language of business, science, and technology.

However, the rivalry between French and Arabic did not stop with the 1943 independence and the 1946 declaration that Arabic is the only official language of the country. This was largely because of the way the Maronite and Catholic elites viewed

Lebanon: as the linkage between the East and the West, and the channel where new civilizing ideas come to the East. For that reason, they advocated a bilingual and bicultural Lebanon, refusing to label her as wholly Arab in identity. This double personality of Lebanon – the Franco Christian and the Arabic Muslim – was fueled with other political factors that led to the eruption of the Civil War in 1975.

The 1989 agreement drawn in Al Taif that ended the civil war clearly states that Lebanon is an Arab state, in identity and belonging. Although education policies should have changed to put the idea that Arabic is Lebanon's mother tongue into effect, successive governments applied measures to maintain the pre-Al Taif situation. Citing Ghaith and Shabaan (2000), Suleiman (2006) mentions that French has been more related to Christians (97% Maronites, 85% Catholics, and 71% Orthodox), while Muslims and Druze prefer English as a FL (82% Sunnis, 70% Shi'as, and 70% Druze).

In the age of globalization, Suleiman (2006) argues that the dominance of English is not small. Its influence is felt on the francophones of whom 61.5% think that English is more useful than French, with a higher percentage among Muslims who are usually associated with English. English in Lebanon has been promoted in schools and universities, even introduced as a third language alongside Arabic and French. It is the main language of business and it is very popular in the media and on the internet.

However, not all these factors explain to Suleiman (2006) the reason of the deterioration of the status of Arabic as the symbol of identity. He argues that this can be traced back to different factors. First, currently Arabic is not needed in order to rival or compete the Other (which was French before); it is not needed any more as a marker of identity to face colonialization. Second, the weakness of the concept of pan-Arab nationalism is obviously associated with a weak deployment of Arabic as a marker of Arab identity. Third, the rise of the concept of a national state in the Arab world has led countries to look for other factors to bond with their national identities. And fourth, it can be assumed that Arabic language lost its prestige in Lebanon with a clear negative attitude towards the language. This adds to the rejection to resort to Arabic as a symbol of identity. Suleiman goes further to explain that all these factors have shifted the struggle between Arabic and French to a struggle between Arabic *Fusha* (Standard Arabic) and the Lebanese dialect.

This struggle between *Fusha* and the dialect in Lebanon has been reflected in the media, as a voice of the political powers in the country. The LBCI (Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International), broadcast in the dialect, is associated with the Maronite-dominated Phalange Party. According to Suleiman (2006), the party aims to build a Lebanese identity where the Maronites are at its core. On the other hand, Al Manar TV, connected to the Islamist ideology of Hizbollah, not surprisingly favors *Fusha*. This *Fusha*-dialect struggle deployment in the media reflects identity construction and contestation that is true of post war Lebanon: it is a contest between 'Lebanonism' and 'Arabism' (Suleiman, 2006, citing Al Batal, 2002). For Suleiman, however, he thinks the Lebanese dialect takes the place of the French language in the struggle between the national identity of Lebanon against pan-Arabism.

Whether we talk about Arabic versus French or formal versus Lebanese colloquial Arabic, we are still talking about two constructs in identity terms: an Arab Lebanon versus a Lebanese Lebanon. The former is *of* the Arab Middle East and the latter is *in* the Arab Middle East. There is, however, a difference between the French and the LC constructed Lebanons. The former looks outside to a nonindigenous language, and the latter looks inside to an indigenous variant of the standard language. The former looks to a recent “colonial” past, and the latter looks to a much older tradition which, in some nationalist discourse, is made to encompass an ancient past, that of the Phoenicians. The former has an elitist tone; the latter, a populist one. The former is confessionally driven and the latter is of wider ethnic appeal. (Suleiman, 2006, p. 132)

The policies of linguistic identity are not the same in Jordan as they are in Lebanon. Suleiman claims that they are of low intensity except for the period of the 1970s when a conflict occurred between the Jordanians and the Palestinians. Moreover, linguistic policies in Jordan are centered on local dialects, not two languages or SA and a dialect. Suleiman is focusing on the period of the 1970s and reflects on the consequences of the tension that occurred during this period.

According to the government’s website of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (Jordan), the country is located in the north of the Arabian Peninsula and west of Asia. The website cites the 2011 statistics of Jordan’s population of 6 million and 249 thousand people. Arabs form the vast majority (98%) of the population, Circassians (1%) and Armenians (1%). Population density is concentrated in the center and north of the country. The official religion is Islam, and Sunni Muslims account for 92% of the population. Other sects and religions also exist, such as Islamic sects of the Druze (2%) and Christians (6%). Most of which follow the Orthodox Church. The website also states that the official language of the country is Arabic, and that English is the first FL (The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, n.d.).

According to Suleiman (2006), the language situation in Jordan revolves around three Arabic dialects: urban, sedentary, and Bedouin (p. 140). Before 1948 and until 1967, the urban and the sedentary were associated with the Palestinians who moved to Jordan on two waves in 1948 and 1967. The urban dialect enjoyed a higher prestigious status as a marker of modernity (Suleiman, 2006). However, the situation changed during the 1970s after the conflict between the Jordanian government and the Palestinian guerrilla. The conflict ended with the defeat of the Palestinian side and, consequently, the division of the society into Jordanians and Palestinians. Male Jordanians consciously shifted to use the Bedouin dialect as a clear marker of Jordanian identity. This split in the linguistic geography of Jordan has gained prominence since then.

The review of Lebanon and Jordan presents clear cases of the influence of political, religious, and colonial ideologies on the linguistic landscape of some Arab countries. On one level, religious affiliations cause a renouncement of the SA language. This renouncement found a different form of expression after the end of the French

colonization of Lebanon by establishing the national dialect (ND) as an authentic marker of Lebanese identity in face of the SA. National affiliations in Jordan, on the other hand, caused a dichotomy of two Arabic varieties, where neither the standard nor the colonial language are part of the linguistic tension.

It is noteworthy to mark here as well the influence of globalization on the spread of English amid these political, religious, and linguistic tensions. This as well, similar to the situation in the Gulf countries, is linked with a decline in the knowledge of SA.

The role of media in Lebanon as presented above is another crucial point in that review. By capitalizing on language ideologies and resources, media may function as a platform to maintain and enhance the tensions in these intertwined ideologies.

2.1.3 Highlights from Iraq

According to *CIA The World Factbook* of Iraq (2020a) at the time of writing this chapter, the country's 40,209,413 population is formed of Arabs 75-80%, Kurdish 15-20%, other 5% (includes Turkmen, Yezidi, Shabak, Kaka'i, Bedouin, Romani, Assyrian, Circassian, Sabaeen-Mandaean, and Persian). However, the *CIA The World Factbook* notes that there is no recent reliable data than these provided by the government in 1987. For the languages, Arabic and Kurdish are both official languages of Iraq. In addition to that, Turkmen (a Turkish dialect), Syriac (Neo-Aramaic), and Armenian are official in areas where native speakers of these languages constitute a majority of the population (*CIA The World Factbook*, 2020a).

Abdul-Hassan (1988) clarifies that the situation of the Arabic language in Iraq, similar to the rest of the Arab countries, is diglossic. There are generally two varieties to be considered; one as high and the other as low, and each serves different functions. He argues that, usually, there is no overlap in the social value of each variety, and the factor that affects the choice of the high variety is education. Educated Iraqis commonly use what is referred to as Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA), a level of the language that has features of the standard and the dialect. According to Taha (2007), ESA has been widely used since the 70s of the last century with the pioneering works of Badawi (1973) and Mitchell (1978, 1986) on levels of contemporary Arabic. Levels of contemporary Arabic and diglossia are discussed further in Section 2.4.

On the factors that have influenced linguistic change in Iraq, Abdul-Hassan (1988) mentions education, media, trade, and the compulsory military service along with the conduct of the First Gulf War (1980-1988). The war brought different male Iraqis together and, therefore, more regional styles have become intelligible or known to many people. Jaber and Krishnasamy (2012) confirm an effect of the 2003 war as well on the linguistic situation in Iraq. In addition to a long history of a broken society suffering from deprivation and violence, 'Iraq is one of the societies that faced social and political change. Beginning with the war in 2003, Iraq came under military occupation by a coalition of forces, primarily American and British. After 2003, Iraq was a country divided by religion and ethnicity' (p. 11). These social, political, and economic changes

affect and widen people's vocabulary. New changes require the innovation of new lexical items in order to express ideas about the new developments.

Jaber and Krishnasamy (2012) investigated the gender pattern regarding the innovated lexical items. In their quantitative research, they investigated the attitude and linguistic choice of males and females with regard to new forms, new meanings, words with semantic shift, and new borrowed lexical items. What is interesting about this study is the listing of some of these lexical innovations that clearly highlight how the Iraqi political and historical contexts change the dialect and the social meanings and values of certain words. The results of the study reveal a gender differentiation pattern between educated men and women aged between 25 and 35 years in Baghdad. The researchers conclude that males are the innovators. They tend to use the new locally made lexical items more than the females. On one hand, most of the females find many words stigmatized and, therefore, should not be uttered by women; most words are found tough and more suitable for men. On the other hand, 90% of males express the opinion that these lexical items reflect the reality of Iraqi society and events since 2003, yet they are nice and interesting. The same percentage thinks that it is not appropriate for females to use these words in public, rather only in a family talk due to social constraints. The different attitude of females to these words is interpreted as a rejection of the bitter reality, which they refer to. They reject the social meanings and values of these words, and so they do not prefer to use them.

In addition to gender, ethnic and religious affiliations in Iraq play a role in language choices. Abdulsalam (2014) studies the linguistic choice of Kurds in Mosul and the factors that affect their use of Kurdish versus Arabic as well as their attitudes towards each of the two languages. He built up community profiles and conducted interviews and a questionnaire in order to investigate whether the contact between the Kurdish and Arabic languages has led to an Arabic language shift or Kurdish language maintenance by the Kurdish people. This study is deemed important in this review since the data of the study include Kurdish features and it is not very common to discuss the Kurdish situation in Arabic sociolinguistic literature.

The Kurdish language 'belongs to the northwestern subdivision of the Indo-Iranian language group of the Indo-European family' (Kinnane, 1964, as cited in Abdulsalam, 2014, p. 12). The Kurdish language in Iraq has two main dialects:

The first dialect is called Kurmanji (or Bahdinani), and the second one is called Sorani. The second is widely used in modern mass communication and literature. Kurmanji is spoken in Duhok province and some areas in Erbil, while Sorani is widely spoken in both Erbil and Slemaniah. Two other dialects are Gorani (Gurani, or Hawarami), and Zengana which is used in Kirkuk and near Khanaqin. (...) However, the two dialects are almost understood by speakers. The Kurdish government in Kurdistan has a policy which gives support to the two major dialects (Kurmanji and Sorani) in the mass media and in education. (Abdulsalam, 2014, p. 12)

For a review of the classification of the Kurdish dialects, see Abdulsalam (2014).

As for the results of his study, Abdulsalam concludes that the Kurdish community in Mosul is bilingual. The majority of his participants report that they use Kurdish in family communication, with a lesser percentage using both Kurdish and Arabic. This family communication helps the community to maintain their language in face of the language of education and the majority of the population: Arabic. However, the majority of the sample uses Kurdish in phone calls with their family and on social media, a lesser percentage uses both Arabic and Kurdish. In contrast, writing personal letters to the family or browsing the internet is mostly carried out in Arabic. Abdulsalam refers this back to the weak competence in reading and writing in Kurdish and the dominance of Arabic on the internet.

As for neighborhood communication, it is carried out mostly in Arabic. This is due to the mixed nature of neighborhoods in Mosul and the lack of Kurdish clusters. Arabic, in this sense, serves as a universal linguistic tool. Equally, Arabic is the linguistic tool in education and workplaces, with a lesser degree Kurdish. This indicates that Kurds are well integrated in society since they assimilate the language of the majority and work in mixed environments, not only Kurdish businesses.

As for the causes that influence linguistic choice of Kurds, the results show social, psychological, historical, political, and demographic factors. Family, close relations of the community, and internal marriage are examples of the social factors. Psychological factors are seen in the sense of pride to belong to the Kurdish origin, a high sense of attachment to the childhood language, Kurdish serving as a bonding tool with the Kurdish community outside of Mosul and Iraq. The suffering that the Kurdish have witnessed in their history plays another role in maintaining their language. The policies of the country as well allow the Kurds to maintain their language. In addition to this, the demographics of whether living in mixed neighborhoods or solely Kurdish ones, both encourage the maintenance of the ethnic language. While in the first case it is a tool to preserve identity, in the second case it is a bonding and natural tool with the people from the same ethnic group. Abdulsalam as well mentions the influence of media channels that broadcast in Kurdish and the traditions of festivities and celebrations.

Regarding the factors that influence the use of Arabic by the Kurdish community in Mosul, it is the necessity to communicate since Arabic is the language of the country, the majority, the economy, and of workplaces. Also, there is the link between Arabic and Islam, which is the religion of the majority of the Kurds. The participants as well list marriages between Kurdish and Arabs as another reason why they would use Arabic language.

Concerning language attitudes, the Kurdish have positive attitudes towards both languages. In sum, Kurdish is the language of childhood, identity, and origin, of which they are very proud. Arabic is the communication tool with the majority in education, business, and religion.

Religious factors by themselves play a noticeable role in the linguistic situation in Iraq. Holes (2019), studying the linguistic differences based on religion and sect in Iraq, asks the questions how dialects came to be labelled 'šīʿī', 'Christian', or 'Jewish', and

what factors play a role in their survival or disappearance. After giving the main features that collectively distinguish the Iraqi dialects, he introduces the main two subdivisions of these dialects, the *gelet* group and the *qeltu* group, names based on how the speakers of each group pronounce the verb 'I said' in Arabic (Holes, 2019, pp. 64-65).

Traditionally, and based on lifestyles and linguistic features, Arabic linguists categorize the *gelet* dialects as 'Bedouin', while they categorize the *qeltu* dialects as sedentary. For the linguistic differences between the *gelet* and *qeltu* dialects, see Holes (2019, pp. 65-67). However, Holes argues that this categorization does not hold any more since the lifestyle of Bedouins has changed. According to the *CIA The World Factbook* (2020a), religious groups in Iraq are distributed as such: Muslim 97% (Shi'a 60%-65%, Sunni 32%-37%), Christian or other 3%. Interestingly, this dialectal division corresponds to a communal division, more noticeable in the south of Iraq. Christians and Jews speak the *qeltu* dialects wherever they are in Iraq, whereas Muslims in the south maintain the *gelet* dialects. In the northern parts, Muslims town dwellers speak the *qeltu* dialects as well.

In order to answer his research questions and to understand the current dialect geography in Iraq, Holes suggests an approach through the demographic history of the country. He contends that Baghdad and most parts of southern Iraq are relatively recently re-populated by non-sedentary Muslims who kept the features of the Bedouin dialects. Due to the utter destructions that befell these parts on the hands of the Mongols in 1258 and later by Tamerlane in 1401, the rebuilding and re-populating of Baghdad took centuries. In light of these historical events:

In the north, the *gelet-qeltu* dialect split still corresponds exactly to non-sedentary/sedentary life-styles (...) and is largely explained by the fact that Mosul was not subject to the medieval disasters that befell Baghdad – there was no cull of the original Muslim population and repopulation from outside the city. The result is that Muslims native to northern Iraq cities like Mosul still speak a *qeltu* dialect like that of the Christians and Jews (...) But Baghdad Muslims all speak a *gelet* dialect typologically similar to that of the Bedouin dialects of a huge desert area to the west and south-west of Baghdad. (Holes, 2019, p. 68)

He, therefore, concluded that the repopulation of Baghdad from the sedentarising Bedouins over the centuries is the reason why this split exists. Sedentarising Bedouins was then enforced by an official Ottoman policy from the middle of the 19th century in order 'to pacify and provide a counter-weight to the powerful north Arabian Shammari and "Anazi tribes"' (Holes, 2019, p. 68). This is clear since the establishment of many southern cities were recently built, such as 'Amara in 1862, an-Naṣiriyya in about 1870, and Ramaḍī in 1880. Holes further tries to explain the existence of some *qeltu* dialect features among the sedentarised Bedouins. He contends that it is most likely because of the remaining Muslims who survived the Mongols and the fact that these dialect features were seen as prestigious to the Bedouins who migrated to Baghdad. Therefore, the Muslim Baghdadi dialect is 'a creation of inward migration and subsequent dialect levelling over a period of several centuries' (p. 68). As the migration increased, the

indexicality of associating these linguistic features appeared as a juxtaposition to the Christian and Jews dialects, from which, according to Holes, it is not known exactly how and when they were originated.

In order to understand how the division in dialects maintains itself, Holes (2019) appeals to sociolinguistic theory. The religion is a segregating factor by building habits and bonds among followers of the same affiliation, such as patterns of worship, employment, socialization, and endogamous marriage. Older maps of Baghdad show the existence of separate Christian and Jewish neighborhoods. In modern times, Christians still live in enclaves, usually around churches. Similarly, employment patterns have maintained a connection between occupation and religious affiliations. Lastly, there is the rarity of exogamous marriage among these religious groups. Therefore, since religion, employment, and marriage lines are set clear, linguistic lines follow in return.

The sociolinguistic situation in Iraq is indeed special. First, the influence of wars in its recent history, as seen above, has contributed to the creation and formation of new lexical items that are specific to the situation in the country. The review as well shows not only a development of new lexical items, but also a rapid formation of indexicalities that are associated with these terms. Gender is an important factor to reveal these indexicalities. Women do not use some of these terms, either due to social constraints that deem these indexes inappropriate for women, or due to the reference to the bitter reality of war. Many of them do not prefer to talk about the loss of their men and sons in the war, forced evacuation or loss of homes, deterioration of the social and economic situation, and even forced migration from the country.

Second, the review also reveals the dynamics between ethnic varieties and Arabic. Iraq might be as well special in how a minority ethnic language can become official in certain regions if this minority forms a majority in that region. The connection and interaction between Kurdish as an official ethnic language and Arabic reveal the linguistic policies, ideologies, and attitudes regarding each of these two languages. It is interesting that the Kurds in Iraq show positive attitudes towards Arabic and Kurdish. This might indicate a normalcy and tension free environment on the side of the Kurds.

Third, the study of language interaction within the lens of demographic history is indeed an addition brought by Holes (2019) to this review. Similar to studying mobility under globalization, studying past mobility in history adds an eye-opening dimension to understand the current sociolinguistic situation of a region. This presents a case of how meanings, values, and indexes are formed, not only through time in history, but also through space and locality.

2.1.4 Highlights from Egypt

Unlike the situation in Iraq, Holes (2019) argues that:

(...) the Copts of Egypt, whether they live in Cairo or southern Egypt. Do not have a 'communal' Arabic dialect different from that of their Muslim neighbours, and there is no evidence that they ever did. (Holes, 2019, p. 70)

He explains this by the stability in Egypt's population over a long period of its history. In addition, Christians are highly socially integrated within the Muslim majority. There is no deep religion-based segregation in employment. In addition to Holes' (2019) explanation, the demography in Egypt where the majority of the population lives in the tight stretch of the Nile valley did not allow for social, and hence, linguistic divisions.

Cotter and De Jong (2019) place Egypt as the transitional area between the east and the west of the Arabic speaking countries. This makes the linguistic situation in Egypt unique with regard to the range of diversity and variation. Since, as mentioned above, most of the population in Egypt lives in the Nile Valley and the Delta, most of the diversity is seen along that region. Behnstedt and Woidich (1985, as cited in Cotter & De Jong, 2019) divide varieties along the Nile and the Delta into 'Lower Egyptian (including Cairo and the Central Delta), Middle and Upper, with additional distinctions between Northern and Southern varieties in each grouping' (p. 50). The linguistic situation in Egypt also includes Bedouin dialects. The majority of these dialects are either spoken in the Western Desert or in the east, in the Sinai Peninsula.

CIA The World Factbook (2020b) about Egypt cites the estimates of July 2020 for the population as 104,124,440 – the largest in the Arab world. According to Article 2 of the Egyptian Constitution, SA is the official language of Egypt. English shared the official status with Arabic until 1952 (Bassiouney, 2015), the year that witnessed the abolishment of the constitutional monarchy and the declaration of the Republic. What is known in literature as Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA), in fact refers to the Cairene dialect, the language of the capital and the most prestigious one. However, Egyptian Arabic has different other varieties as mentioned above. The linguistic situation includes furthermore Nubian (about 50,000-170,000 speakers), Bedja (about 15,000 speakers), Siwi (about 6,000-22,000 speakers), and to a very limited extent Armenian and Greek, mainly in Cairo and Alexandria (p. 9).

The role of media public discourse in constructing the Egyptian identity is the focus of Bassiouney's (2015) book *Language and Identity in Modern Egypt*. Bassiouney looks at the role of language in linking the social world to identity formation. Her data includes books, patriotic songs, novels, newspaper articles, films, blogs, talk shows, and poetry. She contends that despite the linguistic and ethnic diversity in Egypt (even though it is less diverse than other Arab countries), public discourse draws an image of Egyptians as being of a unified identity that cannot be separated or differentiated into individual, social, or national components.

Media public discourse binds together ethnicity, history, locality, religion, character traits, and Arabic language as variables that, collectively, construct the Egyptian identity. Bassiouney (2015) notes that language indexes an identity that is based on shared ideologies, habits, and perceptions in a way that would not be appreciated or fully understood by non-Egyptians. By making use of dialogue, verbless assertive statements,

stance taking positions, personification, and the pronouns, public discourse draws the line between the enemy and the patriotic, as well as between the insider and the outsider. However, although Arabic language is not mentioned in isolation from the other variables, 'during times of upheaval and political tension, language is usually called upon as one of the markers of identity in the Arab world, specifically in Egypt (...) Language comes to the forefront at times of conflict. Usage of ECA in general may reflect attempts at cultural hegemony and mention the distinctive dialect of Egyptians as a reflection of uniqueness' (p. 347).

An important dimension that Bassiouney (2015) refers to in her concluding remarks is how the discourse of the media relies on the shared knowledge of the audience. The indexes that are manipulated in media public discourse should relate to the knowledge of the audience, otherwise the discourse would make no sense. In this regard, the audience would feel the media expresses their voice, in a way that eventually, the media voice would be the audience's as well (Bell, 1984, as cited by Bassiouney, 2015, p. 346).

Order of indexicalities while revisiting Ferguson's diglossia is eminent in Bassiouney's (2015) study about language in Egypt – and the Arab world at large. While first order indexicalities reflect linguistic habits that are established over time, second order indexicalities are products of language ideologies and attitudes. The media plays an important role in categorizing the second order indexicalities, through direct and indirect processes. These direct and indirect processes in turn correspond to ideologies and attitudes, respectively. 'Direct indexes tend to be written, rather than oral. Indirect indexes are manifested in different domains and genres of public discourse, such as movies and blogs. While language ideology reflects SA in a positive light, indirect indexes show the negative indexes of SA. On the other hand, ECA is talked about directly in both a positive and negative manner. The positive manner tends to be in oral public discourse, and the negative manner tends to be in written discourse. Indirectly, ECA also carries positive and negative indexes, but positive ones prevail' (p. 349).

Bassiouney (2015) argues that indexicalities of each code is complex due to the differences between first and second indexes order. Linguistic habits of using SA in legal domains and reciting the Quran and the Bible have associated the indexes of religion, truthfulness and sincerity to SA. However, attitudes in media public discourse have associated the indexes of ignorance and backwardness to SA, placing the use of English on a higher social prestige and a promise of a better job. At the same time, the use of English can be the reason of contesting the Egyptian identity. Similarly, linguistic habits have related the indexes of everyday life and informality to ECA, while the public discourse associates the indexes of authentic Egyptian with character traits such as being funny, although not necessarily sincerity and truthfulness. Because of the linguistic habits of the media, ECA is a common code for Arabic discourse. Egypt has enjoyed a long history of media hegemony that is combined by being the most populous Arab country. This attaches an index of cultural hegemony to ECA in the minds of Egyptians. However, these indexes exist while some intellectuals still perceive ECA as a corrupt language (Bassiouney, 2015).

The creative and performative use of codes denote third order indexicalities. In her data, Bassiouney (2015) refers to a journalist who wrote an article in the Alexandrian dialect on the incident of church bombings that took place near the end of 2010. The use of a local dialect indexes authenticity, toughness, and a 'typical' Alexandrian who does not differentiate between people based on their religion. In novels, third order indexicalities appear in the manipulation 'to the utmost' (p. 355) of CS between SA and ECA. This manipulation constructs the characters of the novels in Bassiouney's study on both levels, Egyptians and individuals. By this manipulation, authors do not wish to reflect linguistic reality in their dialogues. Instead, they are more concerned to project stances and identities instead. The protagonists in these novels are seen as 'paradoxical, still adhering to concepts such as linguistic unity, and regard linguistic diversity as chaos. That is their ideologies and practices collide' (p. 355).

Serreli (2018) follows a social constructivist approach to investigate the changing meanings and values associated with languages in the oasis of Siwa in Egypt. The importance of reviewing this study is to highlight a community in Egypt that is becoming a hub for domestic and foreign tourism, although tourism was affected by lack of security after the 2011 Revolution. Siwa is famous for its special traditional products and lifestyle as well as natural harvests. Many people who visit Siwa come back with a changed attitude towards the environment and a deep appreciation of the experience that made them know a different side of Egypt. It is interesting to shed light on the diversity in Egypt through the example of the linguistic situation in the oasis.

Siwa Oasis is a periphery. It is located in the Western Desert about 50 km from the Libyan border. According to Serreli (2018), the oasis has around 28,000 inhabitants that can be divided into three groups: Siwans, Bedouins, and Egyptians.

Siwans are the Berber portion of the population and the one regarded as 'local'; they represent the majority group and are divided into ten tribes, one of which resides in el-Gara [another oasis located 100 km northeast of Siwa]. Bedouins constitute a tribe that claims lineage ties with the Awlād 'Alī and settled in Siwa in the early twentieth century (...). Finally, the appellative '*maṣriyyīn*' is used to refer to nonlocal Egyptians who have moved to Siwa from different regions of the country, mostly for working purposes. This classification subtends lay people's discourses to the extent that it became automatic. (Serreli, 2018, p. 228)

The flow of people and merchandise from other cities to Siwa have not started until the second half of the 20th century. This delay was due to the distance and lack of infrastructure in the oasis. These same factors have helped preserve the language, as well local and cultural practices of the community. However, everyday life practices and social network of the community have started to change. Factors that contributed to the change are the flow of merchandise, the ability to enroll in the Egyptian army after the 1952 Revolution, the introduction of radio, TV and the internet, enrolment in major Egyptian universities, the increasing presence of non-locals in the oasis for work or tourism, and the increasing rate of intermarriage. The change as well supports Arabization – a process that is gradually taking place and that is not yet completed.

According to Serreli (2018), most Siwans speak Arabic in addition to Siwi. The exception would be older women and preschoolers who speak only Siwi. The proficiency in Arabic varies according to age and education. Interestingly, while elderly Siwans target a Bedouin Arabic similar to that spoken by Awlād 'Alī, young and adult Siwans aim for ECA.

Within a framework of indexicality and a consideration of a process of commodification of culture and identity, Serreli (2018) contends that the local Siwi language has changed to index Siwanness – an authentic, slower, and traditional lifestyle that blends in harmony with the environment. Her results showed that 'Siwi identifies a speaker as Siwan' (p. 231). First order indexicality indicates membership to a group or community according to geographical parameters. The long history of partial isolation has created an automatic link between the language and being a Siwi or a non-Siwi. The study even reports a non-favoring attitude when a non-Siwi reaches a level of fluency in the language. Siwi is, therefore, the unmarked habitual language of the community, not of the individual. It is prerogative to Siwans within their geographical and social spaces of the oasis, regardless of the interlocutors' proficiency in Arabic.

Second order indexicality appears as Siwans start to build associations for the two languages depending on the context and the speakers. By the process of Arabization, Arabic is dominating new activities and contexts, while Siwi is still dominant in traditional contexts. On one hand, Siwi has become the language of solidarity, in-group and intergeneration interactions, and of putting the interlocutors at the same level. On the other hand, due to its association with a traditional lifestyle, Siwi has been negatively associated with backwardness and provisionalism. Participants in Serreli's (2018) study, however, do not prefer to speak about the negative associations of the Siwi language as much as the positive attitude towards Arabic. This is slightly different among teenagers who express 'their fatigue of continuing to be "that Siwan"' (p. 235).

Arabic is an instrumental language in the Siwan community; it is used in schools, work activities, and to communicate with non-locals or outsiders. In socioeconomic terms, some speakers have to master Arabic more than others do. Specifically, ECA has been associated with 'educatedness, urbaneness, open-mindedness, and progress' (Serreli, 2018, p. 236). The study reports that some speakers would even deliberately speak ECA to be described with these attributes. These indexes influenced language choice of speakers. Many Siwans start using Arabic where Siwi is the unmarked code and the one encouraged by the community, such as in domestic domains for example. Serreli adds that these indexes 'are represented by the cover idea of Egyptianness, because lifestyle innovation and change are often perceived as an Egyptianization of customs. This is believed to go hand in hand with a loss of the Siwan traditions, customs, and some specific behavioural and personality traits, such as men's trustworthiness and women's modesty' (pp. 236-237). Siwans usually perceive a speaker who uses ECA as praising and distinguishing himself within the group and wants to sound or look like an Egyptian.

In response to that attitude, Serreli (2018) reports that Siwi language has acquired a third order indexicality among some fringes of the population, especially educated and wealthy Siwans aged 20-30 years. In order to oppose the 'misbehavior' of praising ECA,

Siwi is praised and encouraged as the code of identity. Third order indexicality is a deliberate and conscious choice that makes Siwi an index of Siwanness. In fact, this index is as well triggered by the discourse of preserving the heritage of Siwa as it is becoming a center for traditional and environment tourism as mentioned above. The unique heritage and local productions of Siwa are its economic resource that is being commodified and marketized as scarce commodities in urban cities. Therefore, many sustainable investment projects that propagate the preservation of Siwan heritage and language are launched in the oasis, and in return they affect the discourse of the local population. Many Siwans who are involved in these projects adopt and reproduce the same narrative and discourse.

Serrelli (2018) concludes that Siwa in Egypt sets an example for a case when the global attention to minorities and peripheries has given the community an 'opportunity to capitalize on longstanding feelings of distinctiveness and uniqueness' (p. 240). The Siwi language has changed from indexing an in-group membership, to backwardness. After that, it has become an identity marker and a symbol of unique Siwanness. The living practices have become a cultural heritage where global discourse encourages a preservation of peripheral and minority language for socioeconomic purposes.

These two studies presented on the sociolinguistic situation in Egypt complement each other. Serrelli's (2018) study provides evidence to Bassiouney's (2015) conclusion that public discourse and media in Egypt propagate a unified identity regardless of the diversity that exists in the country, of which Siwa is an example.

What is seen here is two processes that oppose each other. *Language and identity in Modern Egypt* (Bassiouney, 2015) clarifies the role of the media in constructing a unified Egyptian identity. Constructing a homogenized linguistic code and identity in Egypt is similar to the situation in the Arabic Peninsula reviewed by Holes (2011) above. These two cases relate to what Kraidy (2006) mentions that media in the Arab world adopts a process of regionalization (see Section 2.3). Still, globalization is a factor in promoting the distinctive unique features of a peripheral community in Egypt. Capitalizing on the authentic and local resources during globalization is also recorded elsewhere in literature (Aleshinskaya & Gritsenko, 2017). One may argue that the first process is conducted top-down, from the media and the market to the people, while the other is initiated bottom-up, from the people to the capitalistic market and media.

2.1.5 Al-Maghreb: examples from Tunisia and Morocco

Tunisia is located in North Africa on the Mediterranean. The coast runs east and north of the country that has also borders with Libya to the southeast and Algeria from the west and southwest. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Clarke et al., n.d.) cites 2021 statistics of the population that was estimated by 11,867,000 people. *Encyclopedia Britannica* mentions that the population of Tunisia is essentially Arab Berber (Amazigh), who have converted to Islam in the 7th century. Throughout its history, the country has received waves of immigration that have included Phoenicians, sub-Saharan Africans, Jews,

Romans, Vandals, and Arabs (Clarke et al., n.d.). In 2000, ethnic diversity in Tunisia accounted for Tunisian Arabs (67.2%), Bedouin Arabs (26.6%), Algerian Arab (2.4%), Amazigh (Berber) (1.4%), and other groups (2.4%) (Clarke et al., n.d.). The Tunisian linguistic landscape is briefed in Lawson and Sachdev (2000):

Tunisia's strategic situation at the crossroads between Africa, the Arab world, the Mediterranean and Europe, and its long history of invasion and re-invasion, have meant that modern Tunisia has inherited a rich ethnolinguistic heritage. Although the original languages of the Maghreb in general were varieties of Berber, the mother tongue of the vast majority of Tunisians today is Tunisian Arabic (TA). Most accounts describe TA as the 'Low' (L) variety in a diglossic relationship with Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), the 'High' (H) variety (Ferguson, 1959). Though Arabic is the official language of Tunisia, French (F), a strong legacy of Tunisia's recent colonial past, is another superposed variety that continues to be widely used. Over the last decade, English (E) has also been appearing increasingly on the Tunisian linguistic landscape. (Lawson & Sachdev, 2000, pp. 1345-1346)

Lawson and Sachdev (2000) reported on three studies on CS in Tunisia. First, they used a matched-guise technique to gather the attitudes about CS from 169 Tunisian university students. Second, they had 28 students' complete language diaries reflecting on their use of different varieties over a number of days. Third, they conducted a field study to measure the extent of actual CS behavior in casual interactions with over 700 individuals in the streets.

These studies revealed that CS between Tunisian Arabic (TA) and French is the unmarked in-group code that reflects the bilingual nature of the country. They consider it a separate linguistic variety, contrarily to existing perceptions of the Tunisian sociolinguistic situation.

Their study reports a contradiction between a negative attitude towards CS and a high percentage of actual CS behavior, especially in informal in-group settings. They report more use of CS between Arabic and French with Arabs than that with Europeans. Hence, they conclude that it is a code that is used for intra-ethnic communication in Tunisia that might reflect solidarity. They report that CS 'in Tunisia is more likely to be used in communication with people with whom participants identify. (...) the use of which (from an individual's point of view) probably bridges the linguistic (Arabic-French) duality of Tunisia in a co-operative, non-conflictual manner. It was suggested that use of code switching by Tunisian connotes status via French and solidarity via Tunisian Arabic simultaneously' (Lawson & Sachdev, 2000, p. 1357).

In a more recent study, Sayahi (2019) argues that, since the 2011 Revolution in Tunisia, at least three trends have been reconstructing the linguistic situation in Tunisia. First, there is a wider acceptance and use of the Tunisian varieties in public sphere. Second, there is a continuation to access and commodify French. Third, there is an increasing effort to bring Berber as a marker of ethnicity.

In his article, Sayahi (2019) gives a special focus on the linguistic consequences of the use of TA in formal domains. Sayahi analyses four official texts; two scripted (one written

and one read aloud) and two improvised. He argues that features of TA used in formal domains mark the texts as ‘unequivocally’ TA (p. 227). He also argues that although French still enjoys a very strong place in the Tunisian linguistic market, his data show a limited use of French lexical items in scripted official discourse, where users draw primarily from SA to fill any gaps in TA. This use of SA is usually adapted to the dialect, in a process of vernacularization (p. 233). He concludes that this reflects a competition between French and SA in official domains, where French is consciously reduced in favor of the vernacularized lexical items from the standard. According to him, at the lexical level, a main difference between Tunisian everyday life, mass and social media discourse, on the one hand, and official discourse, on the other hand, is the plunging of French lexical items in the former and the consciously reduced use of such items in the latter.

According to Sayahi (2019), the use of the vernacular in official written discourse marks an emergence and evolution of a diglossic situation. He claims: ‘Once a vernacular variety starts to be used in writing and in official settings, a need to develop grammars and dictionaries emerges, which in turn leads to efforts to standardize it and elevate it to the status of an official language. Often times, this transformation of a vernacular variety into a separate standardized language is central part of efforts to establish a more distinct national identity’ (p. 228).

Sayahi (2019) further argues that the normalization of the use of the vernaculars in official written discourse is due in large to the political changes that occurred in 2010-2011. Before the Revolution of 2011, the official discourse was highly restricted and scripted. Unlike the case before the Revolution, Tunisians are experiencing less state control and censorship. Media and public discourse are filled with speech from a variety of people, which increased the linguistic variation. Therefore, more Tunisian varieties are making their way into the public sphere, becoming more frequent on state media, even though some of these varieties were stigmatized or ridiculed before. His conclusion is that Tunisians are increasingly heading ‘towards a normalization of the use of their dialect and its “unofficial” recognition as an identity marker that goes hand in hand with the establishing of a democratic society. Perhaps it is not surprising, then, that the new constitution was one of the first documents to be translated from Standard Arabic into Tunisian Arabic’ (p. 237).

Morocco is a North African country bordering the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean, between Mauritania and Algeria (*CIA The World Factbook*, 2020c). In July 2021, the population was estimated by 36,561,813 people. According to *CIA The World Factbook*, Arab Berbers (Amazigh) form 99% of the population, while other ethnicities share the remaining 1%. As for languages, *CIA The World Factbook* mentions that Arabic and the Amazigh (Berber) Tamazight dialect are the official languages of the country. Other Berber languages (Tachelhit and Tarifit) exist along with French that is often the language of business, government, and diplomacy.

Hachimi (2012) studies the sociolinguistics of mobility that resulted from the migrations of the old urban elite from the city of Fez to Casablanca. She explores the indexical system, identities, lifestyle, moralities, and the changing ideologies associated with this mobility. Fez has an established history of urbanity and a prestigious dialect that marks the bourgeois of Morocco. Meanwhile, Casablanca, established by the French colonialism, has become the urbanized host of rural migration that has made the city a meeting point of various regional dialects. According to Hachimi, the connections between the different urban stories of each of Fez and Casablanca provide critical insights to the sociolinguistic conditions in Morocco. This is studied within the framework of the process of 'iconization' (p. 323) in order to reveal 'the negotiation of language ideologies in relation to identity positions' (p. 323) and to show that 'references of sophistication, civilization, and so on are not inherently associated with the West, as has been the emphasis within much work in postcolonial settings' (p. 323).

In mapping the linguistic situation of Morocco, Hachimi (2012) says the diglossic and multilingual repertoire of Morocco includes:

Moroccan Arabic (MA) and Standard/Classic Arabic (...), which are the respective "low" and "high" varieties in the idealized model of Arabic diglossia (Ferguson, 1959); French, the former colonial language; Tamazight, the indigenous and oldest language in Morocco—commonly known as Berber; and to a lesser extent Spanish, another former colonial language now restricted to some Northern and Southern parts of Morocco. (Hachimi, 2012, p. 323)

The term 'Darija' is the cover term for the different varieties of Moroccan Arabic (MA). CS between MA and the other languages can be described as the unmarked register. Although Hachimi (2012) maintains that, during the 20th century, this multilingual situation can be seen as compromising, these languages do not occupy the same position in society. SA and French have been rivals to take the position of the legitimate languages, reflecting the two opposing ideologies of 'authenticity versus modernization, closure versus openness, and East versus West' (p. 323). At the same time, MA dialect has always been seen as 'a deficient form' of SA. Tamazight is considered a combination of dialects that are connected with 'backwardness and illiteracy' and, thus, cannot be raised to the status of a 'real language' (p. 323).

However, in today's Morocco, the situation is different. After the 1970s, and because of a policy of Arabization, SA has become the domineering language in government agencies and public schools. In spite of this, French is still associated with 'power, prestige, and social mobility' (Hachimi, 2012, p. 324). It is the language of the upper and upper middle classes, the private sector, the professionals, finance, and high education. Adding to this, there is the widely used MA or Darija as most Moroccans and researchers call this dialectal variety of Arabic. MA is the shared language between Berbers and the rest of the population, as well as between Berbers who speak different varieties. Because the spoken Moroccan dialect fulfils referential and affective functions in society, it encompasses oral literature and cultural productions. More recently, it has

spread to fields that were exclusive to SA and French, such as advertising, political slogans, newspapers. Furthermore:

The new media (e.g., SMS, online chats, discussion boards, text messaging, instant messaging, and emails) have also provided an important space for writing MA [Moroccan Arabic]. Moreover, MA is increasingly heard on Moroccan national TV and radio: in commercials, in entertainment shows, in formal interviews and talk shows, and in dubbed foreign soap operas. (Hachimi, 2012, p. 324)

Hachimi's (2012) study emphasizes the shifting indexicalities of Arabic varieties because of mobility, migration, and language contact. In addition to this, Hachimi highlights that, in cross dialect communication, SA plays a very small role in 'the social and ideological evaluations and re-evaluations of linguistic varieties and their relation to linguistic accommodation' (p. 336). This means that SA is not 'the urban koine' since 'in cases of inter-dialect contact, speakers can abandon standard-like dialectal variants of their communal, religious, and ethno-regional varieties to accommodate the locally dominant variety' (p. 336).

Caubet (2018) observes a 'de facto "Moroccanisation"' of the linguistic landscape in Morocco. The plurality of the Moroccan identity has been in the center of a debate on defending the Tamazight and Darija (MA) – the two home languages or mother tongues of the country. Caubet reports on voices that claim that Darija is a fundamental factor in shaping a new Moroccan identity, which she called 'Moroccanness'. In addition to Darija and Tamazight (and of course Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)), the linguistic landscape in Morocco includes as well English, French, and Spanish, and some elite families use these FLs as their home language (p. 99).

In her article, Caubet (2018) highlights the process of 'legitimation' of both Tamazight and Darija. For the situation of Tamazight, which itself includes three main dialects in Morocco (Rif, Middle Atlas, and Sousse), the language faces what she calls the 'legitimation paradox' (p. 101). This is when the legitimation of a language comes very late when the vitality of the language is on the decline.

At the early years of independence (1956), Tamazight was framed within a folkloric culture of the country that attracted tourists for its unique dance, colors, jewelry, and clothes. The main tendency of the country was focused on the ideology of the monarchy, Islam, Arabism, and unity of the territory. Afterwards, Caubet (2018) traces the steps taken towards what she calls 'the official appropriation of Amazigh [Tamazight]'. In 1994, King Hassan II gave a speech in which he introduced the idea of teaching the Moroccan dialects in the curricula. In 1999, the National Charter for Education revived the idea by recommending the introduction of the Tamazight language as a transition language in order to support the teaching of the official language, Arabic (De Ruiter, 2001). In 2001, King Mohammed VI created the Institut Royal de la Culture Amazighe (IRCAM), pointing in his speech to the plural identity of Morocco that embraces Amazigh, Arabic, Sub-Sahara, African, and Andalusian. Later in the year, the Institute was inaugurated by the Ajdir Speech in which the King stated that 'Amazigh is a key element of the national cultural heritage whose presence is reflected in all the

expressions of the Moroccan history and civilization' (Caubet, 2018, pp. 103-104). It was decided that the language was to be introduced in schools in September 2003. Therefore, a rapid standardization process ended up with adopting the *Tifinagh* alphabet, based on the old Berber script with the same name. This was done in order to avoid the symbolical value associated with the Arabic alphabet and the colonial index of the Latin script. Furthermore, a single standard language was to be re-developed from the three mutually unintelligible dialects mentioned above, thus creating a situation of an artificial diglossia. Efforts of the IRCAM in this respect did not lead, until now, to a generally accepted codified general Berber language. Finally, after the Arab Spring in 2011, the language was constitutionalized as an official language, not national.

Looking at the situation of Darija for Moroccans over the last fifteen years, Caubet (2018) argues that it has become 'a language for reconciliation with themselves, after years of self-hatred, a language that makes you accept who you really are, leading to a "claim of plural identity"' (p. 111). It is a situation of peaceful coexistence of languages, which reflects the diversity of the Moroccan landscape. It is a refusal of a Jacobin model of an Arabization that places one language over the others (p. 111). However, unlike Tamazight, Darija is not constitutionalized, announced as an official language, nor accepted as a medium language in schools.

Caubet (2018) argues that although the Darija did not acquire an institutional recognition, the language has evolved in informal spheres. It gained dignity in public spheres even though it lost the battels against the conservative parties in support of Classical and MSA. Darija has become an expression of the Moroccan way of doing things through the creativity and artistic expression, not through nationalism. Caubet starts her review of the use of Darija from 2002 and ends it in 2015. She looks at the Darija use in artistic expressions and the attempts made to find its way into the political and education spheres. These attempts were not very successful.

According to Caubet (2018), the fact that Darija is not standardized or legitimate gives it a bigger space of freedom in the form and topics of expressions. The review starts with an article published by the weekly *Telquel* entitled 'Darija, National Language' (p. 108), linking the language directly to the Moroccan identity. The article, written in French, defends Darija as the language that unites all Moroccans, yet it is not taken seriously. In 2003, two traumatic events affected the view towards Darija in the eyes of the civil society. First, the arrest of 14 metal musicians on allegations of satanic rites and, second, the killing of 33 people and injuring of many others by simultaneous kamikaze bombings on Casablanca. These events raised questions on the education system that has produced these fundamentalists and on the identity of Moroccans.

Near the end of 2003, businessman Noureddine Ayouch started a TV channel in Darija, *Moufida*. The project came during the process of liberalization of audio-visual productions from state monopoly. The channel was to address issues of violence and intolerance and help build a democratic Morocco by showing the modern, successful, progressive face of the Moroccan identity. In an interview with Caubet (2004, as cited in Caubet, 2018), Ayouch states that he 'was about to launch a "civic" channel', and

'without any hesitation, we chose Colloquial Arabic' (p. 110). This was an important step, Darija starting to be related to modernity, tolerance, and success, in contrast to the previous stigma of lack of education, backwardness, and vulgarity.

In 2006, the director and the editor in chief of *Telquel* launched an Arabic weekly called *Nichane*. The paper was written in a mix of mostly SA and Darija, the last one mainly in the name, the headlines, titles, interviews, and editorials of the magazine. The paper sold over twenty thousand copies. It became stronger than the French *Telquel*, which has a readership of the social elite in particular. However, the last issue of the paper was in October 2010 (right before the Arab Spring). The magazine stopped due to accusations to its journalists in relation to the use of Darija and crossing the line by discussing taboo issues like mocking Islam, politics, and lack of respect to the King for addressing him in Darija. Hoogland (2018) summarized the incident:

One particular case deserves mention here: the so-called Darija legal process. In his editorial of 4 August 2007, Benchemsi directly addressed King Mohammed VI by asking what the king had precisely meant in a royal speech about the upcoming elections. Benchemsi uses Darija to address the king about the content of that speech, and also paraphrases in Darija a number of fragments from the royal speech, which of course had been delivered in Standard Arabic. After the publication of this editorial, Benchemsi was arrested and held in custody for questioning. Official charges were never brought, nor did a lawsuit ensue. According to Benchemsi, his arrest and questioning became the inaugural act of a national debate: what place to grant the mother tongue of Moroccans in relation to Standard Arabic, one of their official two languages. *Nichane* suddenly and unexpectedly stopped appearing in 2010, with the last issue, 268, coming out on 1 October 2010. According to Benchemsi in an editorial in *TelQuel* 442, this was allegedly the result of a financial boycott by big advertisers closely related to the political regime. (Hoogland, 2018, p. 278)

Caubet (2018) then reviews the situation of Darija used in dubbing TV series in 2009. A public debate started on 'Which Darija? Which variety? Is Casablanca (the economic capital and metropolis counting over 4 million inhabitants) Darija too "vulgar" or associated with "street language" to be used on television? This was all very much linked to sensitive identity questions, showing how intricately the bonds were felt between the variety used and the representation of a collective Moroccan personality' (p. 113). This debate stirred criticism from both the conservative and the progressive parties. There was a gap between the identification of the language and the situation on screens, especially when it comes to love scenes in Mexican soap operas. Usually, Moroccans would express love scenes euphemistically in French. Even though the trend lasted for seven years as the audience got used to the practice, the conservative Minister of Communication proposed to prohibit it during a debate in the Parliament in 2016.

In the wake of the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt in 2011, Darija was a powerful political tool used by Feb 20 Movement (the movement that started the demonstration in Morocco as an extension of the Arab Spring demonstrations). Darija and Tamazight

were used in the videos launched to mobilize people for Feb 20 protests and to express a unique Moroccan national identity. Darija was also controversial in the political field by the hands of the Prime Minister (PM), Abdelilah Benkirane, who was famous for his use of Darija, even to a vulgar extent (Caubet, 2018, p. 116). Benkirane served as PM from November 2011 to March 2017. In 2016, Journalist Driss Jaydane published a column entitled 'Why should Benkirane leave' (p. 116). One of the reasons was the vulgarity the PM expressed by using Darija. The columnist argued that Benkirane's vulgarity with the Darija, the language of the people, explained his stance to ban its use in education.

However, more tension surrounds the use of Darija in education and teaching. In 2013, a comment by Noureddine Ayouch, whose Zakoura Foundation organized a conference on education reformation, sparked a debate that lasted for two years on the use of Darija as the first language of education. Other languages would be introduced gradually (Miller, 2016, p. 113, as cited in Caubet, 2018, p. 117). In 2015, the PM, speaking in SA, warned that the use of Darija in textbooks is a red line that is not to be trespassed. In 2018, due to his advocacy to integrate the Darija in school curricula, Ayouch was still facing opposition calling for his dismissal from the Supreme Council of Education, Formation, and Scientific Research in Morocco. However, until the time of writing this thesis, his name was listed on the Council official website as a member of the Permanent Committee on Curricula, Programs, Formation, and Multimedia.

Caubet (2018) concludes her review by arguing that despite the failure of the promotion of Darija on the official/formal front, it evolved and regained dignity on creative and artistic expressions as a new form to express 'Moroccanness' in the civil society. Social media and smart phones allow more masses to connect to written Darija, in Latin script more than Arabic.

This review from two countries from the Maghrebi region of the Arab world reveals how contradictory countries from the same region can be. At the time, where CS is the unmarked code of speaking in the two countries, the linguistic ideologies and policies are remarkably different.

At the time where Tunisians start manipulating their dialect in formal contexts to express a distinctive Tunisian identity, the Moroccans are going through a struggle to have their dialect acknowledged by government institutions. Interestingly, the Arab Spring in 2011 has triggered more self-expression in the dialects in both countries. However, the readiness of Tunisian institutions to accept and include their dialect in the formal discourse is unique to this country.

This last point can be traced back to the policies and equity ideologies spread in Tunisia under the former late president Bourguiba (1957-1987). The modernization that Bourguiba achieved in Tunisia has put Tunisia ahead of many other Arab countries in terms of women's rights, harmonious relations with the West, and the modernization of education. This prepared the Tunisians to more democracy after the Arab Spring, and thus to more assimilation and acceptance of their dialect.

However, the conservative trends in Morocco make it hard for Moroccans to express their identity in their dialect on formal and institutional levels. Furthermore, the review underpins, again, the role of media and public discourse in serving as platforms for dialect expressions. It might be argued that the back-and-forth tension between artistic expressions in media and public discourse and government institutions makes the sociolinguistic of Morocco special.

These highlights from different Arab countries reveal the level of cultural and linguistic diversity in the Arab world as a whole. On the level of each country, the linguistic varieties along with their associated meanings and values seem to form a tessellation that has its own pattern and logic. However, in the bigger picture of the whole region, these tessellations form a mosaic on its own of linguistic features, identities, and values. In the following section, the chapter looks at this collective mosaic, shedding light on the dynamics of all these features when they interact together on the pan-Arab level.

2.2 Arabic tessellation mosaics: a diversification of diversity

As shown in the mapping review above, historical, social, cultural, religious, and political factors have a deep influence on mapping the linguistic situation in the Arab countries. The choice between SA, a ND, a local variety, or a FL, colonial or ethnic, reflects a foregrounding of certain ideologies and identities. This makes linguistic choices on the level of each country appear like linguistic tessellations. When these tessellations come together in cross-country communication, a mosaic seems to appear. The present section looks at points of contact of these diverse elements and the effects they have on language choice of Arabs.

The diversity on the level of each nation witnesses a ‘tremendous diversification of diversity’ (Blommaert & Backus, 2011, p. 4) when Arabs from different Arab countries communicate together. In a cross dialect communicative practice, each Arab individual brings biographical indexicalities of values, meanings, and identities from his or her own country. On top of that, in such communicative practice, pan-Arab indexicalities are also present. These indexicalities can be a projection of a commonly shared pan-Arab history, culture, and ideologies or a reflection of hierarchies of hegemony and histories among the different Arab countries. It can be argued that these two levels of indexicalities, the national/individual and the pan-Arab, are present in all inter-Arab communications.

Media is a key component in the above mapping in almost all the regions presented. The media in the Arab world plays an important role in either capitalizing on or diminishing diversified identities and ideologies, employing language as a key tool to enforce or change a certain index. As seen in the review of Section 2.1, media tries to bridge the diversity as seen in the homogenized version of Arabic presented in the Gulf media or the unified identity presented in public discourse in Egypt. Yet, media and artistic expression can capitalize on a unique identity and lifestyle to find a space to

express a distinct unique identity as the case for emphasizing Moroccanness by means of using Darija in Morocco. It is as well the voice of the different religious, political, or ethnic ideologies and identities as seen in Lebanon and Iraq.

It can be argued that this 'tremendous diversification of diversity' in the Arab world is more seen on the virtual sphere, and not so much on the actual ground of each country. Causes of such diversification in Europe are immigration waves after the Cold War and the rise of the internet (Blommaert & Backus, 2011). However, mobility among and between different Arab countries exists on rather a smaller scale than that of Europe. It can be argued that mobility across Arab states is triggered by two main reasons: better living standards and education. Since the discovery of oil in the Gulf states, many Arabs have been moving and settling in the Gulf states looking for better job opportunities and better living standards. Furthermore, there are Arab families who opt to send their children to study in Egypt, especially in Cairo as the host of Cairo University and Al-Azhar University, two prestigious universities across the Arab and Islamic world. More recently, wars have become another cause of mobility. Many Syrians and Iraqis for instance have moved to Egypt or Lebanon either to stay there, or as a transitional point before immigrating to the West. Even with these mobilities, Arabs living in a different Arab country than their own are not labelled as immigrants. Many Egyptians living, for instance for 20 years or more in the Gulf, are still maintaining the Egyptian dialect and lifestyle. All future aspirations which may include a big house and better living conditions are to be fulfilled in the home country.

This limited movement can be traced back to more or less similar economic, political, and social developments across the Arab world that do not actually justify the costs of sacrificing the convenience of living in one's homeland for another country. Sawani (2012) argues in this respect that the repressive and autocratic regimes that ruled the Arab world before the Arab Spring in the end of 2010, tend to adopt centralized and oppressive security policies that minimized cross-border movement of people and ideas.

However, with the emergence of satellite channels and the internet, Arab peoples have found an alternative platform through which they can express their voice. These pan-Arab channels such as Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, and MBC Group, have brought to the surface the sameness and commonality of the shared problems and aspirations. Sawani (2012) says that these media channels affect and shape the minds of their Arab audience through four main elements: an intense sense of common experiences and issues, a unified language code, immediate exposure and involvement, and 'a cultural-emotive sensationalism' (p. 389). Of course, this trans-nation interaction has been equally strengthened by modern means of communication technology, above all the internet by means of blogging and social media websites.

As the above review shows as well, the Arab Spring has influenced linguistic expressions on both levels, the one country and the Arab world. This interaction and the proven sense of shared aspirations among Arabs turned into action at the end of 2010. The uprisings that swept the Arab world starting from Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria, affecting as well Morocco, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab

Emirates, caused radical political, religious, social and economic changes. The repeated similar scenarios of these uprisings enforced the feeling of a shared common experience, while at the same time they increased a sense of patriotic national pride in one's homeland (Temlali, 2011). Temlali says that the Arab Spring has liberated a feeling of patriotic national pride. This feeling was suppressed or expressed in a distorted and radical way, such as the fights that were aroused after football games. He recalls that during the Tunisian Revolution, the demonstrators' rallying call was the Tunisian national anthem, in Egypt it was the word 'Masr', the Egyptian variant word of Egypt. In Libya, the revolutionaries revived the old Libyan flag dated before the Gaddafi coup in 1969.

Another important feature of these uprisings is that they started bottom-up, from the masses to the ruling body. Reports from TV channels and social media testify that the demonstrators in these revolutions came from different walks of life regardless of class or gender (Sawani, 2012). It was the general public, the ordinary people who incited these revolutions.

During these times, Arab people spare no effort to express a long-deprived freedom of expression. They took to social media and TV media to analyze, criticize, weep over, fight, insult, and in particular to hope and aspire for a better path of events. This cross-border interaction has indeed created an 'electronically-enhanced "imagined" Arab *watan* [Arabic word for homeland]' (Pintak, 2009). This satellite-internet mediated nation has transcended national borders and divisions, and has created a new Arab consciousness of the ordinary people characterized by both a pan-Arab unity of shared challenges and ambitions, and a higher sense of national pride. By nature, these radical changes shed their light on the linguistic resources and ideologies.

Morrow and Castleton (2007) argue that satellite channels and the internet have spread SA, that they strengthened the bond between and among the Arab countries, and that they helped standardize the Arabic dialects. In 2011, after the Arab Spring, Temlali (2011) argues that the transnational role played by pan-Arab satellite channels solidified the unity of the Arabic language. He views SA as entering 'its golden age' (p. 49) as everybody is now witnessing SA facilitating communication between the elites from across the Arab world, the communication that has been hindered by national dialectal varieties. However, with the increased sense of pride in one's home country, it is observed that more dialects are being heard and seen on home TV and computer screens in the Arab countries. In addition, the direct coverage of TV channels of the ordinary people who incited the demonstration, increased the amount of dialectal broadcast. Moreover, Temlali himself mentions that linguistic minorities of the Arab world have been involved in the protests. He mentions Berber-speaking groups that have been active in the demonstrations in, Morocco, Algeria, and Libya. As a result, in Morocco, Berber has been recognized as an official language in the Constitution, in an attempt to fulfil basic demands of the demonstrations of February 2011 (p. 47).

From the above, pan-Arab media seem to be a prime point of contact for and among Arabs. A contact that is carried out with either the use or the make use of accessible

linguistic features to propagate or diminish certain ideologies and identities. It is therefore important to review literature on Arabic communication in pan-Arab media in order to understand how pan-Arab programs addressed the diversity of all their participants and audience from across the Arab world. The following section treats these points. For a review of Arabic cross-country communication outside the media setting, see Attwa (2019) and Soliman (2015).

2.3 Arabic on pan-Arab TV

This section reviews literature on spoken Arabic on pan-Arab TV shows. Although Vivarelli (2014a) mentions an estimate of 100 million viewers across the Arab world of the final episode of the *The Voice* or *ṣaḥla Ṣōṭ* 2014 and approximate 120 million viewers of the finale of *Arab Idol* 2014, studies investigating language use in pan-Arab TV are still scarce in the field of Arabic sociolinguistics. With these amounts of viewership and successes of these shows, pan-Arab TV shows provide a plethora of data where the dynamics of Arabic sociolinguistics can be studied profitably. Observing the dynamics of interactions on these shows has also motivated the present study. Below is a discussion of five relevant earlier studies.

Attwa (2019) provides the first results of the current study. This first study tried to answer the questions: 'In order to have a comprehensible communication in a globalized pan-Arab TV setting, 1. To what extent do Arabs use features of their national dialect? 2. To what extent do Arabs use features of their interlocutor's dialect or MSA?' (p. 4). The analysis looked into the linguistic features accessible to and employed by Arabs in cross-country communication, relating the indexicalities of these features to identity and ideology. The study also presents the first results on the use of NDs features, the interlocutors' dialects, and SA.

Based on her findings, Attwa (2019) agrees with Soliman (2015) that, predominantly, Arabs use distinctive features of their own dialects during inter-dialectal communication. Their use of SA features or the interlocutor's dialect features is to serve functions such as humor or to show amicable and welcoming attitudes to the interlocutors. They do not mostly use features of the interlocutor's dialect or SA to have a comprehensible successful communication. Attwa (2019) contends that the polylingualism norm is guiding mutual comprehensibility among and between Arabs. Contrary to previous literature, participants do not explicitly use communication strategies to achieve intelligibility. For instance, they do not resort to SA or the interlocutor's dialect, ask for meaning, nor acquaint their listeners with meanings.

However, the study suggests that these strategies are happening backstage, but not on screen. In pan-Arab TV shows, Arabs intentionally use distinctive features of their own dialect as a clear statement of both, their Arab belonging and national identity. Asking for clarity or negotiation of meaning might have undermined the idea of pan-Arabism and consequently would distract the audience and participants away from the

show. The media agency, MBC in this case, encourages ND use. The main two presenters of the live shows mostly maintain their dialects while introducing the show and addressing the judges. Considering this in light of the teleprompters provided, this practice suggests that the teleprompters are actually written in two different dialects; the Egyptian and the Lebanese.

On achieving comprehensibility, the study suggests that the shared common repertoire of the diverse features of all the dialects and SA among the media, judges, and contestants plays an important role. In addition to this, the topic of discussion is only one: singing. This facilitates comprehension. The analysis also suggests that levelling is the strategy that the participants use. The study finds that 'overall in the show, linguistic differences are reduced in favor of what seems like a sense of celebration of Arabic and Arab diversity. Arabism embraces the show while participants express their Arabness through their national dialect and feeling of belonging to their Arab country' (Attwa, 2019, p. 13). She differentiates between Arabism and Arabness. According to Attwa, Arabism is an ideology. She cites the definition of the entry 'Pan-Arabism (Ideology)' from *Encyclopedia Britannica*:

Nationalist notion of cultural and political unity among Arab countries. Its origins lie in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when increased literacy led to a cultural and literary renaissance among Arabs of the Middle East. This contributed to political agitation and led to the independence of most Arab states from the Ottoman Empire (1918) and from the European powers (by the mid-20th century). (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, n.d., as cited in Attwa, 2019, p. 3)

She based herself on Nydell (2012) to describe the term Arabness:

In order to describe *what* and *how* [emphasis in original] Arabs are, she [Nydell] covers aspects such as beliefs and values, friends and strangers, emotion and logic, personal issues, men and women, social formalities and etiquette, the role of the family, religion and society, Islamism, similarities and differences between Arab countries, and the Arabic language. (Attwa, 2019, p. 3).

The show presents all the distinctive linguistic features as belonging to only one repertoire: the Arabic language. Therefore, each distinctive feature indexes a wider meaning of Arabness. The boundaries of Arabness are widened in this show to embrace Arabs living in foreign countries, speak a dialect of Arabic, and understand other Arabic dialects. Finally, the study concludes:

What embraces the participants is the idea of Arabness and not SA. SA (...) still maintains a role shared by Arabs together; but this shared role is not to facilitate cross-country speaking communication in a globalized pan-Arab setting. The humor that surrounds SA in the examples alludes to Arabism, yes. Common history, common culture, common language and the other ideas that constitute Arabism are still present, cherished I would say. Arabism seems to come as a white sphere surrounding and supporting the whole production and success of this show. But, yet,

in this white sphere there are clear distinctive colors of national identities, all belong in the sphere because they express their Arabness as defined and accepted in this setting. (Attwa, 2019, p. 13)

Di Giovanni (2017) has an interesting study on the translation (dubbing) and retranslation (redubbing) of Disney animation movies to the Egyptian dialect and later to SA. She sheds light on the ideology of retranslation to SA as a pan-Arab code used by Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel. She presents examples from *Cinderella I* (1950) and *Cinderella II* (2002), comparing the two translations. By analyzing the editing and omission that were made to the SA translation, she concludes the ideology and values that this linguistic code carries and the values which Al-Jazeera channel is propagating to the younger generations through these shows.

Di Giovanni (2017) argues that the tradition of dubbing Disney movies has long been carried out in Egyptian Arabic, due to Egypt's history and place in pan-Arab cinema and media productions that is called The Hollywood of the East. However, since 2013, Disney has signed large-scale agreements with the pan-Arab Qatari-based satellite channel, Al-Jazeera, to distribute and redub Disney feature movies. Even new Disney movies that are produced since 2012 are to be dubbed into SA through the channel. According to Di Giovanni, these SA children's animations have stirred fierce debates on the appropriateness of this non-colloquial classical code for these children movies:

(...) the move from one spoken variety of Arabic to the written and formal SA actually involves a considerable loss of spontaneity. Presenting the audiovisual texts as new, however, is certainly one of the reasons behind these redubbings. The new generations of Arabic speakers across the Arab world and the many diasporic communities worldwide will grow up with a new version of the Disney universe, filtered through a pan-Arab but essentially formal language and deprived of a number of emotions, which the use of SA for the (re)dubs is required to erase. (Di Giovanni, 2017, pp. 10-11)

The analysis shows that virtually all the comments on translation strategies are related to the SA versions, since the versions done in the Egyptian dialect 'do not contain any significant semantic alterations or any deletion or substitution in relation to "love" and "dance"' (Di Giovanni, 2017, p. 12). The SA versions deleted and altered most references to love and dance. They referred to the search by the prince to find his love, to find his 'future wife'. Mentioning 'love' is rendered to SA by other feelings such as 'happiness' and many times as the impersonal pronoun 'it'. 'Dancing' is not mentioned all together. The SA translation referred to 'dancing' as 'cleverness' or again the impersonate 'it'.

This altered ideology presented to younger Arab generations is seen as a type of hegemony of the 'pan-Arab empire of Al-Jazeera' (Di Giovanni, 2017, p. 15). Di Giovanni prefers to conclude with open questions for her paper to leave the analysis going on the power of the media, on the pan-Arab and the global levels:

This paper has shown how diglossia in the Arab world is being reshaped through (re)translation through the medium of SA. Perhaps more importantly, this paper has

shown how identity formation in the younger generations is also shaped through translation and retranslation. But does this truly mean that linguistic, cultural, and social hegemonies are changing? Do all the facts above prove that the US animation colossus – Disney – is abdicating in the Arab world, leaving space and power to Al Jazeera? Or rather, should we say that hegemonies, if analysed closely through the lens of language use in translation and retranslation, reveal alliances which further enhance media power? (Di Giovanni, 2017, p. 15)

Earlier to Attwa (2019), Schulthies (2015) discussed the meaning of Arabness. Her study investigates corporate media management of linguistic diversity on talent shows on pan-Arab TV for a period of ten years (2003-2013). Schulthies' start-off point is arguing that state regimes favor unity by foregrounding SA, and thus, backgrounding diversity. Corporate media, however, manipulate several strategies that range in the meanings from indexing Mashreqi Arabic as the default media code to a strategy of inclusivity where SA or any other Arabic is enough to be embraced in the meaning of pan-Arabism.

Schulthies (2015) notes a strategy especially pertaining to Maghrebi-Mashreqi ideology (Hachimi, 2013) in the shows of *Star Academy* and *Super Star* (re-produced later as *Arab Idol*). She notes that in the early years of these shows the media hosts used Mashreqi Arabic dialects assuming that everyone will understand them. Contestants from Tunisia or Morocco, for instance, have to accommodate their Maghrebi dialects to the seemingly default Lebanese and Egyptian media Arabic, 'providing what on the surface appeared to be a smooth communicative framework between Lebanese hosts, instructors, and Arab performers in this pan-Arab contest' (p. 65). The show referred to the audience as a collective Arab audience, in a way to foreground unity. However, the tactic employed by Maghrebi contestants and mocking the Arabic of another Moroccan contestant, both reveal some cracks in this media manufactured unity.

As for the scripted text on the screen, Schulthies (2015) argues that the media in *Star Academy* resort to FLs and a simplified SA in the scripted texts on the screen. LBCI resorts to the cosmopolitan indexical values of the Western Star Academy franchise and multilingual Arab ambitions by employing both English and Arabic scripts.

However, she records different linguistic ideologies in the two shows of *The Voice* and *X Factor*. Contestants in these shows are accepted even if they do not master SA or the Mashreqi Arabic. Unlike the previous shows, there was less SA subtitling to accompany the Maghrebi dialects. Similar to Attwa's (2019) results above, Schulthies (2015) regards this a strategy from the producers to widen the scope of Arabness. This is enforced by the use of iconic phrases in different dialects to greet the contestants and by explaining some Mashreqi idiomatic expressions.

Schulthies (2015) then reviews *Arabs Got Talent* and contends that the producers adopt even simpler linguistic strategies than the above shows:

There were no SA subtitles and very little backstory for performers. Program judges sometimes used more SA styles of speaking with contestants, sometimes features of their own national or "local" Arabics, but most often drew on a mix of "local" phonological or iconic phrase with a standard simplified media Arabic. There were

no Maghrebi or non-Arab judges or hosts, but the Maghrebi Arabics of performers, including street registers, were not glossed through on-screen subtitles. While there continued to be some Mashreqi convergence, little effort was made to translate linguistic differences for audience members. Even mixed forms of Arabic and English or French were assumed to be interpretable by audiences. There were many instances of national iconic praise terms and intensifiers in evaluation, use of simplified SA, rephrasing when there seemed to be a comprehension lag by contestants, and simultaneous translation from mixed and foreign languages into simplified Arabic by program judges and hosts. Thus the communicative tactics of contestants and judges were situationally salient as was the case in the other programs as well. However, the program producer strategies in *Arabs Got Talent* did not involve foregrounding SA or Mashreqi Arabic as default media Arabic. (Schulthies, 2015, p. 69)

Furthermore, Schulthies (2015) argues that *Arabs Got Talent* expands the scope of contestants to non-Arabs. She sees the participation of an American contestant who does not speak or understand Arabic, but being able to sing classical Arabic songs and music, as a strategy from the producers to foreground Arabic music as an expanding global music category that can embrace non-Arabs.

Hachimi (2013) discusses The Maghrebi-Mashreqi Language Ideology on pan-Arab TV talent shows. She argues that the Mashreqi dialects, most importantly the Egyptian and Lebanese, have long dominated the media scene in Morocco. Due to other historical factors such as being the origin place of the Islamic Empire and Arabic language, the originate of the Arab renaissance discourse, and pan-Arabism, Mashreqi Arabic dialects claim superiority to Maghrebi dialects. This ideology of contestation is well seen on the screen of pan-Arab talent shows where a number of contestants from across the Arab countries compete. Hachimi argues that this setting 'of pan-Arab reality TV impose[s] conflicting relational and interactional demands, particularly on North African contestants. On the one hand, they must display "loyalty" to their national variety to appeal to their national audience. At the same time, the dominant Maghreb-Mashreq language ideology insists on the "unintelligibility" of their varieties; to appeal to a pan-Arab audience they feel compelled to accommodate Mashreqi speakers' (pp. 277-278).

In the first part of the study, Hachimi (2013) looks into a YouTube video clip from the show *Star Academy*. She argues that the dynamics and linguistics contestation in these shows reflect the valorization of Mashreqi versus Maghrebi Arabics in terms of 'Arabness' and 'authenticity'. Maghrebi Arabic is seen as less Arab and inauthentic through mocking of the dialect and expressing lack of understanding by Mashreqi speakers, while at the same time the communicative burden of accommodation falls on the shoulders of Maghrebi speakers.

The second part of the study looks into the comments made by YouTube viewers to the video. The comments are in English, French, SA, and different Arabic varieties, where the Arabic comments are written in both Arabic and Latin scripts. The analysis shows that comments from the Mashreqi audience echo the stance in the video by both

mocking the Maghrebi dialects for their sounds, incomprehensibility, and ‘unauthentic’ Arabic language, even rendering Maghrebi speakers as non-Arabs sometimes. It is interesting that Hachimi (2013) reports that some self-identified Moroccans align with these comments and stance. Nonetheless, other Maghrebis comment in defense labelling Mashreqi speakers as being lazy and ignorant for not exerting enough effort to understand the Maghrebi dialects.

Hachimi (2013) also reports another dimension of contestation between Mashreqi-Mashreqi dialects. Some comments from nationals of the Gulf region take the stance that sometimes their dialect is also unintelligible to other nationals; even some Saudis do not understand the Bedouin dialects in Saudi Arabia. This comment is received with shame and blame from another Saudi for the inability to understand a ‘true’ Saudi Arabic. Hachimi sees these instances ‘(...) akin to others that involved tensions among co-nationals, complicate any claims to shared national language ideologies in the Arabic-speaking world. This demonstrates the multiplicity of language ideologies more generally and that not all members of a particular group have the same stake in a dominant ideology’ (p. 287).

Kraidy (2006), expert in the field of media and communication studies, explores reality shows and geopolitics in the Arab world. Programs such as *Super Star*, *Star Academy*, and *Al Raiʿs* are said to set a platform of democracy in the Arab world since they depend on the votes of their viewers to their favorite contestant from Morocco to Iraq. Kraidy conducted fieldwork, text analysis, and interviews in order to explore the political, economic, and socio-cultural factors in these TV reality shows investigating their roles in the pan-Arab public sphere and discourse. Kraidy’s observations on these connections and contentions are set within these dimensions: inter-Arab rivalries, business and religion, gender relations, and public contention.

Although national TV channels and newspapers are still popular in every country of the Arab world, Kraidy (2006) notes that the Arab media industry is developing towards regionalization. He even argues that regionalization has become an established business and marketing strategies. He says:

(...) regional satellite television channels such as Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, LBC and MBC, and regional newspapers such as Al Hayat, Asharq Al Awsat and Al Quds Al Arabi, all three London-based, have a strong following and usually set the terms and rhythm of Pan-Arab public discourse (...) Arab satellite television tends to produce programs that appeal at once to city dwellers in Baghdad and Casablanca and to rural viewers in the Egyptian *saʿid* [upper Egypt] and the Lebanese *jurd* [a village in northern Lebanon], although it is mostly focused on urban middle-class viewers that appeal to advertisers. Additional trends underscoring Arab satellite television’s trans-regional mode of address include (1) the development of what is now known as “white Arabic,” a media compatible, simplified version of Standard Modern Arabic that is becoming a lingua franca for regional public discourse, (2) the advent of stars with regional appeal (whether they are journalists, program hosts, singers, or to a lesser

extent, actors) and (3) the standardization of production practices in Beirut, Cairo and Dubai. (Kraidy, 2006, p. 4)

The formats of these programs are imported from the Western world bringing to the Arab audience 'hybrid' (Kraidy, 2006) shows that combine a Western culture and a local content. From the interviews conducted by Kraidy, he finds that these hybrid programs facilitate media productions to the producers since it is easier to adapt a universal format to the Arab taste than to make an original format. Moreover, this hybrid culture produces unexpected reactions and controversial debates across the Arab world.

Kraidy (2006) argues furthermore that the national passion that these programs weaken the claim that satellite channels are strengthening pan-Arab unity (p. 6). The rivalry during the semi-finals of *Super Star* (broadcast on Future Television) was fueled by the background of the current political tensions between the nations of the three semi-finalists: Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. Demonstrations stormed across Beirut when the Lebanese contestant was eliminated from the competition. Lebanese viewers accused Syria to stand behind this elimination since the Syrian army was controlling affairs in Lebanon during this time in 2003. Likewise, Jordanians felt a patriotic duty to vote for their finalist against Syria because of the tension between Syria and Jordan at the same time. Big mobile and communication corporations made use of the political tension to mobilize the patriotic feeling of the audience in order to increase the votes on the show.

In addition to this, *Super star* was condemned by some conservative religious groups as a promotion of globalization culture and Americanization of Islamic values. Other fighter groups, such as the Islamist Hamas, reproached the Palestinians for supporting the Palestinian contestant in the round of 2004 under the argument that the nation is in need of patriotic heroes and not of 'singers, corruption mongers, and advocates of immorality' (as cited in Kraidy, 2006, p. 6). However, Kraidy thinks that the idea that Islam dominates the socio-cultural and political life of the Arab world is a mere cliché. He points out the counter debates that work against these programs including factors other than religious determinism. He argues that there is even an emerging new-liberal discourse that plays an important role in the Arab public sphere.

Business interests contest religious argument in the Gulf countries in particular. The shutting down of the program *Al Ra?is* came as a rejection of a scene of kissing in the program. Islamist leaders claimed that this is against Islamic teaching, still, the Bahraini parliament objections came on the basis that this program does not reflect reality in the Arab society. Defendants of the programs, representing what Kraidy (2006) calls the neo-liberal trend, argue that the contract of the program would help boost the image of Bahrain as a hub of international investment. The cancellation of the contract would harm the national reputation of the country. Kraidy argues that this marks a change in the view of the 'national reputation' as being connected to investments – not to the norm in the Arab society that reputation is usually connected with sexual and political content. Kraidy also notes the absence of religious reasons in the statement made by MBC Group, broadcasting the show, announcing the termination of the contract. The

statement is based more on the idea of preserving Arab family values and traditions, and not on Islamic ones.

The shows mentioned stir very heated controversies on issues pertaining to modernity and tradition, social change and cultural identity, the status of women and youth, and electoral processes. The interconnections and contentions between the political, social, religious, and cultural domains are discussed and debated on the transnational, pan-Arab, and national levels. These debates and discussions of 'putative social values' (Kraidy, 2006, p. 12) aim at either changing or maintaining the status quo. Kraidy thinks these shows provide a platform to reflect on patriotism, Islamic values against business interests, women's rights and status. He argues that:

Because of its resounding success with Arab audiences, reality television is a magnet for contentious politics, drawing contenders with conflicting ideologies and asymmetrical symbolic resources, who use the introduction of reality television and the debate surrounding it in order to advance their agendas by attempting to redraw the boundaries of Arab public discourse. (Kraidy, 2006, p. 12)

For Kraidy (2006), 'reality television is the harbinger of an alternative future' (p. 12). They provide youth the opportunity to vote and choose their favorite nominee; an opportunity that they are deprived from in real life where their voices are not heard or even expressed. These shows are rather an alternative future, or one may add, an alternative reality. The music video of *Star Academy* highlights this idea:

(...) the video features the Star Academy contestants marching through streets, waving the flags of their respective countries: The Lebanese flag with the cedar between two red bands, the Tunisian with its white crescent and star on red background, the Saudi with its white sword and Islamic script on green background. The video clearly connotes a youth political protest march, brandishing their fists, waving flags, expressing discontent with their situation and invoking an alternative reality dominated by truth, warmth and light. (...) Had Star Academy not achieved enormous popularity, its content would not have articulated Arab social, political and economic reality. Its huge following, however, made it profoundly political. (Kraidy, 2006, pp. 12-13)

This review of Arabic use on pan-Arab TV reveals multiple layers of contesting identities and ideologies. In order to succeed, the pan-Arab entertainment industry seems to maneuver its way along several paths. Producers may reconstruct the definition of an Arab in order to embrace more audience (as seen in Attwa, 2019, and Schulthies, 2015). They may manipulate the Mashreqi-Maghrebi ideologies (as seen in Hachimi, 2013, and Schulthies, 2015). The shows may also capitalize on the indexicalities of MSA against the meanings associated with the most commonly media used dialect, the Egyptian dialect (as seen in Di Giovanni, 2017). Another path is to propagate a regional identity that is also supported by a form of white Arabic and the creation of all-Arab stars (as seen in Kraidy, 2006).

The present review reveals two powers at play in the pan-Arab media. First, media tries to propagate uniformity and unity, diminishing regional and national differences. In so doing, pan-Arab media constructs a discourse that addresses the shared features among Arab audiences. Second, this propagation is in many times counter-translated into a national pride of rivalry. This is reflected in the use of NDs, the mockery of Maghrebi dialects, and the political debates that surround these shows.

Nevertheless, the presented studies do not reveal much about the shared meanings and values upon which pan-Arab communication is carried out. Rampton (2018) argues that for an intelligible communication to happen, there must be a pre-set knowledge that is shared between speakers and interlocutors. Amid the linguistic diversity and multiple national identities presented in Section 2.1 and the propagation of a unified Arabic discourse, multiple questions arise: How could this communication be successful? Which national identity is fronted? What are the accessible linguistic resources and features that Arabs draw on during this complex communication? What are the strategies they employ? How do the participants on these shows conform to the pan-Arab identity and at the same time stress their national one? With adapted Western franchise shows, could there be other identities that are projected on the screen other than the pan-Arab and the national? Could there be a reconstruction of the Arab identity as a whole?

The above reviews and all these questions have inspired the pursuit of the current study. The study, therefore, aims to fill some of these research gaps by, first, exploring the linguistic features and resources accessible to Arabs in their cross-country communication. Second, the study looks deeply into the communication strategies employed. In so doing, the shared meanings, values, and resources that enable a successful communication among Arabs from different countries are revealed and understood. Third, by analyzing language choice and use, the study aims to understand the layers of identities projected on pan-Arab media that is adapted from the West.

In order to set the theoretical framework of the study (presented in Chapter 3), it is finally important to look at the field of Arabic sociolinguistics. The following section introduces a critical evaluation of the field for the purpose of helping the present study avoid misinterpretation of the data and explain the choice of the theoretical concepts chosen.

2.4 Critical Arabic sociolinguistics

In light of the sociolinguistic situation across the Arab world and on media presented in the above sections of this chapter, it is important to discuss the approaches used to study this situation. This section presents a critical bird's-eye view of the recent situation of the field of Arabic sociolinguistics. The last chapter of the second edition of *Arabic Sociolinguistics* (Bassiouney, 2020) guides this critical review. The chapter is titled 'A critical approach to Arabic sociolinguistics'. It states the rationale of a need of a change

in the approach adopted by researchers to examine the field of Arabic sociolinguistics. Bassiouney touches upon the main points of contention to which the current study aims to contribute some answers guided by the framework set in Bassiouney's chapter. The current study aims to contribute to the 'new wave' of Arabic sociolinguistics studies.

Bassiouney (2020) starts by discussing the approach of Critical Sociolinguistics (CSL). This approach re-evaluates 'our ideas about both the role of language in society and the tools for studying it (p. 309). In agreement with Blommaert (2010), the approach challenges previous given notions about language as a product of a specific environment and background. Bassiouney then challenges five notions in relation to Arabic sociolinguistics. First, the assumption that language and society act in a binary relation. Second, the idea of the linguist as a neutral researcher. Third, the static description of the idea of a 'native speaker'. Fourth, the need to address the idea of power and inequality in any sociolinguistic research; Arabic included. Fifth, acknowledging the dominance of the Western perspective and publication of the field of sociolinguistics. There is a need to study sociolinguistics globally, without the influence of Anglo-American settings. The following review presents these five notions. However, the subheadings regroup Bassiouney's views in order to set a basis for the guiding theories of the study mentioned in the following chapter. Bassiouney's views are discussed under the following five subsections.

2.4.1 High and low varieties

As mentioned in Section 2.1, Arabic is a diglossic language. This is the first issue that Bassiouney (2020) discusses along with the binary relation between SA and a dialect. Bassiouney cites García, Nelson, and Spotti (2016, p. 3) in their argument that a standard language is the result of a dominant cultural language ideology in a certain community, including the ideology of the researchers themselves. The idea of a standard language triggers the thinking of binary relationships while looking at the language as a resource in the society. Bassiouney argues that humans categorize language, as they tend to categorize any other resource in the society: measurements, weights, and systems. Therefore, language is seen, for example, in terms of men versus women, standard versus dialect, correct versus corrupt, and so on. As a result, the complete bigger picture of the whole sociolinguistic situation is not captured since linguists tend to look at language in a unified, static, imagined, autonomous entities functioning in binary relationships.

The idea of a standard language is challenged since the process of standardization is an ideology and so it is a set of ideas and norms in the mind – to which usage may totally conform or not (Bassiouney, 2020, citing Milroy & Milroy, 2012). Likewise, in Arabic, the term standard usually refers to the *Fusha* variant of the language and to the actual normal code of a community. Moreover, citing Silverstein (2016, p. 57), Bassiouney presents the challenge to focus only on studying speech with respect to how different it is from the standard; using minimal pairs, readings, and recordings to examine speakers' anxiety towards the use of a pre-set prestige register or which Silverstein calls

‘ideologically driven stratification’ (p. 312). Instead of focusing only on speech variation, sociolinguists should study how speakers position themselves in relation to the standard (*Fusha*) in a wider sociolinguistic context.

According to Bassiouney (2020), there has been an early implied rejection of the binary fixed approach of the term diglossia as proposed by Ferguson (1959). This implied rejection came in the works of Badawi (1973), Blanc (1960), and Meiseles (1980), suggesting the idea of a continuum between the H and L varieties, as suggested in Ferguson’s seminal article. Researchers faced a challenge to determine the boundaries between the standard (H) and the dialect (L). Moreover, the standard in the context of Arabic sociolinguistics refers to an idealized form of the language that is used in formal settings and not the prestigious spoken variety. Researchers when faced by data drawn from live conversations or the media had to recognize the existence of a grey area between the standard and the colloquial. This was clear from the above sections of this chapter as well as the works of Bassiouney (2006), Boussofara-Omar (2003), and Mejdell (2006), trying to investigate CS between SA and the colloquial. Results from these studies found that the concept of one dominant matrix code that controls bilingual utterances is not applicable to the Arabic language since so many utterances could not be categorized as belonging to one code or the other.

2.4.2 Social meanings of Arabic varieties

As for the social meanings and values of each of the H and L codes, sociolinguists should investigate them within the context where the code is produced. Indexes such as identity, power, legitimacy, and ignorance are not fixed or permanently attached to a specific Arabic variety. This was already made clear with the review in Section 2.1 above. Moreover, the SA code can be used to gain legitimacy as was the case with President Mubarak’s speeches during the Egyptian revolution of 2011 (Bassiouney, 2020). Meanwhile, in a comedy movie depicting a conservative Arabic language teacher, SA was a code that indicates ignorance and inferiority versus the codes of FLs that signals power and higher social class.

Dealing with SA as both the H and the prestigious variety has led to some misinterpretation of Arabic sociolinguistic research (Ibrahim, 1986, p. 115, as cited in Bassiouney, 2020). Bassiouney argues that this problem is partly due to the application of western style research onto the Arabic setting. While it can be easier to assume a standardized western variety as equally the one that enjoys the most prestige, the case is different in the Arab world. As she shows in her review, a dialect acquires a standard status because of the power that the people who speak it enjoy. In her study on the dialects of Baghdad, Abu-Haidar (1991) observes that the neutral prestigious standard is Muslim Baghdadi, even to Christians. Cairene Arabic is the prestigious dialect that indexes neutrality, modernity, and urbanization (Bassiouney, 2017). The conclusion which Miller (2012) reaches in her question of which Moroccan dialect should be used on TV dubbed shows is important. She concluded ‘there is neither a clear standard/

prestigious Moroccan Arabic nor a clear consensus of which dialect deserves this title' (Bassiouney, 2020, p. 319).

2.4.3 Independent variables

Another concept that is challenged by CLS in Bassiouney's (2020) chapter is the correlation of independent variables to linguistic variation. Bassiouney argues that this is another concept that is affected by the researcher's subjective social constructs. Variables such as religion and gender, for instance, have been found to be non-static nor fixed and they can therefore not be studied equally. She cites Mesthrie, Swan, Deumert, and Leap (2009) arguing that variables such as gender, religion, and ethnicity are created by western linguists. Most of the studies that examined these variables in the Arab world were mostly carried out by outsider linguists who do not belong to the area under investigation (Bassiouney, 2020). On the variable of religion for instance, she cites Germanos and Miller (2015) saying:

(...) researchers' evaluation of the linguistic situation in the Arab world is to some extent subjective and dependent on the orientations of the researcher. They add that the synchronic grammatical descriptions of researchers tend to emphasise differences and autonomy between communities, by imposing upon speakers labels such as 'Christian Arabic of Baghdad': 'such labels may be misleading in the sense that they implicitly postulate that a given social group (here a religion group) is necessarily characterised by a specific variety or language' (...). These researchers either ignore similarities between what they label a dialect associated with a specific religious group (Jewish Moroccan Arabic, for example) and other dialects in the region. They posit that 'this why dialectal studies have often been accused of developing an essentialist approach and of rigidifying social and linguistic boundaries' (...). (Bassiouney, 2020, p. 322)

Variationists studying the Arab world are criticized of 'hand-picking' certain variables assuming they provide enough evidence for linguistic variation in the Arab world. They ignore the speakers' perception on the social values and meanings of the variables and the context of interaction, while only governed by their social, political, and historical environments (Bassiouney, 2020, p. 322).

At the other side of the coin, Bassiouney (2020) doubts the idea of a native speaker as a static and absolute category. Similar to looking at the linguistic communities as static and autonomous, the concept of a native speaker equally categorizes a specific group as the only empowered to legitimize their code. Bassiouney argues that this idea is again a product of Western ideologies where the ideas of monolingual nation-states were encouraged, especially during the French revolution. Moreover, the missionaries to Africa and Asia propagated the idea of unity in language as a symbol of the unity of the nation to which they travelled. In so doing, the multilingual and fluid nature of these communities was disregarded. The definition of a native speaker appears more inaccurate in the current situation, especially with regard to the findings of Attwa (2019)

and Schulthies (2015) presented above. Media is widening the idea of an Arab in order to include more audience from the diaspora communities for instance. This indeed requires a revisit of the concept of a native speaker who is empowered to legitimize a correct standard language.

Bassiouney (2020) argues that the concept of a native speaker gets more complicated in the so-called diglossic situation of the Arabic language, since SA is not the native language of any community. Within the diversity situation presented earlier in this chapter, the question arises as of which variety is to be considered the native language. More questions arise on the evaluation of CS and utterances. Bassiouney, hence, argues that studying Arabic within the framework of translanguaging may permit a fluid and multi-dimensional situation since in the Arab world there might be competition not only between SA and dialects, but equally among dialects as shown in the previous section of this chapter. This concept again is in agreement with Blommaert (2010) as will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

Other factors can play a role in legitimizing a native speaker/variety. Bassiouney (2020) refers to Schulthies (2015) where she concludes that media can play a role in authenticating a dialect not previously well known in the Arab world, such as Tunisian or Emirati. Race and ideology can also affect the legitimization of a native speaker. In this regard, she refers to the study conducted by Chun and Walters (2011) on the performer Chung. Chung is of Korean and Vietnamese origin but was born and raised in the Arab world. Even though he feels at home in the Arab world more than other Arabs who are of Arab descent but who never lived in the Arab world, he was not granted the status of a legitimate Arabic speaker because he simply does not look Arab.

Bassiouney (2020) argues that the drawback of the concept of a native speaker is its dependency on the idea of uniformity. Native speakers are assumed to look the same, talk the same way, practice the same habits, and, sometimes, hold the same political views. This is reflected in the practice of media to propagate a unified and homogenized persona as seen above in Holes (2011). However, communities are more complex and multi-layered. Bassiouney calls for a rethinking of 'our terms and methods and always regard language as the weft and warp of struggles over resources and power, and part of the inequality surrounding them' (p. 239). She refers to Blommaert's (2013) ideas on superdiversity and studying the linguistic landscape in multilingual societies like Qatar in the Gulf. New linguistic situations affected by migration and diverse cultural backgrounds cannot be studied or defined in conventional terms as will be discussed further in Chapter 3 of this study.

2.4.4 The social-construction approach

In today's world, communication has become a multi-model and people's positions are multi-dimensional. The encounters of everyday life happen among unequals, not equals. This can be seen in the use of pronouns, names, terms of address, and language. Bassiouney (2020) discusses the social-construction approach where language is seen as a resource. Echoing Blommaert (2010), she posits that linguistic resources, like other

social resources, are not equally distributed. They reflect social order, power ideologies and relations, inequalities, historical events, and, above all, the struggle over other social resources. Along the process, these linguistic resources acquire semiotic meanings and values. At the end of the day, it is the speaker and the interlocutor's perception of these values what counts in communication. This is what constructs stereotypes. It is, therefore, the role of CLS 'to understand and analyze how language constructs and "sustains" inequality in different societies and across different nations and states' (Bassiouney, 2020, p. 331). Study of language as a social practice makes linguists view language as unpredictable and in constant change. It carries the products of a work that is of 'deliberate human intervention and manipulation of social context' (Makoni, 2017, as cited in Bassiouney, 2020, p. 332). CLS is concerned with how linguistic forms acquire indexes and how speakers can associate and 'racialize' identities.

Bassiouney (2020) then, following Heller, Pietikäinen, and Pujolar (2018), raised three questions (or rather calls) that pertain to the study of Arabic language and ideology. She elaborates on Heller et al., saying:

Heller et al. are aware of the changing time we live in, in which inequality is emphasised and promoted and in which the far right, with its exclusionary racial discourse, is gaining leverage in so many parts of the world. However, this is also a time of awakening in the field of sociolinguistics. For a decade or more, sociolinguists have been reflecting on their field and on themselves and they are realising they are just a product of a cultural construct, but they have also come to realise that their role is not in fact to understand and interpret the relation between society and language in western, mainly Anglo-European terms, but rather to reflect on the inequalities around them and the power that some groups have over others, as well as the struggles in which language is not just a tool but a resource. (Bassiouney, 2020, pp. 332-333)

Therefore, first, she raises a call to study Arabic language while considering discourses of power and hegemony, fear and mistrust, and historical and political frameworks. She sent this call in reference to the claim by YouTuber Adam Saleh who was kicked off a Delta flight because he spoke Arabic. The second call is for the relation between language and nationalism. The call refers to the situation of Arabic in Israel where Arabic does not enjoy the same status as Hebrew. There is an attempt to remove Arabic as a national language in Israel and this raises a question on the relation between bilingualism and nationalism/binationalism, and therefore, the question whether the Arab citizens of Israel are seen as equal. The last call is to the study of Arabic with regard to the relation between language and the politics of inclusivity of a group who sees itself as discriminated against. This call came in reference to the Moroccan linguistic space where Tamazight was added as an official language along with Arabic after the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt in 2010-2011.

To conclude, Bassiouney (2020) maintains that the value of a linguistic form is based on the access it provides to political, economic, and social power. She agrees with Fairclough (2009) that discourse helps in the 'construction' of ideologies to preserve a

social status quo. 'Public discourse, especially in the media, not only reiterates shared belief systems and ideologies, but also constructs and controls access to them' (Bassiouney, 2020, p. 337).

2.4.5 The sociolinguist as a constructivist

In the last sections of Bassiouney's (2020) chapter, she addresses the way sociolinguists should approach their research. Researchers, since they themselves are part of a cultural and social system, may approach the data while influenced by their own perceptions and subjective interpretations. The role of sociolinguists, as constructivists, is rather to understand how society works and how people perceive their languages, dialects, registers, styles, and meanings. In order to detach themselves from their own perceptions and become what she calls 'the neutral linguist' (p. 337), researchers should critically review their tools, the results, and the process of their research.

In addition to embracing people's stories and rituals with regard to language before scientifically studying them, Bassiouney (2020) calls on linguists to acknowledge their own cultural backgrounds. She also calls on researchers to discuss their research with their peers. This will help researchers be aware of the context, inequalities, and their own biases while collecting their data.

The last point that Bassiouney (2020) highlights in a separate section after mentioning it before along the lines of her chapter, is the hegemony of western, mostly Anglo-American, linguistic frameworks to the study of other language, Arabic in our case. Since most of the knowledge was produced in the West, concepts like multilingualism and bilingualism have been theorized in the West and not the global south:

Access and resources are two key words in the construction approach to language; they were and still are dominant by the west. The west uses English, a powerful resource in academic publishing, and it controls access to prominent journals of the field. Anglo-American scholars, and western scholars more generally, are mostly the editors and reviewers of the most sociolinguistics journals. (Bassiouney, 2020, p. 340)

She cites Smakman (2015) that the concept of a standard language was created in Europe. The political developments caused the development of concepts like the nation-state and therefore a prestige variety. Applying the same concept to different communities led to misinterpretation of the data and a misrepresentation of the sociolinguistic situation, even in Italy with its diverse dialects and the US with the relationship between language and ethnicity. Smakman (2015, as cited in Bassiouney, 2020) also draws the attention to the network of scholars who dominate the field. The scholars in this formed network, mostly native English speakers, write most of the sociolinguistic introductions, review each other's work, and write back covers. Bassiouney sees Smakman's article as a 'wake-up call, which the statistics in it give to sociolinguists. Smakman's article makes one realize how much change is needed, how

lacking research is and how undiversified researchers' perspectives are' (Bassiouney, 2020, p. 342).

Earlier studies presented in this chapter validate Bassiouney's (2020) critical review of the field of Arabic sociolinguistics. The multilayer identities and linguistic indexicalities that exist across the Arab world indeed cannot be studied within a binary approach of simply a standard variety versus a dialect. Media is the space where real language dynamics appear to shatter previous approaches of Arabic inter-dialectal communication. By widening their definition of an Arab and including Arabs in the diaspora, the concept of a native speaker as discussed by Bassiouney indeed does not hold any more as a reference point to evaluate language choice. Likewise, looking at the situation through the lens of a single predetermined stereotypical variable can equally lead to subjective or lacking interpretation of the data.

Studying linguistic forms and features that give access to understand power hegemony and distribution of resources in a multi-layered globalized communication is the goal of this study. As mentioned, more Arabic sociolinguistic studies are needed within the approach of translanguaging.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter starts with introducing the complex nature of the sociolinguistic situation on the level of each of the major dialectal regions of the Arab world. The review reveals different dynamics of power, identity, and history that affect the linguistic choices of the people of selected Arabic countries. Taking this complex situation to the media in order to enable a cross-country communication makes the picture even more complicated, as a mosaic. Media, as reviewed in this chapter, deploy certain strategies in order to appeal to both the pan-Arab and national identities. However, the media as well is the platform to see national rivalry between countries reflected and capitalized upon through linguistic use. The chapter ends with a critical look at the field of Arabic sociolinguistics in order to prevent the current study falling into similar flaws and explain the theoretical concepts discussed in the following chapter.

The literature presented in this chapter inspired the current study to try to fill in some of the gaps and contribute to the new wave of the Arabic sociolinguistics. By analyzing the linguistic features, strategies, and identity indexicalities the study aims to understand the shared accessible resources and knowledge that enable an intelligible successful cross-country communication on a pan-Arab TV show. The following chapter discusses the theoretical concepts that guide the analysis of the study.

Theoretical perspectives

Furthermore, and central to the argument in this book, every nuance of social relations and practices within, among, and beyond those [social] groups is material for the construction of linguistic identities.

(Eckert, 2000, p. 24)

Chapter 2 ended with a critical review of the field of Arabic sociolinguistics. To reiterate one of the points that is relevant to this chapter, Bassiouney (2020) urges the need to shift the approach by which Arabic sociolinguistics is studied. A shift to a wider approach that accounts for the complex linguistic repertoires of Arabic speakers that encompass the scope of diversity presented in Chapter 2.

The quote at the beginning of this chapter by Eckert (2000) presents the underlying principle of the theoretical framework of the current study. Eckert wrote these lines in her outline of the concept of community of practice (CofP). Although the framework of CofP is applied in only one part of this study as discussed below, I find the framework well connecting the different theoretical perspectives applied in the study. Language is seen as a social practice, where language users choose from a shared repertoire to construct meanings and identities. Therefore, meanings and identities are not fixed or static, rather they evolve and are shaped by the time and place of the communicative event.

The present data-driven study investigates practices, repertoires, and constructed meanings and identities among Arabs in a pan-Arab media show. The investigation is carried out from three inter-related sequential dimensions. First, the study analyses the linguistic features and resources that Arabs access and employ during their cross-country communication. Second, the study analyses the communication strategies used by the participants in order to have an intelligible communication. Revealing both the linguistic resources and communications strategies enables an understanding of the shared knowledge, meanings, and values that are the basis of inter-dialectal communication in the Arab world. Third, the study investigates the identity indexicalities that are projected during this multi-layer communication among Arabs.

This three-dimensional investigation aims to fill a gap in inter-dialectal literature on Arabic sociolinguistics. Based on the review presented in Chapter 2, it is clear that the field is in need of more studies that encompass the immense diversity of the Arab world, on both the local and globalized levels. By looking at the local community studied in this study (a TV talent show) the analysis aims to understand the dynamics of linguistic features and identity indexicalities in relation to the larger globalized sociolinguistic

landscape of the Arab world. The present study draws from and contributes to the literature of sociolinguistics of globalization, interactional sociolinguistics, and linguistic ethnography.

This chapter introduces the theoretical concepts that inspired the study and to which the analysis resorts to in order to interpret the data and understand the above three dimensions of the study. The concepts are introduced in order of each of these three dimensions for clarity. For the first dimension and drawing from literature on superdiversity and sociolinguistics of globalization, Section 3.1 discusses the theoretical rationale of choosing the feature – and not a variety or language – as the unit of analysis. The section discusses how features and repertoires reveal the biographical indexes of individuals during a cross-country communication.

For the second dimension, the analysis draws from interactional linguistics. In particular, concepts of communications strategies, with a focus on crossing and receptive multilingualism (RM) are introduced.

Then, following the constructive approach of the study, the third dimension that studies the identity indexes resorts to the concept of CofP and its fruitfulness to reveal the local dynamics of constructing social meanings and identities and the ties this has with the larger sociolinguistic context.

Having the frameworks set as such according to the three dimensions of the study, it is important to note that these theoretical perspectives are not particularly designated to each dimension. The frameworks are well-integrated. The sociolinguistics of globalization is not just limited to the first dimension, but also informs the interactional perspective of the second dimension, and the identity construction perspective of the third dimension. Similarly, the identity perspective builds on the interactional perspective that studies this CofP paying attention to the impacts of globalization.

3.1 Investigating linguistic features and resources

3.1.1 Why is the ‘feature’ the unit of analysis?

The search for linguistic features and resources in the data is inspired by the ideas of Jørgensen (2008) on what he calls languaging. In a context similar to the one presented among Arabs on pan-Arab media where complex multi-modal communication is taking place, Jørgensen argues: ‘Language users employ whatever linguistic features are at their disposal with the intention of achieving their communicative aim’ (p. 169). According to Jørgensen (2008) and Møller and Jørgensen (2009), the act of languaging means that users (‘languagers’) rationally and intentionally choose from a number of linguistic features which they have access to, or which belong to them, in order to achieve their communicative aim.

This constructive approach, similar to what Bassiouney (2020) calls for, transcends clear divisions between languages. The approach denounces the traditional view of human languages as subject to separation and packaging in an isolated set of fixed and

static features. There is an emphasis on the concept of human language, where boundaries between languages cannot be defined and dealt with as isolated islands. The researchers mentioned disagree with the idea that borrowing or CS are usually marked as a deviation from a normal linguistic behavior. It is rather the human norm to move through features of languages available to them in order to express the intended meanings, governed by specific social circumstances. In this sense, language can serve its purpose as a tool for human beings to ‘transfer ideas over large distances in space and time’ (Jørgensen, 2008, p. 161).

However, Blommaert and Backus (2011) do not deny the association of features with particular ‘languages’. The analysis on the level of features must describe ‘if and how the features are associated with one or more “languages”’ (p. 25). It is these associations that reflect meanings, values, attitudes, and, above all, norms. According to Jørgensen, Karrebæk, Madsen, and Møller (2011), speakers who have access to a wide range of superdiverse resources are not deploying these resources haphazardly, rather they are aware of the norms and carefully observe or contest them during their linguistic interaction.

Jørgensen et al. (2011) refer to Blommaert and Backus’ concept of ‘word, combination or pattern’ (p. 30) while explaining features in terms of units and regularities:

Units are words, expressions, sounds, even phonetic characteristics such as rounding. Regularities are traditionally called “rules”, but they are not rules in the legal sense, or even the normative sense. They are regularities of how units are combined into larger units in processes through which the larger units become associated with meanings. (Jørgensen et al., 2011, p. 30)

Speakers associate features directly with values such as ‘vulgar’, ‘ugly’, ‘posh’, ‘poetic’, ‘primitive’, or ‘sophisticated’ (Jørgensen et al., 2011, p. 31). However, features are indirectly related to values when these values are ascribed to the ‘languages’ or ‘varieties’ these features are associated to. For example, some varieties (which themselves are composed of a set of features) are ascribed to ‘superficial teenage girls’, ‘male homosexuality’, or ‘street language’. And values can as well be stereotypically associated with languages, such as roughness is usually associated with speakers of German in Hollywood movies. To these associations belong the values of a correct or incorrect production, a minority or majority language, a native or non-native speaker. Jørgensen et al.’s bottom-line for this argument is that all these associations are negotiable, context-dependent, and, above all, socioculturally constructed.

Moreover, the associated indexes and meanings of each code is not fixed; rather they change according to the context and to the order of indexicalities that are constructed by historical, political, social, education, and/or ethnic factors. As described by Blommaert (2010):

(...) “order of indexicality” is a sensitizing concept that should index (‘point a finger to’) important aspects of power and inequality in the field of semiosis. If forms of

semiosis are socially and culturally valued, these valuation processes should display traces of power and authority, of struggles in which there were winners as well as losers, and in which, in general, the group of winners is smaller than the group of losers. (Blommaert, 2010, p. 38)

This as well applies to Arabic as seen from the previous chapter. The binary neat division of a standard language and a dialect has misled the interpretation of the sociolinguistic situation of the Arabic language. The following section presents a potentially helpful approach.

3.1.2 Why not 'language' or 'variety'? The polylingual norm

The idea of drawing borders between languages has originated from the European idea of a nation state (Blommaert & Backus, 2011, Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Jørgensen, 2008; Møller & Jørgensen, 2009). These separated languages, such as Dutch, English and French, correspond to the creation of separated bordered states – in this case The Netherlands, Britain, and France, respectively. However, the case of human languaging is not always the same. Jørgensen (2008) says that during human linguistic interactions, it is fruitless to count languages used in order to label users as monolingual, bilingual, or trilingual. Instead, humans use features of languages that they may even know very little about. Jørgensen argues that this phenomenon of languaging has become very common in late modern urban societies, which he called the norm of polylingualism:

The polylingualism norm: Language users employ whatever linguistic features are at their disposal to achieve their communicative aims as best they can, regardless of how well they know the involved languages; this entails that the language users may know – and use – the fact that some of the features are perceived by some speakers as not belonging together. (Jørgensen, 2008, p. 163)

As mentioned, in urban modern societies, language users have access to wide varieties of linguistic features and they use whatever features in order to communicate their intended meanings (Jørgensen, 2008; Møller & Jørgensen, 2009). Jørgensen (2008) argues that this polylingual norm describes the human linguistic interactions better than older norms such as monolingual, bilingual, or multilingual norms. The polylingual norm treats human languaging as the normal human behavior and not as a deviation from the norm. Moreover, it does not look at languages as separate entities defined by borders that serve ideological and national constructs.

Analyzing language use in terms of 'languages' or 'varieties' in modern superdiverse societies may cause a number of difficulties. First, it would be difficult to determine which languages to consider. For instance, young people may deploy parts of a proper language, youth language, slang language, as well as other foreign languages, all in one utterance. The level of 'languages' is not helpful to account for this use, otherwise a considerable number of meanings and values would be lost. Second, considering all the linguistic resources used in a superdiverse society, the language level of analysis would

make it difficult to count all the languages involved in any linguistic interaction. Third, some features used cannot be categorized under any socioculturally constructed 'language'. Jørgensen et al. (2011) argue that this level of analysis causes a considerable loss of the content.

These challenges as well describe the gaps created in Arabic sociolinguistics when the CS approach was applied. As mentioned in the review of Chapter 2, many features in the utterances of Arab speakers were not identifiable under just two codes. This is even more complicated when the analysis tries to understand inter-dialectal or cross-country communication in the Arab world. For instance, a language/variety level of analysis cannot account for a Moroccan who speaks Egyptian Arabic with a Moroccan accent. In addition, it does not account for the use of the same feature in different varieties. The approach also does not differentiate between native-like or non-native like accents, which is yet another feature to understand the trajectory of the individual linguistic repertoires and knowledge, more on which in the following section.

3.1.3 Linguistic repertoires and knowledge

Blommaert and Backus (2011) call to revisit the concept of linguistic repertoires in their article 'Repertoires revisited: "Knowing language" in superdiversity'. They argue that, since the 1990s, societies have witnessed two main phenomena that have caused tremendous changes in how we should look at language knowledge and, consequently, at repertoires. These two phenomena are the migration that followed the Cold War and the spread of the internet. In addition to migration and the internet, wars, the revolutions of the Arab Spring in 2011, and pan-Arab media have all affected the language situation across the Arab countries (see Chapter 2 of this study). Blommaert and Backus use the term 'superdiversity' introduced by Vertovec (2007) to describe the 'tremendous diversification of diversity' caused by these phenomena. Their argument holds that this reconsideration of the term 'repertoire' should redirect the analysis from the study of communities to the study of superdiverse subjectivities interacting in a superdiverse society.

They argue that looking at language knowledge should be based on a usage-based approach. Backus (2021) defines knowledge as 'the mental representation that makes language use possible, including the full inventory of all linguistic knowledge that an individual speaker possesses and that can therefore be activated while communicating' (p. 110). He also defines usage as 'an all-inclusive reference to language use, covering both speaking and hearing, and all levels of language such as sounds, words, grammatical patterns and discourse styles' (p. 110). According to Blommaert and Backus (2011), language knowledge consists of two inseparable competencies, the linguistic and the communicative:

Our suggestion is to not limit [linguistic resources] to the traditional linguistic elements of sounds, words and patterns, but to include anything that people use to communicate meaning. This entails that linguistic and communicative competence

should not be separate concepts, but that linguistic competence should be conceptualized as communicative competence, including everything that has always been included in linguistic competence as well as discourse patterns and cultural behavioral patterns. (Blommaert & Backus, 2011, p. 7)

On the one hand, this usage-based approach of looking at language knowledge as well does not consider 'language' or 'variety' as useful levels of analysis since they disregard individual differences focusing on what is commonly shared in the society. For them, languages and dialects are social constructions, so they may have an existence as categories people recognize. In theory, for example, people might just resort to Arabic using whatever features they have at their disposal, no matter from which parts of the Arabic-speaking world they originate. Yet, in practice, most people orient towards the recognized varieties, and thus they are real in that sense. In superdiverse societies, it is important to consider the different types of linguistic knowledge and resources on the individual level as markers of indexical biographies. On the other hand, this approach entails that competencies are thus dynamic since usage is changing and humans 'don't repeat the same linguistic experience every minute' (Blommaert & Backus, 2011, p. 8). It is, then, the role of linguists and sociolinguists to find order in this seemingly chaotic linguistic interaction. Sociolinguistics, in particular, should be concerned to know how, amid all this superdiversity, communication still takes place. This point is in particular salient since this call inspired the second dimension of this study as will be explained in Section 3.2.

Blommaert and Backus (2011) go on to review the patterns of 'language learning' and the resources of linguistic repertoires. For them, the term 'language learning' covers 'the broad range of tactics, technologies and mechanisms by means of which specific language resources become part of someone's repertoire' (p. 9). The process of language learning is polycentric and includes formal learning environments such as schools and colleges, and informal environments such as peer groups, media, internet, and life experiences. These environments encompass learning modes being as vast and diverse as the resources themselves. These modes can be conscious or unconscious and result in passive or active practical competence. Studying these dynamics of language learning is materially conceptualized in the framework of CofP under the 'sociolinguistic competence'. Therefore, this point will be further elaborated in Section 3.3 showing the tools that this framework offers in order to understand the process of constructing this knowledge.

What is important to note during the formation of a linguistic repertoire, according to Blommaert and Backus (2011), is its biographic dimension. The process of building a repertoire is a process of growth; it is never finished throughout a person's life. It is also not a cumulative process. Through life, a human being learns a sequence of registers, styles, and varieties that may change or replace older ones. For example, the resources 7-year-old children employ are different than the resources they use during their adolescence, and that changes when they reach the middle-age, become a parent, or

retire. For Blommaert and Backus (2011), repertoires are ‘biographically complexes of resources’ (p. 9) that follow the life of the individual.

The linguistic resources that form the repertoire of an individual have a different level of competences, and each resource is organized to serve a specific sociolinguistic function. Based on the path or the trajectory through which a resource enters the repertoire, the level of competence is determined: either a maximum, partial, minimal, or recognizing competence. Analyzing these trajectories and their resources provides indexical biographies reflecting the social and cultural experiences and domains of an individual.

Although relatively new to the field of linguistic theories, the usage-based approach has a lot to offer in the study of language contact. Since it combines cognitive and socio-interactive dimensions, the approach integrates and contributes to disciplines of linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics (Backus, 2015, 2021; Hakimov & Backus, 2021).

The literature reviewed above presents an approach to better analyze multi-modal communication in a setting of diverse languages and varieties. The investigation starts with the level of the feature in order to account for all the elements used in communication for the sake of intelligibility to take place. The analysis on the feature level enables a more comprehensive understanding of the linguistic competencies an individual has. This, in turn, is expected to reveal the biographical indexicality of each individual, as well as the meanings, values, and attitudes diverse language users share in a communicative event.

In light of the review presented in Chapter 2, understanding the formation of linguistic repertoires and competencies in Arabic communications is essential to the field of Arabic sociolinguistics. Mainstream understanding of the linguistic knowledge of an Arab holds that it is essentially formed by family and schooling. These mainstream ideas, therefore, accentuate the binary division of the linguistic repertoire into merely the knowledge of SA and a dialect. However, literature on Arabic sociolinguistics hardly counts the informal trajectory of linguistic knowledge of Arabs, such as life experiences, media, the internet, and peer groups. Applying a usage-based approach to Arabic communication, as suggested by Blommaert and Backus (2011) above, should reveal a lot about the range of tactics, technologies, and mechanisms by which a specific language resource has become a part of an Arab’s linguistic repertoire. The current study aims to fill this gap in literature on Arabic sociolinguistics.

As mentioned, the call on sociolinguistics to understand the dynamics of a communication amid a superdiverse community inspired the second dimension of the study. With the distinctively diverse individual biographical indexicalities that each speaker of Arabic brings into the communication with other Arabs from different countries, how does a collective pan-Arab communication take place? What is the shared common knowledge and what are the values that enable this very complex communication? Is there a new community that is formed that has different parameters

that sociolinguists should attend to? Section 3.2 presents the theoretical frameworks that guide the answers to these questions.

3.2 Shared knowledge and intelligibility in cross-country communication

The second dimension of the study employs ideas from the fields of linguistic ethnography and interactive sociolinguistics. This endeavor stems from studying the individual biographical indexicality of the first dimension. In particular, the endeavor is stimulated by the queries on how individuals align or misalign with a group and how intelligibility is taking place among diverse individuals. For the first query, the study makes use of Gumperz's (1982) ideas on communication strategies and CS as well as Rampton's (2018) crossing. For the second one, the study looks at the concept of what is called receptive multilingualism. But before discussing these two points, the section starts off by elaborating on how these ideas are based on the concepts presented in the first section above.

3.2.1 Shared group knowledge

As a consequence of their ideas on linguistic repertoires, Blommaert and Backus (2011) call to revisit the notions of a 'speech community' and a 'language'. By analyzing the mobile and dynamic repertoire trajectories of individual subjects, sociolinguists are able to view the patterns of mobility and dynamics of superdiverse late-modern societies. For them, static and stable communities of knowledge and practice cannot be maintained in modern globalized societies. Consequently, according to them, the repertoires are the actual language used in social life and that is what should be analyzed. These patterns of mobility and dynamics equally aid to identify the complex traces of power:

(...) a collection of resources our subject *had* [emphasis in original] to accumulate and learn in order to make sense to others, that is, in order to operate within the norms and expectations that govern social life in the many niches in which he dwelled and through which he passed. (Blommaert & Backus, 2011, p. 23)

The deconstruction of the idea of a 'language' as a discrete set of features consequently affects the idea of 'language groups and speakers'. The semi-technical term 'speech community' was later replaced in literature by terms of 'communities of practice' (see Section 3.3), 'institutions', and 'networks' in order to better describe more flexible and mobile groups that emerge. In these older models, the idea of a native speaker was crucial, as well as bilingualism and multilingualism, for a person who was or was not raised up in stable speech communities. This linkage was to determine a person's linguistic competency. However, this notion disregards the relationships between

upbringings and proficiency, looking at individuals sharing styles, registers, and genres that they learn through individual biographical trajectories (Blommaert & Backus, 2011). Blommaert and Rampton (2011) call upon sociolinguists:

(...) to address the ways in which people take on different linguistic forms as they align and disaffiliate with different groups at different moments and stages. It has to investigate how they (try to) opt in and opt out, how they perform or play with linguistic signs of group belonging, and how they develop particular trajectories of group identification throughout their lives. (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011, p. 5)

Based on this, communication should not be studied as the production of syntactic and semantic systems. Communication is seen in light of the local situation that makes available a number of resources to the individual participants, and meaning is, thus, defined under the 'here-and-now projection' (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011, p. 5). Meaning is not only a product of literal meanings, but also of other semiotic resources shared by the participants in the communicative practice. Meaning is more linked to indexicality, indicating shared group values and associations such as of power and persuasion.

This multi-modal communicated meaning entails the adoption of a multi-model analysis. For instance, in the age of globalization where communication is done via technologically mediated means, the formation of contexts includes a combination of written, oral, pictorial, even audiovisual signs. This requires the adoption of the newly sociolinguistically informed branch called 'semiotics' (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011, p. 6).

Diversity, with its two dimensions of indexicality and multimodality, challenges the traditional concept of a shared knowledge in relation to the idea of the 'negotiation of meaning' and 'creativity and linguistic profusion'. The presupposition of a shared knowledge and a common ground is not valid in superdiverse communities; language users instead rely on linguistic features drawn from 'ethnic outgroups, new media and popular culture' (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011, p. 7). This again refers to what Jørgensen (2008) calls 'polylingualism'. The interplay of this non-shared knowledge and these interpretations reflect relations of power. For Blommaert and Rampton, it is important to study these behaviors at least for two reasons:

First, they allow us to observe linguistic norms being manufactured, interrogated or altered, or to see norms that have changed and are new/different in the social networks being studied. We can see, in short, the emergence of structure out of agency. And second, there are likely to be social, cultural and/or political stakes in this, as we know from the principle of Indexicality. (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011, p. 7)

They argue that the 'here-and-now' of the communicative event should be studied. Methodologically, two dimensions should be studied. First, the contexts for communication are to be understood ethnographically, including 'places, activities, social relations, interactional histories, textual trajectories, institutional regimes, and

cultural ideologies' (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011, p. 10). Second, the position and the importance of the internal organization of semiotic data should equally be understood. The question should not be about only 'what' or 'who' but also 'when', 'how', and 'why' a feature is preferred.

As mentioned in Section 3.1.3, applying Blommaert and Backus' (2011) ideas to understand the individual trajectory of each speaker of Arabic would enable the current study to understand the biographical index of each speaker on the individual level. However, extending that to the ideas of Blommaert and Rampton (2011) the study will also be able to understand the collective group identification of Arabs coming from different backgrounds. The study will be able to chart ethnographically the dynamics of how an Arab would align or disaffiliate from a pan-Arab identification, which knowledge and values an Arab capitalizes on or avoids projecting a certain identity among fellow Arabs. By so doing, the study aims to reveal social relations, interactional histories, textual trajectories, institutional regimes, and cultural ideologies in Arabic cross-country communication.

3.2.2 Communication strategies: crossing among others

The above call to understand how individuals align or misalign themselves into a group has shaped a crucial component of the second endeavor of the study. Understanding communication strategies is key to understand how this alignment or disaffiliation is taking place.

On linguistic diversity, Gumperz (1982) says: 'Linguistic diversity serves as a communicative resource in everyday life in that conversationalists rely on their knowledge and their stereotypes about variant ways of speaking to categorize events, infer intent, and derive expectations about what is likely to ensue' (p. 130).

In his classic manuscript, Gumperz (1982) argues that the meanings from a communicative exchange are drawn from defining the nature of the situation or activity. The type and the nature of the activity or the situation as defined narrows down the possibilities of interpretations, which the speakers and the interlocutors can infer from the utterances exchanged in a communication instance (CI). By defining the type of activity, an identifiable schema or a frame is thus built that channels the meanings and interpretations to flow through a shared set of expectations and knowledge. The interpretations of these expectations, however, are not static. They develop and change as the participants interact. Therefore, according to Gumperz, the nature of the situation or 'the activity type does not determine meaning but simply constraints interpretations by channeling inferences so as to foreground or make relevant certain aspects of background knowledge and to underplay others' (p. 131).

This interaction between participants in a conversation is marked by constant transitions from one mode of speaking to another: formal and serious; argument and humor; narrative and repartee (Gumperz, 1982, p. 159). Along the sequence of these constant transitions, speakers and listeners coordinate 'rhythmic interchange of both verbal and nonverbal signs' (p. 167) in order to position a mutually agreed upon

interpretation. It is this interpretation that, in the stream of a conversation, underlies 'recurrent strategies, the elicited meanings, and recognized culturally possible lines of reasoning' (p. 160). Along the stream of conversation, when an accepted interpretation is reached, the relevant interpretative strategy is accepted and maintained as well. When a change occurs in the conversation, a change in strategy is indicated. It is, therefore, imperative to show how conversational strategies are integrated in the speaker-listener's linguistic knowledge in order to understand how conversations are managed and meanings are shared or conveyed. Driven by the data, an important strategy that the study looks at is Rampton's (2018) description of what is called 'crossing'.

Influenced by Gumperz's (1982) ideas on CS, Rampton sees yet a specific type of switching which he called 'crossing'. According to Rampton (2018), crossing focuses on the use of linguistic features that are not expected to belong to the participants uttering them. By observing the data, the participants practice crossing to each other's dialects and codes. As will be discussed in Chapter 6, during the conversation, participants shift codes to a different Arabic variety that is not expected to belong to them, as well as foreign language features. Studying the shift to different codes, whether by means of crossing or CS, highlights the mechanisms of the mobility across linguistic, social, and cultural meanings. The 'indexical valence' of this use, in its totality, is what informs us on the social knowledge and cultural ideology of the participants. It underlines the importance of the participants' 'wider cultural knowledge, pointing to the fact that the meaning of an utterance is influenced by their knowledge and experience of participation in larger social systems' (Rampton, 2013, p. 1).

In order to draw general meanings from the practice of CS, and in turn of crossing, Rampton identifies a number of factors that a researcher can rely on. He mentions, 'the variety selected, the crosser's network relations, ethnic and gender identities, his/her orientation to the socio-ideological horizons indexed by the code, his/her linguistic competence, the presence or absence of inheritors, and the size of the switch itself' (Rampton, 2018, p. 271).

Following Auer (1990), Rampton (2018) argues that in acts for crossing there are three dimensions that have to be taken into consideration: the first dimension is that of the speaker's and of the recipient's individual competences and preferences. The second dimension is that of conversational structure. The third is that of the values and social meanings attached to the languages of the repertoire (Auer, 1990, p. 78, as cited in Rampton, 2018). In her study using a CofP framework, Hillman (2011) finds that speakers of Arabic use crossing to other dialects to create humor, claim or establish individual or relational identities, or highlight the other's identity. Crossing, in her study, is one of the strategies her participants used as part of their engaging practices that are specific to constructing the special local community of their classroom.

It can be argued, therefore, that communication strategies (especially crossing), help to reach a tangible and concrete representation of the actual dynamics of communication in a situation of linguistic diversity. This should lead to an understanding

of the shared linguistic knowledge and the mobile social meanings and values that enable intelligible inter-dialectal communication among diverse Arab speakers, as well as the larger social system in which the whole setting is operating.

To further understand intelligibility, the analysis resorts to the ideas of RM. Studies done in the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language (Soliman, 2014, 2015; Trentman & Shiri, 2020) have pointed out that native Arabic speakers may show a reliance on RM in their cross-dialect communication. Therefore, in order to properly interpret the data of this study, it is important to look at this concept, which is done in the following subsection.

3.2.3 Receptive multilingualism

Braunmüller (2013), defines receptive multilingualism (RM) ‘as a form of mutual, unmediated communication between different dialects and languages. “Unmediated” means that no lingua franca is used. In addition, no active command of the addressee’s variety is needed, only some insight into the grammar and lexicon of his/her dialect or language, based on either genetic similarities or on previous (imperfect) learning’ (p. 215).

The quintessence of RM, as determined by Rehbein, Ten Thije, and Verschik (2011), is the concept of Lingua Receptiva (LaRa). They define LaRa as ‘the ensemble of those linguistic, mental, interactional as well as intercultural competencies which are creatively activated when interlocutors listen to linguistic actions in their “passive” language or variety’ (p. 249). By that definition, they argue that speakers adopt additional competencies in order to monitor hearers’ employment of their ‘passive knowledge’ and, therefore, try to control the process of understanding. However, they argue that intelligibility is not an inherent feature of closely related language families. This idea, to them, is quite restrictive (p. 253). They argue, instead, that intelligibility is linked to ‘multilingual (LaRa) communication as dynamic process’ (p. 253).

However, Braunmüller (2013) argues that the key to a successful RM communication does not lie only in the close genetic relation between dialects, but also in other factors. First, there is the lack of standardization and generally acknowledged writing norms. Second, there is the predominance and flexibility of oral communication, supported by forms of nonverbal communication such as gestures. Third, there is the (unrestricted) use of dialects and non-standardized varieties in every-day life (p. 217). In so doing, the participants in a RM communication have to permanently accommodate to the addressees’ varieties. This ‘presupposes both permanent linguistic awareness of inter-dialectal divergences and also of indications of overt and covert genetic relatedness’ (p. 217).

These three factors are well applicable to the situation of Arabic inter-dialectal communication. In addition to the genetic resemblance among the dialects of Arabic, the varieties of Arabic are not standardized and do not have recognized writing systems. For that reason, communication with the dialect is flexible and not rigid, especially when compared to the use of SA. And of course, the dialects and varieties are the unmarked

code in everyday communication. This resemblance to the Arabic sociolinguistic situation makes RM a solid tool to add to the understanding of cross-country communication in the Arab world.

In relation to communication strategies as well, Braunmüller (2013) adds that participants, when forced into a RM communication, adopt some strategies in order to have a successful RM. He reports that ‘they listen very carefully, observe prosody and deictic gestures, try to concentrate on the most meaningful elements in utterances (viz. typically on nouns, verbs and adjectives), whilst often disregarding grammatical elements such as inflectional endings (including word formation elements) or particles’ (pp. 217-218). Riionheimo, Kaivapalu, and Härmävaara (2017) add that a crucial factor of understanding a related language is ‘the notion of SIMILARITY [capitals in original]’ (p. 118). They elaborate that this similarity can be both objective and subjective. The objective similarity refers to actual similarities between related languages. The subjective refers to the perceived and assumed similarity. According to Riionheimo et al., there is little attention given to the explanation of how comprehension takes place concerning the subjective similarity.

However, in addition to this, certain strategies, attitudes, nationalism, and ideology equally contribute to the success of RM communication. As stipulated by Braunmüller (2013), it is only when ideology or politics *suggest* (italics mine) that participants in a RM communication are expected to understand genetically and historically related varieties and languages, that RM may succeed. As he puts it: ‘only in case that one tries to practice it without prejudices’ (p. 218).

From the above, studying communication strategies and RM seem to provide useful tools to analyze data within the theoretical concepts formulated in the literature of superdiversity and the sociolinguistics of globalization. Both together help identify the parameters of cross-country communication in the Arab world – in terms of the shared knowledge and values, dynamics of intelligibility, and the construction or reconstruction of meanings in the setting of the current study.

In light of the quote at the beginning of the chapter, the third dimension of the study is concerned with understanding how the resources, strategies, nuances of practices, and social meanings treated above construct identities. The process of choosing from among the diverse linguistic features, resources, and strategies to achieve communication, and align or misalign with the different groups they communicate with, is not random. This raises the question on which identities Arabs project at a specific time and space of a communicative event. Moreover, studying the mobile resources in ‘communities of practice’ helps understanding power dynamics, hierarchies, and distribution of resources (Blommaert, 2010). Section 3.3 discusses the framework of ‘communities of practice’ and its relevance to reveal the indexicalities of identity in Arabs’ cross-country communication.

3.3 Identity construction

In correspondence to the concept of ‘*linguaging*’ introduced above, Bagga-Gupta, Feilberg, and Lyngvær Hansen (2017) introduce the idea of ‘*identiting*’ where the *do* of identity is an *action* (italics Bagga-Gupta et al.). Similar to the call of Blommaert (2010) and Bassiouney (2020) to adopt a constructivist approach to sociolinguistics, identity is thus to follow the same line and to be studied from a constructionist approach where it is not seen as a fixed and static across time and space. The relationship between linguaging and identity is clear in the following quote: ‘[I]dentiting is understood as being staged in everyday linguaging and interaction inside, outside and across institutional settings. In everyday life, at home and at work, individuals display, perform and ascribe aspects of identity intentionally, as a dimension of habit and mundane social practice’ (Bagga-Gupta et al., 2017, p. 18). To clarify the connection, they argue:

Taking the case of a constructionist perspective on identity thus implies, we argue, that there is need for recognizing the methodological implications of the fact that social interaction including linguaging or the doing of language and communication constitutes a fundamental dimension of socialization and the doing of identity across the life trajectory. In other words, such a position highlights that linguaging (or language-use) and identiting (or identity work) entail an orientation towards (methodological) approaches where the study of time and space and a focus upon human beings in interaction across different sites and modalities (for instance modalities like oral, written, signed) are salient. The significant issue here is that a socioculturally framed decolonial position focuses on the interrelated nature of identiting, linguaging and learning and at the same time sees these as actively constituted in life across institutions, communities and policies. (Bagga-Gupta et al., 2017, p. 18)

For the current study, a CofP framework is applied in order to understand the construction of identity. King (2014) argues that it has become ‘a common knowledge’ (p. 62) to adopt a CofP framework in interactional sociolinguistics in order to understand the production and reproduction of constructs such as gender and sexuality in localized daily practice. He adds that the approach has proven robust to:

(...) enable insight into the inner workings of a community’s discourse-driven formation and maintenance. In this framework, a given community (of practice) gains its distinct character as a product of the sustained interaction through which it has formed, and through the shared practices that concurrently emerge from and shape that sustained interaction. (King, 2014, p. 62)

The section, first, starts with defining CofP. Second, the section discusses the relevance of CofP to learning the sociolinguistic competence and how membership is formed. Third, the importance of the framework to study individual and identities is treated. Last,

it describes the ties it draws between local CofP at the larger (global) sociolinguistic context in which these local communities operate.

As mentioned in the quote at the beginning of this chapter, the nuances of all social practices including language bear features of linguistic identity. Studying identity construction in Arabic cross-country communication culminates the three inter-related components of this dissertation, clarifying the integration among them. CofP provides the tool to investigate the mechanisms of constructing the identity of Arabs on the individual and group levels. The framework provides a microscopic lens on the intricate makings and contentions of identities in relation to linguistic repertoire, strategies, social meanings and values.

3.3.1 Community of practice: definition

According to Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992a), the term CofP is coined by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in 1991 in the field of social learning. The term is coined to describe something that has been existent for a long time. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992a) introduced and applied the term in the field of sociolinguistics, mainly in relation to language, gender, and power. Holding the slogan ‘think practically and look locally’, they define the term as:

A community of practice is an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in some common endeavor. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices – emerge in the course of their joint activity around that endeavor. A community of practice is different as a social construct from the traditional notion of community, primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages. Indeed, it is the practices of the community and members’ differentiated participation in them that structures the community socially. (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992a, p. 96)

To exemplify, a pan-Arab media talent show is a CofP. Similar to Eckert’s example of a rock ’n roll band (Eckert, 2000, p. 35), a pan-Arab talent show creates a life of its own as local practices develop around it, thus shaping an enterprise, activities, and knowledge. It is the practices that emerge while the participants in the show work together for such things as selecting contestants and songs; rehearsing; choosing costumes, makeup, accessories, and styles of music; giving feedback by the judges, the contestants, and the presenters; sharing a life backstage; developing ways of performance, talking, and behavior. All these practices and more that grow out of mutual engagement of the participants is what gives the show its specific character. With these practices, media agents, musicians, contestants, celebrities, crew, staff, and guests construct their identities of participating in the show. They decide on which activities they get engaged with, and by so doing they ‘construct attitudes and orientations, debate values, and evaluate each other’s behavior and that of the people around them’ (p. 171). In these

local activities, the construction of social meanings takes place yielding the specific characteristics of the show.

In elaboration of the nature of CofP, Eckert (2000) argues that this community is not a separate unit, similar to social category, that exists at one level and people get assigned to it. This is mainly because participants belong to different CofPs on multiple levels. The importance of the concept then lies in its ability to reveal the characteristics and functions of social aggregations. It focuses on the meanings that are being made in particular aggregations. Through constructing these meanings, sociolinguistic competence is acquired and, consequently memberships and identities are constructed.

3.3.2 CofP and learning of sociolinguistic competence: membership and belonging

As an expansion to Blommaert and Backus' (2011) ideas on learning mentioned above in Section 3.1, CofP regards learning as a social process. People have a natural process of learning how to perform in order to belong to a certain group. Holmes and Meyerhoff (1999) describe that as a process of an 'apprenticeship' (p. 174). For example, when joining a new workplace, club, or for instance family through marriage or adoption, '[W]e learn to perform appropriately in a CofP as befits our membership status: initially as a "peripheral member," later perhaps as a "core member" (or perhaps not – one may choose to remain a peripheral member). In other words, a CofP inevitably involves the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence' (p. 174).

CofP provides a framework that enables the sociolinguist to focus on the practice and activities participants do in order to become members of a group and to what extent this membership is. Holmes and Meyerhoff (1999) further elaborate:

The practice or activities typically involve many aspects of behavior, including global or specific aspects of language structure, discourse, and interaction patterns. The obvious appeal of this approach is that it offers the sociolinguist a framework of definitions within which to examine the ways in which becoming a member of a CofP interacts with the process of gaining control of the discourse appropriate to it. By emphasizing a process in which apprentices absorb attitudes to situations and interlocutors – and in which they learn how to modify their linguistic and other behaviors, in such a way as to feed perceptions of self and other. (Holmes & Meyerhoff, 1999, p. 175)

Wenger (1998, as cited in Holmes & Meyerhoff, 1999) specifies three dimensions of CofP: mutual engagement, a joint negotiated enterprise, and a shared repertoire of negotiated resources accumulated over time. In his study, King (2014) traces the emergence of a CofP: it is not a community based on imagined or aligned belonging such as gender identity or nationality. These imagined or aligned belongings might not be a CofP in a situation when people come together and realize that they do not have something in common, or that there are no shared resources (linguistic or other) negotiated and developed with practice and mutual engagement.

Applying a linguistic ethnographic approach to a secondary school classroom in New Zealand, King (2014) gives an example of an established familiar routine of giving instructions without a preamble between the teacher and the students. This routine was hard for him to understand since he joined the class later in the academic year. Examples of the instructions given are “do what,” “get started on the what,” or “do the do now” (p. 70). He argues that these instructions did not pose a problem to the students, but it did to him as an outsider. King also records the development as well as the gradual expansion of the interactional boundaries of a shared negotiated repertoire among the students and the teacher. This specific and focused mutual engagement yielded a very specific localized practice to the community of this classroom that would not be understood to an outsider.

However, mastery of this shared repertoire is not the ultimate guarantee to membership. King (2014) shows for example that a student in this class was limited in her access to discourse on sexuality. This was mainly caused by the fact that she is a daughter of a church leader, the identity that put some restraints on her from other members of the community, in this case the students in the class. He elaborates on this: ‘This example demonstrates that membership in a CoP is a complex affair, and not everyone has equal access to the core, or even legitimacy within it regardless of their mastery of localized practices (...) one might not gain legitimacy in relation to all ASPECTS of the shared repertoire’ (p. 77).

3.3.3 Individual and group identities

By learning sociolinguistic competence and choosing the extent to which one would be a member in a group, individual and group identities are constructed. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992a) argue that CofP is a theoretical framework that builds the concrete links between language and gender in the social practices of communities and therefore brings into life ‘the power that resides in and derives from those links’ (p. 90). They argue that CofP looks into a community not defined by a location or by a population, but by ‘social engagement – after all, it is this engagement that language serves, not the place and not the people as a bunch of individuals’ (p. 95). Dewi (2014) maintains that the concept of CofP is suitable to observe language use to express group identity. According to him, CofP focuses on how memberships and identity are constructed within a speech community. In her concluding remarks on studying the construction of ethnic Italian identity in a CofP, De Fina (2007) says:

(...) collective identity is an emergent construct shaped within practices that define a community. Linguistic and non-linguistic acts are used to claim membership into the category “Italian” for the whole group when they become part of normative practices directed at influencing the behavior and perceptions of all the members. In that respect, it can be said that individual behavior influences collective practices and is shaped by them, and that individual and collective identities constitute each other in a dialectic way. (De Fina, 2007, p. 389)

Studying such social organizations, where individual and group identities are co-constructed and individual as well as group symbolic ties emerge, enables sociolinguists to capture the process of making a social meaning. Social meaning is made as 'people jointly construct relations through the development of a mutual view of, and relation to, the communities and people around them' (Eckert, 2000, p. 35). It is the specific shared knowledge, expertise, as well as forms of participation that form part of individuals' identities and places in the community. According to Eckert, the value of the framework of CofP is that it allows a focus on 'the mutually constitutive nature of individual, group, activity, and meaning (p. 35).

Eckert (2000) gives a special focus to style. She argues that stylistic production, whether in clothing or language for example, is the area where the negotiation of social meaning and identity is taking place. She views identity as:

(...) one's "meaning in the world". A person's place in relation to other people, a person's perspective on the rest of the world, a person's understanding of his or her value to others – all of these are integral to the individual's experience of the self, and are constructed in collaboration with others as those others engage in the same construction for themselves. (Eckert, 2000, p. 41)

In her study of the 'jocks' and 'burnouts' in Belten High School, Eckert (2000) concluded that the individual identity is constructed in relation to the meanings and categorization that are being constructed in the world. This manifests itself in showing affinity, hostility, interest, preferences, or religion. She elaborates that social meaning and identity have to do with people's forms of engagement in CofP as well as the world at large. It is the day-to-day social practice that gives communities the shape they have and that articulates communities with others and ultimately with society. The individual identities of the 'jocks' and 'burnouts' are shaped through the forms of participants in each group. The group identity is carved through the interplay of the individual forms of participation that form its life. Therefore, 'both individual and group identities are in continual construction, continual change, continual refinement' (p. 43).

3.3.4 Local and global communities

Another fruitful point in applying the framework of CofP is that it reveals the ties between localized and global practices. In other words, the framework reveals the links between the CofP of concern and the larger sociolinguistic structure and ideologies that surrounds that community. As Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2007) explain:

The second direction [of studying a CofP] is relational, focusing on the articulation between the community of practice and other social configurations. Individuals have memberships in multiple communities of practice, and ways of moving among them. Communities of practice are locations in individuals' social networks, and they mediate individuals' relations to larger institutions (schools, churches, legal systems), and to more global imagined communities (nations, hip-hop, women). Any

account of a community of practice should attend to how its practices articulate with the larger scheme. (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2007, p. 29)

In her study mentioned above, Hillman's (2011) CofP does not only reveal the dynamics of constructing individual and group identities through the practices of crossing and humor, but also the ways by which the participants are considered either insiders or outsiders of the larger Arabic culture and Muslim communities. This is revealed by the correct pragmatic use of religious expressions in their relevant contexts and the understanding of Arabic canned jokes.

Eckert (2000) speaks of a multiplex network cluster. This is 'a cluster whose members' CofP overlap significantly' (p. 36). She reviews a study she conducted with Uhland in 1985 on seven high school students who formed a self-conscious CofP. The group of students defined themselves as a subculture based on a certain style, a set of values, and a certain type of music. They consciously distinguished themselves from the dominant social categories that were existing in the school, and they particularly rejected what they considered a snobbish and class racism of the affluent students in the school. In constructing their individual and group identities, the students articulated their engagement within their CofP simultaneously during their engagement with other CofPs, such as their families and classes in school. The engagement in their local CofP was closely related as well to their alignment with other fans of the same type of music, and their misalignment from other types. This group of students constructed their CofP in a mutual response to the situation at the time; it was their way to deal with their lives back then. During this local mutual engagement, they were tied to the larger structures, meanings, and ideologies in the larger sociolinguistic landscape that surrounded their local CofP.

Eckert (2000) states that CofPs are not formed freely or randomly in the social space. The situations that people face, their needs, their responses to these situations and needs, the type of persons that are engaged with in these responses, the resources available, all are variables that depend on where people live in the society. It is the types of CofP, collectively, at different places in society that at the end form the practices that is viewed as 'class, culture, ethnic culture, gender practice, etc.' (p. 39).

As mentioned above, this last dimension on identity completes the three inter-related areas of investigation of the current study. Studying the communication interactions and strategies within this CofP cannot be done without attention to the globalized nature of a pan-Arab TV talent show. The different theories treated in this chapter relate to the relevant research questions, constructing an arching framework that binds the three dimensions together. This approach is expected to be fruitful in the interpretation of the results of the study presented in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter presents the theoretical framework that guided and inspired the current study. The dissertation adopts and hopes to contribute to a multidisciplinary approach, drawing from sociolinguistics of globalization, interactional linguistics, and linguistic ethnography. The study is composed of three integrated components built on each other. Explorative data-driven, the study starts by exploring the linguistic features and resources available to Arabs in their cross-county communication. The ideas of superdiversity, polylingualism, and a revisiting of linguistic repertoires guide the first dimension. On a closer look, the study is to understand communication strategies and how intelligibility is achieved. This second part is guided by the discussion of crossing and RM. Following a constructive approach, the study is thirdly inspired to look closer to the construction of identity amid these diverse resources. To achieve that, the study resorts to the framework of CofP. The following chapter presents the study, research questions, and methodology.

The study

There are also technical innovations which facilitate the study of everyday speech. The magnetic tape recorder was introduced to this country just after World War II. But most linguists have been slow to admit its importance, continuing to claim that data jotted down in person is more reliable than a tape recording. Most linguistic students in graduate departments have access to an aged Wollensak, if that, and have gotten no grasp of the difficult art of making good recordings.
(Labov, 1972, p. 110)

During my readings to find an emblem quote to the ideas presented in this chapter, I came across Labov's (1972) article 'Some Principles of Linguistic Methodology'. It discusses foundational approaches and principles employed by linguists in their various disciplines to investigate language. But the above quote drew a smile on my face. The tape recorder, which is currently almost extinct, was a 'technical innovation', unreliable when compared to jotting down data in person. This reflects two points. First, the immense development that the study of language has gone through, and second, every new idea takes a long time to be accepted. Labov argues in the same article that, ironically, new methods are only perfected after the actual work is done. By this time, other new approaches are introduced in the form of revolutionary criticism of these old ones.

This chapter describes the methodology adopted for this study. In light of Labov's (1972) quote above, the current methodology does not aspire to present a revolutionary criticism. Nevertheless, it pays heed to what is mentioned in the previous two chapters. A usage-based approach (see Chapter 3) provides an overarching flexible perspective to interpret the data in the sense that it allows the researcher to draw from various disciplines. Guided by the phenomenon that the data may reveal, the different interpretations are based on the various perspectives presented in previous chapters, bearing in mind that 'methodology is careful and conscientious search for error in one's own work' (p. 99).

Chapter 3 introduced the theoretical perspectives that are used to understand the three interrelated dimensions of the present study. The present chapter introduces the research questions, the source of data, and the methodology adopted for the analysis. The findings are presented both quantitatively and qualitatively. While the first is to obtain frequency and tendency, the other is to reveal the attitudes, values, and shared knowledge of the participants. The chapter has five sections. The first one introduces the research questions. The second section presents the source of the data, followed by

a third section on the participants. Section 4.4 discusses the corpus and, finally, Section 4.5 presents the analysis.

4.1 Research questions

As presented in Chapter 3, the study aims to answer three inter-related research questions. The questions spring from each other sequentially guided by the related theoretical perspectives as introduced in the previous chapter. This section first introduces the three questions, followed by a subsection on each question.

The first question explores the data to reveal the linguistic resources available in Arabic cross-country communication. The second question tries to find order to these resources and understand how Arabs organize them in order to achieve communication. As mentioned in Chapter 3, social relations and practices in a communicative event constitute material to construct linguistic identities. Therefore, after understanding the meanings and knowledge that form the foundation of cross-country communication (found in the second research question), the study investigates the identities expressed in the data in a third question. This is especially important with regard to different layers of belongings across the Arab world as presented in Chapter 2. Therefore, the research questions are formulated as follows and in the following order:

- 1 What are the linguistic features and patterns available to and employed by the participants in a pan-Arab TV show?
- 2 a What are the communication strategies employed by the participants in a pan-Arab TV show?
b How does intelligibility take place?
- 3 What are the identity indexicalities expressed by the participants in a pan-Arab TV show?

4.1.1 Research question 1

The first research question (RQ1) is: What are the linguistic features and patterns available to and employed by the participants in a pan-Arab TV show? The answer to RQ1 is presented in the following chapter, Chapter 5. Answering this question consists of an exploratory endeavor of the data that aims to stand on 'whatever features' (Jørgensen, 2008, p. 163; see Chapter 3) employed by Arabs in their cross-country communication. By analyzing the features, the study as well stands on the patterns, if any, of the use of these features. As discussed in Chapter 3, Jørgensen's (2008) and Blommaert and Backus' (2011) ideas in relation to sociolinguistics of globalization and superdiversity inspire and guide the answers to this question.

4.1.2 Research question 2

Springing from the discussion on the sociolinguistics of globalization and superdiversity, as well as what the data reveal, the second research question (RQ2) has two folds: a) What are the communication strategies employed by the participants in a pan-Arab TV show?; and b) How does intelligibility take place? As mentioned above, at the time when answers to RQ1 yield basic linguistic data, RQ2 interprets this data from communicative and sociolinguistic perspectives. The answer to RQ2 is presented in Chapter 6. The analysis resorts to Gumperz's (1982) insights on communication strategies, CS, Rampton's crossing, as well as the ideas of RM (see Chapter 3). By answering these questions, the study stands on the attitudes, values, and shared knowledge among Arabs in their cross-country communication. By so doing, the study approaches the mechanism of intelligibility amid the diverse linguistic resources employed by Arabs from different countries.

4.1.3 Research question 3

As discussed in Chapter 3, this study regards language as a social practice, where each practice and interaction indicates a linguistic identity. By studying the mobile resources available within a framework of sociolinguistics of globalization, sociolinguists reveal the hierarchy of powers among individuals and resources. In manipulating the available resources, a linguistic identity is constructed. True enough, the abundance of linguistic identities that are indexed in the data cannot be missed. Therefore, the third research question (RQ3) aims to answer: What are the identity indexicalities expressed by the participants in a pan-Arab TV show? The answer to RQ3 resorts to the concept of CofP as presented in the previous chapter. The answers to this question are presented in Chapter 7.

For a holistic understanding of the data, following the results of RQ3, the study presents a discussion that binds the results of the three questions together. The purpose of this discussion is to understand how the identity indexes found in the data align or disaffiliate with the use of, on one hand, the linguistic features and patterns, and on the other hand, the associated social meanings and values as well as the communication strategies. The following section presents the source of data: the media group and the show.

4.2 Source of data

4.2.1 Talent shows as a source of data

As presented in the review of Section 2.3, pan-Arab TV has taken communication among Arabs from different countries to another level. Pan-Arab TV provides useful data for studying the sociolinguistic situation of the contemporary Arab world: starting from the diverse linguistic features that are employed in the shows and ending with the contested

identities and ideologies. In order to succeed, pan-Arab media have to find a way to operate within a super-diverse Arab world. For example, they have to address – sometimes reconstruct – the definition of Arabness (as seen in Attwa, 2019, and Schulthies, 2015), pay heed to the Mashreqi-Maghrebi ideologies (as seen in Hachimi, 2013, and Schulthies, 2015), exploit the indexicalities of MSA against the meanings of the dialects (as seen in Di Giovanni, 2017), or cultivate a discourse of unity and uniformity to construct a homogenous regional identity (as seen in Kraidy, 2006).

The present study takes a talent show, the second season of *The Voice* as the basis for a case study. The choice for a talent show is based on several reasons. Talent shows include contestants and participants from a wider range of the Arab world than other programs, such as political talk shows or news bulletins. The atmosphere in talent shows is less tense and formal than social, political, legal, or religious discussions. The nature of these more serious genres may well force the use of a certain discourse type with particular linguistic features that does not allow for much variation, prescribing more use of standard, classical, canonical, or religious features. In contrast, the setting and goal of talent shows promote lively and relatively spontaneous speech that is very close to everyday language. In addition, since the topic of talent shows is specific to the circumscribed context of music and singing, a closer look at shared linguistic resources is easier than it would be with, for example, a movie or a soap opera. Therefore, the choice was made for the then most recent season of the talent show *The Voice*, Season 2. In addition to the above-mentioned reasons, the four judges in this season represent four out of five dialectal regions in the Arab world (Versteegh, 1997; see Chapter 2). The following subsections describe the media channel and the show in more detail.

4.2.2 The media group and the show

As described in Attwa (2019), *The Voice*, in Arabic *ʔahlā Ṣōṭ* [the sweetest voice], that debuted on September 14, 2012, is one of the most popular talent shows in the Arab world. At the time of writing this thesis, the show had made five seasons. It is broadcast worldwide from Beirut, Lebanon, from the studios of the Middle East Broadcasting Centre, the Saudi-owned MBC Group.

According to an Al-Arabiya article published on June 16th, 2020, MBC Group is the biggest and leading media production company in the Arab world (Naar, 2020). This is not only because it enjoys a wide viewership, but also because of the scope and diversity of its shows and channels. The article mentions that MBC Group is listed among the global top 10 media and entertainment companies in terms of social media followers. It also reports on Tubular Labs' results of April 2020, which list MBC Group among the top 20 media companies for social media video views. According to the report, MBC Group achieved significant growth compared to March 2020, jumping 13 positions, from number 32 to number 19 on the leader board for global media and entertainment entities. In 2018, the third annual Tubular Labs' VideoAces Awards had ranked MBC Group number 37 across global media companies, having risen ten spots since the

2017's rankings, and it was number 1 in the Middle East as a whole. These awards honor the top social video brands and media companies across the globe (Brouwer, 2019). These rankings throughout a span of only three years show the rapid growth and vision of MBC Group, not only to become a part of the media and entertainment industry worldwide, but also to assume a leading position in the industry.

Since its launch in 1991, MBC Group is considered the first satellite pan-Arab TV that is broadcast free of subscription fees. At the time of writing this thesis, the group encompassed 20 TV channels, including MBC 1, MBC 2, MBC 3, MBC 4, MBC Action, MBC MAX, MBC Drama, MBC Bollywood, MBC Sport, and Al-Arabiya News. In November 2012, MBC Group launched MBC MASR (MBC Egypt), a channel targeting mainly the Egyptian audience. MBC MASR 2 followed in 2014. In February 2019, MBC Iraq was launched.

MBC Group also has a presence on the radio, with the channel of MBC FM launched in 1994 and Panorama FM in 2004. In 2007, MBC Group established Platinum Records, a media company that aims at making pan-Arab singing stars as well as producing and distributing Arab music from and across the Arab countries.

In 2011, Shahid, the first Arab on-demand streaming platform, was launched. According to MBC Group, the platform hosts the biggest TV and video library in the Arab region. In order to reach the Arab communities that reside outside the Arab countries, in October 2020, Jamie Lang (2020) reports that Shahid VIP brought more than 25,000 hours of Arabic entertainment to the US and Canada. This includes films, series, original programming, and live access to MBC's TV channels. According to the article, by so doing, MBC Group is not only making Arabic speakers in the US and Canada feel more at home, but it also allows them to stay connected with the culture and entertainment of the region.

In an article in *Venture Magazine*, Al Sharif (2014) argues that MBC Group is out of competition with other Arab entertainment companies mainly because of MBC Group's grip and control over talent shows. Although the exact production cost of these shows in the Arab world is unknown, Al Sharif estimates it in millions of dollars. MBC Group has adapted a universal franchise from the US, Canada, and Europe to the Arab audience in a step that puts MBC Group in the global TV arena. Talent shows such as *Arabs Got Talent*, *Arab Idol*, *The Voice*, *X Factor*, and *Project Runway* are indeed profitable. Not only because of advertisements and sponsors' funds, but also because these shows depend on audience participation either through SMS or social media, as viewers vote for their favorite contestant. As reflected in Chapter 2, this appeal to the audience was even higher after the events of the Arab Spring, when viewers were happy to have their votes counted.

Because of these dynamics of interaction among a global franchise, the Arabic adaptation, the media strategies, and viewers' engagement, these talent shows appeared suitable as a case study.

The Arabic format of *The Voice*, *ʔaḥlā Ṣōṭ*, is based on its original Dutch format created by the Dutch media tycoon John de Mol in 2010. The present study examines

the second season of the program that premiered on Saturday, December 28, 2013. The show is composed of three stages that run over 14 weekly episodes: the blind auditions (5 episodes), the battle rounds (3 episodes), and the live performances (6 episodes) – in Arabic as pronounced by the Egyptian lead presenter, *Eṣ-ṣōṭ we Bas, El-muwāgha*, and *El-‘urūḍ El-mubāšra*.

Before the show was screened on TV, the producers had launched a call for auditions. Contestants expressed interest by sending in a recording of their singing, on the basis of which a preliminary selection was made of good voices. The beginning of the show consists of the blind auditions where contestants give their first performances to the judges/coaches who sit with their backs to the contestants. This prime focus on the voice of the contestants, rather than their appearance or their act, is a unique characteristic of *The Voice* as a talent show in comparison to other talents shows that were produced at the same time. In the blind auditions, if a judge/coach likes the voice of a contestant, they express their interest in having the contestant join their teams by pressing a button which turns their chairs around so they can face the contestant. If more than one judge/coach turn their chairs, the contestant has the right to choose which team to join. After forming the teams into a set number of contestants, the second phase starts.

In this second phase, a vocal trainer helps getting the contestants ready for the show. The coach and their assistant trainers group their teams into pairs or groups of three contestants to compete on one song on a boxing ring. The coach then chooses one of the contestants to move ahead to the following phase. The other coaches can steal the contestants who were not chosen. Similar to the blind auditions, if more than one coach expresses an interest in stealing a contestant, the contestant has the right to choose which team to join in the following phase: the live shows.

In the live shows, the whole show is produced live with a strong engagement from the audience at home and on social media. There is a celebratory festive atmosphere to this phase compared to the previous two phases. The episodes in this phase start with a medley of songs performed by the contestants as a group. In the first round of the live shows, the audience votes to choose one contestant and the coach chooses two. In the second round, the audience and the coach each choose one contestant. In the final round, the audience votes for one contestant from two in order to compete in the final episode. The title ‘The Voice’ is, in the end, won through the votes of the audience only.

In order to guarantee a wide viewership, MBC Group broadcast the show at 9 pm, KSA time (8 pm in Egypt and Lebanon) on two days of the weekend, Friday and Saturday. On Friday, a rerun of the previous week’s episode is broadcast, while the new one is broadcast on Saturday. Vivarelli (2014a, 2014b) argues that using television peak time and the strong social media platform together contributed to the high rate of viewership that was estimated at 100 million viewers for the finale.

The judges/coaches are not the only key participants on the show. The second season had a lead Egyptian male presenter, who was joined in the live shows by two Lebanese female presenters. One of them was on stage with the male presenter and the

other was in the social media room, called the V-room or the Blue Room on the show. The episodes also have a presenter voice-over who introduces each episode in SA with a Levantine accent. The following section provides more details on the participants.

4.3 The participants

Communication in the show takes place between the contestants, the judges/coaches, the presenters, the vocal trainers, and the contestants' families and friends. Since the study focuses on cross-country communication, this section first provides information on the number of participants per country. Second, it provides a brief profile of the judges and the presenters. Both the judges and the presenters take part in most of the conversations across the whole show. Even though the female presenters only joined in Episode 9, their share of communication is considerable.

4.3.1 The participants: countries and numbers

As shown in Table 4.1 below, the data come from 82 participants. They are distributed over the various countries as follows: 1 from Algeria, 14 from Egypt, 11 from Iraq, 2 from Jordan, 2 from Kurdistan Iraq, 13 from Lebanon, 17 from Morocco, 2 from Palestine, 1 from Puerto Rico, 4 from Saudi Arabia, 1 from Sudan, 10 from Syria, and 4 from Tunisia. The scope and number of participants from across the Arab countries and beyond makes this study, as far as the researcher knows, the first to include such a huge diversity in communication among Arabs.

It is important to note that this section lists all the participants in the show. The participant from Puerto Rico is the celebrity singer Ricky Martin. At the time of the show, Martin was a judge in *The Voice Australia*. He appeared as special guest at *The Voice, ṭahlā Ṣōṭ*, in the last episode where he performed two songs. Two relatively long English interviews with Martin take place in this episode. His presence, as will be elaborated later, indexes internationalism and connects the Arabic *The Voice* to the international franchise. His production of Arabic as a FL is seen as analogous to the production of Arabs of non-national dialects (NND); both have access to only formulaic expressions like thanks and greetings.

In addition, we see that the total number of Maghrebi participants is 22 (from Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria), while 59 participants are from the Mashreqi parts of the Arab world. Morocco has the biggest representation in the data. The data as such thus offers an adequate representation of the Maghrebi-Mashreqi ideology (see Section 2.3). Table 4.1 presents the participants, the countries they hail from, their roles in the show, and the stage they reached in the competition. 'Auditions' indicates Stage 1, 'battles' indicates Stage 2, 'live shows' indicates Stage 3, and 'final episode' indicates that a participant managed to reach the last episode. The list is arranged by alphabetic order of countries, to highlight the focus of the study, cross-country communication. The

country column also shows whether a contestant mentions that he or she lives in or belong to a foreign country as well.

Name	Country	Role	Last stage
1 Hayat	Algeria	contestant	battles
2 Muhammad Kareem	Egypt	main presenter	final episode
3 Sherine Abdelwahab	Egypt	judge/coach	final episode
4 Wahm	Egypt	contestant	final episode
5 Wahm's fiancée	Egypt	family/friend	auditions
6 Alaa Fuaad	Egypt	contestant	live shows
7 Muhammad Gaber (vocal trainer with Sherine)	Egypt	vocal trainer	final episode
8 Dr Iman (vocal trainer with Kadim)	Egypt	vocal trainer	final episode
9 Dr Amal (vocal trainer with Saber)	Egypt	vocal trainer	final episode
10 Muhammad Husaam	Egypt	contestant	live shows
11 Khaled	Egypt	contestant	live shows
12 Amira	Egypt	contestant	battles
13 Hanaan	Egypt	contestant	battles
14 Marwa Nagy	Egypt	contestant	live shows
15 Israa (Souma)	Egypt	contestant	auditions
16 Kadim As-Saher	Iraq	judge/coach	final episode
17 Adnaan Ebreisim	Iraq	contestant	live shows
18 Karraar	Iraq	contestant	live shows
19 Ali	Iraq	contestant	battles
20 Sattar Saad	Iraq	contestant	final episode (the winner)
21 Muhammad Al-Fares	Iraq	contestant	live shows
22 Samer	Iraq	contestant	live shows
23 Amer Tawfiq	Iraq	contestant	live shows
24 Simur Jalal	Iraq	contestant	final episode
25 Ashuur Tamrus (living in USA)	Iraq	contestant	battles
26 Rita (living in Austria)	Iraq	contestant	battles
27 Iyaad	Jordan	contestant	live shows
28 Firaas	Jordan	contestant	auditions
29 Mihvaan Saleh	Kurdistan Iraq	contestant	live shows
30 Mihvaan's brother	Kurdistan Iraq	family/friend	auditions

Name	Country	Role	Last stage
31 Aimée Sayah	Lebanon	presenter	final episode
32 Nadine Njeim	Lebanon	V-room presenter	final episode
33 Assi El Hallani	Lebanon	judge/coach	final episode
34 Ghazii El-Amir	Lebanon	contestant	live shows
35 Sallaam	Lebanon	contestant	battles
36 Nader Khurii (vocal trainer with Assi)	Lebanon	vocal trainer	final episode
37 Wael	Lebanon	contestant	battles
38 Ahmed Hussein	Lebanon	contestant	live shows
39 Ingrid Bawaab	Lebanon	contestant	live shows
40 Nancy	Lebanon	contestant	live shows
41 Sheryl	Lebanon	contestant	battles
42 Reem Mahran	Lebanon	contestant	live shows
43 Rabie	Lebanon (living in Sweden)	contestant	live shows
44 Khawla Mujahid	Morocco	contestant	live shows
45 Zeinab	Morocco	contestant	auditions
46 Zeinab's friend	Morocco	family/friend	auditions
47 Zeinab's group of friends	Morocco	family/friend	auditions
48 Zeinab's waiter	Morocco	family/friend	auditions
49 Sanaa Abdelhamid	Morocco	contestant	live shows
50 Sahar	Morocco	contestant	live shows
51 Sahar's brother	Morocco	family/friend	battles
52 Nidaal	Morocco	contestant	battles
53 Mahmud Turaabi	Morocco	contestant	live shows
54 Farawla (Asmaa's friend)	Morocco	family/friend	auditions
55 Asmaa's friends	Morocco	family/friend	auditions
56 Asmaa	Morocco	contestant	auditions
57 Halima	Morocco	contestant	battles
58 Hamza	Morocco	contestant	auditions
59 Ayub	Morocco	contestant	battles
60 Marwaan	Morocco	contestant	auditions
61 Sherin	Palestine	contestant	auditions
62 Mona	Palestine, Tunisia (living in England)	contestant	battles
63 Ricky Martin	Puerto Rico	show guest	final episode
64 Muhammad	Saudi Arabia	contestant	battles
65 Sara (Muhammad's daughter)	Saudi Arabia	family/friend	auditions

Name	Country	Role	Last stage
66 Abdelaziz	Saudi Arabia	contestant	battles
67 Muhammad Hashem	Saudi Arabia	contestant	battles
68 Nile	Sudan	contestant	live shows
69 Khaled Hajaar	Syria	contestant	battles
70 Hala Quseir	Syria	contestant	final episode
71 Hanin	Syria	contestant	battles
72 Ghazii Khattab	Syria	contestant	live shows
73 Amaar Khattab	Syria	contestant	live shows
74 Lulu (Ghazii's daughter)	Syria	family/friend	auditions
75 Father of Amaar and Ghazii	Syria	family/friend	live shows
76 Ola	Syria	contestant	battles
77 Ola's consultant	Syria	family/friend	auditions
78 Amaar Shamaa	Syria	contestant	battles
79 Saber Rebaie	Tunisia	judge/coach	final episode
80 Aida	Tunisia	contestant	live shows
81 Nadia	Tunisia	contestant	live shows
82 Muhammad Dihlaab	Tunisia	contestant	live shows

Table 4.1 The participants, countries of origin, their roles, and level of participation in the show

The globalized and superdiverse aspects of the show are not only reflected by the diversity of the judges, presenters, and the contestants, but also through the interplay of international, pan-Arab, and national features that are present in the show. The ambition to reach an international audience outside the Arab world is clear from preserving the name of the show, *The Voice*, and the international format that is repeated in all countries hosting the same show. Moreover, the invitation of Ricky Martin at the end of Season 2 (the case study) to debut his new songs *Adrenalina* and *Come With Me* (Vivarelli, 2014a) gives the show a wider international resonance.

The following subsection provides brief profiles on the four judges and the three presenters. The focus on these seven participants is important for several reasons. First, they are the ones who in nearly all cases steer and initiate the communication. Second, they communicate with all the contestants and with each other. Third, most of them are present from the beginning to the final episode. As mentioned above, the share of communication of the two female presenters who joined only in Episode 9 is equally significant.

4.3.2 The judges and presenters

In the second season, the judges/coaches are Kadim As-Saher, an Iraqi composer, singer, and poet; Assi El Hallani, a Lebanese singer; Saber Reba'y, a Tunisian composer and singer; and Sherine Abdelwahab, an Egyptian singer. They represent four of the five

main dialectal regions of the Arab world (see Section 2.1). The main host of the show is the Egyptian actor and presenter Muhammad Kareem, who is joined in the live performances by the Lebanese presenter Aimée Sayah. The Lebanese presenter Nadine Njeim, who also joined in the live performances, presents from the social media room, referred to in the show as the Blue Room or the V-room. Below are brief profiles of each of the four judges and the three presenters.

Kadim As-Saher (judge/coach)

Referred to by his fans as ‘The Caesar of the Arab Singing’, the original full name of the Iraqi musician was Kadim Jabbar Ibrahim As-Samarāḩī, until he officially changed it to Kadim As-Saher in February, 2019 (RT Online, 2019a). As-Saher was born in Mosul in 1958 (in other sources 1957) to a family with seven brothers and two sisters. At an early age, the family moved to Baghdad, the capital of Iraq, where he grew up in the Al-Hurriya District. As mentioned in his interview with Grundey (2014), As-Saher’s, aged 12, first instrument was a guitar, which he bought after selling his bicycle. In a three-month period, he composed his first classically influenced piece that lasts for 10 or 12 minutes. Against his parents’ wishes, as they wanted him to be a lawyer or a doctor, As-Saher studied for six years in Baghdad’s Academy of Fine Arts. In the Academy, As-Saher sharpened his early talents and studied Arabic and Western music, as well as Iraqi folk music.

Near the end of the Iraqi-Iran war (1980-1988) and while he was still a student at the Academy, As-Saher’s career and fame took off, with some big hits. These included *Ladghat El Hayya [The Snake Bite]* which the Iraqi government tried to ban, and *Abart Al Shat [I Crossed the River]*, which was about to get him expelled from the Academy because it was against the established conventions of classical music that students were expected to produce back then.

Kadim is famous for his own composing style, with dense, complex ballads inspired by poetry (Grundey, 2014). He started composing for the Syrian poet Nizaar Qabbani (1923-1998), known as the ‘Women’s Poet’, who later started writing poetry mainly for Kadim in order to compose the lyrics for his poems and sing them, in MSA. Kadim met Qabbani in Beirut while he was moving from one place to another, affected by the first Gulf war in 1990. Until the death of Qabbani in 1998, they produced over 30 romantic songs that reached across the Arab world. This partnership with Qabbani made As-Saher one of the main singers performing in SA across the modern Arab world (Turk, 2015).

As-Saher has become well established as one of the most influential figures in the history of Arabic music. He performed at some of the world’s biggest venues, such as London’s Royal Albert Hall and cooperated with Western artists, such as Sarah Brightman, Quincy Jones, and Lenny Kravitz. Kadim divides his life between his homes in several countries, such as Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, France, Canada, and Morocco. He mentioned to Grundey (2014): ‘For me, politicians make borders. They divide the world (...) But the world is my country’. In 2011, As-Saher was named a UN

Goodwill Ambassador for Iraq to help raise awareness about the suffering of children in the war-torn country (Al Jazeera, 2011).

He joined *The Voice* as a judge and a coach for the first three seasons: 2012, 2013, and 2015.

Assi El Hallani (judge/coach)

Not unlike As-Saher's reception, Assi El Hallani has been called 'The Knight of the Arab Song' by his fans. He produces his songs in Lebanese, Egyptian, Gulf, and Iraqi dialects. However, in an interview with Al-Arabiya, he has said that he considers the Bedouin song to be his specialty (Quenayber, 2019). Assi was born in 1970 and he is originally from Ba'albak, Lebanon. In an interview on the MBC show *Hatha Ana [This is Me]* in 2011, he revealed that his original name is Muhammad El Hallani, but he named himself Assi after the river Assi in Lebanon, and after the famous Lebanese musician Assi El-Rahbani (1923-1986). El Hallani was raised in Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, where he currently lives with his wife Colette Boulos, a former Miss Lebanon, his son Al-Waleed, and two daughters, Marita and Dana.

In 1988, at the age of 17, Assi started his career after winning the Lebanese talent show *Studio Al-Fan*. He studied for five years at the Higher Institute of Music in Lebanon, specializing in Arabic vocal techniques and the oud, an Arabic stringed musical instrument resembling a lute or mandolin. According to his official website and at the time of writing this thesis, he has released 23 albums and 50 music videos. Assi is considered one of the most productive Lebanese musicians. He has performed in several Arab countries including Syria, Qatar, UAE, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, and Jordan. He also performed in world famous venues such as the Albert Hall in London, the MGM Las Vegas, the Palais des Congres in Paris, and Fox Theatre in Detroit (Assi El Hallani Official Website).

In 2012, Assi was named a UN Goodwill Ambassador for Lebanon under the initiative 'Live Lebanon'. He joined *The Voice* as a judge and a coach for the first four seasons: 2012, 2013, 2015, and 2018.

Sherine Abdelwahab (judge/coach)

Also known as *Es-Sit Sherine* [Her Lady Sherine], her full name is Sherine Sayyed Muhammad Abdelwahab. According to the official Facebook page of Sherine Abdelwahab, the Egyptian singer was born in Cairo on October 10, 1980. Her career as a singer started in the early 2000s with two duet songs; the first was with the Egyptian singer Muhammad Mohey, and the other was with the Egyptian singer Tamer Hosney. Her biggest hit was *Ah ya Leil*, which gained her so much fame that she is sometimes called 'Sherine Ah ya Leil'.

Sherine sings mainly in Egyptian dialect. However, in 2019 she produced a song in Gulf dialect, which reached two million viewers on YouTube only ten days after the release of the song (Al-Qalah News, 2019). Sherine is famous for her sense of humor and spontaneity, which has caused her some problems with the Egyptian government

(Ibrahim, 2019; RT Online, 2019b). For instance, in two different live concerts, Sherine made jokes about the pollution of the Nile and the level of freedom of expression in Egypt. These instances drew heat from activists in the media. Sherine had to apologize for these comments confirming her love and loyalty to Egypt. She said she would be careful in the future about these spontaneous jokes.

In many interviews, Sherine does not hide that she comes from a lower-class family. She started singing at the age of 13 when she was in primary school. She used to sing at some neighborhood weddings and celebrations. Her music teacher believed in her talent and convinced her parents to allow Sherine to join the Cairo Opera House (Arageek, n.d.), where she joined the children's choir of the renowned conductor Selim Sihaab. Later on, she joined the Institute of Arab Music in Cairo, but she quit her studies after her second year to focus on her career. In 2003, she had an unsuccessful experience as an actress. However, her second attempt in 2015 elicited more positive comments from the audience and the critics.

Sherine joined *The Voice* as a judge and a coach for the first three seasons: 2012, 2013, and 2015.

Saber Reba'y (judge/coach)

Saber Reba'y is a Tunisian singer born in Sfax in 1967, often called 'The Prince of Arabic Classical Singing' by his fans. He is a violinist and studied the oud for five years in the High Institute of Music in Tunisia. Reba'y sings in Tunisian, Egyptian, Gulf, Lebanese, and Iraqi dialects. His career started in 1990 on Tunisian radio, and he performed at the Carthage Music Festival in 1994. Not only did he achieve fame among the Tunisian audience at an early age, he also reached the whole Arab audience by winning the Gold Microphone Award in Cairo in 1997 (Layalina Website, 2019a). The year 2000 witnessed sweeping success for his song *Sidi Mansour*, which has become his signature song on his musical tours. In an interview with Saber Reba'y on YouTube by an Iraqi radio channel, the presenter asks Saber about his experience with singing in Iraqi dialect and whether there were any difficulties singing in this dialect. Saber replied that he received help with stress, intonation, assimilation, and pronunciation specific to the Iraqi dialect from the Iraqi composer he was working with (Radio Archive, 2017). In 2009, he was named a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador of the North African Countries of the Arab world.

Saber joined *The Voice* as a judge and a coach for the first three seasons: 2012, 2013, and 2015.

All four judges are well-established stars and celebrities across different generations in the Arab world. They all have a history of singing in different dialects and reach international audiences; three of them have been named Goodwill Ambassadors. The four judges are not just pop singers; rather, they have gained reputations among their fans that indicate their ability to perform within classical Arabic conventions and techniques, as also indicated by the honorific titles they are known by. In that sense, they assume an in-between position among the progressive and conventional schools

of Arabic music. It is possible that these shared features are the criteria on which MBC based the decision to choose them. They can guarantee the show a wider viewership, not only across the Arab world, but also among the Arab communities outside of the Arab world. The huge number of fans each judge can boast is a factor that increases audience's engagement, whether by voting or on social media.

Muhammad Kareem (presenter)

Born in 1980 into a family of politicians and physicians, Muhammad Kareem finished his high school in the US. Following the tradition of his family, Kareem joined the faculty of medicine at Ain Shams University in Egypt (El Cinema Website, 2019a). According to the Gololy Website (2012), Kareem owns a medical center where he practices his profession as a physician alongside his career as an actor and a TV presenter. Muhammad obtained his master's degree in Physical Medicine, Obesity and Weight Reduction (Sako, n.d.). Muhammad started his career in entertainment as a model and achieved such wide success that he was awarded the Best Model Award in 1999. From 1999 to 2005, he acted in several productions. In order to sharpen his artistic talents, he returned to the US in 2005 in order to study acting in Hollywood (Layalina Website, 2019b).

Muhammad won several awards for his roles in *Stolen Kisses* and *Shahata's Store*. The Egyptian director Khaled Youssef directed the latter. He participated in the British movie *Facebook Romance* and was named the Best Actor in Monaco Cinema Festival, 2012 (Sako, n.d.). According to the IMDB Website (Sako, n.d.), Kareem was also awarded several regional and international Best Actor Awards from San Francisco, Alexandria, the Egyptian Oscars, and the Arab Film Festival in California. His films were also shown and sold out in Diaspora and Tribeca Film Festivals in New York and in the Los Angeles Film Festival, Arab Film Festival in California.

Kareem hosted *The Voice* for its first two seasons that were released: 2012 and 2013.

Aimée Sayah (presenter)

In 2014, Aimée Sayah joined Muhammad Kareem as a main presenter of *The Voice* starting from the live shows in Episode 9. Her Facebook page identifies her as a TV host, actress, and journalist. According to *Hia Magazine* (2019), Aimée was born in 1987 in Jbeil, Lebanon. Her father is the Lebanese journalist Ibrahim Sayah who encouraged her to start her career in the media. According to El Cinema Website (2019b), her grandfather is Khalil Sayah who established the first bookstore in 1947 in Jbeil District in Lebanon. Aimée started her media career in 2009 by hosting youth shows on the Lebanese channel MTV. She also achieved success as an actress through her role in the soap opera *wā ṭšraqqat aš-šams* [*The Sun has Risen*]. According to El Cinema Website (2019b), Aimée's talent already showed at the age of 12. She obtained a graduate degree in media studies, and she also studied communication skills at the Lebanese American University.

Aimée hosted *The Voice* in the second and the third season: 2013 and 2015.

Nadine Njeim (V-room presenter)

Nadine Wilson Njeim was named Miss Lebanon in 2007, she represented Lebanon in Miss World 2007 in China, and Miss Universe 2007 in Mexico. In an interview with Nadine Njeim on LBCI Lebanon (2014) she talks about how social media has become an integral part of the structure of *The Voice*. As the owner of an IT company, Nadine says that she feels she is in the right place in the show, and she knows what she is doing interacting with the contestants and encouraging the audience to vote. On the importance of social media, Nadine has talked about how one tweet can have what she calls a 'viral effect' on the audience to vote and to spread news about the contestants. Njeim was born in 1988 in Beirut. She studied Business Administration, International Trade and International Affairs at the American University of Lebanon (El Cinema Website, 2019c; Layalina Website, 2019c). She also has some experience in acting, as she played secondary roles in two soap operas in 2012 and 2014.

Nadine was the social media host in the first two seasons of *The Voice*: 2012 and 2013.

The presenters are from higher social classes, with good family histories, internationally educated, good looking, and multilingual. There is no doubt that these criteria are important since the presenters contribute to the image of MBC Group. Although it is hard to know whether their nationality was part of the selection criteria, it can be said, in light of the review presented in Chapter 2, that having the main presenter come from Egypt and the other two from Lebanon must have played a role in attracting a wider viewership to the second season of *The Voice* in the Arab world. As seen in Chapter 2, the Mashreqi Egyptian and Levantine varieties of Arabic dominate the Arabic media and they have become the most commonly heard dialects on pan-Arab TV.

The next section gives information about the corpus that was built from the communication among the participants in the show.

4.4 The corpus

After watching all 14 episodes, and conducting a pilot study (Attwa, 2019), the decision was made to analyze ten episodes. These ten episodes are representative of the three phases of the show equally, inasmuch as the first three episodes of each phase are included. The reason behind the choice of these ten episodes was made to narrow down the scope of the analysis and for two other interdependent reasons. First, one of the goals of the analysis is to investigate any different dynamics of communication that may occur in the different phases of the program. The study looks into whether moving from the recorded shows to the live shows makes a difference in the communication strategies employed and the identities projected. Second, it was observed that the majority of the participants that continued until the end of the competition appeared in the first three episodes of the blind auditions. Therefore, it was thought important to

give priority to include a complete picture of their communication throughout the show. As seen in Table 4.2, the second phase (the battles) has only three episodes that are all included in the analysis. Regarding the finale of the show, it was thought important to include Episode 14 since this is the culmination of the show. It was deemed important to look at the dynamics of closing and finalizing the communication and the competition. Furthermore, it was assumed that studying the last episode may not only reveal more indexes on the meanings and identities but also new linguistic features if any. Table 4.2 presents the episodes by the three phases.

Phase	Episodes analyzed	Total N episodes
Blind auditions	1, 2, 3	5
Battles	6, 7, 8	3
Live shows	9, 10, 11, 14	6
Total	10	14

Table 4.2 Episodes analyzed by the phases of the show

A corpus was built from the CI in these episodes. A CI is a conversation between at least two people happening on the screen. Therefore, when a participant, for example, was addressing the audience, that speech was not considered a CI. Likewise, when a speaker appears to be talking to someone else but there is no response on the screen from the interlocutor, this talk was not included in the data. This is to ensure that communication is taking place in all data points, and it is clear who it is addressed to.

The span of a CI is determined by the continuation of the interaction on the same topic. For example, the interactions that take place between the judges and the contestant after their performance is a CI. In case a presenter joins in the conversation, the CI is still in place since the topic of the conversation is the same. The CI is not interrupted even if the conversation between the presenter and the contestant moves backstage to comment on the contestant’s performance. That way a better analysis was expected to be reached of a communication that starts and ends in one instance of the show. In total, the ten episodes yielded 166 CIs. Table 4.3 shows the number of instances each episode has. As shown in the table, per phase each episode had more or less the same number of CIs. This is because the structure and timing of the episodes were more or less similar within each phase.

Phase	Episode	N CIs	Total
Blind auditions	Episode 1	13	38
	Episode 2	13	
	Episode 3	12	
Battles	Episode 6	8	24
	Episode 7	8	
	Episode 8	8	
Live shows	Episode 9	27	80
	Episode 10	27	
	Episode 11	26	
The final	Episode 14	24	24
Total			166

Table 4.3 Number of CIs by phases and episodes

Transcriptions of the CIs are made using the CLAN program. CLAN (Computerized Language Analysis) is an open-source software that was created for the purpose of creating and analyzing transcripts in the Child Language Data Exchange System (CHILDES) database. At the beginning of the data collection phase, the program was chosen because it was thought to allow easy searches for features, frequencies, and users. Another reason for choosing the program is that it allows embedding the videos in the same files of the CI, which allows easy access to the data.

However, for optimal use of CLAN, Arabic language linguistic features should have been coded, in nonprofessional language: translated or programmed, into the CLAN software in order for the program to recognize, annotate, and analyze Arabic language and its dialects. While performing the pilot study, Attwa (2019), looking for linguistic frequencies and features by CLAN was thought needed for the analysis in order to establish the use of certain dialects. However, the results in Attwa (2019) made clear that for purposes of the current study a strictly linguistic analysis was not an efficient method; rather a sociolinguistic approach is needed. Due to CLAN's lack of coding of the Arabic language and dialects and the shift in the approach, the software was not efficient for the analysis in the current study. Having said that, the program was useful in saving the CIs, the videos, and the participant profiles.

A useful feature of CLAN is that it profiles each participant in a specific profile box that opens when a new CI is entered. The researcher can give each participant in a CI a name, assign their roles in the communication, and specify the language they use. This allows for easy access of the data related to each participant.

As per the structure of CLAN, names should not exceed seven characters. Therefore, all names are given an abbreviation in the program. For example, Sherine is named 'SHR'; Muhammad Kareem is 'KRM', and so on. These abbreviations also facilitate the

differentiation between participants who share the same name, like the presenter Muhammad who is referred to as 'KRM' and the vocal coach Muhammad who is referred to as 'MHM'.

The different roles are chosen from a drop-down menu in the profile box of each participant, such as 'friend', 'media', and 'teacher'. These roles are assigned to the participants on the show based on the task they perform in the show. For instance, the presenters are given the CLAN role 'media', the trainers are given the CLAN role 'teacher', the coaches/judges are given the CLAN role 'judge', contestants are given the CLAN role 'participant', and their family or friends are given the CLAN role 'family/friend'. The CLAN role 'group' is specified when a team or group of speakers are speaking together and it is not clear who is speaking or what is being said, mainly because the camera does not show who is producing the utterance. In this case as well no specific language is specified, the UNK (unknown) is then mentioned for the language.

CLAN uses a three-letter abbreviation to denote the language of the speaker. For FLs, English is denoted by 'eng', and French by 'frn'. Specifying the Arabic variety in the profile box is determined on the basis of the country a speaker claims to be from. For example, in case contestants mention they are from Iraq, the language specified for them is 'irq', Egypt is given the language 'egy', and Lebanon is given the language 'leb', and so on. The four judges and presenters are famous enough that their countries of origin are known without having to be mentioned in the show. Table 4.4 presents the number of speakers per variety of Arabic. The table is ordered from bigger to smaller numbers. The two speakers from Kurdistan Iraq (a contestant and his brother) spoke mainly in the Iraqi dialect. The contestant used Kurdish in only one CI with the main presenter.

Variety	N speakers
Morocco (mrc)	17
Egypt (egy)	14
Iraq (irq)	13
Lebanon (leb)	13
Syria (syr)	10
Saudi Arabia (sau)	4
Tunisia (tun)	4
Jordan (jor)	2
Palestine (pal)	2
Algeria (alg)	1
Kurdistan Iraq (irq)	1
Sudan (sud)	1

Table 4.4 Number of speakers of the Arabic varieties

The CIs were transliterated in CLAN. Transcription of the data in Arabic script would not represent the subtle differences between the dialects, therefore the transliteration of the 166 CIs was made in Latin script. CLAN does not allow special characters for the transliteration; for that reason, CIs were written in plain Latin script, with upper and lower cases used to differentiate between sounds. The examples chosen to be cited in this study are represented by an adaptation of the system ISO 233-2:1993(E). The adapted transliterated system is mentioned at the beginning of this study. The following section discusses the analysis of the corpus.

4.5 Data analysis

As mentioned above, the first analysis was done on the linguistic level, while piloting for the main study. Part of the results are published in Attwa (2019). This first analysis revealed that the predominant pattern of communication is that speakers use their own NDs. There are also certain locations where participants appear to use features of SA, NNDs, or FLs. Based on these first results, in order to identify why participants employ particular features, the level of analysis shifted to a more sociolinguistic level where the relevant fragments were investigated in more depth.

In this study, the 166 CIs (see above section) of the data were investigated and studied at least five times. Each time was accompanied by watching the episodes in order to ensure a thorough study of the data. This means that every CI was analyzed at least ten times.

As mentioned in the quote and introduction that began this chapter, the study adopts both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. In the quantitative analysis, the number of times features of a NND, of SA, and FLs used were counted. The results were grouped to establish the patterns and the ranking, if any, of these features. The qualitative method was used to investigate the meanings, values, and shared knowledge behind the use of these features.

Data from the 'groups' (a CLAN role – see Section 4.4) were eliminated from the analysis since it is often not clear which participant is responsible for an utterance. However, the data from participants who provided the only data from their respective countries (Jordan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, plus the participant who says she belongs to Palestine, Tunisia, and England) were analyzed in order to see whether they match the overall findings.

In order to answer the first research question, three different Excel spreadsheets were maintained in order to count the occurrences of NND, SA, and FL features. First, it was specified when participants used NNDs. An Excel spreadsheet was created and the occurrences were coded for the episode, the CI, the speaker, the interlocutor, the NND used, the utterance in which the non-national features used, where possible the reason why this was done, and finally a column for any further comments.

A second Excel spreadsheet was created to record the occurrences of SA features. This sheet includes the episode and the CI, the participants involved, the utterance featuring SA features, the reason for using them, and further comments by the researcher.

Finally, the data were investigated in two rounds to record where participants used foreign features. The investigation was carried out twice in order to determine whether the features used can be considered loanwords or a longer stretch. Therefore, two Excel spreadsheets were created. The first sheet recorded the use of foreign words. Again, the episode, the CI, the participants, the loanword or expression, the original FL, the reason for using it, and any further comments were entered into separate columns. The second sheet specified the occurrence of longer foreign language stretches (FS), with similar coding.

In order to answer the second research question, the data were studied twice to identify occurrences where participants negotiated meanings and communication strategies, and to identify metalinguistic discussions. Once again, the relevant data were coded in Excel spreadsheets. For meaning negotiations, the spreadsheet specified the episode, the CI, the participants, how the settlement of this negotiation took place, and further comments by the researcher. The spreadsheet for metalinguistic discussion was similar.

To answer the third research question, a seventh Excel spreadsheet was set up to record any explicit expression of identity made by the participants. The instances were coded for the episode, the CI, the speaker, the interlocutor, the expression of identity, the country expressed, the speaker's country, and five category labels: bonding, representation, delegate, pan-Arab, and universal. A close study of the data was run in order to establish these labels as the final basis for categorization. These five labels were used to determine the reasons participants had for making an expression of identity.

The episodes were investigated one more time in order to check for any expressions of identity outside of the 166 CIs. Based on repeated observation of the data and the episodes, it was deemed important to check whether there were any different kinds of identity expression between the main corpus and the rest of the show. The analysis was run again and for every identified instance, coding was applied: the episode, where in the episode the expression took place, the speaker, the dialect, the interlocutor(s), mainly being the audience, a description of the situation, and the labels of diaspora, universal, national, and pan-Arab. Similar to the above category, a close study of the data was run in order to confirm the relevance of these labels as the final list of categories. The spreadsheet also included a column for any further comments by the researcher.

The following three chapters present the results for each of the three research questions. Chapter 7 also includes a final discussion to understand how identity indexicalities align or disaffiliate with the use of, on the one hand, the linguistic features and patterns, and, on the other hand, the social meanings and values associated with them, and the communication strategies participants use.

Linguistic features and patterns

- Kadim: *lammā ʔitkalam ʔusām, (shifts to Husaam) itkalam-it maʔr-ī?*
[When Husaam spoke, (shifts to Husaam) did you speak Egyptian?]
- Husaam: *ma-anā maʔr-ī ʔab'an.*
[I am Egyptian of course.]
- Kadim: *lamma ʔanēt el-ʔuǧniya mā ʔasēt-ak (Egyptian), ʔasēt-ak...*
[When you sang the song, I didn't think you were (Egyptian).
I thought you were ...]
- Saber: *ʔaliž-ī.*
[From the Gulf.]
- Kadim: *ʔaliž-ī.*
[From the Gulf.]
- Saber: *ʔay mīza.*
[This is an asset.]
(*The Voice*, Season 2, Episode 7)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter and the following two present the answers to the three research questions. The present chapter provides answers to the first: What are the linguistic features and patterns available to and employed by the participants in a pan-Arab TV show? I will first present and discuss the linguistic features and patterns found in the data of the second season of *The Voice*. Next, I will discuss the meanings and indexicalities of these features and patterns in their totality, in order to establish the shared cultural knowledge and resources that are operating in Arabic cross-country communication in *The Voice*.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, Attwa (2019) found that the dominant pattern of communication in the show is that each participant uses features of the dialect of the country they claim their belonging to. The quote at the beginning of the chapter is exemplary for this result. When asked whether he spoke Egyptian Arabic, Husaam answered that that was naturally the case since he was Egyptian. However, the analysis also found other linguistic features that were used at certain points in the communication. These features were of SA and FL origin. Figure 5.1 introduces an overview of the features and the patterns in the show.

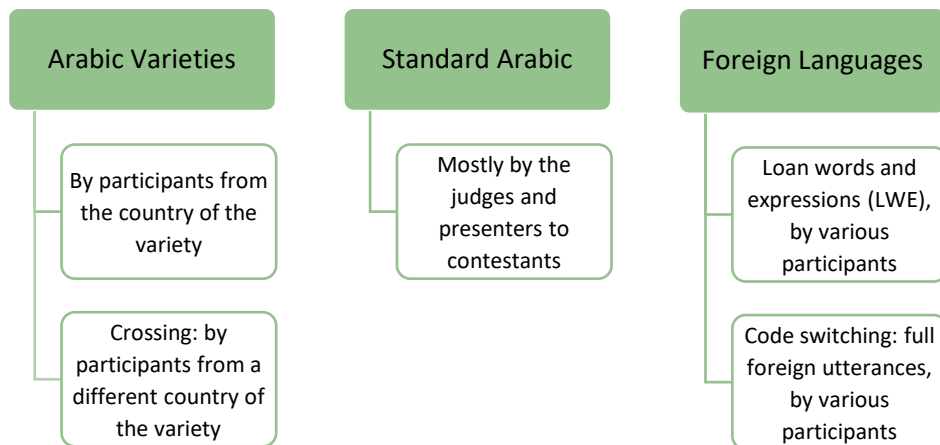


Figure 5.1 Overview of linguistic features and patterns in the show

The chart shows an overview since there are some exceptions to these general patterns as will be made clear in detail below. It is important to note that this chapter focuses on the upper-level patterns in the chart since the focus is to explore what features and patterns are present in the data. The usages labelled crossing and CS, under Arabic Varieties and Foreign Languages, respectively, are discussed in the following chapter, as they are part of the communication strategies employed by the participants. Using features of SA is not considered crossing nor CS as it is seen as part of the linguistic repertoire of each individual Arab. The features of the variety of Arabic of each individual Arab and that of SA are part of the same continuum along which speakers move throughout their life experiences (Al-Batal, 2017; Badawi, 1973).

Another point that is important to note is that SA and FL features appeared in specific locations amid the dominant pattern of communication, using features of the Arabic variety of the region where the participants claim they belong to. The data showed that the use of SA and FL features were not prime tools of communication among Arabs from different countries. It was only during the two interviews with Ricky Martin in the final episode that the English language was the language of communication. The presentation below focuses on the moments at which SA and FL were used.

The linguistic features of the Arabic varieties, SA and FL appeared as either dynamic or static. A feature was dynamic, which was the prevailing pattern, when it was the actual utterance of the speaker, rather than one that was read from a prompt or repeated. In the last cases, it was labeled ‘static’, signifying that the feature was produced by repetition or reading, for example, from a social media message.

Following this introduction, the chapter includes four sections. Section 5.2 introduces examples from the dominant pattern of the majority of the participants, using features of the Arabic variety of their own region or country. Section 5.3 presents the patterns and locations of SA features, and Section 5.4 does the same for foreign

loanwords and expressions (LWE). The final section is a discussion of the meanings of these features and patterns. The chapter ends with a conclusion.

5.2 Distinctive linguistic features and patterns of different varieties of Arabic

The data revealed the presence of the distinctive linguistic features of the different varieties of Arabic of the countries that the participants claimed they belong to. In total, 12 countries were represented in the data: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kurdistan Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, and Tunisia.

Two main patterns of using these features were found. The primary pattern was that participants predominantly used the distinctive features of the Arabic variety of their own country. This is referred to as the participant's national dialect (ND). The only exception to this pattern was the Algerian contestant who did not mainly use Algerian linguistic features but instead used mostly Lebanese features. This exception is discussed under the label of *crossing* in the next chapter, where the focus is on the second pattern: the use of features of a non-national dialect (NND). This second pattern, crossing, occurred 98 times. The following section presents examples of the first pattern.

5.2.1 Pattern of using participants' national dialect

In the ten episodes analyzed, 166 communication instances (CI) were counted. The participants predominately used features of their ND. Three CI, each from a different phase of the show, are discussed below to show participants using this pattern (with the exception of Algerian contestant Hayat as mentioned above). These examples were selected because they contain a high number of varieties. This provides the most dramatic illustration of this pattern, maintained throughout the different phases of the show. The identification of NDs was based on the use of the linguistic features that were distinctive for each ND (see Chapter 2). Of the 12 countries mentioned above, Jordan, Kurdistan Iraq, Palestine, and Sudan were not represented in these examples. The data contained a maximum of two participants from each of these countries and the CI in which they participated only included two participants. Nevertheless, for these participants too, the general pattern was observed.

Example 1

The first example is from Episode 1, the blind auditions. The participants, their roles, and countries are presented in Table 5.1.

Name	Role	Country
Assi	judge	Lebanon
Kadim	judge	Iraq
Kareem	presenter	Egypt
Khawla	contestant	Morocco
Saber	judge	Tunisia
Sherine	judge	Egypt

Table 5.1 Participants in Example 1

- Kadim: *masā? el-ḥēr!*
[Good evening!]
- Khawka: *masā en-nūr!*
[Good evening!]
- Kadim: *šū ismék?*
[What is your name?]
- Khawla: *ḥawlā mujāhid.*
[Khawla Mujahid.]
- Kadim: *bārak aḷḷah laḷḷah ‘alā hā-šōṭ el-ḥelew!*
[Praise be to God for such a beautiful voice!]
- Khawla: *šukran!*
[Thank you!]
- Kadim: *tistāhlī, iḥnā nīrīd el-ašwāṭ el-žamīla il-li miṭlik ḥaqīqa, ya ‘nī, aḥsantī!*
[You deserve to be here. We do want beautiful voices like yours. Good job!]
- Sherine: *ya ‘nī anā kunt fakrā šōṭ Beyoncé bas, lākin kamān ṭeli-tī šaba-hā.*
[I thought only your voice resembled Beyoncé’s, but it turned out that you also look like her.]
- Khawla: *(laughing)*
- Sherine: *‘enē-kī, ‘ēn Beyoncé bez-zabṭ. we ēh el-misaḥāt el ‘and-ik fī šōṭ-ek dih!*
[Your eyes are exactly like hers. Such strength you have in your voice!]
- Kadim: *mašā? aḷḷah!*
[Praise be to God!]
- Khawla: *rabinā yiḥalī-kī!*
[God bless you!]
- Sherine: *miš haneḥsid-hā!*
[We won’t envy her!]
- Kadim: *(laughing) lā lā, b-agūl mašā? aḷḷah.*
(laughing) [No, no, just praising God.]
- Sherine: *aho el-ḥašab aho! (laughing)*
[Here, touch wood!] *(laughing)*

- Assi: *ḥawlā adāʔ-ik fazēʔ, wē ultē išiyā ʕaʔb ḥada yeʔul-ḡ, b-hanī-kē!*
 [Khawla, your performance is great. You sang things that are difficult for most people. Congratulations!]
- Saber: *ḥawlā, intī ʕōṭ-ik mutamakin we ḥassīt li-wahlé inn-ik ʔand-ik taʕruba kbīré yaʔnī f-el-maḡnā we ḥuʕuʕan fel-lōn ḥaḡaya ʔel-lī huwā hard ʕuwiya. we fakkr-tī-nī be-Witney Houston. tistāh-lī in-nik ʔtkūn-ī fī The Voice.*
 [Khawla, you have a strong voice. I felt for a moment that you have big experience in singing, especially in this difficult style. You reminded me of Whitney Houston. You deserve to be in *The Voice*.]
- Khawla: *ʕukran!*
 [Thank you!]
- Saber: *ʕūt-ik min ḡimn el-aʕwāt il-lī kunnā nabḡaṭ ʔan-hā, we ʔ!!ḡah yuwafḡ-ik fī ḡtiyār ma bin-nā tlāta yaʔnī.*
 [Your voice is among the voices I was looking for. Good luck in your choice from the three of us.]
- Sherine: *ḥawlā, ihnā ʕabāb zay baʔḡ we labsīn isswed zay baʔḡ, we sanat-nā ḡilwa inʕāʔ ʔ!!ḡah el-sanā-dī, fā, anā ʔayzākī maʔāya.*
 [Khawla, we are both young and wearing black, and we will have a good season together. I want you in my team.]
- Khawla: *ʕaʔb el-iḡtiyār, perce que kamlīn asātīḡa tabārak ʔ!!ḡah ʔindkum taʕriba, we ḡādī nitʔalam min-kum kamlīn (break) we ha-niḡṭār kāzim.*
 [It is a difficult choice because, Praise be to God, you are all great masters with big experience and I will learn from all of you (*break*) I will choose Kadim.]
- Sherine: *anā ʔarfah, ʔenēhā ḡarba keda.*
 [I knew it. Her eyes are looking this way.]
- Kadim: *aḡsan-tī!*
 [Good job!]
- (backstage)
- Kareem: *asbat-tī ēh en-nahārda min ḡilāl waʔfit-ik ʔala masraḡ The Voice we le-dinyā kul-lahā?*
 [Through standing on the stage of *The Voice*, what did you proof for the whole world?]
- Khawla: *el-talent il-lī ʔindī, el-ḡamdu-lil-lah! ḡādu kā ni-tḡadim fīh, we kā ni-tbit le-l-nās kamlīn yaʔnī il-li mā ʔumrhum mā ittāḡit la-hum furʕah, baʕ yi-werr-iw el-talent il-le ʔnd-hum, je [sic] vraiment heureuse!*
 [I will develop the talent I have, thanks be to God! I prove to those who have not gotten a chance yet that they can show their talent. I am really happy!]

In this example, the six participants, regardless of their role in the show, maintained the distinctive features of the Arabic variety spoken in their respective countries. In the case of the Moroccan contestant, the use of French features was considered part of the distinctive features of the Moroccan dialect. Hachimi (2012) mentioned that CS between Moroccan dialect and French language is the unmarked speech in Morocco. The use of

foreign features is examined in more details further below in Section 5.4. In this instance, MBC Group had the practice of providing subtitles to the Moroccan contestants. Providing subtitles is discussed under the features of SA below.

In this example, Kadim maintained Iraqi features in his speech. Some of the Iraqi phonological features were the *imāla*¹ in *ism-êk* [your name], the diphthong /ew/ typical of the word *helew* [sweet], and the pronunciation of /ž/, /t/, and /q/. He also shifted the /q/ to /g/ (typical of the *gelet* variety, see Section 2.1.3) later when he spoke more casually to Sherine in *b-agūl* [I say]. Other Iraqi lexical features were found as well, such as: the question word *šū* [what], the demonstrative *ha* [this], and the idiomatic expression *bārak a!!qah la!!qah* [God bless].

Sherine and Kareem both maintained many linguistic features of the Egyptian variety. Some examples of phonological features were the open flat vowels, the absence of emphatic vowels and *imāla*, the shift of /d/ to sibilant /z/ in the word *bez-zabṭ* [exactly], the shift of /t/ to /s/, and the shift of /q/ to /ʔ/. Some lexical features were *ēh* [what], *en-nahārda* [today], *bas* [only], *dih* [this], and *ʔāho* [here it is]. Grammatical features were the verb patterns *ʔeli-tī* [you turned out to be] and *asbat-tī* [you have proven]. Another feature was the syntactic feature of placing the question word at the end of the question as in Kareem's question to Khawla.

Moving to the Lebanese features in Assi's utterance, some phonological examples were found in the *imāla* in *fazê'* [terrific], *wê* [and], *ult-ê* [you said], and *išiyâ* [things]. Some lexical features were recorded as well, such as *išiyâ* [things] and *hada* [someone].

Tunisian phonological features were found when Saber pronounces the final *imāla* /é/ distinctive of the Tunisian dialect, such as *li-wahlé* [for a moment] and *kbīré* [big]. He also maintained the pronunciation of /ž/, the deletion of short vowels in the first syllable of words such as *kbīré* [big], *ʔtkūn-ī* [you are], and the shortening of vowels in *hassīt* [I felt] and *šuwīya* [a little]. An example of a lexical feature was the demonstrative *haḡaya* [this].

The last participant in this example was the Moroccan contestant to whom MBC provide SA subtitles. Khawla used Moroccan features in her speech such as the use of French features: *el-talent* [the talent], *parce que* [because], and her final expression *je [sic] vraiment heureuse* [I am really happy]. Moroccan phonological features were found, such as the use of /q/ sound and the shift of /t/ to /t/. Lexical items include *ḡādu* [I will], *kamlīn* [all], and *baš* [in order to]. Grammatical features included the verb pattern *yi-wer-iw* [they show], the aspect marker *ḡādī* [I will], the indicative verb marker *kā-*, and the use of *n-* for first person indicative verbs: *ni-t'alam* [I learn], *ni-tqadim* [I progress], and *ni-tbit* [I prove].

¹ As occurred in the data, *imāla* is the fronting and raising of long /ā/ towards emphatic /â/ or non-emphatic /ê/, and of short /a/ towards emphatic /â/ or non-emphatic /é/. The difference between the emphatic or non-emphatic categories is regional, where Lebanese and Tunisians tend to shift towards /é/ and /ê/, while Syrians and Iraqis tend to shift towards /â/ and /â/.

Example 2

The second example is from Episode 7, the battles. The participants, their roles, and countries are presented in Table 5.2.

Name	Role	Country
Abd El-Aziz	contestant	Saudi Arabia
Amal	trainer	Egypt
Muhammad El-Fares (Mfars)	contestant	Iraq
Saber	judge	Tunisia

Table 5.2 Participants in Example 2

- Saber: *anê bi-l-nisbê li-ya anê ma-'andī-š mawāhib 'adiyê, 'andī nās muhtarfa tġanī. el-uġniyá el-iġtartá li-šōtēn el-žayin hiyá uġniyyīt bala ħub le-rāšid el-māzid. wēš kūn šāyf nafsu f-el-uġniyê, yiqol-lī. inta, we inta, mīn?*
[For me, I don't have normal talents. I have professional people singing. The song which I chose for the coming two voices is *Bala Ĥub* by Rashid El-Majid. Whoever sees himself in the song, tell me. You, and you. Who?]
- Abd El-Aziz: *mumkin.*
[Maybe.]
- Saber: *bul'ez (short for Abd El-Aziz), we mīn eš kūn m'āk t-ħib?*
[Bul'ez (short for Abd El-Aziz), and who do you like to be with you?]
- Abd El-Aziz: *wqj-!ahī anā mā mā ħib! anā mālī 'ilāqa ya'nī. (laughing)*
[I don't like anything! It is not my business.] (laughing)
- Saber: *bul'ez, eš-kūn?*
[Bul'ez, who?]
- Abd El-Aziz: *wqj-!ah atwāqa' inn-ū mħammad.*
[I guess it is Muhammad.]
- Saber: *lā kaḡalik! intum el-iġnēn b-il-l-nisbá liyá ana min el-ašwāt il-lī ša'b inī niġtār bin-hum fa-ntmana-lkum el-tawfiq we ni-tlaqaw fi fi-l-tamārīn.*
[It is so! For me, you are two voices hard to choose from. I wish you success and we see each other in the training.]
- (moving to the battle ring)
- Mfars: *lā tħāf!*
[Don't be scared!]
- Abd El-Aziz: (not clear) *inšq!!ah.*
(not clear) [God's willing.]
- Saber: *inta ħažūl šuwya.*
[You are a bit shy.]
- Amal: *ahh, huwa ħaġūl gidḡan miš šuwyaia.*
[Yes, he is very shy, not a bit.]

Saber: *el-ḥūf* [not clear: *ma-wid-dīš*] *udḥul, uṭruq babak.*
[I don't want you to veel scared.]

Speaking to his team, Saber maintained the features of the Tunisian dialect. Typical were the final *imāla* /é/ distinctive of Tunisian vowels as in *anê* [I] and *'adiyé* [normal], the deletion of vowels as in *t-ḡanī* [you sing] and *t-ḥib* [you like], the pronunciation of the /ž/ sound, and the lexical features *wēš kūn* [which one could he/she be] and *ēš kūn* [which one could he/she be].

Abd El-Aziz used the emphatic /ā/ and /ā̄/ typical of Saudi dialect vowels, as in *anā* [I] and *atwāqqa'* [I expect], where he also used the /q/ sound. On the syntactic level, he used the negation *mā ḥib* [I do not like].

In this instance, Muhammad El-Fares did not speak much. The only utterance he gave came with the Iraqi feature of the so-called 'prohibition construction' *lā thāff* [don't be afraid], where he used the emphatic /ā̄/ as well.

Amal, the vocal trainer reiterated with Egyptian features some words that Saber had said with Tunisian features. She pronounced the word *ḥagūl* [shy] using /g/ in contrast of /ž/, the intensifier *giddan* [very] distinctive of Egyptian Arabic, and the negation particle *miš* [not]. She also pronounced the word *šuwaiya* [a little] in the Egyptian way versus how Saber had pronounced it *šuwiyá*.

Example 3

The third example is from Episode 14, the last one. The participants, their roles and countries are presented in Table 5.3.

Name	Role	Country
Hala Quseir	contestant	Syria
Nadine	presenter	Lebanon
Sattar Saad	contestant	Iraq
Simur Jalal	contestant	Iraq
Wahm	contestant	Egypt

Table 5.3 Participants in Example 3

Nadine: *karīm ma'ī halla wahim we simōr we sattār. wahim ḥabrīnā šū addamit-l-ék el-v-room bi birnāméž aḥlā šōṭ?*

[Kareem, I have now Wahm, Simur, Sattar with me. Wahm, tell us what did the V room offer you in *The Voice*?]

Wahm: *el-v-room addimm-le-nā iḍ-ḍiḥka w-el-bahaga w-et-ta'āruf 'an-nās aktar we aktar we zay mantī šayfa kul yōm bi-nu'ud nu-rʔuṣ we ni-ḍḥak aho, wara ho.*

[The V-room offered us laugh and joy. It made us know people better. As you see, every day we keep dancing and laughing. Here, you see, in the back.]

- Nadine: *šayf-în šayf-în we sam'-în!*
[Yes, we can see and hear!]
- Wahm: *we mabsût-în gidd-an we 'arraf-nā 'an-nās aktar aktar we tamam!*
[We are happy and we got to know people better. All is good!]
- Nadine: *nihnā kamān it'arafnā 'a šahšit-ék el-ħilwa yā wahim.*
[We also could know your nice personality, Wahm.]
- Wahm: *tislam-i-l-î!*
[Thank you!]
- Nadine: *wet-tšaraf-nā kamān!*
[It is our honor also!]
- Wahm: *tislam-î, ħabib-t-î!*
[Thank you!]
- Nadine: *simōr nafs is-sū?əl il-ak.*
[Simur, the same question for you.]
- Simur: *el-v-room qadam-nā bi šakil žamīl l-in-nās bi-šarāħa ħaħanə qarib-în m-in-nās ħalū in-nās ya 'rif-ün šahšiytnə el-ħaqiqiyə ya 'nī fa a'taqid qadam-nā ħidma žamīlə.*
[The V-room introduced us in a good way to the audience, really. It made us close to people. People know our real characters. So it offered us a very good service.]
- Nadine: *ya 'nī 'irif-nā min simōr mazbōt?*
[So now we know who is the real Simur?]
- Simur: *taħiyá li-l-v-room.*
[Salute to the V-room.]
- Nadine: *ħalāš! mazbōt taħiyé kibīré la-l-v-room. sattār nafs is-sū?əl il-ak.*
[Good! Salute to the V-room. Sattar, same question to you.]
- Sattar: *ħaba'-an el-v-room tawašul-nā waya in-nās waya eğ-ğumhūr ġam'at-nā iħnā el-muštariċ-în ġam'a ħilwə, dā?im-an ?iħnā bi-l-v-room, mitwašl-în waya in-nās waya eğ-ğumhūr ta'liqāt-him el-ħilwé il-lī tifarəħ-nā dā?im-an we ...*
[Of course, the V-room offered our communication with the audience and our nice gathering. We are always in the V-room communicating with people and reading their sweet comments that make us happy and always ...]
- Nadine: *ad ēh inta kint bi-ħāžé min ħilāl ha-l-birnāméž li ha-d-da'm?*
[How much did you need this support in the show?]
- Sattar: *akīd lawlā da'm el-ğumhūr mā awšal ānī li hay el-marħalé, el-ħamdil-lah wa-l-šukur. we inša||ħ!*
[Of course, without this support I wouldn't have made it to this phase. Thanks be to God!]
- Nadine: *bi-nisma' bi-nisma'! hayda id-da'm kamān yallī ?inta bi ħāžé ?il-lo; da'm ašdī?ā?-kun bi-birnāméž The Voice, mazbōt?*
[Listen! This support that you also need; the support of your friends in *The Voice*. Isn't this true?]
- Sattar: *akīd akīd inša||ħ el-ğamhūr yaquf-ün li-š-šōt il-lī ħabbō kil el-ašwāt mašā? a||ħ ašwāt žamīlá we tastaħiq an-no tikūn aħlā šōt (not clear)*

[Of course, God's willing the audience would support the voice which they like. All the voices are beautiful and deserve to be *The Voice*] (*not clear*)

Nadine: (*not clear*) *sattār, šukran il-ak! hāla bidd-ī isʔal-ik, šū adamm-l-ék el-v-room?*
(*not clear*) [Sattar, thank you! Hala, I would like to ask you, what did the V-room offer you?]

Hala: *šū adam-lī el-v-room? šuf-nā-ki hāda aham šī.*

[What did the V-room offer me? We saw you, the most important thing.]

Nadine: *šukran il-ék hāla! anā kamān itšaraf-it iktīr bi-ma'rifit-kun akīd, farḥāné ktīr.*

[Thank you, Hala! Me too, I am honored to know you all of course. I am very happy.]

Hala: *twāšul-ná ma'a in-nās ill iktīr bi-nḥib-un (not clear) we ktīr anā mabšōṭá el-yōm rīm wa ḥālid we 'ammār kilun kilun.*

[Our communication with the people who we love so much (*not clear*). I am very happy today. We have Reem, Khaled, Ammār, all of them.]

Nadine: *taḥiyé il-un! taḥiyé ʔil-un!*

[Greetings to them! Greetings to them!]

The CI was taking place in the V-room where the Lebanese presenter, Nadine, asked her guests, two Iraqis, one Egyptian, and one Syrian the question: What did the V-room offer them? In this question, she used distinctive Lebanese features such as the lexical items *halla* [now], *ḥabr-ī-nā* [tell us] (to Wahm), *niḥnā* [we], and *ʔil-ak* [for you]. She maintained the *imāla* feature such as *birnāméž* [program], *taḥiyé* [greeting], *kibīr-é* [big], and she pronounced the /ʒ/ and shifts the /q/ to /ʔ/ such as *ʔaddam-it-l-ék* [offer you].

Wahm replied to Nadine using Egyptian features as she maintained the flat open vowels. She also shifted the /q/ to /ʔ/ such as *ʔaddim-le-nā* [offered us]. She used the lexical items *zay* [as] and *aho* [here], and the verb pattern *nu-ʔud* [we stay], *nu-rʔuš* [we dance], and *ni-ḏḥak* [we laugh]. With the verb *nu-ʔud* [we stay] she also used the aspect marker *bi-*.

The Iraqi Simur replied to the question using Iraqi features such as the use of /q/ in *qadam-nā* [presented us] and *qarib-īn* [close]. Also notable were the insertion of a vowel in the final syllable in *šakil* [form], and the emphatic vowels /a/ and /ā/ such as *šahšiy-qt-nā* [our personalities] and *el-ḥaqāqiy-ā* [the real].

Sattar maintained the Iraqi features as well in the affricate /ǧ/, the emphatic /ā/ in *ḥilwā* [sweet], and the insertion of the vowel in the last syllable in *šukur* [thanks]. Iraqi lexical features were present as well, such as *ǧnī* [I], *hay* [this], and the idiomatic *el-ḥamdil-lah wa-l-šukur* [thanks be to God].

Hala, the Syrian contestant, used Syrian features such as the words *šū* [what], *hāda* [this], and *šī* [something]. Other features included the inversion of the first vowel in *iktīr* [a lot], the deletion of the first vowel altogether in *ktīr* [a lot], the high rise *imāla* distinctive of Syrian Arabic versus Lebanese Arabic in *twāšul-ná* [our communication], *mabšōṭ-á* [happy], and the use of /ā/ in proper names such as *ḥālid* [Khaled].

The above exemplary communicative events (further data can be inspected upon request) show that the participants in the data communicated using mostly the distinctive features of their own ND, and the integral analysis showed that was the case

in all phases of the show and with different participants, no matter what their role was in *The Voice*. As mentioned earlier, instances of using NND did exist, with a total count of 98 occasions of crossing that took place in the whole data set of 166 CIs, which were otherwise conducted in the participants' NDs. Most of these occurrences were not to facilitate communication but to serve other functions, as will be explained in the next chapter.

The following two sections discuss the use of features of SA and FLs, the rarity of which further confirms the dominant pattern of communication presented in this section. It will be clear that the contestants maintained their NDs, even though at certain moments they used other linguistic features, serving various functions.

5.3 Features and patterns of Standard Arabic

In the 166 CIs, the data showed 39 occasions of using SA features, ten of them were in the form of subtitles written on the screen. Out of the ten subtitles, seven were for the speech of Moroccan contestants, two for English utterances, and in one case it was not clear. Due to the nature of the show, the subtitles occurred in the blind auditions and the battles since it was hard to provide subtitles in the live shows. These subtitles occurred in CIs where participants were dominantly using their own ND. In line with Hachimi (2013; see Chapter 2), MBC Group assumed that the Moroccan dialect spoken by these contestants would not be understood by the majority of the audience, therefore, they provided subtitles in SA. This assumption presumably also guided MBC Group when providing subtitles to Moroccan contestant Halima, even when she crossed to use Egyptian features.

Following the logic behind data collection presented in Chapter 4, these SA subtitles are not part of the data since they were actually directed to the audience and there was no feedback on the screen on how communication took place. For that reason, they were not further analyzed.

The remaining 29 occasions at which SA features occurred in spoken form by some participants are the focus of the analysis below. First, the criteria for identifying SA occasions are explained, followed by a table showing the use of SA features. An account of the functions of these occurrences follows.

5.3.1 Identifying SA features

The analysis did not show full CIs in SA only. However, the use of SA features, as mentioned, appeared at particular moments, within the prevailing pattern of using the participants' NDs. In order to designate a SA occurrence, the main distinctive features between SA and each dialect were considered. They are discussed below.

- *On the phonological level* – One of the general distinctions between SA and dialects is maintaining the pronunciation of the final glottal stop instead of shifting it to a long vowel /ā/. Therefore, an item was considered SA if it was used with a glottal stop where there was an equivalent in the speaker’s dialect that did not have a glottal stop, or another lexical item was used. For example, *samāʔ* versus *samā* [sky], and *suʔadāʔ* versus *mabsuṭīn* [happy]. Similarly, one of the general distinctions between SA and the Egyptian and Levantine dialects is maintaining the /q/ sound in SA while the dialects shift to glottal stop. Therefore, for speakers of these dialects, an item was considered SA if it was pronounced with /q/ sound at the time where the dialect of the speaker had commonly an equivalent without the /q/. For example, *ṣadiq* versus *ṣāḥib* [a friend], or *manṭiqa* versus *manṭiʔa* [a region]. In case of verbs, items were determined to be SA if the verb was pronounced in the SA verb pattern. For example, the verb *u-naffiq* [to implement] would be SA, versus *yi-naffiq* in Egyptian Arabic.
- *On the lexical level* – If a word had a common equivalent in the speaker’s dialect but a participant chose to produce the SA equivalent, such as *ṣadiq* versus *ṣāḥib* [a friend] above, it was considered a feature of SA.
- *The article* – The definite article was considered a SA feature if it was pronounced as *al-* and not as *el-* or *il-*.
- *On a stretch of utterance* – A stretch of utterance was considered SA if it included a combination of features that appeared collectively in this utterance, for example, the use of a passive voice, the pronunciation of a case marker, and the choice of certain lexical items. It is important to note that the accusative adverbial case marking (*tanwīn manṣūb*), such as *ʔaḥyān-an* [sometimes] or *daym-an* [always], was not designated as SA features. It was seen as part of ESA (Badawi, 1973) and therefore one of the levels of the speakers’ ND. Since these adverbial items were used in the dialect as such, they were not considered SA.

The data showed that speakers sometimes used SA features while they dominantly spoke features of their NDs. It is noteworthy, however, that 28 of the 29 cases were produced by the judges and Muhammad Kareem, the presenter. The only case in which a contestant used an SA feature was in Episode 11, where Syrian Hala was reading a tweet sent to her by one of the fans. She read: *aṣ-ṣiba wa-l- žamāl-u milk-u yad-ay-kī, wa ʔay-u tāž-in ʔaʔazz-u min tāž-ik?* [Youth and beauty are in the possession of your hands. What can be a more precious crown than that of yours?]. This poetic language was a static production, as explained in the introduction since Hala was reading and not actually producing her own utterance.

The remaining 28 cases are shown in Table 5.4. It is noted, as observed above, that the judges were responsible for most of the instances; Assi accounted for eight cases, Kadim for three cases, Saber for ten cases, and Sherine for three cases. Muhammad Kareem, the presenter, accounted for four cases. From left to right, the table shows the first participants who produced the SA feature, their ND, their role, the listener and their

ND and role, and the last column contains the discourse function of the SA usage. These functions were denoted in the Excel sheet where the data was collected (see Chapter 4). The table is organized by the alphabetical order of the participant who produced the SA feature.

INF 1/lang	Role	INF 2/lang	Role	Function
1 Assi (leb)	judge	Kareem (egy)	presenter	comment as a judge/coach
2		Aimée (leb)	presenter	comment as a judge/coach
3		Kareem (egy)	presenter	comment as a judge/coach
4		Amaar (syr)	contestant	comment as a judge/coach
5		Kareem (egy)	presenter	comment as a judge/coach
6		Aimée (leb)	presenter	comment as a judge/coach
7		Aimée (leb)	presenter	comment as a judge/coach
8		Kadeem (irq)	contestant	teasing
9 Kadim (irq)	judge	Ingrid (leb)	contestant	comment as a judge/coach
10		Judges	judge	teasing
11		Reem (leb)	contestant	teasing
12 Kareem (egy)	presenter	Hanaan (egy)	contestant	appreciation
13		Aimée (leb)	presenter	appreciation
14		Sherine (egy)	judge	choosing – decisive moment
15		Rabie (leb)	contestant	teasing
16 Saber (tun)	judge	Amer (irq)	contestant	comment as a judge/coach
17		Nile (sud)	contestant	comment as a judge/coach
		Ayoub (mrc)	contestant	
18		Amaar (syr)	contestant	comment as a judge/coach
19		Sattar (irq)	contestant	choosing – decisive moment
20		Amaar (syr)	contestant	choosing – decisive moment
21		Simur (irq)	contestant	comment as a judge/coach
22		Aimée (leb)	presenter	comment as a judge/coach
23		Kareem (egy) Team	presenter group	comment as a judge/coach
24		Assi (leb)	judge	rephrasing a dialect feature
25		Wahm (egy)	contestant	teasing
26 Sherine (egy)	judge	Souma (egy)	contestant	comment as a judge/coach
27		Group	group	comment as a judge/coach
28		Ayoub (mrc)	contestant	comment as a judge/coach
		Kareem (egy)	presenter	

Table 5.4 Instances of using SA features

SA features were mostly used, 17 times, to serve the function of judges *providing a professional opinion* to the contestants. It was interesting to see that SA was also used to invoke *humor* or *teasing* in the show. This last function occurred five times. The following section treats each of the different SA functions mentioned in the table.

5.3.2 SA features to express professional opinions

Table 5.4 shows that 17 instances out of the 28 were done as part of *feedback given by a judge or a coach*. For example, in Episode 7, Saber commented on the performance made by Ghazi and Aamer and said *ʔiħnā wiafnā ʔiʔāb-an wa ʔižlāl-an ʔawwal-an ʔistamtā-ʔnā bī soṭ-ēn miṭl gāzī we ʔāmer, allah yiṭawel bī ʔumr-ak (Aamer)!* [We stood in admiration and respect. First, we enjoyed two voices like that of Ghazi and Aamer. May God give you (Aamer) a long life!]. Saber started his comment with SA features, then he shifted back to maintain his Tunisian ND as the dominant pattern of the communication. However, in this comment, he used features of SA mainly the case marking of the accusative nouns, as becomes clear in the final nunation or what is known in Arabic as the *tanwīn*. This was seen in *ʔiʔāb-an* [in admiration], *ʔižlāl-an* [in respect], and *ʔawwal-an* [first]. The other clear SA feature was the pronunciation of *wa-* rather than *wi-* which would have been typical for the dialect.

Assi, in Episode 9, commented on Hala's performance saying *hala ya ʔnī nabi ʔ min al-ʔaṭṭ? wa-l-ʔiħsās be-ṣawṭ-ʔ* [Hala, there is a spring of giving and emotions in her voice]. Amid this comment in his Lebanese ND, Assi used the lexical item *nabi* [spring] and the pronunciation of the definite article in *al-ʔaṭṭ?* [giving] and *wa-l-ʔiħsās* [and emotions]. The whole expression was a figure of speech that literally meant 'a spring of giving and feeling'. This was poetic language.

Similarly, Kadim used a figure of speech to comment on Ingrid in Episode 10. He said *kul šī ħilew kitbū ʔan eš-šuʔarā? el-yōm ha-nġama ʔ el-kalimāt el-ħilwā kull-ħā, kul mā kutib ʔan žamāl el-marṭa we ʔan ʔiṣ-ṣōṭ ha-nidū-kī yā ʔ-l-masraħ!* [Everything nice that the poets wrote, today we will gather all the beautiful words. All that is written on the beauty of women and voice we will give it to you on stage!]. This is a good example as it shows the same idea expressed twice; one time using dialect features and another in SA features. Starting with incomplete sentences in the dialect, Kadim chose to rephrase his ideas in SA. The rephrase started from *kul mā kutib ʔan žamāl el-marṭa we ʔan ʔiṣ-ṣōṭ ha-nidū-kī yā ʔ-l-masraħ!* [All that is written on the beauty of women and voice we will give it to you on stage!]. The SA features were seen in the relative pronoun *mā* [what] versus *šī* [a thing], *kutib* [was written] versus *kitbū* [they wrote], and *el-marṭa* [woman] to which Kadim did not use a dialect equivalent. Kadim was elevating the register of his language by repeating what he said with SA features. It seems the mentioning of poets writing about romantic love to women triggered this use of SA. It is interesting that he returned to dialect features in the future marker *ha-* [will], the verb pattern and lexical *nidū* [we give], and the object pronoun *yā* [it].

In Episode 3, Sherine commented on Souma's performance saying *bas ʔaħsant-ī ʔiħtiyār-an wu ħuluq-an* [Good job on your choice and manners]. Sherine mentioned the

manners to Souma because she was veiled. The SA features she used were in the use of accusative case marking, as clear in the nunation (or *tanwīn*).

The judges also gave titles of praise to the contestants in SA. Assi called Adnaan *malik al-ʔihsās* [the king of feeling] and Reem *ʔoltʔnét al-ǧināʔ al-ʿarabê* [the sultana of Arabic singing].

The scarcity of SA features in the comments made by the judges made their opinion salient, special, and more credible. The unexpected low frequency of using SA features was an interesting outcome of the analysis that will be discussed further in Section 5.5.2. It is noteworthy to add that, except for the above-mentioned comment made by Sherine to Souma, the judges used these SA features with contestants who passed the blind auditions. As if the higher level of their talents required a higher register of the language. However, due to the small number of occurrences of such use, this result cannot be generalized.

5.3.3 SA features for teasing and humor

The second use of SA features that appeared in the data was for *teasing* and *humor*. This function appeared five times. An example of this happened in an exchange between Assi and Kadim, where Assi started in his ND, then used SA features while challenging Kadim:

Assi: *ʔawʿed-ak bi-munāfasé ʔǧhna. sa-ʔūrī-ka ʔay-uhā al-qayṣar!*

[I promise you a fierce competition. I will show you, Ceasar!]

Kadim: *naʿam.*

[Yes.]

Assi: *man huwa al-ḥilānī?*

[Who is Al-Hilaani?]

Although Assi started his utterance in his Lebanese ND, as is clear from the *imāla* in *bi-munāfasé* [with competition], the next modifier came in the form of an SA feature as he got rid of the *imāla* at the end of the word *ʔǧhna* [fierce; lit. grinding]. He then used further SA features: the lexical items *ʔūrī-ka* [I show you], *ʔay-uhā* [thou], and the future marker *sa-* [will]. This triggered Kadim to reply with *naʿam* [yes], also a feature of SA, to which Assi responded using the SA relative pronoun *man* [who] and the definite article *al-* before to his name.

Another example of teasing came from Saber and was directed at Sherine. In the very first episode, Saber and Sherine were competing to convince Wahm to join their teams. Saber commenced in his Tunisian ND, but then started to use features of SA to challenge and tease Sherine. He said: (...) *el-ʔōṭ ʔl-lī fih ʔih ʔdīd ma-smiʿ-*na-hā-š*, fā ʿand-ī walla ʿand ʔirīn, wa lākin mina al-wahm ʔanna ʔirīn tithaṣal ʿalē-kī* [(...) the voice that has something new which we didn't hear before, so it is the same whether with me or with Sherine. But it is an illusion that Sherine will have you]. Saber was playing on the meaning of Wahm's name that can mean 'illusion' too. SA features appeared in *wa lākin mina al-wahm ʔanna ʔirīn tithaṣal ʿalē-kī* [But it is an illusion that Sherine will have you]. The features were the pronunciation of *wa* [and], the definite article *al* in *al-wahm*

[illusion], and the use of particle *ʔanna* [that]. The effect of teasing was taking place with the shift to SA features. Playing on the meaning of Wahm's name along with the use of SA features, Saber teased Sherine by drawing the limits of what she could aspire for in the competition. The use of SA features in this context added a mock seriousness to the event.

Although rare in the data, using SA features to create humor and jokes was indeed a new index added to SA. The laughter and light atmosphere that these instances created in the show (one can argue the effect was equally extended to the Arab audience at home) referred to a common knowledge shared by the participants. The indexicality of using SA features is discussed in Section 5.5.2.

5.3.4 SA features to express a decisive moment

Three times the participants used SA features *at a decisive moment of choice*. In Episode 7, Kareem talked to Sherine: *ʔintī ʔin-nahārda fī maʔzaq* [you are in a fix], using the SA feature of pronouncing the /q/, untypical of the Egyptian dialect. Similarly, Saber asked Amaar in Episode 2 *ʔammār tihtār man?* [Amaar, who do you choose?]. He used the SA question word *man* [who] instead of *mīn* or *minew*. Saber preceded the question word by a pause, stressing it to intensify the moment of choice. Also in Episode 2, Saber noted that Sattar was *fī mawqef lā yuḥsad ʔalē-h* [in an unenviable situation] because he had to make his choice between the four judges. SA features were the negation particle *lā* [not] and the passive voice *yuḥsad* [he is envied].

Two out of the three instances of using SA to signal a decisive moment of choice were idiomatic expressions that were commonly used with SA features even in the dialects. For instance, a hypothetical Egyptian pronunciation of *fī maʔzaq* [in a fix] by Kareem or a hypothetical Tunisian pronunciation of *fī mawqef mā-yḥsid-š ʔalē-h* [in an unenviable situation] by Saber were less likely to occur in their respective dialects. To test the existence of the hypothetical dialect form *mawqef mā-yḥsid-š* [in an unenviable situation], I made a search run using the Arabic words in *arabiCorpus* and the run yielded zero instances per 100,000 words in 'All'.

The use of SA in these examples seems to appeal to the mainstream understanding of how Arabs use SA in their daily communication: in serious and solemn moments. This explains the reason why in these moments the speakers used SA idioms to express their serious tone. However, taking the whole atmosphere of the show and the fun competition, this use carries and implied humor into it as well. This will be elaborated further in the discussion below.

5.3.5 SA features to express appreciation

Kareem, the presenter, expressed his *appreciation* twice using the same feature of SA, the word *suʔadāʔ* [happy – plural male form] with the glottal stop at the end, instead of the commonly used Egyptian *mabsuṭ-īn* [happy]. He used this once with Hanaan in Episode 7 and once with Aimée in Episode 9.

5.3.6 SA features to rephrase a dialect

Only once in the data, the use of SA feature came to *rephrase a word in a dialect*. In Episode 6, Saber was commenting on a contestant saying: (...) *fa šār el-mawḏū‘ ya‘nī tġanī be-‘iyāṭ ya‘nī b-šiyāḥ* [(...) then the singing would sound like crying, meaning yelling]. Assi then explained further *yešīr šarīḥ* [becomes screaming]. In Tunisian dialect, the lexical item *‘iyāṭ* means yelling, however, in other dialects the word means crying. Saber, aware of this difference, rephrased the word using *šiyāḥ*, which is an SA equivalent of yelling or shouting. Assi, equally aware of the difference, rephrased the word by a more Mashreqi Arabic item saying *šarīḥ* [scream].

The limited occurrence of SA features is an interesting result of the data. More interestingly, unlike the common perception, SA was not used to facilitate comprehension among Arabs from different countries. Using SA features in cross-country communication served other functions, but not intelligibility.

Concerning indexicalities, on the one hand, the occasional use of SA in contexts of professionalism and appreciation, and at decisive moments, shows that SA bears indexes of seriousness, honesty, and reverence. On the other hand, the use of SA to cause humor indicates different indexes and values that were shared among the participants, otherwise humor would not have been successful. These different levels of indexicality are elaborated further in the discussion.

The pattern of occasionally using SA features further proves the dominant pattern of communication. As seen in the example, the participants used SA features amid the main linguistic resources for their communication, the NDs. Something similar holds for the use of FL features, as shown in the following section.

5.4 Features of foreign languages

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, features of FL appeared in the data in two types: loan words and expressions (LWE), and longer stretches. ‘Loanwords’ describe those words taken from languages other than Arabic, in many times adapted to the linguistic system of Arabic. This adaptation can be phonological, morphosyntactic, or syntactic. Phonological adaptation occurs, for instance, when someone utters ‘brogam’, for the English word ‘program’. An example of morphosyntactic adaptation is *brovāṭ* of the Italian *provas* [rehearsals] where the Arabic plural feminine suffix is added. Another example is in the addition of the definite article *el-* in *el-coach* [the coach] or *el-v-room* [the V-room]. Finally, a syntactic adaptation appears when a foreign word is used within the Arabic sentence structure such as *bravo ‘alēk* [bravo on you], similar to the expression *mašā? qīlah ‘alēk* [praise be to God on you]. Loan expressions are fixed expressions or compounds that often serve a very specific function. For example, ‘good luck’ used in the function of wishing a good luck, and ‘thank you’ used to give thanks.

Second, there were stretches of several foreign language utterances, where participants expressed themselves in another FL for longer than a single loan word or expression. This second category appeared less often than the first one. It was sometimes used as a communication strategy. Therefore, it is discussed from the perspective of CS and crossing in the following chapter. The use of LWEs is presented in this section.

5.4.1 Loan words and expressions

The data showed 565 instances of LWE. The foreign languages from which these words were borrowed are English (419 instances), French (89 instances), and Italian (57 instances).

There were three instances where the participants used English and French together; mainly to express gratitude. These instances occurred in the first, second, and sixth episode respectively, by Zeinab, a contestant from Morocco, Saber, the Tunisian Judge, and Sherine, the Egyptian judge. To thank Assi, the judge from Lebanon, Zeinab, said ‘merci, thank you’, Saber said ‘thank you! merci merci merci’ to his group, and to thank Sallam, a Lebanese contestant, Sherine said ‘thank you, *habibi*, merci merci’ [thank you, my love, thanks, thanks].

This section is further divided into two subsections. The first subsection introduces the use of LWE by the participants, to see how widespread the use of foreign elements was, while the second subsection organizes the LWE by the semantic field, to see in what domains the need for foreign elements was apparently felt the most.

LWE by participants

Unlike the use of SA features, using LWE was not mostly exclusive to a certain role in the show. The use of LWE appeared to be proportional to the length of the participants’ speech; the longer one spoke, the more LWEs they used. The judges and presenters appeared to produce more LWEs because they had longer time to speak on the whole show. This result suggests that the use of LWE as presented below is a natural part of Arabic cross-country communication. Table 5.5 summarizes the participants’ use of LWE, and the number of instances per FL. The list is in alphabetical order.

Participant	Role	Foreign language			Total N LWE
		English	French	Italian	
Adnaan (irq)	contestant	2			2
Aida (tun)	contestant	3	1		4
Aimée (leb)	presenter	14	2	1	17
Alaa (egy)	contestant		1		1
Ali (irq)	contestant	1			1
Amaar (syr)	contestant		1		1

Participant	Role	Foreign language			Total N LWE
		English	French	Italian	
Amal (egy)	trainer	4	2		6
Assi (leb)	judge/coach	50	12	8	70
Asmaa (mrc)	contestant	1			1
Dhlab (tun)	contestant		2		2
Farawla (mrc)	friends/family	1	1		2
Friends (mrc)	friends/family			1	1
Ghazi (leb)	contestant	2	1		3
Gkhattab (syr)	contestant	1			2
Hala (syr)	contestant	4	3	1	8
Hanaan (egy)	contestant	1			1
Hanin (syr)	contestant	2			2
Hayat (alg)	contestant	1	1		2
Hussein (leb)	contestant	3			3
Iman (egy)	trainer	4		1	5
Ingrid (leb)	contestant	4	2		6
Iyad (jor)	contestant	1	1		2
Kadim (irq)	judge/coach	23	2	18	43
Kareem (egy)	presenter	33	3	1	37
Karrar (irq)	contestant	2			2
Khawla (mrc)	contestant	4	4		8
Khuri (leb)	trainer	1	1		2
Mahmud (mrc)	contestant	3			3
Marwa (egy)	contestant	5			5
Marwan (mrc)	contestant		1		1
MGaber (egy)	trainer	3			3
MHashem (sau)	contestant	1			1
Mona (pal, tun, eng)	contestant	4			4
Nadia (tun)	contestant	1			1
Nadine (leb)	presenter	71	7		78
Nancy (leb)	contestant	4	1		5
Nile (sud)	contestant	10			10
Ola (syr)	contestant	1			1
Reem (leb)	contestant	3			3
Rita (irq)	contestant	1			1
Saber (tun)	judge/coach	71	20	18	109
Sahar (mrc)	contestant	1	3		3

Participant	Role	Foreign language			Total N LWE
		English	French	Italian	
Sallaam (leb)	contestant	3			3
Sanaa (mrc)	contestant	1			1
Sattar (irq)	contestant	6			6
Shamaa (syr)	contestant	1			1
Sherine (egy)	judge/coach	53	8	8	69
Sherine (pal)	contestant	1	1		2
Sheryl (leb)	contestant	2	1		3
Simur (irq)	contestant	5	1		6
Souma (egy)	contestant		1		1
Wael (leb)	contestant	2			2
Wahm (egy)	contestant	2	3		5
Waiter (mrc)	family/friends	1			1
Zeinab (mrc)	contestant	1	2		3
Total		419	89	57	565

Table 5.5 Participants using LWE

Obviously, the presenters and judges accounted for more occurrences of LWE. They accounted for 423 instances out of the 565 instances of LWE, i.e., 74.8% of the instances. This was due to, as mentioned above, their longer time and duration of speech throughout the ten episodes of the show that were subject of the analysis. The duration of speech also justifies the relatively close numbers of LWE used by the vocal trainers. Nadine, the presenter from the V-room, had a higher percentage (59% of the total LWE produced by the presenters) than the other two presenters did, perhaps because of the semantic field of social media she often talked about. The following section elaborates on the semantic fields prominent in the use of LWE.

Looking at the English LWEs, the only double-digit number other than that of the judges and presenters was related to Nile, the only Sudanese contestant who competed with English songs. An explanation of that could be because Nile stayed in the competition until the semi-finals. Nile also mentioned that he lived in Dubai, where CS between Arabic and English is a normal code of communication (see Holes, 2011; and the review in Chapter 2). Out of the ten occurrences, Nile gave thanks four times and used social medial terms three times.

The second contestant who used English LWE the most was Sattar, the winner of the show. The relatively high number was again due to his competition until the end. His production shifted between the social media terms just as ‘Twitter’, ‘hashtag’, and ‘Facebook’, and the setting of the show, such as ‘break’ and ‘V-room’. Sattar greeted once in English saying ‘Hello’.

Regarding the French occurrences, 31 out of the 93 (33.3%) was for the thanking word ‘merci’ [thanks]. At the time when the participants shared the element ‘merci’, more French LWEs occurred by Maghrebi or Lebanese contestants. Out of the 29 participants who produced French LWE, 17 were either Lebanese or from the Maghrebi part of the Arab world. This justifies the double digits for Assi and Saber versus the other two judges.

The majority of Italian LWEs used was mainly ‘bravo’ for praising and ‘prova’ [rehearsal], in addition to other music terminology. These fields justify why the judges and the presenters produce the majority of Italian LWEs. These LWEs occurred as part of their speech praising the contestants, commenting on the rehearsals, or the musical features of the songs or the quality of the contestants’ voices.

From the above presentation, LWEs seem to be a shared resource among the participants. At the same time when English was common among the participants from across the Arab world, participants from the Maghreb or Lebanon produced more French LWEs. This is understandable and expected due to the history of these regions where French is the first FL (see review in Chapter 2). However, the roles of a judge, trainer, and presenter triggered Italian LWEs as well, though limited compared to English and French LWEs. In addition to the role in the show, the domain in which the judges and presenters spoke triggered these Italian LWEs. The semantic domain plays a significant role in governing the use of LWEs and FL. The following subsection presents the semantic domains where these LWEs were used.

LWE by semantic field

The 24 semantic fields that mark the use of LWE are shown in Figure 5.2. The chart also shows the FL from which the words were borrowed. The semantic fields of LWE are discussed below in descending order of the number of occurrences in the data. Table 5.6 provides some examples of each of the semantic field. The following overview of LWE reflects as well on the Arabic equivalents present in each category.

As shown in Figure 5.2 below, ‘the name of the show’ *The Voice* was the LWE used most often, 93 times. ‘The voice’ was used to mean the actual show and to refer to the best voice, the meaning of the show. Clearly, this category used only English LWEs. The commercial equivalent name of the show in Arabic, *ʔahlā ʔōt* [the sweetest voice], was also used – many times on its own and sometimes hand in hand with *The Voice*, in which case it referred to the show itself. This Arabic equivalent was not as frequent as the corresponding LWE. For example, in Episode 2, Saber welcomed Amira saying *marhaba bik fi ʔahlā ʔōt!* [Welcome to *The Voice*!; lit. the sweetest voice]. In Episode 3, in his comment to Hamza who was not chosen by the judges, Assi mentioned that although Hamza’s voice was good, but *ʔism el-birnāmaʔ ʔahlā ʔōt* [the name of the show is *The Sweetest Voice*] so that was why he could not choose him. This usage was produced more by the presenters during their speech addressed to the audience and so it was not part of the data. In the communication between participants, the Arabic *ʔahlā ʔōt* was used, not as frequent as the English LWE, to literally mean [the sweetest voice] while

playing on the name of the show itself. Examples of this use appeared in Episode 1 when Saber mentioned to Wahm that he was looking for *ʔahlā Ṣōṭ* [the sweetest voice] and later to Zeinab that he had to choose *ʔahlā Ṣōṭ*. In Episode 7, Kadim mentioned to Nadia that he was looking for *ʔahlā Ṣōṭ*. Similarly, in Episode 14, Kareem said the decisive moment had arrived to know *ʔahlā Ṣōṭ* and Sherine said that the four finalists deserve to be *ʔahlā Ṣōṭ*.

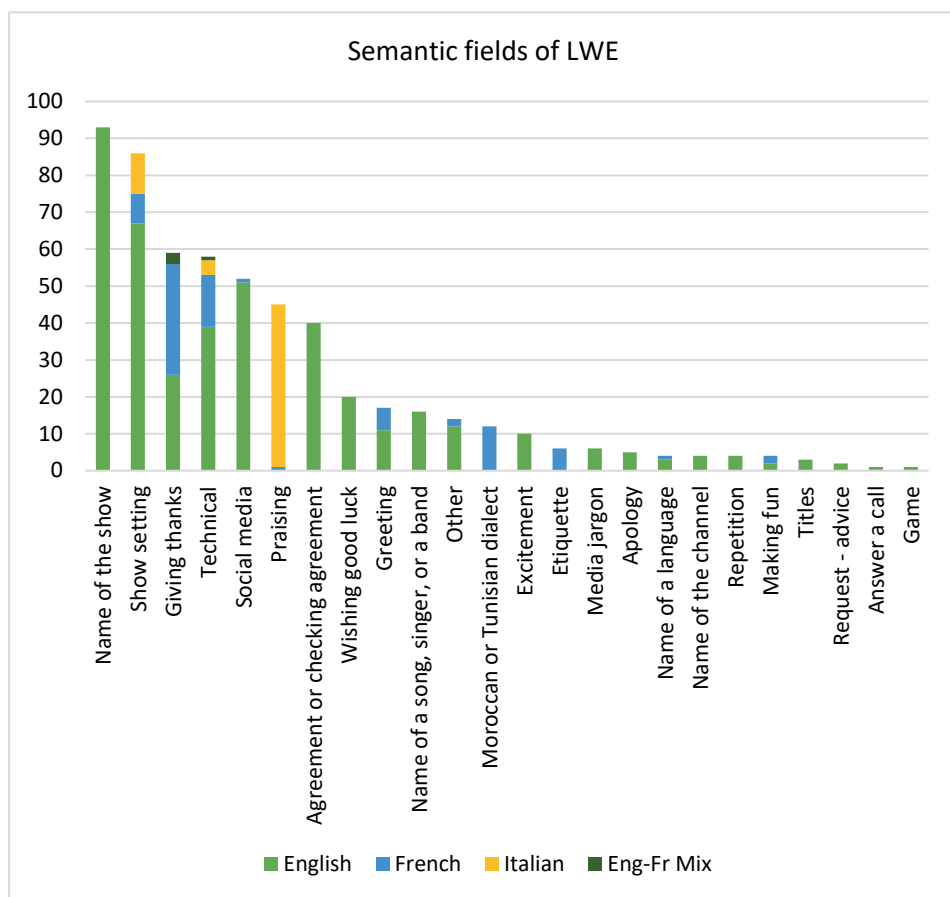


Figure 5.2 The 24 semantic fields of LWE by the FL

The higher frequency of the English name of the show can be traced back to the universally common name of the franchise that has become common in its Arabic edition as well. However, the adaptation of the show into Arabic necessitated an Arabization of the show, hence the name *ʔahlā Ṣōṭ* which is not a literal translation of the English since the superlative adjective is added in Arabic. Since the Arabic name is specific to the Arabic edition of the show, it spread among the audience through the media presenters and the judges. The integration of the literal meaning of the name is

the strategy from the judges and the presenters to promote the show in its Arabic name to the Arab audience.

The use of the Arabic and English names was interchanged unmarked. In an interview with the vocal trainers in Episode 12, Iman expressed her wish that ‘The Voice’ would be from her team. She used the name to mean the best voice or the title of the winner. However, in the same interview, Kareem asked them if they had a feeling that *ʔahlā Ṣōṭ* would be from their teams. Similar to Iman, he used the title of the best voice, but of course this time in Arabic. In other several repeated instances, the presenter Kareem would shout ‘The Voice’ and the audience in stage would respond by *ʔahlā Ṣōṭ*.

Semantic field	N instances	Example(s) of LWE used
Name of the show	93	‘The Voice’
Show setting	86	<i>el-kotš</i> [the coach] / el-battles / el-break
Giving thanks	59	merci / thank you
Technical	58	tempo / maestro / tone
Social media	52	hashtag / Facebook / Tweet
Praising	45	bravo / mon amour
Agreement or checking agreement	40	ok / yeah
Wishing good luck	20	good luck
Greeting	17	hi / bye / bonsoire / hello
Name of a song, singer, or band	16	Beyonce / Kenny Rogers / Pink Floyd / On the Radio
Other	14	<i>tanšana</i> from [tension] / already
Moroccan or Tunisian dialect	12	using French features while speaking
Excitement	10	wow / yes / oh my god
Etiquette	6	el-bébé / souvenir / compliment / cadeaux
Media jargon	6	scenario / <i>banarāt</i> [banners] / cover / photo session / beauty tip / el-background
Apology	5	sorry / I’m sorry
Name of a language	4	English / French / français
Name of the channel	4	MBC
Repetition	4	princess / scenario / wow / you
Making fun	4	I love you / oh my god / <i>comme c’est jolie, voila, voila</i>
Titles	3	madame / princess / papa
Request – advice	2	please
Answer a call	1	yes
Game	1	PlayStation

Table 5.6 Examples of LWE by semantic field

Talk about the ‘setting of the show’ triggered high numbers of LWE use in the data. There were 67 English, 11 Italian, and 8 French LWE instances in this category. These 86 instances seemed to be used naturally, triggering no remarks or rephrasing, nor subtitles. The 11 LWE instances of Italian mainly concerned the word *prova* [rehearsal]. Other examples of LWEs in this category were *el-brōva* [the rehearsal], *f-el-brov-āt* [at the rehearsals], *el-kotš* [the coach], *el-battles* [the battles], *el-live* [the live], *show* [the show], *el-brogrām* [the program], *el-vocal coach* [the vocal coach], *el-micro* [the mic], *el-kart* [the card], *el-finalé* [the final], and others. As shown in the examples, most of these LWE were used within an Arabic structure where the definite article *el-* was used with most of them. Many of them were pronounced with Arabic phonology, as represented by the transliteration of *el-brogrām* [the program], *el-kart* [the card], and *el-kotš* [the coach].

Arabic equivalents of some of these LWE were also used. The data showed the usage of *el-mudarrīb-in* [coaches], *el-urūd el-mubāšr-a* [the live shows], *el-sama-āt* [speakers], and *ṭawānīn* or *qawānīn* [rules]. The data did not reveal a pattern of when participants would choose between the English and the Arabic equivalents. For example, in Episode 9, while Sherine was commenting on a contestant, the speakers and the microphone disturbed her. This interaction took place between her and Kareem:

Sherine: *ya'nī bas el-speakers dōl fī-hum šuwayia distortion.*
[It is just these speakers have some distortion.]

Saber: yeah.

Sherine: *ya'nī, yā rēt ye-waṭū eš-šōt šuwayia. ġēr keda ṭenta, ṭasbat-elī ṭen-ak ṭenta, ṭanā ma-ba-krah-š ḥāg-a f-el-bernāmig ṭad el-mayek dah. ṭa'mel ēh f-el-mayek dah?*
[I would like if they could reduce the volume a bit. Otherwise, you have proven to me that you, you. I don't hate anything in this program but this mic. What should I do with this mic?]

Kareem: *el-mayek w-el ē sammā-āt ha-ngīb d-el-waṭī ḥad ḥalan ye-zabaṭ ed-deny-a.*
[The mic and the speakers. We will bring someone to fix everything.]

In this example, even though Sherine was upset, she produced English LWEs ‘mic’, ‘speakers’, and ‘distortion’. It seems her utterance of these English LWEs made Saber agree to what she said with LWE ‘yeah’. However, at the time when Kareem produced English LWE ‘mic’, he used the Arabic equivalent *sammā-āt* [speakers]. This example shows how LWEs in this category appeared as a normal part of the participants’ speech, even when they were upset in which case speakers tend to think less about their language choice. Comparing the production of Kareem and Sherine in this interaction, Kareem, in a calmer mood, produced the Arabic equivalent of one LWE but not the other.

Overall, in this category, the use of Arabic equivalents appeared more frequently than LWEs. Although in the above example, there was no definite justification of the choices between the Arabic and English equivalents, the adaptation of the show to the Arabic audience made it a necessity for the presenters and producers to form Arabic equivalents of the lexical items pertaining to the structure of the show. Expressions such

as *tažārub al-ʔadāʔ* [the blind auditions] and *el-muwagahāt* [the battles] were abundant in the data. The word ‘V-room’, on the other hand, did not appear to have an Arabic equivalent in the data.

It was noted that some LWEs were quite limited to certain forms. For instance, the plural form ‘coaches’ was not used as much as the Arabic plural form *mudarrībīn* [coaches]. On the contrary, the word ‘battles’ was often used plural, while the singular was often expressed by the Arabic equivalent *el-muwagah* [the battle; lit. confrontation].

It was also noted that Aimée, the Lebanese presenter, did not use LWEs much for concepts related to the show setting. She accounted for only six instances; five of them being *el-v-room*; the other one was *ʔe-brēk* [the break]. From watching the show, it appeared that Aimée was the most committed to the script and she did not improvise as much as Kareem and Nadine. This may explain her lesser use of LWEs with regards to these concepts.

‘Thank you’ and ‘merci’ were the two LWE forms used to *give thanks* in the 59 instances recorded in the data under this category. The English LWE ‘thank you’ was used 26 times, the French ‘merci’ 30 times, and a mix of both occurred 3 times. Various Arabic expressions of gratitude, such as *šukran* [thanks], *alla yi-ḥal-ik* [may God keep you], and *yi-ayš-ak* [may God keep you alive] were also used often. Sometimes the participants used the LWE and the Arabic expression in the same utterance. For example, in Episode 6, Sallam thanked Sherine saying both ‘thank you’ and *ʔanā kitīr bi-šakkār ʔis-sit šerīn* [I very much thank lady Sherine]. A blend sometimes happened within an Arabic structure, such as *merci kitīr* [merci a lot] by Ingrid in Episode 10 and *thank you ʔil-lak* [thank you to you] by Nadine in Episode 10 as well. The LWE ‘merci’ was usually pronounced with Arabic phonology, though five instances were recorded where it was pronounced with French phonology, with the French /r/ clearly uttered. Apart from one instance by the Jordanian contestant, Iyad, this was done by participants who come from the Maghreb countries.

It is noteworthy that the participants did not use other LWEs to express gratitude other than ‘merci’ and ‘thank you’. For instance, they did not use the shortened forms ‘thanks’ or expressions such as ‘appreciated’, ‘I appreciate it’, or any other common way of thanking in English or French. Likewise, they did not reply to these two LWEs with ‘you’re welcome’ or ‘de rien’. Other forms of thanking or relevant replies in Arabic were used more frequently in the show.

Similar to the above category, the data does not show a clear pattern by which participants chose between the LWE and Arabic expressions of gratitude. For instance, looking at Episode 9, the first of the live shows and one of the highest occurrences of LWEs, at the time contestant Ahmed Hussein replied with ‘thank you’ to Nadine in the V-room, he replied to Kadim’s praise earlier on stage once with *šukr-an* [thanks] and another with *ʔalf šukr* [a thousand thanks]. In Episode 2, contestant Sherine gave thanks to Kadim using LWE ‘thank you’, then she gave thanks to the rest of the judges in Arabic saying *šukr-an* [thanks]. Similarly, in the same episode, contestant Ghazi gave thanks to

Sherine using LWE 'merci' but expressed his appreciation to Kadim with a prayer *ʔaʔlah yi-ḥal-īk* [may God keep you].

LWEs of 'technical terms' related to the field of music appeared 58 times. A total of 39 LWEs came from English, 15 from French, and 4 from Italian. The judges, the vocal trainers, and the presenters produced 55 of these LWEs, while the contestants produced only three. Lebanese contestant Ingrid described her performance in the rehearsal by 'second voice', Nile described a song as 'classic', and Muhammad Dihlaab described his performance as *yi-ṣīr carré* [it would become *carré*]. From among the judges, Saber accounted for 21 (36%) of these 58 LWEs. Examples of English LWEs were 'el-power' [the power], 'super star', and 'el-notāt' [the notes]. English LWEs appeared within Arabic structures as part of the comments made by the judges and the vocal trainers. For instance, Iman, the vocal trainer, responded to Ingrid's comment above saying 'ah, second voice *ma'a-hā*' [yes, second voice with her]. Saber commented on Sattar's performance saying '*duḥūl-ak kān* out of tune' [lit. your entrance was out of tune], and to Wael saying '*ʔet-tōn mtā' ṣōt-ak aw el-velocity mtā' ṣōt-ak*' [the tone of your voice or the velocity of your voice]. Examples of French LWE in this category were *coupler* [pair] said by Assi and *voix de tête* [head voice], and '*aml-it fent* [she made an opening] produced by Saber. Italian technical LWEs used were *cappella* [cappella], said by Saber. While Sherine was about to sing in praise of Nile, she waited for the conductor to start the music saying: *maestro? maestro? fēn el-mastro?* [Conductor? Conductor? Where is the conductor?]. Kadim in his comments to his team used 'soprano' and 'mezzo-soprano'.

All Italian LWEs appeared under this category except for *prova* [rehearsal] (pronounced /brova/, see this section on the show setting category, and 'bravo', of the section on praising below). James Bennett (2017) refers to the hegemony of Italian language over the field of music in his article 'Why do we use Italian words to describe music?' He cites the Oxford dictionary saying that when the art of music spread throughout Europe, it was natural that Italian spread with it considering the large contributions to the field of music coming from Italy. It may seem equally natural then that this hegemony has spread as well to the Arabic language as a shared resource among people of the field of music that Italian music words have become well established in this domain.

Arabic equivalents in this category were used, with lesser frequency than LWEs. For instance, Saber used the word *teqniy-āt* [techniques] in his comments to contestants Hayat and Muhammad Dihlaab in Episode 3. Vocal trainer Amal explained to Aida that the song she had to sing *heyia meš teknīk 'alā ʔad mā ʔeḥsās* [is not about technique as much as it is about feelings]. Later on, she repeated '*ʔeḥsās, sense* [feeling, sense].

LWEs belonging to the field of 'social media' appeared 52 times in the data. English LWEs accounted for 51 of those instances, the other one being a French word used by a Tunisian contestant in Episode 10, where he immediately followed up the French word with its Arabic equivalent *les commentaires we ta'liq-āt* [the comments]. Not surprisingly, the appearance of this category of LWE started from Episode 9, where the

V-room and the presenter Nadine were introduced. It is important to remember as well that Episode 9 is the beginning of the live shows where less editing is assumed to have been applied to the speech of the participants.

The Lebanese presenter Nadine accounted for 29 instances of LWE use in the social media domain. LWEs in this category included: 'Facebook', 'Twitter', 'Instagram', 'hashtag', 'word count', 'tweet', 'tweetāt' [tweets], 'internet', 'online', 'social media', 'MBC V-room', 'YouTube', 'le commentaire' [the comment], 'follower', 'tablet', and 'page'. They were often integrated morphosyntactically with the Arabic definite article: *el-facebook*, *el-tweet*, *et-tablet*, et cetera. It is noted as well that they were used as part of the Arabic structure. For example, in Episode 9 Nadine asked Rabie *kām follower šār-ū 'ind-ak?* [How many followers do you have by now?], where she used the Arabic feature of using a singular noun after the question word *kām?* [how many?] and not the plural form typical of the equivalent English structure.

Arabic equivalents of some these words were also noted in the data. The word *mutabī-in* [followers], *ta'liḡ-ét* [comments], *taḡrīd-ét* [tweets] (*taḡrīda* is the singular form for a tweet) and *twīt-āt* [tweets], and *šabak-āt et-tawāšul el-ḡižtimā'ī* [social media]. In this category, the LWEs were more frequent than the Arabic equivalents. One reason for that is that some of these LWE do not have equivalents in Arabic, such as the name of the platforms Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Some other terms that do not have equivalents are hashtag, tablet, and V-room. For the LWEs that have Arabic equivalents, it appears that there was no specific pattern that could be discerned for when the Arabic equivalents were used.

Focusing on Nadine's speech as the presenter who produced LWEs the most, she did not seem to follow a clear pattern in shifting between LWE and their Arabic equivalents. For instance, in Episode 9 she used LWE expressions to describe the V-room to Kareem and Aimée as *markaz el-social media* [the center of social media]. However, later in the same episode, she replied to Aimée saying *Aimée, 'am ye-wšq!nā kam hāḡél men ta'liḡ-ét wel ḡasḡilé men kél el-mušahid-in 'abr kil šabak-ét et-tawāšul el-ḡižtimā'ī* [Aimee, we are receiving a huge number of comments and questions from all the audience on social media]. She used the Arabic equivalent of social media *šabak-ét et-tawāšul el-ḡižtimā'ī* [lit. the networks of social communication] and the Arabic *ta'liḡ-ét* [comments], while later in the episode she used the LWE 'el comment' [the comment] during her interview with Khawla.

The Italian LWE 'bravo' accounted for 44 of the 45 instances recorded for 'praising'. The only other LWE is 'mon amour' [my love] and it was used once by Saber to Iraqi contestant Simur in Episode 10. The explanation for this French use is to rhyme with the contestant's name as Saber says it, *simūr, mon amour* [Simur, my love], and of course using French came naturally to Tunisian Saber. Interestingly, Simur replied to that with the Arabic equivalent *yā ḡabībī ḡinta* [my love, you].

Most of the times, *bravo* was pronounced /bravo/ with Arabic phonology, except for two times where it is pronounced /bravov/ by Assi. Often it was part of the Arabic structure *bravo 'alē-k* or *bravo 'alē-kī* [bravo on you]. This occurred in Episode 3 by Saber

and Episode 6 by Sherine and Kadim. It appears that participants were replacing the Arabic praising expression *mašāʔ aḷḷah* [glory be to God] with *bravo* but maintaining the Arabic structure of using *ʿalē-k* [on you]. The LWE *‘bravo’* was also used in combination with other Arabic praising expressions. For example, in Episode 3, Saber praised a contestant saying *ʔaḥsan-tī ʔaḥsan-tī, bravo ʿalē-kī* [Well done, well done, bravo on you]. In the same episode, Kadim said *mašāʔ aḷḷah ʿalē-kī, bravo* [Praise be to God on you, bravo]. On the use of expressions with religious references, see De Ruiter and Attwa (2021). It was also noted that only the masculine form *bravo* was used and not its feminine form *brava*. *Bravo* was used to praise anyone, whether male, female, or a group of people.

Praising expressions in Arabic were more frequent and diverse in the show than the Italian LWE *‘bravo’*. As seen in the examples above, *bravo* has become a normal expression of praising in that it was integrated and used interchangeably with other Arabic expressions. Similar to other categories, there did not seem to be a justification to the choice between *bravo* and other Arabic expressions of praising.

The English LWE *‘ok’* accounted for 38 instances out of the 40 that were labelled *agreement or checking agreement*. The remaining two instances were for the word *‘yeah’* where it was only used for agreement. Checking for agreement accounted for five instances of *ok* used with question intonation.

English LWE *‘good luck’* accounted for all 20 instances of using a loan expression for *wishing someone good luck*. Similar to other categories, this LWE was sometimes used with equivalent Arabic expressions. For instance, in Episode 10, Nadine wished Nancy *good luck bi-t-tawfīʔ* [good luck, with success]. In Episode 3, Assi wished Simur *muwafaʔ ḥabībī, muwafaʔ, good luck lā ʔilā-k, good luck* [Successful, dear, successful, good luck to you, good luck]. In Episode 7, Kadim said to Hayat *ʔaškur-ik we good luck* [Thank you and good luck].

There does not seem to be a clear pattern for when the participants chose between the Arabic expressions *muwafaʔ* [successful] or *bi-t-tawfīʔ* [with success] and *‘good luck’*. Considering the small number of LWEs in this category, Arabic expressions of wishing *‘good luck’* were used more frequent in the show.

Using English *‘hi’*, *‘hello’*, and *‘bye’*, and French *‘bonsoir’* for *greeting* were recorded 17 times in the data. They also appeared in combination with Arabic expressions for greeting. For instance, in Episode 1, Saber greeted Moroccan Sanaa by *bonsoir, masā el-ḥēr* [good evening, good evening] to which she replied *masā ʿin-nūr* [good evening]. In Episode 10, Lebanese Reem greeted Nadine saying *hi marhabā* [hi, hi]. The French *bonsoir* [good evening], the only French greeting that was used, was produced by two participants from Lebanon, two from Morocco, one from Tunisia, and one from Palestine. Similar to the above category, the small number of LWEs indicate the higher use of Arabic greeting expressions.

Names of songs, singers, and bands accounted for 16 occurrences of LWE in the data. Names of Beyoncé, Justin Bieber, and Kenny Rogers were mentioned to refer to similarities between the contestants who performed in English and the non-Arab

singers. For instance, in Episode 7 Saber called Rabie *yā Justin Bieber el-mažmū'a* [you, Justin Bieber of the group]. In Episode 8, Sherine called Khawla *Beyoncé el-'arab* [Beyoncé of the Arabs]. In addition to this, names of songs or bands were also mentioned without further comment and without subtitles, such as *I will survive*, *On the radio*, and *Stand by me*.

The 14 instances that are labelled *other* are LWEs that do not have a semantic categorization except that they are loan words and expressions. Three of them are semi-calques. In Episode 8, Saber described a contestant as his *ʔāḥir kart* [last card], a word combination in which one half is the phonologically adapted LWE *kart* for 'card'. Likewise, in Episode 11, Syrian Amaar said *na'ṭī chance*, pronouncing 'chance' with French phonology. This is a direct translation of the French idiom *donner une chance* [to give a chance]. However, he used /chance/ within the structure of the existing Arabic idiom *na'ṭī furṣa*. The third semi-calque instance appeared when in Episode 3 the Algerian contestant, Hayat, says *ʔaḥadt el-risk* [I took the risk].

There were three instances of the word 'tension' being used with Arabic morphology. Interestingly, these three instances use different Arabic forms. In Episode 7, Saber described a contestant as *mi-tanšīn* using an Arabic participle pattern to mean the contestant looked tense. In Episode 8, Sherine, used the same noun in a verbal noun pattern, saying *tanšan-a* to convey the concept of tension. Finally, in Episode 6 Saber formed the word *tanšan* on another Arabic verbal noun pattern.

Other LWEs in this category were used just once in the data. In Episode 10, Ingrid mentioned the color *bordeaux*. In Episode 1, a Moroccan waiter used the LWE *el-mall* [the mall]. In Episode 3, Egyptian Marwa speaking about her husband saying *bi-l'aks, support me gidan we šaga'nī* [On the contrary, he supported and encouraged me very much]. She used the items 'support me' within an Arabic sentence structure and accompanied by an Arabic intensifier. Kareem, in Episode 10, asked Reem about her feelings saying 'cool?'. In Episode 11, Sherine (feeling shy because Kadim gave her a flower for the World Women's Day) said that she could not be sad today as Kadim gave her 'a flower'. In Episode 1, Saber commented on a contestant saying she reached *el-pik* [the peak] of her performance. The vocal coach Amal, describing a contestant in Episode 8, said *wišu flat* [his face is flat]. Finally, Egyptian contestant Marwa in Episode 14 used the adverb LWE 'already', which was commonly used among Egyptians.

Another category was labeled *the Tunisian or the Moroccan dialect*. Not surprisingly, the 12 instances marked with this label were all French LWEs. The use of fillers such as *voilà* [here], *bon* [good], *c'est bon* [this is good], *donc* [so], and *vraiment* [really] appear five times. In Episode 1, Khawla, a Moroccan contestant, said *le talent* [the talent] and *parce que* [because]. In Episode 11, she replied to a question by Nadine with *bien sûr* [for sure]. In Episode 1, Moroccan contestant Zeinab expressed appreciation to the Moroccan waiter who gave her a present by saying *c'est gentil, merci, c'est gentil* [This is nice, thank you, thank you]. In Episode 9, Saber challenged Kareem to use more Tunisian features by asking him *ça va, ça va, aussi?* [good, good, also?] to which Kareem replied jokingly that Saber had to teach him more Tunisian words.

The six instances related to the Tunisian dialect were all uttered by judge Saber; one of the four Tunisian participants. The six instances of Moroccan dialect were produced by Khawla, Zeinab, and Fareed; three out of the 17 Moroccan participants.

Expressing excitement by LWEs appeared ten times in the data. The forms used are 'wow' (4 instances), 'yes' (4 instances), and 'oh my God' (2 instances).

A few *media jargon* words accounted for six instances of LWE use: 'cover', 'beauty tip', 'photo session', 'background', 'scenario', and '*banar-āt*' [banners]. In Episode 14, Kadim used 'background' but immediately followed it with the Arabic equivalent *ħalfiya*. In Episode 14, in a background report, Simur used the Arabic equivalent of *ħalsit taħwīr* for [photo session], which was used by the presenter. This report was not part of the core corpus of data and it was not counted or mentioned in Table 5.5, but the example was interesting nonetheless to reveal the use of Arabic equivalents in the show.

It is noted that participants sometimes used French LWEs for *etiquette* reasons. This occurred six times in the data. In Episode 9, both Aimée and Sherine used the LWE *el-bébé* [the baby] while congratulating Saber on his new baby. In Episode 14, when Assi was giving gifts to his fellow judges, he used the word *cadeaux* [a gift]. The LWE '*souvenir*' was also used two times by Assi in Episode 10 and 14. In Episode 11, Nadine used the French word *el-compliment* [the compliment] to thank Muhammad El-Fares for his compliment to her. The choice of French in this category can be seen as a touch of class that participants wanted to add in these situations.

English LWEs 'sorry' and 'I'm sorry' were used five times *to express apology*. The apology came either when giving a negative opinion on a contestant or choosing one judge or contestant over another. This appeared in Episode 1, 3, 6, and 9 by Sherine, Reem, Mona, and Ghazi respectively.

Four times LWEs seemed to be used for *fun or teasing*. One use of the expression 'oh my god' was categorized this way. Sherine used it when talking to Assi in Episode 1. She used this expression sarcastically when Assi bragged about his secret ways of bringing a T-Shirt that had the logo of *The Voice* on it. In another instance, in Episode 2, Assi resorted to some French claptrap saying *quand ça? comme c'est joli, voilà, voilà* [When is that? How beautiful, there it is, there it is]. He said that to make fun of Saber when the latter used the alleged French word *apujateur* to describe a contestant's voice. The other judges did not understand the word, so Assi started uttering these French LWEs to make fun of Saber, implying that he was talking nonsense. The word *tactic*, pronounced 'taktīk', was said by Saber, also to Assi in Episode 2, to show off his secret plan with regard to the timing when he turned his chair to the contestant. Finally, in Episode 1, Assi was teasing the judges with his team and reminded them that he won the title last year. While he was laughing, he said to Sherine that he will not tease her *li-ħan-nī bi-ħib-ik* [because I love you] and he followed it by 'I love you'.

Naming a language as a foreign word appeared in four instances: 'el-English', 'Français', 'English', and 'French'.

As the data only focused on CI between participants, the omnipresent name of the channel was recorded as LWE only four times. MBC was either mentioned by itself or

with the definite article *el-MBC*. It was also mentioned under the social media category, but it was included there as part of a social media website or link, such as ‘instagram mbc the voice insta’ or ‘mbc.net/thevoiceplus’.

Four times LWE use was labelled as *repetition*. This means that a participant had mentioned the LWE and another participant then repeated it. In Episode 7, Kadim said to the two contestants who were about to compete in the battles *?inta gilt wow we hiya gālit yā ‘ēnī* [You said ‘wow’ and she said ‘yā ‘ēnī’]. In Episode 2, Sherine repeated the word *yū* [elongated you] as said by the contestant Ingrid at the end of her song to announce her choice of Kadim as her coach. In Episode 10, Kareem repeated after Nile the word ‘scenario’ as he said there were so many scenarios in his head right now. Finally, in Episode 9, Sherine called herself a ‘princess’ and Aimée repeated the word after her.

Titles in the form of an LWE appeared three times in the data. ‘Princess’, as mentioned above, was given by Sherine to herself in Episode 9. ‘Papa’ was the title Sherine gave to the senior contestant Aamer (pronounced /papa/ not /baba/). And the title ‘*madām*’ [Madame] was given by Kadim to Rita, a middle-aged female contestant.

English LWE ‘please’ was mentioned twice and was labelled *request/give advice*. Its first mention was by Sherine in Episode 10 and pronounced ‘*blīz*’. The second use was by Saber when he was giving advice to the contestants to not be scared of the stage.

The LWE ‘yes’ was used once by Sherine in Episode 11 to *respond* to Kareem calling her. Likewise, LWE ‘game station’ was mentioned once by Assi when he said that he beat Kareem in their game station play the day before.

This above overview shows that LWEs as used in the show has become a normal part of Arabic communication. A very few instances of LWEs were flagged. These instances appeared under the category ‘technical terms’. For instance, in the battle between contestants Aida and Wael, Saber commented that by raising the *ṭabaq-a* [tone], the performance would be *voix de tête*. Saber followed this by rephrasing into Arabic, *yīṣīr ṣōt musta’ār ya’nī* [it becomes a fake voice]. In another instance, the LWE ‘out of tune’, used by Saber in conversation with Sattar in Episode 2, was subtitled in SA by MBC channel as *duḥūl-ak kān ḥārig ‘an el-laḥn*. This last instance was directed to the audience at home, not the participants in the communication event.

It might be the specialization of the field and the related terminology what triggered these explanations. At the time when LWEs were used without raising any questions or meanings, on one hand, participants seemed aware that their use of technical terms of the field of music might not be equally intelligible to the contestants and the audience behind the screens. On the other hand, using these foreign specialized LWEs helped to create an exclusive in-group identity whose shared knowledge was specific to the field of music and using the jargon of that field, therefore, reflected expertise and professionalism.

At the time when the specialized field of music triggered the use of LWE, and a very scarce flagging thereof, the overview also revealed the other domains that caused

participants to use LWEs. The use of Arabic equivalents in these categories has two consequences. First, the meaning is subtly transmitted to participants or audience who might not have access to the meanings of these LWEs. Second, by this subtle and discreet way of providing the meaning, the show reinforces the sense of normalcy to use LWEs, even by the presenters.

The following section presents a deeper discussion on the meanings of the features and patterns found in the show.

5.5 Discussion

The analysis presented above allows an answer to the first research question, which is exploratory in nature. The question is: What are the linguistic features and patterns available to and employed by the participants in the pan-Arab TV show, *The Voice*? The linguistic features are of the NDs of the countries represented in the show, of SA, and of FLs, mostly English and French. Against the dominant pattern of participants using their NDs, features of SA and FLs occurred throughout the data. The use of SA features, while rare, is mostly unidirectional from the judges and the media to the contestants. Features of FLs appeared in the form of LWEs or occasional longer stretches of utterances. French words tend to be from Maghreb participants. Italian seems to be limited to musical terms. Generally, FL use is not commented upon and appears as a natural part of the conversational genre represented in the show. However, on the individual level there seems to be no clear pattern for when a speaker chooses between Arabic and foreign features in his or her speech. Some productions appear natural in both codes.

The following discussion reflects on what the use of each category of features may mean (Blommaert, 2010; Pérez-Milans, 2015). It is an attempt to understand the indexicalities of the communicative features in relation to social, cultural, historical, and global parameters.

5.5.1 Patterns of using features of national dialects

The results agree with recent studies on Arabic inter-dialectal communication (Soliman, 2014, 2015; Trentman & Shiri, 2020). Arabs from different countries communicating together mainly use their national or regional dialects. Although it is alluring to assume this usage indexes national identities, the researcher would rather be very cautious in drawing any conclusions until the communication strategies and actual indications of identity marking in the data are investigated. These two issues are the focus of the second and third research question, respectively, and will be discussed in the next two chapters.

Although Soliman (2014, 2015), and Trentman and Shiri (2020) identify the phenomenon of receptive multilingualism (see Chapter 3), they do not go into the mechanisms of intelligibility, or into the shared values and knowledge that make mutual

communication among Arabs possible. These studies were primarily done in the field of Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language, which may be the reason why they did not investigate issues of identity indexicality, or shared knowledge underlying communication in RM mode. The current study aims to fill this gap and provide preliminary answers to these questions (see the next two chapters).

5.5.2 Patterns of using features of Standard Arabic

Standard Arabic features turned out to be used less frequently than what is commonly perceived about SA as the unifying code among Arabs from different countries. SA features were not used to facilitate comprehension; rather they sometimes seemed to index professionalism, reverence, seriousness, and expertise, but they were also used to convey humor and teasing.

Expressing a judgment or an opinion using SA features could be seen as adding a connotation of respect, professionalism, seriousness, expertise, and objectivity to the comment made. One feels the SA features eliminate subjective emotions that may be involved in the comment. Likewise, endowing a title of praise in SA on a contestant, amid a comment in ND, such as *malik al-ʔihsās* [king of feeling] and *ṣoltānét al-ǧināʔ al-ʿarabé* [sultana of Arabic singing], adds a sense of grandiosity to the title while ascribing it to the contestant's talent. It was interesting to see this function of SA was mostly relational to the contestants who passed the blind auditions. The judges probably raised the register and formality of their language to match the higher quality of the contestants' performances.

Interestingly, using SA features in teasing and fun reveals the other side of the coin. This use, although scarce mentioned (5 times out of 28), turns the seriousness index and the position of SA as a reverential code upside down. This use of SA is the opposite of what has been claimed in previous literature done on CS between SA and the dialects (for a good review see Albirini, 2016, pp. 241-245). In the current show, joking is not only done in the dialects; SA has also become a tool for making fun and joking. Speakers stir humor with SA features, acting as if a challenge is serious, and alluding to the historical, religious, and poetic position of SA. Historical and religious movies and narratives are habitually and expectedly performed in SA. This performance is part of the shared knowledge among Arabs who grew up in and after the 1950s. Pan-Arabism discourse favoring SA on TV and education was one of the main ingredients in the creation of pan-Arabism (Brustad, 2017). The play on the relation of SA to pan-Arabism and the unified language of all Arabs that built their Arab and Islamic identities makes the joke immediate to the participants and the audience. This shared heritage among Arabs allows them to understand and recognize the joke.

Following Bassiouney's (2015, 2018) reference to Silverstein's (2003; see Chapter 2) indexical orders, the use of SA as a marker of professionalism agrees with Bassiouney's identification of SA as a case of first order indexicality. History as well as social habits and norms situate SA as the code of professionalism, expertise, and reverence. Taking this idea further in the context of sociolinguistics of globalization and diaspora,

Blommaert (2007) argues that this indexical order equally reflects a power hierarchy. Sure enough, the pattern of this use as seen in the data accentuates the hierarchy and power of judges or coaches over the contestants. The unidirectional use of SA from the judges to the contestants situates the judges as the decision makers allowing minimal negotiation from the side of the contestant to the opinion given by the judges.

However, the data reveal a different third indexical order as well. Bassiouney (2015), as mentioned in Chapter 2, found a derogatory index of SA in public discourse. Contrarily to this, the current study reveals humor as a third indexical order of SA (Silverstein, 2003). In interaction, Silverstein highlights the role of a common culture and common value schemas, as well as shared intentions of the participants. Indeed, using SA to stir humor employs the abovementioned culture schema of SA but takes it one step further. The humor would not have been successful if the first order indexicality of SA was not shared among the participants. Participants in the humorous interaction build on the shared knowledge of history and pan-Arabism discourse – a shared knowledge that excludes non-Arabs.

It is interesting to note that, at the time when seriousness as the first indexical order builds a hierarchy among Arabs with regard to their different roles as a judge and a contestant, manipulating the seriousness index to cause humor builds an in-group identity. The shared cultural knowledge as described above strengthens the potential for the humoristic value of the use of SA, even though at face value the context is one of competing and challenging, as seen in the examples. This understanding was not only shared among the participants in the interaction, but also among everyone who was present at the show as well as the audience at home.

Standard Arabic features used to mark a decisive moment, present a blend between the two indexical orders mentioned above. When Saber posed the all-important question to the contestant using the question word *man?* [who?], the arguing voices of the judges and the audience withdrew into silence, awaiting the decision. The other two instances of this use of SA were, first, when Kareem said to Sherine *ʔintī ʔin-nahārda fī maʔzaq* [you are, today, in a fix] and, second, Saber said to Sattar *fī mawqef lā yuḥsad ʿal-ēh* [in unenviable position]. These two metaphors signal a pause on the part of the interlocutor, to ponder about their situation and think about which choice to make. In comparison to the use of SA features to give a comment as a judge, the level of seriousness here is lighter and tainted with a light sarcasm regarding the dilemma. Although at face value this usage appeals to the first order of seriousness, the sarcastic tone is accentuated by the use of SA features adding an attitude of light-heartedness and easiness. Speakers' attitudes, according to Bassiouney (2015), are considered representative of second order indexicality.

Another index of SA appears in the ten cases of SA subtitles: seven cases provided to Moroccan contestants, two cases to English utterances, and one case unidentifiable in the data. This use of SA, although limited, indexes SA as the intelligible common variety, resorted to by media when similarities and intelligibility are not assumed or perceived in Arabic inter-dialectal communication. In RM terms (see Chapter 3), Riionheimo et al.

(2017) discusses the subjective nature of similarity and the role it plays in the success of RM. Subjective similarity refers to the perceived and assumed similarity between different dialects or languages in a RM communication instance. In the show, it seems that MBC Group perceived and assumed insufficient intelligibility on the part of the audience in these ten instances. However, it is not clear why this assumption seems to play a role only in these instances, and not in all other communication by Moroccan contestants, or for all contributions in English.

The discussion in this section demonstrates that SA indexes a number of meanings during Arabic cross-country communication. On the one hand, SA is the code of professionalism and expertise, of reverence and seriousness, but on the other hand, SA can also be used for humor. In this last case, its use accentuates the shared knowledge and history, and plays with it. A value of light-heartedness was sometimes given to SA, in order to alleviate a decisive moment of choice. In addition to these meanings, SA still occupies, on a lower level though, the position of a mutually intelligible code that the media can resort to in cases when lack of comprehensibility is subjectively assumed.

5.5.3 Patterns of using features of loan words and expressions

Indexing LWE

As presented above, the use of LWE in the data passed without comment and, unlike the use of SA, did not follow a specific user pattern. Except for the one instance of making fun of Saber when he produced an unknown French word, most of the communication where LWEs appear were smooth and not negotiated by the participants or the media. Only in two instances did the media provide SA subtitles. In these two instances, there was no clear reason why the producers assumed a lack of intelligibility. Moreover, the subtitles were directed at the audience and not at the participants involved in the communication on the show.

The lack of metalinguistic commenting indexes commonality and shared knowledge. This does not mean that speakers do not recognize the features as foreign – participants use them sometimes to cause humor. According to the review presented in Chapter 2, this shared knowledge can be traced back to the shared history of colonial languages, the type of education prevalent across the Arab world, and the similar socioeconomic factors that entail good command of FLs for social prestige and better job opportunities.

It is important to note that using LWEs as such is not new to pan-Arab media. Nashef (2013) notes that the trend of using LWE has been common in Arab media. She argues further:

(...) however, the trend of inserting foreign words when Arabic terms exist is not only becoming very common but is a way of showing the person is westernized, the assumption being that this is more civilized. Myers-Scotton [1995] argues that ‘bilingual elites’ ‘pronounce loans as close to the originals as possible’. It also grants more authority to the person uttering these words (...) As the media have a great influence on the mass audience, viewers will consciously or subconsciously begin

adopting these words and incorporating them in their own speech. (Nashef, 2013, p. 325)

The data illustrate this pattern, the trend of using LWEs without Arabic rephrasing or explanation. However, it is important to signal the indexes of LWE use on the individual level. Following Nashef, we may interpret the use of LWE as signals of westernization, authority, and expertise.

However, considering the more frequent use of Arabic equivalents of many LWEs, these westernized and authoritative indexes may as well imply aloofness. It is not definite from the data the extent LWEs use forms a shared knowledge among the participants. What the data may be representing is a side of what Nashef refers to above as the 'bilingual elites' who took it for granted that knowledge of LWE was necessarily shared with the same level among each individual participant. The westernization and authority that these features bear create an exclusive environment in which some participants may not only feel timid to question the practice, but also aspire to imitate the production of LWE to fit in. It seems LWE is as another tool of creating a special community for those who know how to communicate with them, who share the knowledge, and who do not question its use as integral part of the community's repertoire. This index is discussed further in Chapter 6 with consideration to the use of long stretches of FLs.

Domains of LWE

The semantic fields noted in the analysis are particularly interesting from the perspective of CS. They may provide some answers to the basic question: Why are these foreign-origin words selected? Fields like show setting, technical terms, social media, other, and media jargon (see Table 5.7) reveal the reason that some foreign words may sometimes just be the best available alternative, even filling lexical gaps, or else be so salient in the media environment that they get activated quicker than their Arabic equivalents or convey the intended meaning a bit more precisely. In an attempt to understand the nature of these borrowings, the semantic fields of LWE may be further grouped into two categories, which will be called 'yielding' and 'unyielding'. This grouping reveals more characteristics of the fields in terms of openness and markedness.

Yielding categories include the semantic fields of 'show setting', 'social media', 'technical', 'media', 'Tunisian and Moroccan dialects', 'name of a song, singer, or a band', 'humor', 'loan words', 'repetition', 'etiquette', and 'games'. They allow the use of different LWEs. The semantic fields of 'name of the show', 'giving thanks', 'praising', 'agreement', 'wishing good luck', 'greeting', 'excitement', 'apology', 'name of a language', 'name of the channel', 'titles', 'request', and 'answer a call' are grouped under unyielding LWEs. This is because they are limited to particular expressions, sometimes a single one, such as 'ok' for 'agreement' and 'good luck' for 'wishing good luck'. The number of instances per category is shown in Table 5.7. The yielding category

accounts for almost 46% of the LWE instances, while the unyielding category accounts for almost 54%.

Yielding LWE		Unyielding LWE	
Category of LWE	N instances	Category of LWE	N instances
Show setting	86	Name of the show	93
Technical	58	Giving thanks	59
Social media	52	Praising	45
Name of song, singer, or band	16	Agreement or checking	40
Other	14	agreement	
Moroccan or Tunisian dialect	12	Wishing good luck	20
Media jargon	6	Greeting	17
Etiquette	6	Excitement	10
Repetition	4	Apology	5
Making fun	4	Name of a language	4
Game	1	Name of the channel	4
		Titles	3
		Request – advice	2
		Answer a call	1
Total	259 (45.8%)	Total	303 (53.6%)

Table 5.7 Yielding and unyielding domains of LWE

The yielding category is open to borrowing new LWEs that are either specific to a certain field, such as music or media, that are part of a dialect repertoire, or that are used freely to cause humor. As appearing in the data, the unyielding group shows somehow limited LWEs, sometimes only one, that is loaned in order to carry out a single function. No other similar LWE that performs the same function is borrowed from the same FL. This is seen in the use of ‘I am sorry’, ‘please’, and ‘thank you’. These LWEs are the only ones that are borrowed from English to perform the functions of ‘apology’, ‘request’, and ‘giving thanks’ respectively. As noted earlier, the responses ‘no worries’ or ‘you’re welcome’ are not borrowed. Having said that, it is important to highlight that more data is needed to measure the validity of this remark. There might be potential occurrences of more LWEs under an unyielding category that did not occur in the data.

Another important difference between the two categories is that instances of the yielding one, except for ‘the name of the show’ under the unyielding category, sometimes trigger Arabic translations or equivalents. This was shown above for the use of *ta’li?ê?et* [comments], *el-sama’ât* [speakers], and *halfiya* [background]. The unyielding category, again with the exception of ‘*The Voice*’, does not trigger the use of Arabic equivalents. They can be used hand in hand or within the Arabic structure of that

equivalent, but without providing a translation. This is seen in the examples mentioned above such as the use of 'bravo *'alē-k'*, 'good luck, *muwafa?*', or 'thank you *la-ʔil-ak'*.

This difference may tell something about what speakers consider marked or unmarked in their language use. The yielding category sits closer to the marked end of the continuum, while the unyielding is placed closer to the unmarked end. I used the idea of a continuum because as mentioned above there is no clear pattern in the data that show when exactly a participant chooses an Arabic equivalent for the LWE. In the yielding category, there are often words that speakers do not necessarily see as so entrenched in spoken Arabic that they can be used just like that, so that they often feel that they have to flag them. Technical domains account for much of the 46% of LWEs that fall under the yielding LWE category. Abundant use of foreign words and expressions in technical and professional fields has been reported in research done on CS between Arabic dialects and French or English (Albirini, 2016). The fields that particularly trigger the use of LWE in our study are music, social media, media, and the setting of the show, *The Voice*.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an answer to the first research question. In Arabic cross-country communication, the participants in the show mainly use linguistic features typical of their NDs to communicate with each other.

Within this dominant pattern, the analysis also uncovered instances where the participants use features of SA and FLs. Standard Arabic indexes a professional, serious, and reverent attitude, but is also used in a humorous way. The use of SA in subtitles maintains the index of SA as the default code for everyone when a dialect is perceived as unintelligible to many viewers. It is interesting that the one Arabic variant, which the media sometimes perceives as unintelligible, is the Moroccan dialect. Foreign features are increasingly being used as unmarked aspects of the language in the pan-Arab media. They index westernization, internationalism, authority, confidence, and education.

Chapter 6 will go deeper into the communication strategies used in the data. This will allow a better understanding of the issue of intelligibility in Arabic-cross country communication.

Strategies and intelligibility in Arabic cross-country communication

- Sherine: ... *lolā howwa* (referring to Muhammad the vocal trainer) *mā-kun-tš, mā-knš el-natīga di ha-tiṭla' bi-l-ḥalāwa dih.* (talking to Karraar, an Iraqi contestant) *fā mā-thḥāf. ḡešnū ha-l-ḥilew!*
[... without him (referring to Muhammad the vocal trainer), the result wouldn't have been that good. (talking to Karraar, an Iraqi contestant) So, don't be afraid. How beautiful!]
- Kareem: (repeating Iraqi features after Sherine) *mā-thḥāf. ya'nī bardo el-ḡa'da ganb kəzim ḡassar-it f-el-luḡa bardo yā širīn.*
(repeating Iraqi features after Sherine) [So, don't be afraid. Sitting next to Kadim influenced your language, Sherine.]
- Sherine: (jokingly) *ḡaiwā, ḡanā ba-tkalim luḡāt kitīr ḡawī.*
(jokingly) [Yes, I speak many languages.]
- (*The Voice*, Season 2, Episode 11)

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 explored the linguistic features used in Arabic cross-country communication in *The Voice*. The chapter also pointed at patterns participants use in organizing and managing these features. Arabs employ features of national dialects (ND), Standard Arabic (SA), and foreign languages (FL). The dominant pattern of communication is that each participant communicates using his or her ND. The use of SA features is limited to judges, and serves functions such as emphasizing professionalism, objectivity, or humor. Foreign languages features, i.e., loan words and phrases, as well as longer stretches of utterances, are indexed with social meanings as well.

This chapter takes a closer look at communication, to examine communicative strategies and to understand the dynamics of intelligibility using all these diverse features, particularly, the distinctive features of the NDs. As mentioned in Chapter 5, the findings confirm those of previous research (Soliman, 2014, 2015; Trentman & Shiri, 2020) on the practice of a form of receptive multilingualism (RM) in the Arab world. However, these studies did not look into the issue of how intelligibility takes place. Braunmüller (2013) argues that speakers and interlocutors, when forced into communication using RM, employ specific strategies, characterized by an attitude of willingness to communicate without prejudice.

The quote at the beginning of this chapter, taken from Episode 11, presents a clear example of strategies adopted during communication. The example shows crossing to a non-national dialect (NND) and metalinguistic discussion. Revealing the scope, meanings and values of all strategies employed by the participants in the show will provide answers to the second research question: What are the communication strategies employed in *The Voice* in order to create an intelligible pan-Arab show? By answering this question, the chapter as well aims to reveal the shared knowledge and resources that enable intelligible Arabic cross-country communication.

The analysis resorts to literature on interactional sociolinguistics, such as Gumperz's (1982) ideas on building schematic representations of linguistic diversity during communication, CS, Rampton's (2018) theory of crossing, and general insights about negotiation of meaning and metalinguistic discussion (see Chapter 3). The chapter consists of six sections, including this introduction. Section 6.2 describes the schemas and inferences of meaning that can be identified in the show. Section 6.3 looks at crossing and CS as strategies. As mentioned in Chapter 5, crossing is taking place to NND, while CS is seen in the use of FL. Each of these types are discussed in specific subsections. Section 6.4 presents the cases of overt negotiation of meaning, while Section 6.5 presents the instances of metalinguistic discussion. Section 6.6 is a discussion of the communicative meanings of these strategies.

6.2 Schema and inference of meanings

In his obituary to Gumperz, Levinson (2015) paid homage to the late pioneer as the founder of so many standard notions and vocabulary used in modern sociolinguistics. Gumperz 'introduced or redefined notions such as the speech community, repertoire, metaphorical switching, contextualization, linguistic convergence, interactional sociolinguistics, and many others' (p. 214). Gumperz's ideas on schema and inferences of meaning, as they have become a common sense to study discourse, are particularly useful to understand how communication is taking place among the participants of *The Voice*.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Gumperz (1982) argues that linguistic diversity is a resource in daily life CIs. Intelligibility starts when participants begin to infer meanings and intentions and draw expectations depending on their knowledge. General inferences of meaning are drawn from defining the nature of the situation or the activity that, in turn, channels the meanings and interpretations to flow through a shared set of expectations and knowledge. In that sense, participants in a communication event build a common ground for their interaction. According to Gumperz, the interpretations of these expectations, however, are not static. They develop and change as the participants interact. The nature of the situation does not determine meaning but only limits interpretations by channeling inferences 'so as to foreground or make relevant certain aspects of background knowledge and to underplay others' (p. 131).

6.2.1 Activity type and communication schemas in *The Voice 2*

Following Gumperz's (1982) paradigm, to a considerable extent, communication in *The Voice* is carried out by the expectation of what is going to be said within the structured sequence of the show. The show is built on a sequence of activities that are repeated in every episode in each phase of the show. The use of the superdiverse linguistic features present is thus constrained by the type and nature of each activity. In what follows, this subsection presents a description of the activity types in the show, and the communicative schemas that are formed, based on these activities.

In the first phase of the show, the blind auditions, there is no presenter on stage. There is a background introduction to the competition and the contestants through the voice of Muhammad Kareem, the lead presenter of the show. Backstage, Kareem also hosts interviews with the contestants, and sometimes with their accompanying family or friends, before they go on stage. After the contestants give their performances, the judges take turns to ask them about their names and countries. Then they start to provide either positive or negative feedback. Afterwards, contestants go backstage to their family or friends, where they may meet Kareem again giving a brief comment on the experience. Table 6.1 shows the sequential types of activities of the episodes in each phase of the show and the related schema. Gumperz (1982) explains schema as an 'interpretive frame, i.e. a set of expectations which rests on previous experience. These expectations (...) form a background with reference to which verbal options, both linguistic and paralinguistic, take on a signaling value to indicate implicit connections among subparts of the discourse' (p. 102).

Phase of the show	Activity type	Schema (building expectations)
Phase 1: the blind auditions (Episodes 1, 2, 3)	1 Summarizing previous episode. (In the first episode of Season 2, summarizing the previous season and explaining the structure of the show.)	Remembering what happened and introducing what is coming.
	2 Introducing background narrative of the contestant by Kareem's voice. Sometimes Kareem holds interviews with the contestant and their companions.	Knowing the country, age, work, singing experience, and the reason they join <i>The Voice</i> .
	3 Singing.	Listening to a national or romantic song. While listening, recognizing and expecting features of an Arabic variety.
	4 Turning the chairs.	In case any of the judges turn their chairs during the performance, there is an expectation of praise and acceptance

Phase of the show	Activity type	Schema (building expectations)
		remarks. In case no chair turns, there is an expectation of feedback and wishing good luck.
	5 Judges asking about name and country.	Knowing the name and country (sometimes the city) and expecting features of an Arabic variety.
	6 Feedback by the judges.	Listening to criticism mentioning the strong and weak points in the contestant's performance and praising or commenting on their looks. Expecting responses of thanks and comments by the contestant.
	7 In case more than one judge turns, they debate to convince the contestant to join their teams.	Teasing and joking.
	8 Backstage comments by the contestant with Kareem and family.	Listening to reflections on either being accepted or disqualified.
	9 Wrapping up the episode by Kareem's voice.	Remembering the progress achieved by each team and the incidents in the episode.
Phase 2: the battles (Episodes 6, 7, 8)	1 Summarizing previous episode. (In case of Episode 6, summarizing the previous phase and explaining the rules of new one.)	Remembering what happened and introducing what is coming.
	2 Welcoming the judges and vocal trainers.	Mentioning names, profession, and expertise.
	3 The judges selecting the contestants for the battles.	Mentioning names, songs, and comments from the coach and the contestants.
	4 Practice and rehearsals with the judge and vocal trainer.	Giving remarks while practicing. Contestants show challenge and rivalry.
	5 Introducing contestants by Kareem.	Recapping the background introduction given in the first phase on each contestant.
	6 Competing.	Listening to a national or romantic song. While listening, recognizing and expecting features of an Arabic variety.

Phase of the show	Activity type	Schema (building expectations)
	7 Feedback from the judges.	Listening to criticism mentioning the strong and weak points in the contestant's performance and praising or commenting on their looks. Expecting responses of thanks and comments by the contestant.
	8 Announcing the winner.	Giving congratulations.
	9 A possibility of one judge taking the other contestant into his team or thanking the disqualified.	In case more than one judge turns, teasing and joking. In case of disqualification, thanking the contestant and wishing him/her good luck.
	10 Wrapping up the episode by Kareem's voice.	Remembering the progress achieved by each team.
Phase 3: the live shows (Episodes 9, 10, 11, 14)	1 Summarizing previous episode. (In case of Episode 9, summarizing the previous phase and explaining the new one.)	Remembering what happened and introducing what is coming.
	2 Welcome by Kareem and Aimée. (Only in Episode 9, Kareem welcomes Aimée and Nadine to the show).	Listening to welcome and greeting expressions.
	3 Greeting Nadine in the V-room and the judges.	Listening to welcome and greeting expressions.
	4 Announcing the following competing team and a brief introduction about each contestant competing in this episode.	Recapping a brief background on the contestants and their journey in the show.
	5 A contestant sings.	Listening to a national or romantic song. While listening, recognizing and expecting features of an Arabic variety.
	6 Feedback from the judges.	Listening to criticism mentioning the strong and weak points in the contestant's performance and praising or commenting on their looks. Expecting responses of thanks and comments by the contestant.
	7 Thanking the contestant and asking the audience to vote.	Expressing thanks and encourage voting.

Phase of the show	Activity type	Schema (building expectations)
	8 Another contestant sings.	Listening to a national or romantic song. While listening, recognizing and expecting features of an Arabic variety.
	9 Intervals of interviews from the V-room by Nadine.	Expecting to hear about social media interaction and comments from the contestants.
	10 Asking a question to the contestants before announcing the winner and the selection by the judge.	Expressing excitement, anxiety, and announcing the winner.
	11 Wrapping up the episode.	Remembering the progress achieved by each team.

Table 6.1 Activity type and schema

In the second phase of the show, the battles, the sequence of the episodes starts with Kareem summarizing the last episode (or the first phase in case of Episode 6) and introducing what is coming next in this new episode (or phase). He then greets and welcomes the judges. The setting then moves to backstage where the judges meet their teams, select the competing contestants, and announce the song. After that, the scene changes to a piano room to start practicing the song, then the practicing is resumed in the ring. The setting is taken to the actual day of the competition in the ring. After singing, judges comment on the performance and announce their selection. Kareem congratulates the winner and thanks the losing contestants, wishing them good luck. There is a possibility for the judges to give the losing contestant another chance by pressing the buzz button and take them into their teams. In case more than one judge presses the buzz button to announce the selection, debate starts between them to convince the contestant to join their teams.

The last phase of the show, the live shows, are more festive and include a group performance by the contestants. The sequence of communication again starts with remembering what happened and introducing the coming phase. Episode 9, the first in this phase, introduces two new hosts, Aimée Sayah and Nadine Njeim. The episodes then start with the hosts greeting and welcoming each other, then they greet and welcome the judges and the vocal trainers. After that, they announce the competing teams. A brief introduction about the contestants is given before their performances and then comments from the judges follow. Between the performances, the setting transfers to the V-room, where Nadine hosts interviews and comments on social media interaction. After the team finishes, the winner of the audience vote is announced, followed by the selection by the judge.

The last episode of the show, and of this phase, follows the same sequence but with the addition of performances by the judges themselves, and by Ricky Martin. The

performances from each judge precede the performances of their teams. Ricky Martin performs twice, once after the first round of the performances by the four teams and then after the second round. After the performance of each judge, either Kareem or Aimée holds a very brief interview with each of them applauding their performance and commenting on the song in case it is a debut for *The Voice*. Two interviews are held with Ricky Martin in English, after his performances. Kareem and Aimée carry out the two interviews, respectively.

From the presentation above, activity types, the sequential structure of the show, participants' inference of meaning outline and make the communication with all the superdiverse linguistic features in the show possible. The interpretations and expectations are, therefore, channeled towards a limited context that enable mutual understanding among the participants and the audience in front of the screen. Moreover, setting the structure of the show as explained above establishes agreements among the participants on the roles and hierarchies. These agreements channel more expectations and interpretations of the linguistic choices of each participant in order to fulfill these expected roles.

Taking a closer look, the data revealed a number of communication strategies taking place within this general outline: crossing, CS, negotiation of meaning, and metalinguistic discussions. Crossing and CS are a continuation of Gumperz's (1982) ideas on discourse analysis.

6.3 Features of non-national dialects and foreign languages

6.3.1 Crossing and code switching

Within the above-described structure of the show, and while the participants maintain the main patterns of communication as presented in Chapter 5, the data showed locations where the participants used features of NNDs and FLs. The analysis revealed crossing practices when the participants used NNDs, and CS when they used stretches of FLs.

Before proceeding further to the results, I would like to highlight the dimensions of each practice, crossing and CS. Although Chapter 2 provided a critical outline of the inefficacy of CS when applied to Arabic inter-dialectal communication, the practice was found useful to interpret the use of FLs. For a review on the relationship between CS, identity and globalization, see Hall and Nilep (2015).

Building on Gumperz's (1982) ideas on discourse analysis and contextualization cues, Rampton (1995, 2018) identifies 'crossing' as a type of CS. Gumperz identifies two types of CS, situational and metaphorical. According to Rampton, crossing can be seen as a metaphorical CS. Both CS and crossing are types of a more general term 'code alternation' (Rampton, 1995, p. 276). But what do all these terms mean in the context of the current study?

I will start by the most general. Code alternation is any kind of using different codes during a CI (see Chapter 4). Code switching, as mentioned above, has two types. The situational CS is a change in the code that causes a change in the interpreting frame or schema (see Section 6.2 above). The metaphorical CS where crossing is seen ‘involves a “partial violation of co-occurrence expectations” and participants do not settle into the newly introduced contextual frame as an easy basis for further interaction’ (Rampton, 1995, p. 278).

Any code alternation provides a contextual cue. According to Gumperz (as cited by Rampton, 1995), contextualization cues are ‘constellations of surface features of message form (...) by which speakers signal and listeners interpret what the activity is, how semantic content is to be understood and how each sentence relates to what precedes or follows’ (p. 276). Following Auer (1990), Rampton sees code alternation as a vital important cue because of the contrast between two adjacent utterances. Code alternation contrasts what is said in the first code versus that is said in the second. This alternation does not only serve discourse functions such as highlighting side remarks or marking a new topic, but also it plays with the social values and attitudes related to the codes used.

The data did not show instances of situational CS where participants change the code in order to change the schema or the interpreting frame of meaning. In that sense, participants did not change the code and settle on the new one in order to achieve further communicative purposes. The data, however, showed two types of metaphorical CS, where there is a partial or temporary code alternation in order to achieve a discourse function. The schema did not change with code alternation and the participants returned to the dominant pattern of communication: that of using their NDs. For purposes of this study, these two different types are referred to as crossing and CS. The rest of this subsection is an elaboration on the differences between these two terms.

Code switching is based on the notion of bilingualism or multilingualism, i.e., speakers show a level of competency in the codes they use since these codes belong to the speakers. Code switching is a natural and useful resource for bilinguals that offers ample communicative strategies and richer tools for creating meaning (Youssef, 2016). It is an in-group practice that is, to an extent, limited to those who share similar expectations and rules of interpretation for the use of the codes used. It is, therefore, a practice seen to affirm membership and solidarity to the group. Crossing, however, as mentioned in Chapter 3, describes the use of a code that is not socially recognized to belong to the speakers. The new code used is an outgroup code. The participants who use the new code are usually not accepted members of the group associated with the second code they use. According to Rampton (1995), this type of code alternation involves ‘a distinct sense of movement across social or ethnic boundaries, raises issues of social legitimacy that participants need to negotiate, and that analysts could usefully devote more attention to’ (p. 280).

More than CS, the act of crossing implies improvisation, denaturalization of conventions, and is related to purchasing power and lifestyles (Rampton, 2017;

Yamachita, 2019). At the time when CS indexes a bilingual or multilingual identity since it focuses on languages that are well-established in the speakers' repertoires, crossing deploys mimicking and artful performance that highlight how speakers overestimate the similarities within a group by using certain features of their linguistic codes. Crossing can be an end in itself or can serve as a first step in a longer discourse, such as performance art, that could imply disdain or respect (Rampton, 1995, p. 281). Yamachita (2019) argues that crossing is not a hostile interaction. It serves 'to reassure peer solidarity and to create spaces where participants challenge or mock the predominant ideologies connected to language, ethnicity and identity' (p. 222). Hall and Niley (2015) argue that linguistic solidarity in Rampton's crossing 'does not derive from membership in a bounded ethnic group, but rather from an interethnic sensibility produced through boundary disruption' (p. 610). On the location of crossing in the discourse, Rampton says:

But in spite of all this variation, quite a clear pattern emerged from the data considered both in this study and in Hewitt's. The ethnolinguistic boundary transgression inherent in code crossing responded to, or produced, liminal moments and activities, when the ordered flow of habitual social life was loosened and when normal social relations could not be taken for granted. Code crossing occurred at the boundaries of interactional enclosure, in the vicinity of delicts and transgressions, in self talk and response cries, in games, cross-sex interaction and in the context of performance art. (Rampton, 1995, p. 281)

Another difference between in-group CS and out-group crossing practices is the location where the code alternation appears. On one hand, in-group CS is likely to occur in the unexceptional conduct of everyday life. Members of the group may alternate without being consciously aware of it. This type of alternation requires some productive and/or receptive competence in the semantic-referential dimension of both codes. This competence, in many instances, is seen as bilingual or multilingual proficiency in the codes used as mentioned above. Crossing, on the other hand, does not have such flexibility. The code alternation in crossing appears at liminal locations in the CI and is usually flagged. For example, it is 'marked by pauses, hesitation phenomenon, repetition, and metalinguistic commentary' (Romaine 1988, p. 141, as cited in Rampton 1995, p. 282). However, Rampton does not deny the occurrence of crossing amid conversations as well (not in liminal positions only). However, this was not the pattern that appeared in the studies he mentioned. Another distinguishing feature is that proficiency in out-group crossing can be described as minimal.

Rampton (1995) follows Auer (1990) in specifying three dimensions to be taken into consideration when studying code alternation:

The first dimension is that of the speaker's and of the recipient's individual competencies and preferences. The second dimension is that of conversational structure. The third is that of the values and social meaning attached to the languages of the repertoire. In any particular instance of code-alternation, all three

dimensions may play a role, or just one or two of them. (Auer, 1990, p. 78, as cited in Rampton, 1995, p. 282)

According to Rampton (1995), these three dimensions are found in out-group crossing, but not necessarily in in-group CS. Code switching is primarily discourse related and it focuses on conventional syntactic patterns that try to draw a clear borderline between the codes used. The change of code is mostly used to set offside remarks, mark new topics, or repeat questions and requests. In these instances, the third dimension is not necessarily present. Crossing, however, 'seems guaranteed to involve all three of Auer's dimensions' (p. 283). Crossing provides the tools to highlight the use of stylistic resources without building on a relatively well-established in-group or community memberships. The practice focuses on the social reality and the role of the speaker's position within it, or, in Rampton's words:

Crossing involves a disjunction between speaker and code that cannot be readily accommodated as a normal part of ordinary social reality. This incongruity necessarily entails (a) that crossing is participant-related, and that (b) the language involved has a wider social meaning. The 'newsworthiness' of this anomalous combination then makes crossing a practice that (c) participants interactionally orient to in the intricate but extensive way that we have documented – in other words, crossing's sociolinguistic incongruity is intimately connected with the discourse relatedness. (Rampton, 1995, p. 283)

In this regard, crossing, as such, is a type of languaging (see Chapter 3). It combines highly notable issues concerning ethnic identity with very definite actions and occasions. This feature of crossing makes it a fertile empirical site to investigate social knowledge in informal interaction among different social networks that help understand the connection points between macro and micro social processes.

To sum up, crossing as used in this study is to describe those instances where the speaker uses a code that is not socially recognized to be his or hers. This second code may belong to the listener or may not. The focus in the analysis is on the practice of the speakers. Then, CS is used to describe the instances where speakers use a second code that appear to belong to them. The use of this in-group code is characterized by competency, familiarity and comfort in expressing different discourse functions with an interlocutor that seems equally comfortable with the use of this second code.

In light of the above review, the following two subsections present the results of using features of NNDs and FLs, respectively. Each subsection presents the results quantitatively and qualitatively.

6.3.2 Using non-national features

As mentioned in Chapter 5, the predominant pattern of communication in the show is that each participant uses features of his ND. However, the data also showed 98 locations of the use of features from a NND. An important framework through which the

use of NND can be interpreted are Rampton's (1995) ideas on crossing (see Chapter 3 and Section 6.3.1 above). The present section first introduces the quantitative results of the analysis, followed by a qualitative analysis that reflects the functions of crossing.

Quantitative results

Only 16 participants out of the total 82 (19.5%) were responsible for the uses of NND. In 48 cases (48.9%), the features were Egyptian Arabic, 2 of these being of Alexandria and the rest assumingly of Cairo ('assumingly' because the participants did not say that clearly in the show), 16 came from Iraqi Arabic, 14 were Lebanese features, 9 were Moroccan features, 6 Tunisian, 3 Kurdish, and 1 Syrian. In one case, labelling was difficult (it was coded as 'generic'). Table 6.2 lists the 98 instances, the speakers and interlocutors involved, along with their NDs and roles in the show. The table is arranged by the source of the NND that was used.

Participant (ND)	Role	Interlocutor (ND)	Role	NND	Total each
1 Sherine (egy)	judge	Alaa (egy)	contestant	alx	48
2 Sherine (egy)	judge	Khaled (alx)	contestant	alx	
3 Adnaan (irq)	contestant	Husaam (egy)	contestant	egy	
4 AHussein (leb)	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
5 Assi (leb)	judge	Husaam (egy)	contestant	egy	
6 Assi (leb)	judge	Husaam (egy)	contestant	egy	
7 Assi (leb)	judge	Husaam (egy)	contestant	egy	
8 Assi (leb)	judge	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
9 Assi (leb)	judge	Sherine (egy)	judge	egy	
10 Assi (leb)	judge	Sherine (egy)	judge	egy	
11 Assi (leb)	judge	Aimée (leb)/ audience	presenter	egy	
12 Ghazi (leb)	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
13 Halima (mrc)	contestant	Amal (egy)	vocal trainer	egy	
14 Halima (mrc)	contestant	Amal (egy)	vocal trainer	egy	
15 Halima (mrc)	contestant	Amal (egy)	vocal trainer	egy	
16 Halima (mrc)	contestant	Kadim (irq)	judge	egy	
17 Halima (mrc)	contestant	Kadim (irq)/ Iman (egy)	judge/ vocal trainer	egy	
18 Aimée (leb)	presenter	Sherine (egy)	judge	egy	
19 Aimée (leb)	presenter	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
20 Aimée (leb)	presenter	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
21 Aimée (leb)	presenter	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	

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Participant (ND)	Role	Interlocutor (ND)	Role	NND	Total each	
22	Aimée (leb)	presenter	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
23	Kadim (irq)	judge	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
24	Kadim (irq)	judge	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
25	Kadim (irq)	judge	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
26	Kadim (irq)	judge	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
27	Kadim (irq)	judge	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
28	Kadim (irq)	judge	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
29	Marwan (mrc)	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge	egy	
30	Marwan (mrc)	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge	egy	
31	Nadine (leb)	presenter	Wahm (egy)	contestant	egy	
32	Nadine (leb)	presenter	Marwa (egy)	contestant	egy	
33	Nadine (leb)	presenter	Alaa (egy)	contestant	egy	
34	Nadine (leb)	presenter	Ghazi (leb)	contestant	egy	
35	Nancy (leb)	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge	egy	
36	Rabie (leb)	contestant	Kareem (egy)/ the audience	presenter	egy	
37	Rabie (leb)	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter	egy	
38	Saber (tun)	judge	Husaam (egy)	contestant	egy	
39	Saber (tun)	judge	Husaam (egy)	contestant	egy	
40	Saber (tun)	judge	Amal (egy)	vocal trainer	egy	
41	Saber (tun)	judge	Sherine (egy)	judge	egy	
42	Saber (tun)	judge	Sherine (egy)	judge	egy	
43	Saber (tun)	judge	Assi (leb)	judge	egy	
44	Saber (tun)	judge	Sherine (egy)	judge	egy	
45	Saber (tun)	judge	Sherine (egy)	judge	egy	
46	Saber (tun)	judge	Ghazi (leb)	contestant	egy	
47	Saber (tun)	judge	General	general	egy	
48	Saber (tun)	judge	General	general	egy	
49	Halima (mrc)	contestant	Kadim (irq)	judge	generic	1
50	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Samer (irq)	contestant	irq	16
51	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Kadim (irq)	judge	irq	
52	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Adnaan (irq)	contestant	irq	
53	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Amer (irq)	contestant	irq	
54	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Amer (irq)	contestant	irq	
55	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Sattar (irq)	contestant	irq	

Participant (ND)	Role	Interlocutor (ND)	Role	NND	Total each	
56	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Adnaan (irq)	contestant	irq	
57	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Karrar (irq)	contestant	irq	
58	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Samer (irq)	contestant	irq	
59	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Kadim (irq)	judge	irq	
60	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Sattar (irq)	contestant	irq	
61	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Kadim (irq)	judge	irq	
62	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Samer (irq)	contestant	irq	
63	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Karrar (irq)	contestant	irq	
64	Sherine (egy)	judge	Karrar (irq)	contestant	irq	
65	Sherine (egy)	judge	Karrar (irq)	contestant	irq	
66	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Mihvan (kurd)	contestant	kurd	3
67	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Mihvan (kurd)	contestant	kurd	
68	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Mihvan (kurd)	contestant	kurd	
69	Hayat (alg)	contestant	Judges	judge	leb	14
70	Hayat (alg)	contestant	Kadim/judges	judge	leb	
71	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Ghazi (leb)	contestant	leb	
72	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Ghazi (leb)	contestant	leb	
73	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Rabie (leb)	contestant	leb	
74	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Sherine (egy)	judge	leb	
75	Sahar (mrc)	contestant	Assi (leb)	judge	leb	
76	Sahar (mrc)	contestant	Assi (leb)/ Khuri (leb)	judge/ vocal trainer	leb	
77	Sherine (egy)	judge	Kadim (irq)	judge	leb	
78	Sherine (egy)	judge	Ghazi (leb)	contestant	leb	
79	Sherine (egy)	judge	Assi (leb)	judge	leb	
80	Sherine (egy)	judge	Saber (tun)	judge	leb	
81	Sherine (egy)	judge	Nancy (leb)	contestant	leb	
82	Sherine (egy)	judge	Saber (tun)	judge	leb	
83	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Khawla (mrc)	contestant	mrc	9
84	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Khawla (mrc)	contestant	mrc	
85	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Khawla (mrc)	contestant	mrc	
86	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Mahmoud (mrc)	contestant	mrc	
87	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Khawla (mrc)	contestant	mrc	
88	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Sattar (irq)	contestant	mrc	

Participant (ND)	Role	Interlocutor (ND)	Role	NND	Total each
89 Kareem (egy)	presenter	Ahussein (leb)/ Sattar (irq)/ Khawla (mrc)	contestant	mrc	
90 Sherine (egy)	judge	Sanaa (mrc)	contestant	mrc	
91 Sherine (egy)	judge	Hamza (mrc)	contestant	mrc	
92 Sherine (egy)	judge	Amaar (syr)	contestant	syr	1
93 Halima (mrc)	contestant	Saber (tun)	judge	tun	6
94 Kareem (egy)	presenter	Saber (tun)	judge	tun	
95 Kareem (egy)	presenter	Saber (tun)	judge	tun	
96 Kareem (egy)	presenter	Saber (tun)	judge	tun	
97 Kareem (egy)	presenter	Dihlaab (tun)	contestant	tun	
98 Sherine (egy)	judge	Saber (tun)	judge	tun	

Table 6.2 Use of NND in the show

The most prolific user of such features was Egyptian Muhammad Kareem, who used features of NNDs 32 times (14 Iraqi, 3 Kurdish, 4 Lebanese, 7 Moroccan, and 4 Tunisian). Next was Sherine, also Egyptian, who used features of NNDs 14 times (2 Alexandrian, 6 Lebanese, 2 Iraqi, 2 Moroccan, 1 Syrian, and 1 Tunisian). Table 6.2 shows that other participants use such features sporadically. Moroccan Halima used Egyptian Arabic features 5 times, Tunisian once, and she was also the one responsible for the generic NND feature (see below). Moroccan Sahar used Lebanese features twice. The other participants used Egyptian features: Tunisian Saber 10 times, Lebanese Assi 7 times, Iraqi Kadim 6 times, Lebanese Aimée 5 times, and Nadine 4 times, Moroccan Marwan and Lebanese Rabie each twice, and Iraqi Adnaan, the Lebanese Ahmed, Nancy, and Ghazi each once. A special case was the Algerian Hayat, who used mostly Lebanese features throughout her communication in the show, and a few Algerian features. Hayat was the only participant who was an exception to the unmarked pattern of using ND and who used mostly NND features in her communication.

A final quantitative overview is given in Figure 6.1, which shows the proportion of NND sources in the data from the 16 participants who used NND, except for Hayat.

As Figure 6.1 below shows, 12 of the 16 participants used Egyptian NND features, 4 participants used Lebanese NND features, and 3 participants used Tunisian NND features. Only the Egyptian Kareem and Sherine used Iraqi and Moroccan features. Only Kareem used features of Kurdish and only Sherine used Alexandrian and Syrian features.

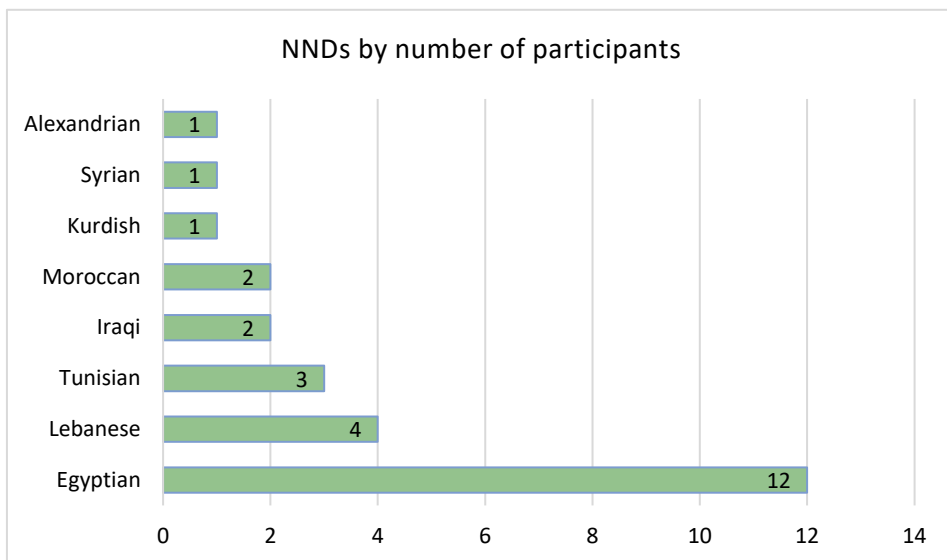


Figure 6.1 NNDs by number of participants

Qualitative results

To consider the data qualitatively, the NND locations were labelled for their functions in the communication. As mentioned in Chapter 4, these locations were compiled in an Excel sheet where the function of each of these instances was recorded. These functions were regrouped into more general categories that defined the discourse function mentioned in the sections of this analysis.

Two main general categories were found for 91 instances out of the 98: discourse maintenance and humor. More details are discussed below. The seven remaining instances could not be labelled under either of these two categories. The reason was that their function seemed static, in the sense that there was no dynamic transmission of the speaker's ideas or expression of emotions. Instead, they came in the form of reading from a tweet (two instances), taking or giving a cue (four instances), and quoting the Egyptian musician Abdel Wahab (one instance). All seven instances concerned Egyptian features.

The two instances labelled *reading from a tweet* were produced by Nadine, the Lebanese host from the V-room. She read the tweet in her Lebanese accent and as written in Egyptian features. Three instances were labelled as *taking the cue* and one as *giving the cue*. All four instances occurred in conversation between the two hosts, the Lebanese Aimée and the Egyptian Kareem, where Aimée used Egyptian features. These instances were considered static because both presenters were reading their lines from a teleprompter. This meant the producers of the show scripted and prepared these exchanges between them; they were not their own spontaneous utterances. The instance where Lebanese Aimée gave Egyptian Kareem the cue, she said *muš kida yā*

karīm? [Isn't it so, Kareem?]. Kareem gave her the cue with a similar question in the other three instances. She took the cue saying *keda keda yā karīm* [It is so, it is so, Kareem] in two instances, and in the other one she said *kida yā karīm mazbūṭ!* [It is so, Kareem, right!]. In all four instances, it was the same Egyptian feature: *keda* (pronounced /kida/ as well by Aimée) versus *heik*, the Lebanese equivalent of this word.

The final instance out of the seven that were not categorized as one of the two main categories was labelled as *quoting Abdel Wahab*, because it was the only instance where Lebanese Assi quoted the famous Egyptian musician Muhammad Abdel Wahab in commenting on a contestant. Assi used to stand up when he got fascinated by a contestant. He commented on this, citing Abdel Wahab, who also used to stand up out of respect to the voice of the Lebanese singer Wadie Is-Safy. When asked about the reason why he was standing up, Abdel Wahab said, as quoted by Assi in the show, *iṣ-ṣōṭ dah 'ēb 'alē-nā nu-'ud we huwa be-yġanī* [Shame on us to sit down while this voice is singing]. Assi quoted the famous Egyptian musician using Egyptian features: the demonstrative *dah* [this], the verb pattern *nu-'ud* [we sit], and *be-yġanī* [he sings].

The next two subsections present the analysis of the 91 instances that were gathered under the two main categories mentioned above: discourse maintenance and achieving a humorous effect.

Crossing to non-national features for discourse maintenance

Out of the 91 instances mentioned above, 26 were labelled as having the function *discourse maintenance*. The difference between this and the other main category, as may be obvious, was whether crossing to NND features caused the effect of laughter among the participants or not. These 26 instances did not stir laughter; rather they served the more serious functions explained below. Table 6.3 sums up the labels given to the different functions of communication gathered under this category.

Label	N instances
Accommodating to a higher power (Mashreqi-Maghrebi ideology)	9
Influenced by an Egyptian interlocutor	8
Expression of thanks or appreciation	3
Greeting	3
Encouragement	2
Rephrasing oneself	1
Total	26 (26.5% of the total 98 instances of NND)

Table 6.3 Functions of NNDs crossing for discourse maintenance

These examples are discussed in detail below.

The first category, *accommodating to a higher power*, include two Maghrebi contestants, an Algerian and a Moroccan. The category offered insights on the Mashreqi-Maghrebi language ideology (see Chapter 2). One of these two contestants was the untypical participant who used NND for communication, Hayat Zarouq. As mentioned above, the Algerian Hayat Zarouq was the only participant who used NND in most of her communication in the show, even in the background reports. Although the background reports were not part of the data, a glance at them revealed that her speech behavior was contrary to the main pattern of the show, in which participants mainly used features of their NDs.

Since this was a unique case in the data, I conducted some research online, to see whether Zarouq perhaps lived in Lebanon and whether there were other videos where she used Lebanese features other than in the show. She seemed to be quite well-known in Algeria. In a video by Ennahar TV on YouTube, published on June 4th, 2017, the presenter announced that Zarouq had decided to quit her career as a singer and focus only on writing lyrics. According to the video, this news came at the time when Zarouq had just finished her latest album, which was to be released soon. Another video was published on January 30th, 2018, by the Algerian TV host Slimani Malik on Zair News Channel where Slimani hosted Zarouq after the release of her album (presumably the same album mentioned in the news report by Ennahar TV). In this interview, she spoke using only Algerian features including the use of French features that were seen as part of the Algerian dialect. I did not find any videos where she used Lebanese features, or sources where other Algerians commented on Zarouq's use of Lebanese features in *The Voice*.

In the data, Zarouq appeared in two episodes, 3 and 7. In the analysis, I have counted these as two locations because it would have been misleading to count all her Lebanese features as separate locations of using non-national features. As mentioned earlier, Zarouq used mainly Lebanese features and a few Algerian ones. In Episode 3, the blind audition, she spoke to the judges after three of them had pressed the buzz button for her. She said *kint fakra ?in-nu mā ḥadā rāḥ yubrum li-?an-nī ?aḥad-t el-risk ?in-nī ?a'mil-hā 'ā ṭṭāriqtī* [I thought nobody would turn because I took the risk to do it my way]. In the same CI she said later *?anā kint 'imil-t ?iḥtiyār-ī bas mā dḥr el-?iḥtiyār* [I had made my choice from the judges but the choice did not turn]. Zarouq used Lebanese features in these two examples: the lexical items *ḥadā* [this] and *yubrum* [turns], the verb patterns *kint* [I was] and *'imil-t* [made], and the future modal *rāḥ* [will]. However, Algerian features of her ND were present as well, on a secondary level, such as the absence of *imāla*, the pronunciation of /q/ in *ṭṭāriqtī* [my way] and the lexical item *dḥr* [turned] versus *yubrum* [turns] in the first utterance.

In the battles, Episode 7, Zarouq was competing with the Lebanese Ingrid Bawab in Kadim's team. In the rehearsal, she spoke using Lebanese features to Ingrid who wanted to raise the tone. Hayat felt this would be very difficult for her voice, so she asked Ingrid a rhetorical sarcastic question: *bid-dik ti-?til-īn-ī?* [Do you want to kill me?]. In this question, she used the lexical Lebanese item *bid-dik* [you want] and /ʔ/ instead of /q/,

typical of Algerian dialect. Similar to her production in Episode 3 above, she did not use the *imāla*, which made her accent not Lebanese.

Her last utterance in the show as well came with Lebanese features. She said *kān bid-dī bas aškur kul el-ʔasātza ʔakīd ‘alā raʔyu-hum fī-yā ʔanā da rāḥ yisā‘idnī mshān b-ištaḡal ʔakṭar in-šā-allah we ʔuškur ḥaṣatan el-ʔustād kḏim es-sāhir liʔan-nū ʔiʔṭnī el-furṣa bshān ʔakūn (unclear) ma‘kum (unclear)* [I just wanted to thank all the masters for sure for their opinion about me. This would help me to work more. I specially thank Mr. Kadim As-Saher because he gave me a chance to be (unclear) with you (unclear)]. Again, she used the lexical items *bid-dī* [I want], *mshān* [because], *bshān* [because], the future marker *rāḥ* [will] and the aspect marker *b-*. She pronounced these utterances with an Algerian accent. Although she pronounced /z/ instead of /d/ in *el-ʔasātza* [masters] which is a feature of Lebanese and other Middle Eastern Mashreqī dialects, she pronounced the /d/ in *el-ʔustād* [master] as it would sound in her Algerian dialect.

The reason why Zarouq mainly used Lebanese features rather than Algerian ones could probably be traced back to the location of the broadcast of the show, which was Lebanon, similar to the first season, and presumably, many of the crewmembers were Lebanese. In this location and amidst this crew, being the only Algerian contestant in the competition, Zarouq might have felt under pressure to accommodate her language. The Lebanese location and crew did not have the same influence on the rest of the participants in the show, except for Sherine to a certain extent as will be presented in the following subsection. In the discussion section of this chapter (Section 6.6), this category is discussed further in light of the Mashreqī-Maghrebi language ideology, after we have looked at more examples from other Maghrebi contestants.

Looking at Halima, a Moroccan contestant, she was observed using Egyptian features five times, all of them in one CI. In this CI, she was communicating with Iman, the vocal trainer assisting Kadim with the team. She was expressing her disagreement against a higher power that had chosen the song for her. Although she was using her national Moroccan features, in this instance when Egyptian Iman asked her what was wrong, as Halima was crying, she replied *māfiš ḥāga* [nothing] and later she explained to her *ʔanā hina ‘ašān ʔangaḥ miš ‘ašān ya’nī ʔaḥud taḥadī yi-wadi-nī li-bīt-ī* [I am here to succeed, not to take a challenge that sends me home]. In this communication, she used the Egyptian expression *māfiš ḥāga* [there is nothing], with the negation *māfiš* [there is no] and the pronunciation of /g/ sound instead of /ʒ/. She also used the /g/ feature in the verb *ʔangaḥ* [I succeed], the lexical items *‘ašān* [in order to] and *yi-wadi-nī* [takes me to], and the negation in *miš* [not]. Her non-Egyptian accent appeared in the final stop at each word of her utterance and in the vowels *li-bīt-ī* [to my home] instead of *le-bētī*, typical of Egyptian Arabic.

However, when speaking to Kadim in the same instance, she produced the one utterance labelled as having generic NND features. She used very broad features of Arabic not typical of a specific dialect. Maybe she was trying to balance between Egyptian and Iraqi Arabic as Egyptian Iman was also still present in the conversation. She said to Kadim *ya’nī ʔiḥnā fī marḥala muḥima ya’nī, law kul wāḥid ya’nī yitmanā ʔin-nū*

yinžah [I mean we are in an important phase, I mean, if everybody, I mean, wish to succeed]. It seems her attempt to use features closer to Kadim's dialect produced a broken grammatical structure in her sentences. Distinctive features of a certain dialect could not be found in this utterance, except for her Moroccan accent.

Another function of using non-national features under the category of serious communication is labelled *influenced by an Egyptian interlocutor*. This type appeared eight times in this category. It concerned instances where the speaker used an Egyptian feature with an Egyptian interlocutor. There was no other function that could label these crossings and all the eight locations appeared with an Egyptian interlocutor, hence the label. An example of this was when Aimée, the Lebanese host, was addressing the audience in her Lebanese ND, and then shifted to address Egyptian Sherine asking *širīn, gahza?* [Sherine, are you ready?] where she used the /g/ instead of the /ž/ and she did not pronounce the *imāla*. Another example was when Saber was thinking to select a contestant from among his team in Episode 6. After thinking and talking in his Tunisian ND, he addressed the Egyptian vocal trainer in his team saying *ēh yā kotš? ēh yā kotš? le-tnēn he? le-tnēn ḡabdá'u, he?* [What, coach? What, coach? Both? Both did great?] He used the question word *ēh* [what] and the lexical item *le-tnēn* [the two]. However, the last word *ḡabdá'u* [they did great] was pronounced using a short emphatic *imāla*, common in the Tunisian vowel system.

Using non-national features to *thank or express appreciation* to the interlocutor was recurrent in the data. In addition to her use of Egyptian Arabic in Episode 3, Moroccan Halima used a Tunisian feature with the Tunisian judge, Saber. She used the fixed known expression *yī'ayšak* [thank you] to thank him for praising her. Marwan, a Moroccan contestant, used Egyptian features in two instances to express his appreciation to Sherine who chose him in her team. For example, he said *šaraf lī-yā kibīr ḡawī* [It is a very big honor for me]. He used lexical features *lī-yā* [for me] and *ḡawī* [very], and he kept the vowel system of Egyptian Arabic in *šaraf* [honor] versus the Moroccan *šrif'*, and *kibīr* [big] versus the Moroccan *kbīr*.

Greeting was another repeated function for using non-national features in the data. The Iraqi Adnaan, the Lebanese Assi, and the Moroccan Sahar used features of NND to greet their interlocutors. Both Adnaan and Assi used Egyptian features to greet the Egyptian Husaam. Adnaan says *ḡizzay-ak yā ḡusām?* [How are you, Husaam?]. In the same Cl, Assi says *ḡabībī ḡizzay-ak? ḡaḡbar-ak ēh? ḡezzay mašr?* [Dear, how are you? What's up? How is Egypt?]. Both Adnaan and Assi used the Egyptian lexical item *ḡizzay-ak* [How are you?], and Assi added the idiomatic expressions *ḡabībī* [my dear] and *ḡaḡbār-ak ēh?* [What's up?], both typical of Egyptian greetings. He also explicitly greeted Egypt. Another instance of greeting using NND came from the Moroccan contestant Sahar. The Moroccan contestant used the Lebanese lexical item *kīf-kum?* [How are you both?] to greet Lebanese Assi and Khuri.

In these two instances, Assi and Sahar maintained more features of the NND they had used in their greeting. Assi and Adnaan were talking with Husaam on Skype. Husaam was in Egypt while both of Assi and Adnaan were in Lebanon. This difference in the

location along with the setting of Skype probably was what triggered the use of Egyptian features by Assi. Assi explained the song to Husaam using Egyptian features and said *ṭaba'an hiya el-ġinwa ʔil-lī ha-tġan-ū-hā ʔuġniya ma'rūf-a ged-dan we ʔakīd ʔinta sāmī'-hā, hiya ʔuġniya le rāšid el-māžid* [Of course, the song which you will sing is well known and of course you have heard it. It is a song for Rashid El-Majid]. He used the Egyptian lexical items *el-ġinwa* [the song] and *ged-dan* [very], the verb pattern *ha-tġan-ū-hā* [you (pl.) will sing] and *sāmī'-hā* [have heard it]. He did not pronounce the *imāla* typical of Lebanese Arabic and he kept the /g/ sound in *ged-dan*. However, Assi's production in this instance sounded forced, i.e., it did not flow smoothly as a natural fluency of an Egyptian native speaker. The subtle pauses between words did not render a natural smooth production.

In her instance, Sahar was competing with Palestinian-British Mona in the team of the Lebanese Assi and the vocal trainer Khuri. When asked if she knew the song they had picked for them to compete on, Sahar replied *ʔanā ʔakīd ba-'raf Pink bas hā el-ʔéġniyā mā ba-'ref-hā* [Sure, I know Pink, but this song I don't know]. She said this using Lebanese features, such as the verb pattern *ba-'raf* [I know], the demonstrative *hā* [this], the negation in *mā ba-'ref-hā* [I don't know it], and the lexical item *el-ʔéġniyā* [the song], pronounced also in the Lebanese *imāla*. Surrounded by all Levantine dialect speakers, and the pressure of her position as the one who did not know the song, probably made Sahar use these features to communicate her vulnerable position to her coach, vocal trainer, and rival.

Using non-national features for *encouragement* appeared twice, both times when Saber encouraged Egyptian Husaam. He said *ʔaḥsant! we ḥǧfiz 'al-basma dih!* [You did well! Keep this smile!]. Although he kept the Tunisian feature /z/ he used the Egyptian demonstrative *dih* [this] and the open flat vowels in *'al-basma* [the smile].

The only instance where Sherine used Syrian features appeared as a *rephrase* to what she had said in Egyptian features. Part of her advice to the Syrian Khaled was *we ṣāḷṭan nafs-uh, ṣāḷṭan ḥāl-uh* [And he is enjoying himself, and he is enjoying himself]. She rephrased what she first said in Egyptian: *nafs-uh* [himself], using the Syrian lexical item *ḥāl-uh* [himself]. Sherine acted based on her generalized assumption about the Syrian dialect. It seems she perceived the lexical item *nafs-uh* [himself] as less Syrian than the item *ḥāl-uh* [himself], and so she tried to converge towards her Syrian team member.

The use of NNDs for discourse maintenance, although relatively limited in the data, indexes convivial and convergent communication practices. By using the NNDs, there was either a sense of appeal or a tacit move to get closer to the interlocutors by fondling with a dear possession, their ND. The *appeal to fit in* is seen in the cases of Sahar, Hayat, and Halima, who are all from the Maghrebi side of the Arab world. The *convivial fondling* is clearer in the cases of encouragement, expression of appreciation, rephrase, and, above all, being convivial with the Egyptian interlocutors. It is noteworthy that 19 instances out of these 26 NND use were of Egyptian features; this accounts for 73% of them. Both the Maghrebi-Mashreqi communication dynamics and the position of the

Egyptian features will be elaborated further in the discussion after the full presentation of the results. In the following section, the second category is analyzed – the humor effect.

Crossing to non-national dialects for humor effect

There were 65 points of crossing to features of NNDs that stirred laughter among the participants. These humorous instances served various specific purposes: *repetition, praising, greeting, teasing and replying to teasing, congratulating, flirting, and being funny*. These 65 instances counted for 66.3% of the 98 instances where features of NNDs were used. Table 6.4 sums up the labels given to these instances under this category.

Label	N instances
Repeating	19
Praising	19
Greeting	12
Teasing or replying to teasing	10
Congratulations	3
Fun flirting	1
Being funny	1
Total	65 (66.3% of the total 98 instances of NND)

Table 6.4 Using NND for humor effect

Repeating non-national features occurred 19 times in the data. The repetition was of something said by a participant on the show in the ND and repeated by another as non-national features. This repetition sometimes came to express surprise or sarcasm from what had been said. For example, in the first episode, Assi was trying to convince a contestant to join his team. Part of what he said to tease the judges was that the contestant could join Sherine's team, as Sherine was not at a level to compete with him. Surprised by this teasing, Sherine repeated what Assi had said with Lebanese features as a rhetorical question, then she repeated the question with Egyptian features:

Assi: *ʔanā bi-raʔy-ê rūḥ ma'a širīn, širīn ma-b-tnāfis-nê.*

[I think you can go with Sherine, Sherine does not compete with me.]

Sherine: *širīn ma-b-tnāfs-ak?*

[Sherine does not compete with you?]

Assi: *lāʔ, 'ašān law ribiḥ-tê ʔintê ... (interrupted)*

[Because if you win, ...] (interrupted)

Sherine: *mīn diḥ ʔil-lī mš b-tnāfs-ak?*

[Who is that who does not compete with you?]

In her first reaction, Sherine used the Lebanese negation features that Assi had used in his utterance to tease her. Sherine then repeated the structure using the Egyptian Arabic negation features.

Another example occurred in an exchange between Egyptian Kareem and Lebanese Rabie. In Episode 9, after singing an English song, Kareem praised Rabie saying that he was singing very well in English. In Lebanese features, Rabie said that he also knew Arabic very well. Kareem repeated what Rabie had said using the same features *be-te'raf 'arabī kamān mnīh?* [You know Arabic well too?]. Kareem did this using the Egyptian vowel system but repeated the Lebanese lexical item *mnīh* [well]. Then Rabie said 'I will show you', and he started acting out a scene by the Egyptian actor Adel Imam from the play *El-Wād Sayid Eš-Šaḡāl* [*The boy, Sayed, the servant*]. Rabie acted in Egyptian Arabic repeating what Imam said in the play: *bi-t-ḥibīnī yā hudā?* [Do you love me, Huda?]. This performance suggested that what Rabie referred to as 'Arabic' actually turned out to be the Egyptian variety.

Iraqi judge Kadim repeatedly used the same Egyptian features with Kareem referring to a secret between them. Kadim asked Kareem in Episodes 9, 10 and 11: *lēh keda yā mḥamad?* [Why so, Muhammad?]. The Egyptian features Kadim used were the question word *lēh* [why], the lexical item *keda* [this/so], and the vowels in *mḥamad* [Muhammad]. Sometimes Kareem responded by parroting the same question back to Kadim, using Egyptian features: *lēh keda yā kāzim?* [Why so, Kadim?]. Then they both would start to laugh. In Episode 11, Kadim explained that in the early stages of the show, the recorded episodes, Kareem used to make many mistakes and that they had to repeat several times. During these repeated shootings, Kareem was reproached with the question *lēh keda yā mḥamad?* [Why so, Muhammad?]. Subsequently, the expression became a fixture as Kadim used it repeatedly to tease Kareem during the show.

Out of the 19 occurrences of the use of non-national features for repetition, 11 were of Egyptian features, and these were carried out by Lebanese Rabie, Nadine, and Assi, Tunisian Saber, and Iraqi Kadim. Three occurrences were of Lebanese features, by Egyptian Kareem and Sherine. Kareem also repeated Moroccan features twice in one instance. He repeated the word *žūš* [both] after Moroccan Khawla had used it (this instance is explained further in Section 6.4 under *negotiation of meaning*). Kareem also repeated Iraqi features twice. One of them was actually a repetition of what Sherine had said to an Iraqi contestant, praising him and asking him not to be afraid. She gave the Iraqi contestant this advice using Iraqi features, saying *mā thǧf!* [Don't be scared!], which Kareem repeated later to the same contestant. Sherine also repeated Tunisian features once to mock what Tunisian Saber had said in expressing his confidence about his team. He had said that he knew what he had in his team, and Sherine repeated this saying *'āref eš-nū ʔel-lī 'and-u* [He knows what he has].

Use of non-national features for *praising* appeared in 19 locations in the data as well. The Egyptian Kareem counted for 12 times out of these 19 (8 times for Iraqi features, 2 times for Moroccan features, once for Lebanese features, and once for Tunisian features). Sherine used non-national features for praising 6 times (2 times using Iraqi

features, 2 times using Lebanese features, and 2 times using Moroccan features). The other occurrence for praising was by Lebanese Ghazi when he used Egyptian features with Kareem.

This final occurrence provided a good example of a praising exchange by Kareem and Ghazi. After Ghazi made his performance in Episode 11, Kareem entered the stage praising him, saying *ya'nī zay mā bi-tʔulū keda fi libnān, bi-t'aʔid* [As you say in Lebanon, you are amazing (lit. You cause people to have a complex)]. To this Ghazi replied *wal-lāhī ʔinta ʔil-lī miya miya* [By God, you are 100%]. In this example, each used an idiomatic fixed expression of the other's dialect for praising. Kareem's choice was clearly a conscious choice, as he started his praise with Egyptian features, saying 'as you say in Lebanon'. Kareem used this pattern of using a fixed expression to praise a contestant also in his 11 other examples. For example, in Episode 10, he praised the Iraqi Sattar and Amer saying *kul-liš ḥilew* [very beautiful].

Kareem was responsible for yet another pattern of the use of non-national features as he carried out all of the 12 occurrences labelled *greeting* with a humorous effect. From the data, he appeared to be learning to say the idiomatic fixed expressions of saying [How are you?] in different dialects. For example, he said to Moroccan Khawla *kif dāyr-a, lā baʔasʔ*, to Iraqi Kadim *ʔēš lōn-ak el-ʔawel tamāmʔ*, to Tunisian Saber *ʔaḥwāl-ak merīglaʔ*, and to the Kurdish Mhvaan *mhvaan, ʔentā bāšīʔ* before adding *selav bū kurdistān. Ba-ʔūl ṣaḥ walla ēhʔ* Kareem did not translate the first part of his greeting to Mhvaan, but the second part came in Egyptian features asking [Do I say it correctly or not?]. He pronounced these greetings in an Egyptian accent and sometimes used other Egyptian features such as in his question to Kadim where he used the idiomatic *tamām* [great] at the end of his greeting. Usually praising or greeting triggered a shy laugh from his interlocutors and a response in their ND.

Another 10 instances of using non-national features are labelled *teasing or replying to teasing*. Four instances appeared in one CI, which is a good example to illustrate the mechanism behind using these features in teasing. This example was also discussed in Attwa (2019).

Sherine: *šū ha-l-malāk el- ʔaʔbyaʔ! gamīla gedan, šakl-ek ḥelw gidan! we ʔinšallah rabena yuwafa-ʔik, lākin miš ha-ywafaʔ ṣāber.*

[What a white angel! So beautiful, your look is very nice! God's willing, HE will grant you success, but HE won't grant Saber success.]

Saber: *(laughing) dah bo'd-ek!*

(laughing) [This is far from you!]

Nancy: *rabena ha-ywafaʔ ṣāber li-ʔan-nī ma'-ah.*

[God will grant Saber success because I am with him.]

Saber: *(laughing) dah bo'd-ek! dah bo'd-ek!*

(laughing) [This is far from you! This is far from you!]

Assi: *šāber bad-ak šīʔ (running after Nancy)*

[Saber, do you want something?] *(running after Nancy)*

- Saber: (running after Assi) *ta'ālā ya-bn-ī. ta'ālā! ʔinta rāyeh fēn? ta'āl! ta'āl!*
(running after Assi) [Come, my boy, come! Where are you going? Come! Come!]
(to Sherine) *yalla, ʃubur-nā we nul-nā!*
(to Sherine) [We were rewarded for our patience!]
- Sherine: *ʃeḥet-ēn 'a ʔalb-ak!*
[You have it with double health on your heart!]

In this example, features of Egyptian and Lebanese dialects were used. Sherine said *šū ha-l-malāk el-ʔabyāḍ!* [What a white angel!] using Lebanese features with an Egyptian accent to praise Lebanese Nancy on her outlook. Then she continued the rest of her utterance with Egyptian features. Second, Saber responded to Sherine's teasing using the Egyptian idiomatic expression *dah bo'd-ek!* [This is far from you!]. Saber kept using Egyptian features, even when he talked to Lebanese Assi who was chasing beautiful Nancy outside the stage, saying *ta'ālā ya-bn-ī. ta'ālā! ʔinta rayeh fēn? ta'āl! ta'āl!* [Come, my boy, come! Where are you going? Come! Come!]. Saber maintained his use of Egyptian features in the idiomatic expression *ʃubur-nā we nul-nā!* [We were rewarded for our patience!] in order to tease Sherine. Interestingly, Sherine replied to him using a Levantine idiomatic expression pronounced with an Egyptian accent: *ʃeḥet-ēn 'a ʔalb-ak!* [You have it with double health on your heart!]. In this example, shifting to Lebanese features on Sherine's part is one of her ways to be funny, either with the Lebanese constant or the Tunisian judge. Likewise, Saber's way to be funny was to use Egyptian features, either with Egyptian Sherine or with Lebanese Assi. In order to avoid repetition in the coming three paragraphs, I will use only the English translations to refer to the expressions.

The humor effect in this instance came from the act of teasing and, more, from using NND features. The fact that Saber was teasing Sherine was one level of humor, and the use of the fixed Egyptian expression [This is far from you] took the humor to another level. Such use sent the message that 'I am not only competing with you and challenging you to win, but also I am challenging you with your own tools (language) in your territory.' It sounded like an implication that Saber knew all about the tactics Sherine was using in order to win. Using Egyptian NNDs by Tunisian Saber with Egyptian Sherine was an act of trespassing (crossing) to her space to heighten the challenge and thus the humor challenge.

Interestingly, when Saber maintained Egyptian features with Assi, the humor was triggered by the Egyptianness of the expressions itself. The expression [Come, my boy, come! Where are you going? Come! Come!] is so common on Egyptian TV movies and drama that it has become a well-known way of how Egyptians express their sarcasm of goofy actions. It can be argued that the use of this expression by Saber was probably triggered by Sherine's presence and the fact that he had just used Egyptian features right before.

Sherine's use of the expression [You have it with double health on your heart!] came as a reaction to the second teasing by Saber when he said to her in Egyptian [We were rewarded for our patience!]. Saber went back to enter Sherine's space by using Egyptian

features to accentuate the humor and teasing effect. This expression also added a funny closure to the challenge. However, it seemed that Sherine did not have equal access to the Tunisian features to be able to invade Saber's space and tease him with features of his dialect. Therefore, she resorted to an easily accessible resource to her, the Lebanese features. This usage might have been triggered by the presence of Lebanese Nancy and Assi as well as the whole surrounding of the show being set in Lebanon which made these features handy to Sherine.

Congratulations given to a contestant using non-national features occurred three times, once by Kareem and twice by Sherine. In Episode 9, Egyptian Kareem congratulated Moroccan Khawla saying *mabrūk! ʔefrāḥ-ī bezzāf! ʔefrāḥ-ī bezzāf!* [Congratulations! Be happy a lot! Be happy a lot!]. Kareem used the Moroccan lexical feature *bezzāf* [a lot] in the middle of his Egyptian utterance. Sherine, also in Episode 9, used features of the Alexandrian dialect. In her congratulations to Egyptian Alaa, whom she mistakenly thought was from Alexandria, she said *ʔaiyū 'ala šōt-ak!* [Wow, what a beautiful voice!]. Sherine used the expression *ʔaiyū* [wow] with an extended final long vowel. Cairenes overgeneralize that all Alexandrians use this expression most of the time to express admiration or excitement. Later, she realized that Alaa was not the contestant from Alexandria, rather Khaled. She then repeated the same expression with Khaled. This instance showed that using features of a NND could also extend to the more local level of the city and that speakers might be aware of such distinctive features.

In another instance labelled *fun flirting*, Sherine used Lebanese features while flirting with Iraqi Kadim. She said to him in Episode 7 *ʔaḥlā na'am waḷ-ḷāḥ-ī, yuʔbur-ūn-ī haš-ša'r-ḡt el-ḥilw-īn* [The most beautiful yes, by God! This [grey] hair is killing me]. This instance consolidated the assumption made above that one of Sherine's ways to make fun in the show was to use Lebanese features, as she even resorted to these features with Iraqi Kadim.

The last label under humorous communication is simply *being funny*. This instance appeared in Episode 11 between Egyptian Kareem and Iraqi Samer, where Kareem asked Samer *šīn tirīd tʔūl tgūl lil-ʔaḥīl bi-l-'irḡq?* [What do you want to say to the family in Iraq?]. The production appeared broken as if Kareem was practicing speaking a foreign language with Samer. It is noteworthy that producing the word *tʔūl* [you say] came first in Egyptian features before he corrected himself to imitate an Iraqi feature, saying *tgūl*.

Creating humor simply by making use of NNDs was made possible due to the contrast between the old code and the new code that was not expected from the speaker. The functions of teasing, greeting, congratulating and others, may have been expected as part of the schema set by the setting of the show (see Section 6.2). Yet, alternating the code to one that did not belong to the speakers in such prompt moments added a light jest to the show. This immediate and surprising humor effect further accentuated the discourse functions mentioned above. In other words, functions such as praising, greeting, or teasing would have been unmarked without the use of NND. By using NND,

the speakers were flagging the utterance, making it specifically pertaining to the national identity of the listener.

Unlike the discourse maintenance category mentioned in the above subsection, using NND features for humor did not index an appeal to fit in. However, it built on the index of convivial fondling with a dear possession of the interlocutor, the ND. Although this fondling existed in all of the examples mentioned above, they played a more important role in the instances of teasing and repeating. Using NNDs in these instances created a light funny atmosphere, without which the teasing and repeating might have been taken seriously and the tone of the show would have been more rivalry. Section 6.6.3 further elaborates on the meanings of NNDs.

The practice of crossing as described in Section 6.3.1 can be seen in the use of NNDs as presented in the above examples. As mentioned by Rampton (1995), the three dimensions of code alternation can be found in the instances above. The interlocutors' competence and preferences, the conversation structure, and, most importantly, the social meaning of the new code used. In the examples, speakers did not show full competency in the new code they used. This was clear in the use of their own vocal system, in the alternation as well as in the explicit learning process that Kareem highlighted during his playful crossing. Participants who carried out the practice seemed to lack a good level of competency in the second code they use. The instances of Assi, Halima, and Hayat who produced slower NND utterances that are marked by pauses and a lack of full fluency exemplified this feature.

As mentioned above, the convivial fondling of the ND of the listener was often received with a shy smile and appreciation of the recognition. In these instances of the conversation, it seemed that the listeners preferred this act of appeal or fondling using their ND. As mentioned above by Yamachita (2019), crossing in these instances succeeded in building peer solidarity and a non-hostile, convivial atmosphere. The fondling and appeal were based on the socially accepted meaning of the act of code alternation, the recognition of the ND and the country of the listener.

Another feature of crossing that was observed, in agreement with Rampton's and Hewitt's studies (Rampton, 1995, p. 281), was that most of the occurrences of the practice appeared in a liminal position in the CIs. Expression of thanks, greetings, congratulations, or encouragements were not part of the actual CIs. As described by Rampton above, the use of non-national features by the speakers were rather flagged to set off not only a topic or a side remark about these functions, but also to mark the identity of the listener.

Performance and festive atmosphere are other features of out-group crossing as mentioned in Rampton (1995). These two features were seen in the above examples. Crossing, as used by the participants, could be an end in itself that added in the creation of this festive and performing art show in *The Voice*. As seen in the results, these crossings were carried out to show respect and recognition for the identity of the listener. The practice itself carried social meanings as explained above and will be

elaborated on further in the discussion in Section 6.6. Performing crossing to index identity and enhance social meanings such as welcoming, gratitude, or fun flirting is a distinct feature of this practice.

In addition to the above features, some sporadic instances reveal other values among the speakers. For example, some instances reveal the limited resources that some speakers have, like Sherine and her limited access to Tunisian features versus her use of Lebanese ones. Another example also showed an instance of over estimation of the similarities among the group of Alexandrians that occurred in the instance of Sherine praising Alaa and then Khaled. These examples revealed the shared meanings and values that set the foundation to interpret these acts of crossing with laugh and appreciation. The discussion section will elaborate on this further. First, however, the data analysis will be complemented by looking at the use of features from FLs.

6.3.3 Foreign language stretches

In total, there were 41 occurrences of using material from FLs in the data of the 166 CIs. In Episode 14, the show hosted Ricky Martin and both Aimée and Kareem interviewed him live on stage. These two CIs were counted as just two occurrences of FL use since each was one long stretch of English conversation. In the case of Aimée, she used to wrap up the English conversation into Arabic for the audience, while Kareem, who appeared more distracted, did not provide Arabic translations. The quantitative and qualitative results of the 41 instances are presented below.

Quantitative results

Table 6.5 provides an overview, organized by the speaker. The last column shows the label given to each instance during the analysis (see Chapter 4). Similar to the labels of using NNDs, the function of this code alternation was specified in an Excel sheet. These functions were then regrouped under a general categorization. The label marked the contextual function of using these foreign features in the discourse.

Speaker (lang)	Role	Interlocutor (lang)	Role	FL	Label
1 Amaar (syr) family	contestant's family	Amaar (syr)	contestant	eng	confidence / to give confidence after losing
2 Ashur (irq)	contestant	Khuri (leb)	vocal trainer	eng	confidence / to show confidence and hide embarrassment
3 Aimée (leb)	presenter	Ricky Martin (eng)	guest	eng	hosting Ricky Martin
4		Nile (sud)	contestant	eng	praising

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Speaker (lang)	Role	Interlocutor (lang)	Role	FL	Label
5		Sahar (mrc)	contestant	eng	praising / repeating the name of the song
6		Sherine (egy)	judge	eng	praising / taking from the song Sherine sang for Nile
7	Kareem (egy)	Mhvaan (irq)	contestant	kur	greeting
8		Ricky Martin (eng)	guest	eng	hosting Ricky Martin
9		Rita (irq)	contestant	eng	repeating what Sherine says
10		Everyone	various	eng	repeating what Sherine says
11	Khawla (mrc)	Kareem (egy) audience	presenter audience	eng	excitement / promise
12		Nadine (leb) audience	presenter audience	eng	repetition / taken from a song / gratitude
13		Kareem (egy)	presenter	frn	excitement / Moroccan dialect
14	Mhvaan (irq)	Kadim (irq)	judge	kur	translating the song
15	Marwan (mrc)	Sherine (egy)	judge	eng	praising / reply to praise and selection
16	Nadine (leb)	Group	group	eng	excitement / cheering
17		Nile (sud)	contestant	eng	excitement / taking from the song Sherine sang for Nile
18		Khawla (mrc)	contestant	eng	excitement
19		Khawla (mrc)	contestant	eng	excitement
20		Khawla (mrc)	contestant	eng	excitement
21		Ingrid (leb)	contestant	eng	praising / give thanks / motivating the audience
22		Hala (syr)	contestant	eng	repetition – reading a tweet by Rabie (leb)
23	Nile (sud)	Kareem (egy)	presenter	eng	confidence
24		Aimée (leb)	presenter	eng	confidence
25		Sherine (egy)	judge	eng	excitement / opinion about song
26	Rita (irq)	Kadim (irq)	judge	eng	praising / reply to praise and selection

Speaker (lang)	Role	Interlocutor (lang)	Role	FL	Label
27 Saber (tun)	judge	Ola (syr)	contestant	eng	confidence / to give her confidence / critical
28		Group	group	eng	confidence / wishing good luck
29		Judges – Marwa (egy)	judge – contestant	eng	excitement / teasing
30		Simur (irq)	contestant	frn	praising / convincing him to join his team
31 Sherine (pal)	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter	eng	confidence / to show confidence and hide embarrassment
32		Kareem (egy)	presenter	eng	confidence / to hide embarrassment of her bad English
33		Group	group	eng	confidence / difficult selection
34		Aimée (leb)	presenter	eng	humor
35		Kareem (egy)	presenter	eng	humor
36		Kareem (egy)	presenter	eng	kids' talk
37		Kareem (egy)	presenter	eng	kids' talk
38		Rita (irq)	contestant	eng	praising
39		Nile (sud)	contestant	eng	praising
40		Aimée (leb)	presenter	eng	praising / compliment
41		Rabie (leb)	contestant	eng	praising / convincing because Rabie sings in English

Table 6.5 Use of foreign language

The FL use in these instances consists of relatively longer segments than the use of FL features that are discussed in Chapter 5. In order to differentiate, these segments will be referred to as foreign language stretches (FS). As seen in Table 6.5, 13 participants out of the total 82 (see Chapter 4) use FS (about 16%). These participants were three presenters, two judges, seven contestants, and one relative of a contestant. Six out of the seven contestants who used FS performed FL songs. Except for Ashur, the rest of the contestants (Khawla, Marwan, Nile, Rita, and Sherine) performed English songs, while Mhvaan performed a Kurdish song. From the four judges, only Saber and Sherine produced FS, but Assi nor Kadim did. The three presenters in the show all produced FS. Judge Sherine produced the biggest share of these FS, counting for 25%. Presenter Nadine produced more FS than her colleagues, Aimée and Kareem seven, four, and three instances respectively.

Qualitative results

The 39 occurrences (all 41, minus the two directed at Ricky Martin) were labelled as shown in Table 6.6. Foreign stretches were used 11 times in relation to praising, 9 times in relation to confidence, 9 times for excitement, 4 for repetition, 2 times for humor, 2 for kids’ talk by Sherine to her daughters, once for greeting and another to translate a song from Kurdish. Table 6.6 also shows the FL used and their number of occurrences.

In all these cases, participants used FS in the middle of their speech which otherwise was conducted using their NDs.

Label (Why)	N instances	Foreign language
Praising	11	English (10) / French (1)
Confidence	9	English
Excitement	9	English (8) / French (1)
Repetition	4	English
Humor	2	English
Kids’ talk	2	English
Greeting	1	Kurdish
Translating a song	1	Kurdish

Table 6.6 Functions of foreign stretches

English was the most used FL in the show, accounting for 35 instances out of the 39 mentioned in the Table 6.6. Each French and Kurdish occurred twice.

The label *praising* covered both expressions of praise and replies to praising. Out of the 11 instances, 9 were for expressions of praise and 2 were responses. Sherine used English FSs to express praising 4 times, Aimée 3 times, and Nadine once. Saber used French FS once to express praising. Contestants Rita and Marwan each used English FS to reply to praising.

A telling example comes from Episode 10, where Sherine praised Nile, the Sudanese contestant in her team, after performing in English, saying:

Sherine: Nile, you are good man, and smart man.

Nile: *šukr-an šukr-an!*

[Thank you! Thank you!]

Sherine: And star man. I want you forever *yā Nile*

Nile: I wish (*laughing*)

During the live shows that started from Episode 9, subtitles were not provided. It is noteworthy as well that this stretch was made with no re-phrasing in Arabic by Sherine or by the presenter. In the same episode, Sherine applauded Aimée on her looks, saying:

Sherine: *ʔin ʔintī she look great.*

[That you, she look great.]

Aimée: Thank you! You look great too!

With a clear mistake in the use of the pronoun ‘she’ instead of ‘you’, Aimée accepted the praise and reciprocated by praising Sherine’s looks, in English.

In Episode 3, trying to convince Simur to join his team, Saber used French, saying *simūr, mon amour, pas (not clear) pour toujours yā simūr* [Simur, my love, do not (*not clear*) always, Simur].

Marwan and Rita both replied to praise using English. In Episode 2, Rita replied to Kadim for choosing her in his team saying ‘I’m proud of this, thank you!’ In Episode 3, Marwan replied to Sherine’s praise for choosing him in her team saying ‘It’s an honor for me.’

Out of these 11 instances, 9 included a contestant who had performed in English. The instance where Aimée used English with Sherine (‘Sherine, Sherine, we will always love you too’), was triggered by Whitney Houston’s song *I will always love you*, which Sherine had sung to Nile. Only the instances where Sherine praised Aimée and Saber praised Simur, there was no English performance by the two contestants, Wahm and Simur, respectively.

It is important to point out that other instances of praising, which was done very often in the show, were carried out in Arabic, e.g., *ʔinta šōtak rāʔi’ žid-an* [Your voice is very beautiful], *ʔinta saḥar-ti-nī* [You enchanted me], and *ma-šāʔ-allaḥ ‘alē-k* [Praise be to God on you].

The label *confidence* covered situations where confidence was either high or shaky. English was used in the nine occurrences under this category, by judges Saber and Sherine, and four contestants. The first example appeared in Episode 1 by contestant Sherine from Palestine who performed in English and Arabic. The contestant was not chosen by any of the judges and was disqualified from the show. In her post-performance interview with Kareem backstage, she said ‘My self-confidence *mā hayqil’* [My self-confidence will not decrease]. Another example appeared in Episode 8 by the family of Syrian Amaar Shammaa who had lost in the battles. In an attempt to boost his confidence, a family member said to him ‘You are the best’. Ashour, in Episode 8, competing with a Lebanese, and trained by Lebanese Assi and vocal trainer Khuri, defended his ability to be able to perform as requested saying ‘No no no, I can do it’. Nile, the Sudanese contestant who performed in English, on the other hand, demonstrated a high level of self-confidence in the show. Responding to Kareem’s question on his feelings in Episode 10, Nile said ‘I’m sure everyone is supporting me’. Also in Episode 11, in response to a similar question by Aimée, he said ‘Very much. Satisfied’. The first occurrence by the judge Saber was directed at Ola, a Syrian contestant. Ola seemed distracted and losing her confidence during the rehearsals for the battle, so Saber asked in English not to sound critical to her: ‘You are thinking about what?’ She replied ‘Everything’. In Episode 9, Sherine talked to herself, expressing difficulty in making a choice from among the contestants, and said ‘I can’t’. The final

instance was when Sherine hid her embarrassment about her bad pronunciation of English that, at that time of the show, people were criticizing her for on social media. Jokingly she said: *we 'āyza ʔaʔul-uhum*, I'm very sorry, guys, *'ašān ʔanā ta'līmī French* [And I want to tell them, I am sorry, guys, I had a French education]. Sherine mentioned the French education in reference to the most common types of education in Egypt. She does not have a French education, but out of embarrassment, she made fun of herself for not pronouncing English well.

Unlike the instances labelled praising, the confidence instances did not seem to be triggered by a contestant who was performing in English. In the above examples, only Nile performed in English and Palestinian contestant Sherine sang in English and Arabic.

Four participants expressed their *excitement* with English FS in nine instances. In Episode 11, the following exchange took place between Nadine and Nile in the V-room, after Sherine had sung *I will always love you* to Nile after his performance.

Nadine: *ya'nê* it was nice I will always love you, it was easy. (*shifting to another contestant*)
ba-'tizir min-nik badnā el-micró.

[So, it was nice, I will always love you. It was easy. (*shifting to another contestant*)
I apologize, we need the mic.]

Nile: *bi-šarḡḡa mitfāziʔ žid-dan žid-dan.* This was amazing surprise.
[Honestly, I am very very surprised. This was amazing surprise.]

Nadine: It was a great surprise.

In Episode 3, Saber showed his excitement because the contestant Marwa chose him over the other three coaches. He said 'Yes, yes, yes. Sorry, I'm sorry, I'm really sorry, I'm really sorry. *ʔanā ʔāsif! ʔaḥsan-tī! ʔaḥsan-tī! ʔaḥsan-tī! ʔaḥsan-tī! ʔaḥsan-tī!* [Yes, yes, yes. Sorry, I am sorry, I'm really sorry, I'm really sorry. I am sorry. Good job! Good job! Good job! Good job! Good job!]. In Episode 9, Khawla expressed her excitement saying: *we* [and] *I promise you, dimā n-qqdim-kum ʔaḥsan mel-lī fat* [And I promise you, I always present better than what is before]. In Episode 10, Nadine cheered the V-room with a group of contestants around her saying 'Go V-room, we love our V-room'. In Episode 8, when Sherine asked Nile if he liked the song, part of his comment was 'It's an original song'.

Expression of excitement using French FS came from Khawla, the Moroccan semi-finalist. In her first appearance in Episode 1, after being accepted in the blind auditions, she replied to Kareem's question about her feelings using French FS as a feature of her Moroccan dialect saying: *je* [sic] *vraiment heureusse* [I am really happy]. This FS as well as Khawla's dialect production in this episode was accompanied with SA subtitles.

However, in the examples mentioned above, there was no rephrasing or subtitling. Also, Nadine, in her role as presenter, used FS without rephrasing into Arabic, which was not normally the habit of presenters on Arab TV shows. Saber, on the other hand, seemed to have realized that he had produced FS in English. Following his realization of what should had been the normal thing to do on an Arab TV show, he started rephrasing what he had said into Arabic *ʔanā ʔāsif* [I am sorry], repeating a praise to Marwa in Arabic as well in *ʔaḥsan-tī* [You did good].

This feeling of excitement seems to reveal a shade of the participants' speech outside of the show. Taken by their excitement, the relevant four participants, Khawla, Nile, Saber, and Nadine, seemed to have forgotten the protocol of maintaining Arabic language on TV taking more liberty in using FS. This assumption is particularly relevant to Nadine, the presenter. From among the other three participants, Nadine was expected to follow the media common protocol of continue to use Arabic in order to provide Arabic meanings whenever any of her participants produced FS. Nevertheless, this was not always the case. There were three such instances by Nadine, the Lebanese presenter in the V-room, with Khawla who performed in English and was given the title 'the Arab Beyoncé' by Sherine. In Episode 9, Nadine asked Khawla *ʔidā 'and-ik one thing, one thing be-titmān-nê te-ʔül-ī-h* [If you have one thing, one thing you wish to say]. In the same CI, they had this exchange:

Khawla: *ʔanā I love šerīn ktīr.*

[I, I love Sherine very much.]

Nadine: *You love šerīn, you love Beyoncé and you the new Beyoncé el-'arab, šār (not clear) perfect lēh lā??*

[You love Sherine, you love Beyoncé and you are the new Arab Beyoncé. This has become (not clear) perfect, why not?]

The last instance between them was in Episode 11, where Nadine asked Khawla after her performance 'How was it?'

The reason these cases are said to reveal the nature of the participants' speech outside of the show is that Nadine, as a presenter and media person, had the choice (not to mention the professional obligation) to guide the conversation in Arabic or provide a paraphrase in Arabic whenever her guests produced FS. However, in these cases, Nadine took the liberty to use her own style of using FS with Arabic, mainly with Khawla, who demonstrated a very good level of English in her performance. Khawla, in these instances, was the trigger for Nadine to maintain her natural speech and not to adhere to common media protocols. However, in this situation, Nadine forgot about the professional code and started using FL features as if she was talking to a close acquaintance, and not on TV. The trust that her interlocutor could hold the conversation in English along with the comfort that was established by the time they spent on the show probably had created an in-group ganging. This feeling of ganging with similar people was reflected in Nadine's very natural production that revealed her normal way of talking. This was similar to the production of Saber in the examples above. Driven by his feeling of excitement, Saber had probably forgotten shortly the setting of an Arab TV show and produced his utterance first in English, which he then translated to Arabic. In contrast, Nadine maintained the speech and did not shift back to use or translate into Arabic.

As presented in Chapter 4, the backgrounds of both Saber and Nadine indicated a good level of education and mastery over FLs. Similarly, Nile and Khawla were two contestants who remained until the semi-finals and who showed a high level of mastery over FLs, particularly English. According to the review of Section 2.1, CS between English

and Arabic is a characteristic of the speech of young Arab generations' speech who belong to upper middle social classes. These instances of excitement and the sense of familiarity and ganging that developed throughout the shooting of the show have allowed these four participants to lower their guards and produce the speech they would produce away from the camera and TV setting.

Repetition of FS appeared in another four instances in the data. Kareem repeated the praise Sherine made to Rita. In the instance mentioned above under *praising* in Episode 8, Kareem repeated after Sherine 'soo beautiful'. Kareem also repeated after Sherine her talk to her kids (see below). Another repeating instance appeared static (not produced by the actual speaker but read from a tweet on social media – see Section 5.1). In this instance, presenter Nadine from the V-room, was reading a tweet sent to Syrian contestant Hala by Lebanese contestant Rabie who had been out of the competition by this time. She read 'Everyone that loves me please vote for Hala Al-Qasir tomorrow, today we need to make her and Mr. Assi El Hallani win the voice vote vote vote.' In Episode 9 and after her performance of the song *I have Nothing*, Khawla replied to Nadine in the V-room about what to say to her audience. Khawla said, influenced by the song, *el-ḡuḡneya ḡel-lī ḡan-ēt fīhā I have nothing, ya'nī I have nothing min ḡēr-kum ḡent-umaa* [The song which I sang, I have nothing, means I have nothing without you].

It seems FSs produced by repetition was motivated by a different stimulant than the productions of the original utterance. The choice of repeating a stretch of an utterance was partially influenced by another speaker's choice of words and structures, while adding other discourse functions. For example, when Sherine praised Rita using FS 'soo beautiful', she produced her own utterance as mentioned under category *praising* above. By repeating the exact words to Rita, Kareem was emphasizing the praise, holding up the conversation, and adding a sense of light humor and atmosphere. When Khawla repeated the words from the song, she added creativity to her speech and the utterance felt warmer since she was addressing Whitney Houston's song to her fans, mixing it with Arabic structures.

Sherine was responsible for using FS for the two *humor* instances recorded. In Episode 11, when she was making her choice among contestants and wanted to lighten the situation she said 'No more English', following it by *lā maḡāl li-lmašā'ir* [no time for feelings]. By saying 'No more English', Sherine was implying that she was getting serious and she would not follow her heart, rather she would make a rational decisive choice.

In Episode 9, when it was time for her team to perform, she had this exchange with Kareem after he called her name:

Sherine: *yes, yā babī.*

[Yes, baby.]

Kareem: *yes yā babī! geh ed-dār 'alē-kī yā babī delwaḡtī.*

[Yes, baby! It is your turn now.]

Sherine: *yes, yā babī.*

[Yes, baby.]

The humor was produced because Sherine used the idiomatic expression ‘baby’, which implied a flirt with Kareem. The use of this expression was often mocked on Egyptian TV where a dominant female lover, coming from a higher social class, pampered a low-class macho character calling him ‘baby’. The suggestion here is that the man is considered less manly or strong in front of his woman’s wishes. Therefore, Sherine was making fun calling Kareem with the expression, who, surprised, replied to her using the same expression.

Likewise, the two instances labelled *kids’ talk* were made by Sherine, this time to her daughters. She said she would go off the context of the show to send a message to her kids. Kareem followed by repeating the FS without rephrasing in Arabic for the audience.

Sherine: *law ma-ʔul-ti-š I love you mariyam and hanā, ʔanā ha-z’al men-ek. fa I love you mariyam and hanā and big kiss and big hug.*

[If you did not say, I love you Mariyam and Hana, I will get upset from you. So, I love you Mariyam and Hana.]

Kareem: *Big kiss and big hug men šerīn.*

[A big kiss and hug from Sherine.]

The two instances of using Kurdish FS both appeared in Episode 9. The first instance was mentioned in Section 6.3.2 as part of Kareem’s pattern of using the language or the dialect of the contestant to greet and welcome them. In this instance, Kareem used Kurdish FS with Mhvaan, the contestant from Kurdistan Iraq. The exchange took place as follows:

Kareem: *mhvaan, ʔentā bāš-t?*

[(in Kurdish) Mhvaan, are you good?]

Mhvaan: *bāš-im spāz, bāš-im!*

[(in Kurdish) I am good, thanks, I am good!]

Kareem: *selav bū kurdistān! ba-ʔul saḥ wal-la ēh?*

[(in Kurdish) Peace to Kurdistan! (in Egyptian Arabic) Am I saying it right?]

Mhvaan: *selav bū kurdistān, ʔu ʔdav min ʔī selav bū kurdistān ‘irqé!*

[(in Kurdish) Peace to Kurdistan! and from me also peace to Kurdistan Iraq!]

No subtitles or paraphrasing were given to the audience or other participants in the show, so it was assumed that Kareem was greeting Mhvaan. This exchange ended with Kareem greeting the people of Kurdistan Iraq in Arabic.

The second instance also took place with Mhvaan, but now in a conversation with Kadim. After performing a song in Kurdish, Kadim asked Mhvaan if he could provide a translation of the song. Therefore, this exchange took place:

Mhvaan: *‘ayšanā ‘alī, ‘ayša bint ‘alī.*

[(in Kurdish) Aysha the daughter of Ali. (in Arabic) Aysha the daughter of Ali.]

Kadim: *heyia ʔesmahā ‘ayša bint ‘alī?*

[(in Arabic) Is her name Aysha the daughter of Ali?]

Mhvaan: *ʔaiwa*.

[(*in Arabic*) Yes.]

Then Mhvaan went on to give a few more sentences for the general meaning of the song in Arabic. It attracted attention that among other songs performed in FLs, only the Kurdish song was asked to be translated. This signals that Kurdish was really seen as a FL, and equally signals the assumed familiarity and understanding of English and French songs performed in the show.

Using FS as appeared from the above functions and examples, reveals some important communication habits among Arabs. The use of FS in the show is better described as CS and not crossing (see Section 6.3.1). The reason for that is the comfort by which FS features were used, the English ones in particular. Code alternation to English FS appeared like an in-group switching that the interlocutors felt normal using it. At instances, especially those of excitement, the participants who switched to FS did not seem to be conscious of their switch. For example the TV host Nadine forgot to follow her profession protocol of providing Arabic meaning to what was said in a FS.

The lack of Arabic translations or paraphrase emphasizes that FSs were seen as a common resource, or so it seems. English and French FSs were not paraphrased at the times, where Moroccan and Kurdish were. For those participants who used FS or sing in a FL, they did not seem to perform with a code that was an out-of-group, like the case in using NNDs. They are bilinguals and some of them are trilingual. Using a foreign language and singing in a foreign language, English in particular, seems to be part of a common repertoire and resource that Arabs use. However, it is important to remember that only 13 out of the 82 participants (16%) in the show did this type of switching. Echoing the discussion in Section 5.5.3, this limited use raises the question: To what extent FS resources, especially English, are in fact common linguistic resources among Arabs? Sherine's performance comes to confirm this observation. While she was trying to imitate and get access to English to cope with what appeared to be a norm among this in-group, she appeared lacking full control over this resource. This failure to access the resource of FLs caused her to be ridiculed on social media. The discussion below will shed more light on the meaning of this use.

But before that, in order to have a complete picture, it is important to present the few instances of negotiation of meaning and metalinguistic discussions that appeared in the data. The coming two sections of this chapter present these two categories, respectively.

6.4 Negotiation of meaning

The analysis showed six instances of *negotiation of meaning*. These were instances where the interlocutor signaled a lack of understanding or a request to clarify. There were only six instances in the data, and the presentation below includes them all.

The first instance occurred in Episode 7 during the rehearsals. Egyptian Muhammad, the vocal trainer helping Sherine, was giving instructions to Muhammad Dihlaab from Tunisia. Meanwhile, the other contestant was practicing her singing. Egyptian Muhammad told the Tunisian contestant in his Egyptian ND *ʔallil el-ǧuna šuwaya, ʔallil el-ǧuna* [Reduce singing a bit; reduce singing]. The Tunisian contestant gave a gesture with his head indicating ‘what?’. It was not clear if he did not hear what the trainer had said because of the other contestant who was practicing, or if he did not understand what had been said to him. The situation was settled when the Egyptian vocal trainer rephrased the message, again in his Egyptian ND, saying *ma-t-ǧan-īš kitīr, ʔabšaʔ* [Don’t sing much, simpler].

The second instance occurred in Episode 9 and involved the Egyptian presenter Kareem and the Tunisian judge Saber. Kareem was asking Saber to make his choice from amongst the contestants on his team. Part of the exchange that happened between the two of them was as follows:

- Saber: *ʔel-lī beš ye-kammel em’āyā, doctōra?*
[The one who will continue with me, doctor?]
- Kareem: *ʔel-lī ʔa-ya-kammel (stressing on the ʔa-) ma’āk, teḥṭṭr mīn?*
[The one who will continue with you. Who do you choose?]
- Saber: *huwa, eš-šōt ʔel-lī beš ye-kammel em’āyā. wal-lāhī s’ība! mḥamad el-fāres.*
[The voice that will continue with me. It is really hard! Muhammad El-Fares.]

In this exchange, Kareem was confused by what Saber had said in his Tunisian dialect using the future particle *beš* [will], which was close in sound to the negation particle *meš* [not] in Egyptian dialect. This was the reason Kareem tried to implicitly make clear to Saber that the name he was about to choose was for the contestant who would continue with him, so he put stress on the Egyptian future particle /ḥ-/ in his utterance. However, Saber did not rephrase what he had said. Rather he insisted on using the Tunisian dialect, saying nothing about the correction made by Kareem.

It was interesting to see that previously in Episode 7, Saber gave a second chance to Egyptian Husaam to join his team after he was about to be disqualified in the battles. When he pressed his buzz button, Saber said twice to Husaam *ʔinta ʔa-ṭkammil* [You will continue], using the feature which Kareem implicitly wanted Saber to use but didn’t in the above instance.

In Episode 10, a negotiation of meaning occurred between two Maghrebi dialects. In an interview with a Moroccan and a Tunisian contestant hosted by the Lebanese presenter Nadine, the Tunisian contestant said clearly that he did not understand what the Moroccan contestant was saying *safīr tunis ma-fhim-š ḥatta kilma mil-lī qul-t-u* [The ambassador of Tunisia did not understand even a word from what you said]. The ‘ambassador of Tunisia’ was a title given to the Tunisian contestant by his Tunisian fans. This explicit lack of understanding was not resolved. In response, Nadine, the presenter, said *lāʔ hayda l-żawāb bad-nā ni-ʔṭi’ alēh* [No, we want to cut on this response]. Then she addressed the Moroccan saying that of course they were sure of his good intentions, which implied that she did not fully understand either what the Moroccan contestant

was saying. This stands as one of the very few examples where the use of ND clearly led to misunderstanding and was not resolved.

In Episode 10, Iraqi judge Kadim was asked by Lebanese Aimée to give his opinion on the contestants in Saber's team. When Kadim asked about the name of one of the contestants, Aimée gave him *ʔiyād*. As Kadim did not understand what she said, Sherine repeated the name *ʔiyād*. Kadim then heard it as *riyāḏ*. Then both Sherine and Saber repeated the name *ʔiyād*. Finally, Kadim said *ʔayād. ʔihnā ni-samm-ih ʔayād bi-l-'irāq* [Ayaad. We call it Ayaad in Iraq].

In Episode 11, Egyptian Kareem was asking Kadim's team which was more important for them, Kadim's opinion or the opinion of the audience. Khawla replied in her Moroccan ND *ʒūʒ* [both]. Kareem misheard it and asked explicitly in his Egyptian ND: *bʒōš ya'nī ēh? ēh bʒōš di baʔa?* [What does *bʒōš* mean? What is this word now?]. This stirred laughter and Khawla explained it by her hands making a sign of 'two' with her fingers while laughing. Kareem kept repeating and making fun of this word, even while asking the other contestants in the team.

The final instance occurred in Episode 14 between Tunisian Saber and Lebanese Aimée. After finishing his debut song *aka haw*, Aimée and Saber had the following exchange:

Aimée: *ʒukr-an ʒukr-an, ʒāber, bas ʔismaḥ-l-ê ʔasʔal-ák bas suʔāl kilma kint 'am tiʔül-a aka haw, ya'nī ēh?*

[Thank you, thank you, Saber! But let me ask you about a word you were saying 'aka haw' what does it mean?]

Saber: *ʔintê aka haw. (to the audience) ti-sm'u fihā? ʔintī aka haw ya'nī ʔintī we bas.*

[You aka haw. (to the audience) Have you heard it? You aka haw means 'only you'.]

Aimée: *ʔinta aka haw. ʔinta aka haw.*

[You aka haw. You aka haw.]

Saber: *kilmé tunsiyé ʒirfa ya'nī.*

[It is a pure Tunisian word.]

Out of these 6 instances, 4 occurred between Maghrebi and Mashreqi Arabic speakers, and 1 between two Maghrebi dialect speakers with a speaker of a Mashreqi dialect present. Also, five out of the six instances appeared in the live shows. This may indicate three points. First, after spending some time together in the show, participants became more at ease with each other to express their occasional lack of understanding. Second, there may well have occurred more instances of lack of understanding, or of meaning negotiation, during the first two recorded phases of the show but the producers might have edited them out. Third, participants might have often just let the misunderstanding pass without drawing attention to it.

That there were so few instances of negotiation of meaning, provides further empirical evidence for the analysis presented so far in this study. Not only RM is an important skill by which Arabs maintain their communication with their NDs, but also crossing to NNDs serve other discourse functions other than facilitating comprehension. What is noteworthy about these six instances is that the situations were not resolved by

crossing to features of the interlocutor's dialect. Understanding was achieved by either a rephrase of the speaker's ND, an insistence on it, a non-verbal signal, an interruption of an expression of the lack of understanding accompanied by an assumption of good intentions, realizing the equivalent in one's dialect, or a clear explanation announcing the difficult word as a pure version of the dialect. This, in turn, reveals the limited accessibility participants have to each other's dialects as will be elaborated more in the discussion.

6.5 Metalinguistic discussions

Apart from the negotiations discussed in the previous section, the analysis also yielded 12 instances of metalinguistic discussions. Out of these 12, 9 were discussions or comments on singing in a different dialect than the contestant's ND. For example, in Episode 7 in the battles, Egyptian Muhammad Husaam competed with Iraqi Adnaan in a song by the Bahraini-Saudi singer Rashid Al-Maajid. After their performance, Kadim, Saber, and Assi applauded Husaam for singing in a Gulf dialect saying he had given himself a big challenge to master the song in order to compete with Adnaan, who was assumed to be more at ease with the Gulf dialect. In the background report, Husaam mentioned that it had indeed been a challenge for him to master this song to compete with Adnaan because of the dialect. This instance had a reflection in Episode 9, when Aimée asked Saber's opinion about Husaam singing in his own dialect in this episode, compared to his earlier performance in the Gulf dialect.

In Episode 8, Amal, the Egyptian vocal trainer helping Saber, brought to his attention that Ola, the Syrian contestant, did a good job studying and reviewing the Egyptian dialect in order to compete with her rival singing an Egyptian song.

In Episode 14, Egyptian Sherine asked Egyptian Wahm to give a performance in a different dialect to show off her abilities. Wahm sang a Gulf song. This came as a reaction to the performance by Syrian Hala who had performed in a different dialect, and Iraqi Simur who performed in Turkish language.

The other three instances of metalinguistic discussion were not related to singing. First, in Episode 10, in his habit to greet the contestants in their dialect as mentioned above, Egyptian Kareem told Moroccan Mahmoud that he had learned that a 'suit' was called a *tikistera* in MA and he asked Mahmoud to confirm this. Mahmoud indeed confirmed, pronouncing the word with his Moroccan accent. Mahmoud then added that the people of Morocco loved Kareem when he spoke in Moroccan dialect.

Second, there is the instance mentioned above and quoted at the beginning of this chapter, when Sherine advised the Iraqi contestant not to be afraid while singing, which made Kareem saying that just sitting next to Iraqi Kadim made Sherine master the Iraqi dialect. Jokingly, Sherine replied that she spoke several languages, which was not true.

The third instance came as a continuation to the *žūž* [both] instance mentioned above. Kareem told Khawla that she was the last Moroccan contestant in the show. He was wondering, in case she left the show, with whom he would speak Moroccan dialect.

These few instances indicate the awareness of the linguistic diversity that existed in the show. Although crossing to NNDs and CS to a FL are clear in the data, the strategies of negotiation of meaning and metalinguistic discussion indicate two main points. First, there is an awareness of the differences and the diversity that exist among the participants. Second, there might be a resort to levelling where participants avoid using features that they think might be hard to understand by participants from different countries. It seems that participants and media try to downplay differences and unintelligibility by avoiding expressions of any misunderstanding. The discussion section below elaborates on the meaning of these combined strategies.

6.6 Discussion

The findings presented in this chapter help answering the second research question: What are the communication strategies employed in *The Voice* in order to create an intelligible pan-Arab show? The analysis showed that the structure and context of the show help in building a preliminary schema of shared meanings, inferences, and expectations among the participants. Within this structure, a number of communication strategies were apparent that carried the shared knowledge and values that, in turn, enabled an intelligible communication.

This chapter is a connecting one between the previous and the following chapter. Chapter 5 explored ‘what’ are the resources used in Arabic cross-country communication. The present chapter addressed the ‘how’ these resources are organized and employed within communication strategies in order to achieve intelligibility. The ability to have an intelligible communication reflects that Arabs, with their diverse identities and backgrounds, practice this intelligibility. As mentioned earlier, RM is not possible without a positive attitude conducted by the speakers. Chapter 7 addresses expressions of identities and whether they align with the use of linguistic resources as presented in Chapters 5 and 6.

This final section presents a discussion of the meanings of these strategies in their totality, in order to have a better grasp of the workings of intelligibility on the show. The discussion looks into these conversational strategies against the broader background of shared resources, power, and humor.

Concerning shared resources, the discussion reflects on the ownership of and accessibility to the linguistic resources that compose the shared Arab repertoire. Emphasis will be on the indexicality of these resources. As for power, the discussion will look at the dynamics of power as revealed by the strategies and the linguistic choices. Finally, humor will be discussed as a strategy and a resource that defines several instances in the communication in the data, and that, if successful, celebrates an

abundance of shared values and meanings. Therefore, it is important to look at what the communication strategies index, how they employ the linguistic resources to create humor. However, first some brief observations are offered on the primary working of creating social meaning in communication.

6.6.1 Preliminary making of meaning

The first basis of intelligibility in the show is the building of expectations and inferences. As noted in the activity types and the related schema presented in Section 6.2, the show follows a number of repeated situations in sequential structure: greetings, welcoming, giving feedback on performances, announcing a winner, either of a judge selection or audience votes. The wrapping up of the episodes at the beginning and end of each episode and phase and sometimes during them, along with the explanation of the coming phase or episode, set the boundaries of the situations and activities. The participants come to expect all this, thus limiting the potential for misunderstandings. Introducing such setting also clarifies the roles of the participants within the show, and this, in turn, creates some expectations on the linguistic choices expected from each role.

With the repeated sequences and activities, the utterances, varying but interchangeable, have become expected and formulaic over time. Fillmore (1977, as cited by Gumperz, 1982) argues that 'an enormous amount of natural language is formulaic, automatic, and rehearsed, rather than propositional, creative or freely generated' (p. 133). The use of this formulaic language 'signals both expectations about what is to be accomplished and about the form that replies must take' (p. 134). In a show like *The Voice*, where communication is controlled by teleprompters, timed scenes, guided TV-staged settings, viewership, and commercial gains, the use of formulaic and rehearsed language is much higher than natural language settings.

In addition to their role in schema building, Alison Wray (2002, 2012) argues that the use of formulaic language serves a socio-pragmatic function as well. She sees such use as a way to promote survival interests. She argues:

Humans, being psychologically and socially complex, are unable fully to meet their emotional, mental, and physical needs without involving others. One effective tool for drawing others into behaviors beneficial to us is to employ wordstrings that are in current use in our community. They enable us socially to align ourselves with others (I am like you because I talk like you, so you will want to help me), and as a way of minimizing the risk of misunderstanding, since wordstrings or partly lexicalized frames that have their own semantic entry require less decoding. (Wray, 2012, pp. 231-232).

The existence of such formulaic language among Arabs from different backgrounds indicates a usage-based meaning that has been created and shared among the participants in the show. Formulaic language marks an insider status and preserves the identity of the linguistic group. This is exemplified in the use of formulaic expressions of

the NNDs. As will be elaborated further in Section 6.6.2, participants in the show use formulaic expressions of thanking and greetings in their interlocutor's dialect, in order to align with each other and embrace the variety as part of the overall linguistic identity of all the participants.

However, as is logical given the nature of a live talent show, and as seen in the data presentation above, on a micro level, participants engage in spontaneous exchanges as well. The results of Chapter 5 reveal the linguistic resources found and shared among Arabs in their cross-country communication. These resources are their NDs, SA, and FLs, namely English, French, and Italian. As seen in Chapter 5, the default pattern of communication is carried out with the ND of each participant. Receptive multilingualism is a skill that Arabs employ in order to communicate with each other using their different dialects.

On this micro level, the results show that the resources that shape the repertoire of Arabs are used in certain dynamics, which in turn reveal a shared knowledge that enables the success of these dynamics. The results of the present chapter show the organization and the patterns of using these different resources. At the time when Arabs show a tendency to cross to each other's ND, they code switch to FLs. As seen in Section 6.3, by using NNDs, individual Arabs seem to cross to an outgroup code. This crossing indexes either an appeal to fit in with a group or a convivial fondling of the interlocutor. Both the appeal and the convivial fondling are based on indexing the ND as a dear possession of the listener. Through these acts of crossing, Arabs perform different discourse functions and simultaneously show peer solidarity and a warm recognition of the country of the codes to which they cross. Using FL is seen as an act of CS, where participants seem to use a code that they are familiar with. Switching to FLs, English in particular, appeared not flagged in the data and in many instances used without paraphrase into Arabic.

However, the few instances of negotiation of meaning and metalinguistic discussion, complete the picture of how these resources are organized and presented in the communication on the show. In order to further interpret the distribution and organization of these resources as appeared in the data, the following discussion touches upon questions of ownership and accessibility, indexicality, power, and humor.

6.6.2 Shared linguistic resources: ownership and accessibility

As a first general step to understand the distribution of the linguistic resources found in Chapter 5, I will interpret these same resources in terms of ownership and accessibility.

As mentioned above, NDs are dearly owned by their citizens. The dialect is not only expected and maintained by the majority (see Hayat's exception case in Section 6.3.2) once the country is announced, it is also a marker of identity. For example, Kadim realized that Husaam was Egyptian when he spoke Egyptian after singing in a Gulf dialect. This sense of ownership explains the indexes of conviviality and appeal to fit it. Participants are aware of each other's dear possession and so they fondle this dear

possession in order to appeal for something or create a convivial atmosphere with each other. But to what extent are these possessions accessible?

As seen in the results, except for the Egyptian dialect, not all participants have access to each other's dialects. A striking contrast is seen considering the substantial percentage (75%) of participants who have good access to the Egyptian dialect versus accessibility to other dialects. The high percentage of crossing to the Egyptian variety means that the majority of Arabs enjoy a notable level of familiarity that allows them an easy access to this variety of Arabic. I will come back to elaborate more on the situation of the Egyptian dialect in the data below in Section 6.6.3. But first, a general understanding of ownership and accessibility of SA and FL is discussed.

Features of SA seem to be owned by all the participants in the show. Pan-Arab ownership of SA manifested itself in the allusions to Arab heritage and history, which in turn, caused humor. However, although owned by all, using it is determined by other factors. As shown in Chapter 5, the role and profession of the speakers determine the extent to which they resort to SA. Standard Arabic is found to solidify professional opinions and enhance objectivity.

Foreign languages, nevertheless, seem accessible. Chapter 5 and this chapter showed the discourse functions where participants resort to use features of FL, whether on the level of the word or that of a longer stretches of utterances. The data also showed that Arabic equivalents of these foreign expressions exist and are used, and more frequently in many times. Chapter 5 showed that foreign words have become part of the normal speech in a way that makes them owned by the speakers. Expressions such as 'bravo', 'merci', 'thanks', and 'social media', for instance, have become an easily accessible owned resource. Resorting to foreign stretches enforces this accessibility further. As seen in the results of this chapter, CS to FL, mostly to English, is again presented as normal behavior by the participants in the show. However, the relatively low number of participants doing that (13 out of 82, about 16%) raises the question whether all participants do in fact have access and find CS between Arabic and FL a part of a normal speech of an Arab.

Expression of excitement, as appeared in Section 6.3.3, reveal a normal speech of a few participants outside of the show, namely Saber, Nadine, Nile, and Khawla. By 'normal', I mean the speech they would use off television screen. Nevertheless, the low number of participants who fall under this category makes it hard to generalize this result. In fact, judge Sherine presents a case as mentioned. Sherine is trying to access the FL resource because she felt this is the way to belong to *The Voice* community. She tried to produce more features than any other participant did, but she was mocked on social media because she failed to have an appropriate access to this resource that marks power, education, and class. This last point is better understood in terms of power, as will be treated in Section 6.6.3 below. For now, I would like to take a closer look on the meaning of code alternation practices in the data, particularly with regards to the position of Egyptian variety and identity.

6.6.3 Indexing crossed and switched resources

Using NND features

The analyses presented in this chapter and Chapter 5 reveal the application of RM and the polylingual norm where ‘language users employ whatever linguistic features at their disposal to achieve their communicative aims’ (Jørgensen, 2008, p. 169). Amid the default pattern of using the participants NDs in communication, the analysis shows locations where participants deviate from it, and use features of SA, NND, or FLs. These locations and their meaning as presented above, clarify the seeming contradiction between the randomness in the words ‘whatever’ and ‘norm’, presented in Jørgensen’s definition. The indexicalities and patterns presented in this study find order to the seemingly chaotic use of linguistic resources in diverse interactions (Blommaert & Backus, 2011; see Chapter 3). Taking a closer look at the practice of crossing, as a form of languaging, does not only help interpret the workings of RM and polylingualism, but also helps to understand the active and passive resources. Resources are active when the participants produce them in utterances. In turn, they are passive when the participants’ knowledge about the resource stops at a receptive competence, and they do not produce them actively in communication.

Recalling the factors that a researcher can depend on for investigating crossing as mentioned in Chapter 3, Rampton (2018) lists ‘the variety selected, the crosser’s network relations, ethnic and gender identities, his/her orientation to the socio-ideological horizons indexed by the code, his/her linguistic competence, the presence or absence of inheritors, and the size of the switch itself’ (p. 271).

Crossing to a NND is a strategy used by the speakers in the show in order to achieve many of their communicative aims. At face value, crossing does not serve functions of intelligibility, rather it fulfills functions such as greetings, congratulating, encouraging, challenging a higher power, teasing and the like. Except for challenging a higher power, the functions served by crossing do not transcend the level of formulaic language and expressions that occur at liminal locations of the communication. No other participants than the main host Kareem, and to a lesser extent the judge Sherine, used crossing to several NNDs. Kareem appears to be learning how to say formulaic expressions in the dialects of the different contestants. NNDs are clearly not a linguistic resource that is used actively much – understanding them is an important passive skill, however. Participants, to a certain extent, show they can comprehend each other’s dialects, as is typical in RM (see Chapters 3 and 5). However, the Egyptian dialect occupies a special position as mentioned above.

On one hand, it was shown that 47% of crossing to NND is carried out into the Egyptian dialect. Twelve out of the 16 participants who cross to NND are actually crossing to Egyptian features. All the static crossings where the participant was reading or repeating an utterance and not actually producing his/her own NND, are done into Egyptian features. Eleven out of the 19 repetition instances are done into Egyptian features. In addition, 8 cases are labelled *influenced by an Egyptian interlocutor*.

On the other hand, the two participants who use NND features the most are Egyptians: the main host Kareem (31 times out of the 98), and judge Sherine (14 times). Kareem is responsible for 12 of the 19 NND uses for praising, and all the 12 instances of using NND for greeting. Kareem and Sherine stand out against the other participants who perform similar roles in the show. The other two presenters, Aimée and Nadine, both Lebanese, do not take it upon themselves to welcome or talk to contestants in their respective dialects. The show is actually hosted in their country, and it could have been expected that they would welcome the guests in their own dialects. Kareem's practice would have seemed unique for him, if not for Sherine doing the same thing but less often. In comparison, judges Kadim, Saber, and Assi never use NND to welcome or praise contestants. Their only use of NND is the use of Egyptian features.

With reservation, these findings can be interpreted as reflecting Egyptianness or the Egyptian sense of self-awareness, amid other Arab nationalities. Both Kareem and Sherine seem to exercise a right to access their interlocutors' dialects. This right may be supported by their position in the hierarchy of roles in the show. Both Kareem, as a main host, and Sherine, as a judge, feel empowered enough to freely practice crossing to the NNDs of other participants. This becomes clearer when juxtaposed with other Egyptian participants who are not at an equal level in the show's hierarchy of roles. Other Egyptian participants, as appeared on the show, do not use NNDs. Although this crossing might be happening off stage and behind the cameras. However, it should be highlighted again that this access does not transcend the level of formulaic expressions.

To put this crossing practice under the microscope of Rampton's (2018) factors mentioned above, the majority of NND crossing is done in Egyptian features or by Egyptians. These results index, on the one hand, the Egyptian dialect as the most familiar and most known dialect among Arabs. Resources of the Egyptian dialect seem to be commonly and actively shared by the participants. In turn, participants feel they have the right and access to use these features. However, this does not mean that the Egyptian dialect is indexed as a useful lingua franca. On the other hand, it seems that the Egyptian identity, especially when powered with a higher position in the hierarchy of roles in the community of *The Voice*, lends a right to participants to cross to other NNDs in order to welcome or greet. This indexes the Egyptian identity as the would-be host to other nationalities.

In order to understand the indexicality of NNDs as resources, recalling Auer's (1990) three dimensions of crossings is necessary (see Chapter 3 and Section 6.3.1):

The first dimension is that of the speaker's and of the recipient's individual competences and preferences. The second dimension is that of conversational structure. The third is that of the values and social meanings attached to the languages of the repertoire. (Auer, 1990, p. 78, as cited in Rampton, 2018)

Considering the first dimension in the use of NND, as mentioned above, the analysis shows that generally participants have more competence in using Egyptian features than Egyptians using other NND features. An exception is Hayat, who demonstrates relative competence in using Lebanese features with Algerian accent. Using NND comes

to serve functions of thanking, greeting, praising, encouraging, and repeating. The competence in, and presumably access, to NND resources exercised by Egyptian participants appear very limited when compared to the extent other participants' competency and accessibility to Egyptian NND. For example, Assi expressed a whole situation to Husaam with Egyptian features, and Halima negotiated her position with Iman through Egyptian features. Egyptian participants did not show this level of competency when using NNDs.

Crossing to NND features to greet, praise, or thank does not go beyond a limited pool of fixed commonly known features of a certain dialect. This use can be compared to the cultural expressions that a non-native speaker of a FL would like to know when visiting the country where this language is spoken in order to enjoy talking to locals, using a few useful utterances. It is interesting to see this approach is taking place as well among the speakers of Arabic dialects. Although, the face value index of this use is *welcoming* and a *recognition* of the other's unique dialect, the other side of the coin is an index of *foreignness* and *non-belonging*.

Considering the preferences of the speakers and their interlocutors, the reaction of the interlocutors when Kareem or Sherine use features of their dialects, is in many cases a shy smile of appreciation, indicating they welcome the social meaning that is associated with the use of their ND. In this shy smile, it seems to the viewer, lies a *sense of gratitude* to this appreciation coming from a higher hierarchy, in the present case the Egyptian presenter and Egyptian judge. However, their dependent role as contestants accentuates this sense of gratitude, as they have reasons to hope for recognition from hosts, judges, and celebrities.

The preference of the contestants is generally to reply in their ND in order to accept the positive messages from Kareem and Sherine. The practice of greeting, praising, or congratulating the interlocutor in their ND reflects how the speakers, i.e., Egyptian Kareem and Sherine, consider their interlocutor as a *representative of a social group*, i.e., the people of the interlocutor's country. Furthermore, the practice of choosing to keep one's ND and to respond to the friendly remarks in their ND, indicates that the participants hold themselves as representatives of that same social group as well. An example of this is when Mahmoud, a Moroccan contestant, told Kareem that the people of Morocco love it when Kareem uses Moroccan features in the show. Only once in the data does the reply to Kareem's praise come in his Egyptian features, thus representing Kareem as a member of the social group of Egyptian people. This is seen in the instance between Lebanese Ghazi and Egyptian Kareem. After praising Ghazi using Lebanese idiom, Kareem receives a praise from Ghazi that contains Egyptian features. However, this reciprocity is not the pattern in the data.

It is the identity of both, Kareem and Sherine as celebrities combined by their roles as presenter and judge respectively, that makes this dynamic generally unidirectional. Considering the higher position in the hierarchy that comes with their roles, this dynamic is moving from top to bottom. The participants holding this higher role, in the cases we discussed, happen to be Egyptians as well. In other words, the Egyptian identity is not

the sole trigger of granting a higher level among participants. In order for that to happen, an Egyptian needs to enjoy another higher-level role, such as a judge or a TV host. If identities are as such combined, the Egyptian one is brought to the front. It is interesting to see these dynamics in more instances in relation to hierarchy and power in the show as discussed further in the following subsection.

The passive access to NNDs other than the Egyptian one implies a strategy of levelling by the participants. Levelling means that speakers avoid uttering features of their NDs that they think would be hard to understand by their interlocutors who belong to other varieties. Levelling is specially highlighted by the instances of negotiation of meaning and metalinguistic discussion. It is implicitly deduced from the nature of the low number of occasions in which meaning is negotiated and participants engage in overt metalinguistic discussion. For example, when Saber explained to Aimée and the audience the words *aka haw* [only you] as pure Tunisian, there was an immediate acceptance of this explanation by Aimée, the audience, and the other participants. A shared acceptance took place that there are specific dialect features that are not known to other participants not belonging to this dialect. There is a shared acceptance, it seems, that features specific to dialects can be a source of fun and conviviality, an opportunity to engage with others.

As mentioned above, settling negotiation of meaning sequences was not done by rephrasing oneself in the interlocutors' ND. This in turn implies that the limited access participants have to each other's dialects and thus to ways of rephrasing things, makes them perform in their own dialect even when struggling to make themselves understood. This practice reveals a strategy of levelling by the participants. This practice, in turn, puts another aspect of RM in the centre stage: participants have enough passive knowledge of each other's dialect, but seem not able to actively use them.

Using foreign language features

Now I discuss the use of LWE (see Chapter 5) and FSs, which will also help us understand another dimension of pan-Arab linguistic knowledge. The discussion below will elaborate on the meanings of the use FLs, especially when compared with the use of different Arabic features explained above.

The occurrence of FL in the data, as either LWE or FS, indicates linguistic unmarkedness and cultural normalcy. As seen in Chapter 5, expressions such as 'bravo', 'ok', 'good luck', 'hi', 'wow', 'compliment', 'please', and 'sorry' are used to express conventional pragmatic meanings. The use of these expressions is unmarked in the data and they are sometimes used hand in hand with their Arabic equivalents. Foreign expressions such as these seem to have become part of the shared linguistic repertoire of Arabs in the show. No one seems to question these features or attempt to rephrase them. This is similar to what Rampton (2018) calls 'passing': 'In order to avoid all the talk that draws attention to their use of an outgroup code, people pretend that the outgroup code is actually part of their own inheritance' (p. 76). But why is this the case?

For historical reasons, English, French, and Italian are colonial languages in the Arab world (see Chapter 2), and this may explain the assimilation of these expressions as part of the shared repertoire. Socially, the use of foreign LWE indexes a higher social class and a higher education level (Albirini, 2016). As a logical outcome of globalization, English accounts for 420 cases (almost 75%) LWE and 37 FS (90%) in the data. Use of these resources, indexes internationalism, Americanism, modernity, and, for the show, it is also an index of membership in the universally shared mass culture of *The Voice* as a franchise. This last point confirms Blommaert's (2005) description of English use as a sign of superdiversity that it is 'associated with core values of capitalist ideas of success: entrepreneurship, mobility, luxury' (p. 212). These indexicalities, in relation to globalization, explain, for example, why Dutch is not present in the show, although *The Voice* is originally a Dutch franchise.

Yet, not all foreign features enjoy the same level of unmarkedness as seen in the yielding category of LWE in Chapter 5. The field and domain that are borrowed from Western culture is the trigger of these relatively marked cases of LWE since their Arabic equivalents are as well in frequent use. Music, social media, media, and the setting of the show are new doors through which new LWEs enter the linguistic repertoire of Arabs in the show. As seen in Section 5.5.3, such use inclines towards a certain markedness. However, the high frequency of using these LWEs can be pointing towards a process of normalization and making these LWEs unmarked on the long run.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, FL use is made to appear easily accessible. Although, a relatively few participants use FS in the show, it seems that the producers of the show gave a silent 'passing' (see Rampton's definition above) to use these features in order to index the community of the show with modernity, education, expertise, and internationalism. Foreign language is rather an activated resource that media and participants attempt to normalize in order to be part of a global franchise and social community.

The discussion above sometimes touches on the hierarchy that permeates interaction in the show. In the following section, power is discussed in terms of the use of these linguistic resources.

6.6.4 Linguistic resources and power

Indexing crossing strategy reveals the dynamics of power. As seen in the discussion of the Egyptian identity in the section above, the right of access to certain linguistic resources is exercised when these resources interact with a certain identity and a hierarchical role in a communication event. This in turn affects the meanings and values associated with these resources.

Power and Arabic varieties

Crossing to NNDs reflects power dynamics among participants. Two indexes, *lack of confidence* and *claiming group membership*, can be seen when the dimensions of

conversation structures are considered. Three instances are used here to illustrate this. First, Algerian Hayat mostly maintains Lebanese features in a show that is broadcast from Lebanon. Second, Moroccan Halima negotiates her disagreement with her Egyptian vocal trainer in Egyptian features. Third, Moroccan Sahar uses Lebanese features when surrounded by Levantine speakers and faced by a challenge of a song she does not know. The three contestants are working against their shaken confidence, appealing to a higher power, and trying to claim their membership in the larger group, rather than just in their national group. This became explicit in what Halima says, using Egyptian features, *kunt fakr-a nafs-ī ma'zūm-a* [I thought I was invited], expressing her feeling of an outsider to the group at this instance.

These crossing instances by the three contestants can be interpreted within a framework of Maghrebi-Mashreqi ideology. In all nine occurrences of this kind of crossing, the speakers are negotiating their positions using non-national features of the higher power, i.e., the judges or vocal trainers. These nine instances of negotiation all occur between Maghrebi speakers and Mashreqi interlocutors. Although, elsewhere in the data Sahar and Halima maintain their Moroccan ND, in these negotiation situations, they use features of Lebanese or Egyptian. Their choice sheds more light on the choice made by Hayat throughout the show – to use mostly Lebanese features instead of Algerian, as was explained above. One reason behind this choice can be that participants want to make sure they are not misunderstood while negotiating their position with the person who has power over them. They want to make sure that their message is as clear as possible. Using the dialect of their judge or trainer is like fondling with their cherished dialect in hopes to have their appeal heard.

Ensuring that their message be clearly understood in the competition reflects how important this competition is to them, more important than stressing their national identity. Previous research has noted the sense of alienation (Attwa, 2019; Chakrani, 2015) that Maghrebi speakers feel during their communication with Mashreqi speakers. Although Halima and Sahar maintain their ND throughout the show, despite this sense of alienation that they might have been feeling, being placed in a 'not-so-competent' position among other Mashreqi speakers adds another level to this sense of alienation, making it appear on the surface. As a counter practice, in order to try to claim back their belonging to the community of *The Voice*, they use NND, i.e., the dialect of their interlocutors, who happen to have a say on their position in the competition. It is in this practice that the dynamic of power hierarchies is clear in the show. Hayat, Sahar, and Halima are in the position of a contestant who is now negotiating to be a competent rival in the show. The hierarchy of the higher levels of judge and coach, and the presence of a seemingly more competent rival ('seemingly', because actually Sahar won the competition with Mona), pushed Sahar and Halima to appeal to these higher powers. Their vulnerable position may have increased the sense of alienation that they already might have been feeling due to their Maghrebi dialects. In fact, the effect of using non-national features in these instances is to accentuate the Maghrebi identity more than the identity of a competing contestant. The juxtaposition of non-national features used

with the identity of a competent contestant that is negotiated by using the Mashreqi features, brings the Maghrebi-Mashreqi ideology to the front in these instances. It appears that what comes to the mind of Sahar, Halima, and Hayat while negotiating their position in the competition are the Mashreqi identities of their interlocutors and, therefore, they made the choice to use their interlocutors' linguistic features as a defiant attempt to get their message of clarity and belonging transmitted. Hayat presents an extreme version of this appeal, as she mostly maintains the Mashreqi features throughout her presence in the show. The juxtaposition of what they are appealing to, and the linguistic features they use in this appeal reveals the feeling of alienation that Maghrebi contestants might have been feeling during the show, and that this feeling is brought up to the surface in instances when they are shaken by their predicaments as a contestant in trouble.

A complementary illustration of these power dynamics was seen when Saber refused to yield to Kareem's correction, as a way to deny that the proper way to talk for him would be a dialect other than his Tunisian one (Egyptian in this case). Although Saber had used the exact same feature previously with Egyptian Husaam, to encourage him, his position and role as a judge and a celebrity give him the power not to yield to the Mashreqi correction from Kareem – in his role as representing the media. The higher position of Saber as a judge and a celebrity in the show, unlike Hayat, Sahar, and Halima, changes the dynamics of power and enables Saber to maintain his Maghrebi linguistic feature, even to an Egyptian interlocutor. This instance conforms the discussion point made above that the Egyptian identity is not enough to grant a higher power to its speaker. Hierarchies of other roles, as seen in this case with Tunisian Saber, did not grant Egyptian Kareem a higher power over the Maghrebi identity of his interlocutor.

In general, however, there is a sense of equality among the different dialects of Arabic that the show tries to project. In agreement with Attwa (2019), the low number of instances in which misunderstandings are negotiated imply that there may be a strategy at work to avoid expressing any lack of understanding. This strategy was especially brought to the surface in the instance that took place in the V-room between Nadine, a Tunisian contestant, and a Moroccan contestant. Nadine cut off the talk about the lack of comprehension by the Tunisian contestant. She explicitly said *lā? hayda l-żawāb bad-nā ni-ṭī' alēh* [No, we want to cut on this response], expressing assurance of the good intentions of the Moroccan contestant. The other instance of lack of comprehension occurred in the *żūš* [both] instance between Kareem and the Moroccan contestant Khawla. Although this instance triggered an effect of laughter, the first one did not. The comment from the Tunisian contestant was seen as disrespectful to the Moroccan counterpart. Therefore, Nadine had to cut off this talk.

The attitude of the hosts in these two instances reflect the policy of the show to avoid explicit attention to any lack of comprehension across dialects, maybe especially when it concerned the Moroccan one. The show wants to project that there are equal levels of intelligibility across all dialects, even though more metalinguistic discussion might be happening behind the screens, as was shown in the analysis. This seemingly

forced equality in fact reflects a disparity of power for the varieties of Arabic, where less power is given to and exercised by the Moroccan variant.

Power and foreign languages

We saw that in the majority of cases using FS was done to give or to reply to praise, and to show or hide a shaken confidence. Using Arabic to fulfil these functions occurs too. The challenge is to understand why in these instances the participants often shifted to FS, mostly English.

Gearing towards the final episodes, FL use is intensified by the two interviews with Ricky Martin and a report about singing in FL. This process of constructing the show by increasing FL indexicalities towards the finale is discussed further in terms of identity in the following chapter. Appealing to the above indexicalities of English, as the language of a colonial power in history and of the modern Western world, including of this economic franchise, is seen as an appeal to a better self. The practice of the producers and participants of using foreign features as if they own them is an attempt to raise the bar of the show by trying to attract a higher-class audience. Nashef (2013) strongly argues that the use of FL is a process of restructuring the self to what is considered 'better, more useful descriptions' (p. 325). What appears in the show is a reconstruction of a desired better self, using the language of the other where new subjects are brought into being (p. 325). As mentioned above, the use of FL indexes modernity, class, and education. This reconstruction of the self is magnified by looking at Sherine's use of FL.

Sherine, the judge, has the highest number of FSs: 10 cases out of 41 (almost 25%). Her use is noteworthy because she is the one who is criticized for her bad English pronunciation by the audience on social media websites. She noted this in the show in the example discussed above: *we 'āyza ḡaḡul-uhum*, 'I'm very sorry, guys, 'ašān ḡanā ta'īimī French [And I want to tell them, I am sorry, guys, I had a French education].

In *Connected in Cairo*, Peterson (2011) discusses how expensive education in Egypt is translated as a class difference:

Education in FLs, the ability to adopt appropriate Western dress, familiarity with technologies, and an appreciation of Western taste – and the brand names through which these are codified – rapidly have become class markers (...) the ability to distinguish clearly between the /b/ and /p/ phonemes, for example, or competence in properly accessorizing a Western dress can mean a difference between a salary of EGP 50 and one of EGP 500 per month. (Peterson, 2011, p. 39)

Although we may disagree with Peterson that EGP 500 is considered a high salary in Cairo, the point is that a salary is not an issue for Sherine since she has become a super star in the Arab World. In her TV interviews as a guest, however, Sherine always emphasizes her poor background and that she comes from the slums of Cairo, and now she is the main provider of her family. Peterson follows the account given by Barsoum (1999, 2004, as cited in Peterson 2011). Barsoum explains how employment agents in multinational corporations in Egypt pay attention to subtle differences in the way young

women speak, dress, and accessorize. A young woman who is dressed fashionably and has an American or European accent is from 'wilād an-nās - literally, "child[ren] of the people" [but] used idiomatically to refer to children of privilege' (Peterson, 2011, p. 40). Those who possess an academic degree and have a specialized training offer no competitive advantage to those who speak English with an Egyptian accent or 'wear the wrong shoes for their dress' (p. 40).

In several of her interviews, for example one with TV host Wafaa Al-Kilaany in *Al-Matāha* [*The Maze*] and with Presenter Nicole Saba in *At-Tufāha* [*The Apple*], Sherine admits that she feels ashamed that she used to escape school and did not finish her school education, and that she does not know English or good Arabic, meaning SA, very well. That is why she wants her daughters to have a better education and to have good English. She also feels ashamed when her daughters speak English and she does not understand what they are saying.

The instances where she sends her kids 'big hug and big kiss' and says 'I love you Mariam and Hana' reflects the above description. Sherine, as the provider for her daughters and her Egyptian family, aspires to provide a good level of education for her kids, and 'good' here means expensive and international, as that would make the children fit in the new globalized world. Acquiring American or European accents is deemed essential. With this, Sherine hopes to be accepted as part of the elite class, those who master FLs, to complete the image of a celebrity. Being the participant who uses FS the most reflects her attempts to be part of this community created by her peers and conducted by the media. Sherine is a clear example of a participant who is trying to fit in, even though she is mocked on social media. She replies to this mocking by trying to show more confidence and use more FS, and jokingly apologize about her bad English.

Sherine's behavior reflects the position of FL use in the show. It seems CS to FL empowers the speakers with a higher position of class, education, and expertise. Even though this characteristic of the show is made to appear normalized, Sherine presents a case to undermine this and offers a reminder that FL is not yet a totally unmarked resource among Arabs.

The following and section treats the subject of humor.

6.6.5 Humor

Humor is a clear and repeated index that appears when considering Rampton's (2018) third dimension of social meaning and values. As seen in the examples from Sherine, Assi, Saber, and Kareem, crossing to NND and CS to FL, as well as negotiation of meaning, is a tool they use in order to affect and cause humor, through teasing and joking.

Crossing to a different dialect in a joking manner makes the dialectal interaction more resonant and confirms awareness of the dialect differences. In most cases, the humor comes from the knowing practice of using linguistic features that do not belong to the speaker but to the interlocutor. The humor comes from this recognition of differences and their highlighting, by performing them in a funny and light manner. The absence of metalinguistic comments or explanations indicates that the differences

between dialects constitutes shared knowledge and a shared resource among Arabs to which they all have access and a right to use when they deem it appropriate. It is the awareness of these differences that causes jokes to have humorous effects among the participants involved.

The finding agrees with Hillman's (2011) claim that using humor by using features of a NND or FL, equally SA as presented in Chapter 5, does not only represent locations of identity display, more specifically relational identity display, but also mitigates tensions, softens face-threatening acts, and protects participants' positive face needs. Humor, as used in the show, is a tool to play with the differences among the participants. The success of the joke depends on the awareness of shared knowledge and values. Intelligibility of humor functions as an index of in-group membership. It is part of Arabness to understand the instances of humor as presented in the show.

To sum up, Arab cross-country communication is made possible and intelligible due to the already shared and agreed upon values and social meanings that are associated with the use of the diverse linguistic resources. Arabs in their inter-dialectal communication share the following pieces of knowledge: 1) Egyptian features are the most commonly active shared resources and, in their different roles, Arabs have a right to access it; 2) The Egyptian identity occupies a significant space in the mind of Arabs during their inter-dialectal communication. This identity gains more power if combined with a higher role in the hierarchy of the community, a power that marks this identity as the host of other Arab identities; 3) A shared awareness of the existence of linguistic differences to which they may cross in order to negotiate, greet, praise, or cause humor; 4) Arabic dialects other than Egyptian are passively shared among Arabs. They appeal to their capacity to practice RM in order to communicate with speakers of different Arabic dialects; 5) Greeting and praising done by crossing to NND may have the social value of welcoming and appreciating but may also attribute the social values of the foreigner or the alien; 6) The dynamics between Maghrebi and Mashreqi Arabic are not fixed but are subject to change according to the hierarchy of roles that grants one of these poles the power over the other; 7) Foreign language resources are an activated resource that can be used to reconstruct a better self and to display expertise, modernity, and internationalism; 8) Humor is an important communication strategy to ease the tension that may occur from differences. It is used to accentuate, emphasize, and recognize national and linguistic diversity.

6.7 Conclusion

As an important connecting chapter between the other two research questions, this chapter has analyzed the data in order to provide explanations of the dynamics of intelligibility within the main patterns established in Chapter 5, which showed that RM is the dominant mode of communication in the show. As a first step, the chapter started by introducing how the community created by the participants in *The Voice* builds its

schema structure, as introduced by Gumperz (1982). Furthermore, it showed the schema of the communicative activities, eliminating potential sources of misunderstanding, and limiting understanding to certain meanings and expectations. The chapter then drew on Rampton's (2018) ideas on crossing versus CS as strategies, in order to understand the shared meanings, values, and knowledge among Arabs that underlie communication in the show and that enable inter-dialect intelligibility. The chapter added further evidence regarding the dynamics of RM in the show. The following Chapter 7 looks at the identity markers expressed by the participants, in order to more fully understand the dynamics of identity construction among Arabs. It will also investigate how the identity indexes align or misalign with the employment of the linguistic features and patterns, and their meanings and values, that have been presented in Chapters 5 and 6.

Identity indexed

Aimée in Lebanese Arabic: *mīn el-mawhebé ?il-lê ?ażma' 'alē-hā el-'alam el-'arabé kil-lu?*

Kareem in Egyptian Arabic: *mīn el-mawheba ?il-lī ?agma' 'alē-hā el-'alam el-'arabī kul-lu?*

[Which talent did the whole Arab world agree on?]

(*The Voice*, Season 2, 2014)

7.1 Introduction

The first episode of the second season of *The Voice* started with the blind auditions with Egyptian contestant Wahm performing an Iraqi song, using Iraqi features. However, she modified the lyrics to include, along with Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, and Lebanon – the four countries of the four judges. In the song, the poet stated his conditions for his beloved woman. The reason of these conditions as sung by Wahm in the show was [I am Iraqi and my jealousy is catastrophic. I am Egyptian and my jealousy is catastrophic. I am Tunisian and my jealousy is catastrophic. I am Lebanese and my jealousy is catastrophic.] However, the show ended in its last episode with the Iraqi flag accompanying the Iraqi winner of the season, Sattar Saad.

The quote at the beginning of this chapter is a refrain repeated by both presenters, Egyptian Kareem and Lebanese Aimée, before announcing the winners of the audience's votes. Each presenter said the refrain in his/her respective Arabic variety. With the results of Chapters 5 and 6 in mind, the participants seem to move between national, pan-Arab, and universal linguistic indexicalities. This chapter investigates the instances in the data where they explicitly express an identity index.

As mentioned in the analyses presented in the previous two chapters, the linguistic features found and distributed show indexicalities of national identity more than a pan-Arab identity, as reflected in the abundant use of features of NDs versus the sporadic use of SA. Moreover, they reveal an indexicality of internationalism and universality with the use of elements from FLs. This chapter runs another analysis of how participants index identity (see Chapter 4) in order to answer the following question: 'What are the identity indexicalities expressed by the participants in the pan-Arab TV show, *The Voice*?' The data shed light as well on how these identity indexicalities align or misalign with the use of linguistic features and patterns discussed in Chapter 5, and the social meanings and values presented in Chapter 6. The analysis underlying this chapter searched the

data in order to identify the explicit expressions of identity indexicalities, and to see if there is any conflict between the use of linguistic features and this explicit expression.

Three major identity categories were found, namely *national* ones, where there is a belonging to a certain country; *pan-Arab*, where there is a belonging to the Arab world at large; and *universal* indexicalities, where there is an expression of affiliation with the international community. The national category is further divided into the subcategories *bonding*, *representation*, and *delegation*. The scope of each category is explained under the relevant subsection below.

The analysis showed there were 142 instances where the participants indicated a relationship towards a country, the Arab world, or universality. Relationships were labelled in the data as instances of national bonding, national representation, national delegate, pan-Arab, or universal. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the data was compiled in an Excel sheet where each of the instances were labelled for its denotation of identity index. Table 7.1 shows the number of occurrences of each of these labels.

Relationship label	N instances
National bonding	15
National representation	39
National delegate	32
Pan-Arab	46
Universal	10
Total	142

Table 7.1 Labels of identity indexicalities

Figure 7.1 below shows the percentage distribution of the identity indexicalities. As shown, the three national indexes counted for 60.5% of the data, while pan-Arab references counted for 32.3%, and the universal category for 7%. Below is a discussion of each label providing more explanations and examples.

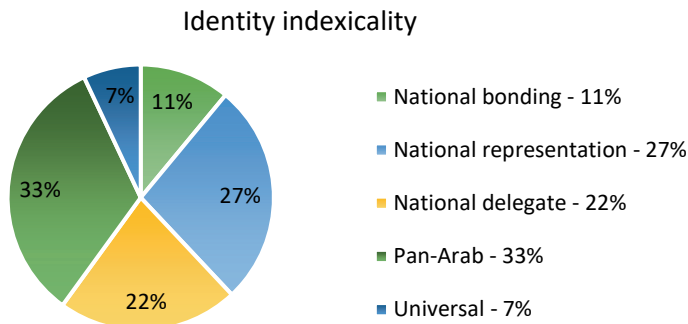


Figure 7.1 Percentages of identity indexicality

Before doing so, it is important to note that utterances can be double labelled. For example, in Episode 11, Kareem the presenter had this conversation with Samer, a contestant from Iraq:

Kareem: *šukran līk yā šāber, ya'nī šhāda gamīla gidḍan. (shifting to Samer) šīn tirīd t?ūl tgūl li-l-?aḥīl bi-l-'irāq?*

[Thank you, Saber. This a very beautiful feedback. (shifting to Samer) What would you like to say to the family in Iraq?]

Samer: *?anā ḥayī ?aḥlī bi-l-'irāq wa-l-waṭan el-'arabī wa gul-u-hum in-šāl-lah yā rab el-faraha dōm.*

[I would like to greet my family in Iraq and the Arab homeland. I would like to say to them, God's willing, the happiness would last.]

This exchange was labelled *national representation* since Kareem considered Samer a representative of the Iraqi people. It was also labelled *national delegate* since Samer assumed and accepted the role as a delegate of the Iraqi people. A third label was *pan-Arab* as Samer, in his greeting, included the whole Arab world. Figure 7.2 shows the overlap in numbers between the three major categories of identities.

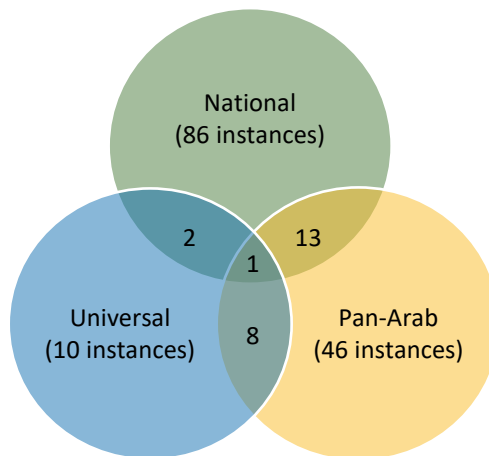


Figure 7.2 Overlap instances in the three major identity categories

Each of the following three sections presents the results of one of the three major identity categories.

7.2 National indexicalities

As mentioned above, the data reveal that participants mark national belonging by projecting three micro indexicalities: bonding, representation, and delegation. *National bonding* was indexed when a certain participant built a relationship of bonding with

another because they both belonged to the same country. *National representation* was marked in cases when a participant held another participant as a representative of the latter’s country. *National delegation* was marked when a participant held himself or herself delegate of their own countries. In what follows, each of these categories are treated respectively.

7.2.1 National bonding

As mentioned in Table 7.1, this label occurred 15 times (10.5%). Table 7.2 shows the distribution of these instances in the data.

Country	Count	By	Role	To	Role
Egypt	8	Sherine	judge	Alaa	contestant
		Sherine	judge	Wahm	contestant
		Sherine	judge	Marwa	contestant
		Sherine	judge	Wahm	contestant
		Sherine	judge	Wahm	contestant
		Kareem	presenter	Wahm	contestant
		Sherine	judge	Wahm	contestant
		Kareem	presenter	Marwa	contestant
Lebanon	4	Assi	judge	Ghazi	contestant
		Assi	judge	Ghazi	contestant
		Assi	judge	Everyone	
		Assi	judge	Everyone	
Iraq	2	Kadim	judge	Rita	contestant
		Kadim	judge	Ali	contestant
Tunisia	1	Saber	judge	Dihlaab	contestant

Table 7.2 National bonding

Based on who initiated the bonding relationship, it seems that it was mostly carried out from a judge or presenter to a contestant, i.e., from a higher to a lower level on the hierarchies of roles in the show. Due to the nature of the show, there is a possibility that contestants bonded together off camera or in occasions that were not shown on the screen and therefore they did not appear in the data. In what follows, I am presenting some telling examples of national bonding instances.

After Marwa made her first performance in the blind auditions, she mentioned that she was from Egypt. Sherine replied to this: *yā salām, taḥiya gumhuriyit maṣr el-‘arab-i-ya. ʔaiwa kida baʔa!* [Oh, long live Egypt. Finally! YES!]. National bonding occurred in the data on the micro level of the region as well. Coming from the city of Baalbek in

Lebanon, Assi bonded with Ghazi since his first appearance in the blind auditions. He maintained this bond until the live episodes. For example, in Episode 11, he was commenting on how Ghazi responded to the feedback. He described him as a little stubborn and said speaking to the audience: *ti'rf-ū ba'albak hēké 'anīd* [You know, he is from Baalbek. He is stubborn]. The Iraqi judge Kadim praised Rita after her performance in the blind auditions saying *raġa'-tī-n-ī wēn kunit bel-madinet el-ḥureyá, ḡim-maṭiqá ḡeš-ša'biyá. ḡanā ḡktīr farḥān ḡibew-ġūd-ik* [You took me back to Huriya city, the Sha'biya region. I am very happy you are here]. Finally, Tunisian judge Saber bonded with the Tunisian contestant Muhammad Dihlaab saying that he had already known Dihlaab in Tunisia: *mḡamad min el-ḡašwāṭ ḡil-lī ni-'rafhā fī tunis we ma'rūf-a fī tunis* [Muhammad is among the voices I know in Tunisia, and his voice is famous in Tunisia].

An important comment from Assi appeared in Episode 11 while he was making his choice. The selection started between Hala from Syria, Reem from Lebanon, and Ghazi from Baalbek, Lebanon. As mentioned earlier, Assi bonded with Ghazi on several occasions during the show. In this instance, he started his selection by addressing the audience saying:

bi-trézé kil el-ḡudūr el-karīm mā yēḡud maḡhaz walā yi-'tibr-ū ḡiṣṣé qqwmiyé. niḡnē birnāmaž fané, mā ḡizā ḡaḡadnā ḡadā min balad, we ḡadā min balad bad-un yuḡulū lēš flēn min el-balad el-ḡāḡhar, ḡaw el-balad tilk el-ḡāḡhar, ḡaw el-balad el-tāné. fā haydé birnāmēž fané, fī ḡadā bad-dū yiḡal bi-l-ḡāḡher, niḡnā be-yhmn-ā ni-ḡadém šōré ḡilwé.

[I beseech the honorable audience not to consider the selection a national issue. We are in a talent show. I don't want someone to say why the choice is made from this country over this country. This is an artistic show and it should stay as such till the end. We only care to present a good image.]

It seems Assi was paving his way for his choice of Ghazi, who was from the same region in Lebanon as him. He was trying to prevent any accusations from the audience that his selection might had been marred by a bias to his region, Baalbek. After he chose Hala as his first choice, Assi resumed and repeated his talk to the audience before choosing between Reem and Ghazi saying *we birža' mar-ra tāniyé b-ḡūl ḡnā mā 'em bi-šṭiḡil kil ḡadā min wēn, ḡnā haḡūl lā ḡu'mul taškilé ḡilwé bi-l-farīḡ la-yiḡal-lū li-fināl. lā ha-ḡtār ḡāzé el-ḡamīr* [I repeat that I am not thinking where each one [contestant] is from. I choose in order to make a good mix in my group so it can compete till the end. I will choose Ghazi El-Amir]. This quote reflects the level of pride and feeling of bonding participants may feel towards their fellow participants from the same region/city. It also reflects the effect of the national/regional bonding on the audience and their interaction with the show.

7.2.2 National representation

The second national index in the data is labelled *national representation*. This label indicates that a participant considered another participant to be a representative of the

latter's country, region, or city. This label was applied 39 times (27.4%). Table 7.3 presents these occurrences.

Country represented	Representative	Role	By (nationality)	Role	National rep.		
Algeria	Hayat	contestant	Assi (leb)	judge	1		
			Kadim (irq)	judge			
			Saber (tun)	judge			
Egypt	Husaam	contestant	Assi (leb)	judge	5		
	Alaa	contestant	Sherine (egy)*	judge			
	Khaled	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge			
	Khaled	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter			
	Husaam	contestant	Saber (tun)	judge			
Iraq	Amer	contestant	Assi (leb)	judge	11		
	Samer	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter			
	Sattar	contestant	Tweet (social media)				
	Sattar	contestant	Nadine (leb)	presenter			
	Simur	contestant	Saber (tun)	judge			
	Samer	contestant	Saber (tun)	judge			
	Simur	contestant	Saber (tun)	judge			
	Simur	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge			
	Karraar	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge			
	Simur	contestant	Tweet (social media)				
	Sattar	contestant	Kadim (irq)	judge			
	Jordan	Iyaad	contestant	Kareem (egy)		presenter	1
Kurdistan Iraq	Mihvaan	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter	1		
Lebanon	Everyone	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge	1		
Morocco	Nadia	contestant	Assi (leb)	judge	4		
			Kareem (egy)	presenter			
			Khawla	contestant		Kareem (egy)	presenter
			Mahmud	contestant		Kareem (egy)	presenter
National	Everyone	contestant	Assi (leb)	judge	3		
			Assi (leb)	judge			
			Saber (tun)	judge			
Palestine	Sherine	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter	1		

Country represented	Representative	Role	By (nationality)	Role	National rep.
Sudan	Nile	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge	4
	Nile	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge	
	Nile	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge	
	Nile	contestant	Nadine (leb) Tweet (social media)	presenter	
Syria	Hala	contestant	Assi (leb)	judge	3
	Syrian stars		Rim (leb)	contestant	
	Khaled	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge	
Tunisia	Dihlaab	contestant	Nadine (leb) Tweet (social media)	presenter	4
	Dihlaab	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge	
	Dihlaab	contestant	Sherine (egy)	judge	
	Aida	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter	

Table 7.3 National representation

* Sherine mistakenly thought Alaa was from Alexandria

On the one hand, Table 7.3 shows that participants who were considered representatives of their countries were mostly contestants. On the other hand, those who explicated this representation were mostly judges and presenters. Similar to the direction of national bonding mentioned above, again the judges and presenters who enjoyed a higher role level were apparently free to consider the contestants at the lower role level as representatives of their countries. An exception to this pattern was the Lebanese contestant Rim, who considered a Syrian singer who wrote her a positive comment on social media as a representative of all Syrian artists.

All countries in the show were represented by their contestants, except for Saudi Arabia. Countries granting the agency of representation were Egypt 21 times, 12 by judge Sherine and 9 by presenter Kareem; Lebanon 11 times, 7 by judge Assi, 3 by presenter Nadine, and once by contestant Rim; Tunisia 6 times by judge Saber; and Iraq 2 times by judge Kadim. The relatively high number of the Egyptian participants who granted the representation, aligned with the data presented in Chapter 6 that the Egyptian identity allowed for a more prominent role in welcoming and greeting participants from other Arab countries. Five instances out of the 40 served as greeting to the contestant's country.

The 'National' cell under the column 'Country represented' in Table 7.3 stands for the instances where a participant considered several contestants as the representation of several countries at the same time. As shown, this happened three times in the data, two of which were in the same CI in the last episode, in the final words of the judges,

Assi and Saber. In response to an intense cheering by the in-stage audience to the Iraqi contestant Sattar Saad, Assi said to the audience:

mitl mā bi-n-šaži' lā satār bad-nā nšaži' simūr, simūr 'arāʔê kamān. bi-naḥs el-waʔit, bad-nā nišaži', bad-nā nišaži', lā ʔumm ʔid-duniyā maṣir, wahim, bi-naḥs el-waʔit, bad-nā nišaži' syriyā el-ġāliyyé, el-ḥābībé. bid-dī ʔil-lun ʔin-nū kintū bi-tirfa'-ū, rafa'tū rās balad-kun, we bayad-tu wiš ʔahl-i-kun we ʔahl balad-kun.

[As we cheer to Sattar, we need to cheer to Simur as well. He is Iraqi too. At the same time, we need to cheer for the mother of the world, Egypt, Wahm. At the same time, we need to cheer for the precious beloved Syria. I would like to tell them [the final contestants] that you made your countries and families proud.]

In his turn, Saber commented:

bi-l-nisbā liyá ʔaná šarraf-fū blād-hum, kil wāḥed šarraf balād-u, sawāʔ-an kânêṯ hāla, sawāʔ-an kân sattār sawāʔ-an kân-it wahm ʔaw simūr, šarf-ū-nā el-yōm we šarf-ū-nā tilit el-ʔašhur ʔil-lī kun-nā bi the voice. ʔint-umā faḥr, ni-'awidhā, faḥir li-buldān-kum.

[For me, they made their countries honored. Each one of them: Hala, Sattar, Wahm, or Simur. It has been an honor throughout the three months of *The Voice*. Again, you make your countries proud.]

The case that is marked 'Everyone' took place when Aimée was praising Sherine on her good style. Sherine replied praising Lebanon: *el-ḥamdu-l-la! ʔanā 'ašān fī balad kull-ahā ʔin-nās zuʔ-hā ḥilw, fa ʔanā lāzim ʔalbis ḥilw* [Thank God! It is because I am in a country full of people who have good taste, so I have to dress nicely]. Thanking Aimée for her compliment, Sherine extended the appreciation to all the people of Lebanon, including Aimée. Aimée stood as a representative for all Lebanese people in this instance.

The case marked 'Syrian stars' took place in the V-room where Lebanese Rim received support from some Syrian musicians and singers on social media. This was the only instance where a contestant expressed representation. Although the nationality of the celebrities was not mentioned in the comment, in her response, she thanked all the Syrian stars who were supporting her saying *ʔanā bidī ʔitšakkar kil nužūm suriyā yal-lī 'am be-y-da'am-ūn-ī bi-tašwīt-un* [I would like to thank all the Syrian stars who are supporting me with their votes]. Similar to Sherine, Rim extended her gratefulness to all the Syrian stars, including those who supported her on social media. By emphasizing their national belonging, she gave them agency as representatives of all Syrian stars.

As mentioned, five times the expression of representation was accompanied by greeting and welcoming the country. For instance, the following conversation took place when the judges greeted the Algerian contestant Hayat:

Hayat: *ʔismī ḥayāt zarūq min al-žazāʔir.*

[My name is Hayat Zarouq, from Algeria.]

Assi: *el-žazāʔir! ʔahlā wi-sahlā!*

[Algeria! Welcome!]

Saber: *ʔahlā wi-sahlā bi-l- ʔazāʔir!*
[Welcome, Algeria!]

Kadim: (*Kadim sang to Algeria then he shifted to Hayat*) *w-intī maḥlā-k-ī!*
(*Kadim sang to Algeria then he shifted to Hayat*) [And you, how beautiful you are!]

Another example of the accompanied greeting came from Sherine to the Tunisian contestant, Muhammad Dihlaab: *yā ʔahl-an bi tunis! we ša'b tunis! we mawāhib tunis!* [Welcome, Tunisia! The People of Tunisia! The Talents of Tunisia!].

The representation also came in the direct form of ‘make your country proud or happy’. For instance, Saber praised Samer when he took him into his team in the battles giving him a second chance in the competition saying *ʔirfaʔ rāš balad-ak!* [Make your country proud!]. Also, Sherine saw Karrar as a national hero for his country. She said to him *el-irāʔ kull-ahā mistani-y-āk yā baṭal el-irāʔ ʔil-lī gāy* [Iraq is waiting for you. You are the future hero of Iraq].

In addition, sometimes judges sent their congratulations or a voting request to the people of the country represented. When Nile won the votes of the audience in Episode 11, Sherine opened the card saying *mabrūk li-ʔahl es-sudān!* [Congratulations to the people of Sudan!]. In Episode 10, after the performance of Muhammad Dihlaab, she said *we bardo baʔūl li-ʔahl tunis ēh yi-šawat-ū-l-u we wuʔf-ū maʔ-āyā ʔin-nahārda li-ʔann-u yi-stāhil* [I also say to the people of Tunisia to vote for him and stand with me because he deserves [their support]].

The data showed as well that this was also important for the audience on social media. Viewers sent tweets that indicated that this national representation was not only limited to the participants on stage, but also extended to the audience at home and on social media. In Episode 10, Nadine told Simur that there was a title for him on social media: *fī laʔab ʔi-lak, laʔab ʔalā šabakēt it-tawāṣul el-ʔiṣtimāʔ ʔin-nak ʔinta safir bilāḍ-ak, safir tunis* [There is a title for you on social media. [People are saying] that you are the ambassador of your country. You are the ambassador of Tunisia]. In Episode 14, Nadine read a tweet for Simur saying *yā baṭal ʔibn ʔir-rāfidēn el-ǧāll!* [You hero, son of Mesopotamia!].

7.2.3 National delegation

If the category of attributed national representation is one side of the coin, the other side is the category of *national delegate*. This label was applied when a participant indicated, accepted, or declared that they are representing their countries in the show. The analysis showed that this label was applied 32 times (22.5%). Table 7.4 shows the distribution.

Participant	Role	Country	N occurrences
Simur	contestant	Iraq	4
Wahm	contestant	Egypt	4
Assi	judge	Lebanon	3
Hala	contestant	Syria	3
Nile	contestant	Sudan	3
Sattar	contestant	Iraq	2
Sherine	judge	Egypt	2
Adnaan	contestant	Iraq	1
Aimée	presenter	Lebanon	1
Amaar	contestant	Syria	1
Amer	contestant	Iraq	1
Dihlaab	contestant	Tunisia	1
Khaled	contestant	Iraq	1
Kadim	judge	Iraq	1
M. Al-Fares	contestant	Iraq	1
Mahmud	contestant	Morocco	1
Samer	contestant	Iraq	1
Sattar	contestant	Iraq	1

Table 7.4 National delegation instances

Contestants repeatedly expressed pride to be competing in the show in the name of their countries. In Episode 8, Amaar from Syria said after he was disqualified from the battles: *šaraf ʔiktīr ʔikbīr lā ʔilī ʔin-nī ǧanēt bi ʔism baladī sūriya* [It is a great honor for me to sing in the name of my country, Syria]. In Episode 9, when Muhammad El-Fares moved to the next live show, he said *mabrūk, mabrūk ʔ-l-baladī* [Congratulations to my country]. In Episode 14, after her last performance, Wahm greeted Lebanon and other Arab countries, but she started her talk by *ʔanā mabšūṭ-a el-ʔawel ʔin fī mašr-y-īn kitīr we siyādt ʔis-safir we ḥaram-u, we mumasil-īn el-mašr-y-īn we mašr* [I am happy, first, that there are so many Egyptians, his highness the Egyptian ambassador and his wife, Egyptian actors, and Egypt].

The judges Assi, Kadim, and Sherine expressed their belonging to their countries jokingly, or in reference to music or political events. After Wahm gave the first performance in the blind auditions, Saber and Sherine turned their chairs to have Wahm join their teams. Jokingly, Sherine said to Wahm: *ʔarf-a law ʔih̄tar-tī šāber, meš ha-ḥaluhum yi-dah̄al-ū-kī mašr* [You know, if you choose Saber, I will not let them [the officials] allow you into Egypt]. Assi made a similar remark to the Moroccan contestant Mahmud. After Mahmud’s performance, Assi and Sherine turned their chairs to make Mahmud join their teams. When Mahmud chose Sherine’s team, Assi commented that Mahmud did not choose him in the two phases of the show, so he said *be-wʔid-ak halla ḥaṭiṭ-l-ak*

ʔism-ak 'al-maṭṭar, ḥ-ʔawqif-ak lamma bi-tiṭla' mi-l-birnāmiž [I will give your name at the airport. They [the officials] will stop you when you leave the show]. Kadim became a delegate for his country when he commented on the style of music presented by Ali, a contestant from Iraq. After he chose Ali to join his team, Kadim said to the judges: *bas hādā el-maqām, hādā yisam-ū el-maqām ʔihnā 'in-nā, lōn min ʔalwān el- ġinā? ʔis-ša'b židd-an* [But this Maqaam – we [Iraqis] call this The Maqaam – is one of the most difficult types of singing for us].

Assi and Sherine functioned as delegates to their countries, sometimes through making political references. In Episode 9, Sherine commented on the abilities of the Egyptian contestant, Khaled. She said he was also able to sing in different dialects and languages, including Turkish. Then she added: *ma'a ʔen inā 'and-enā mašākel ma'a turkiya bas meš muškela* [Although we have issues with Turkey, but no problem]. In reference to the political tension between Egypt and Turkey after the military ended Muhammad Morsi's presidency in Egypt in 2013. In the same episode, Assi transgressed from the context of the show to mention the incident of an explosion that happened in his region, Baalbek, Lebanon. Assi said:

bad-dī ʔūl šaġlé, law bad-dī aṭla' šuwayé 'an siyē? el-birnāmiž, baddī ʔūl niḥnā we bī 'am bi-nṣawir el-laylé min šuway 'irifnā ʔin-nu ḥaṣal ʔinfižar bi-libnān bi-ba'albak, we rāḥ šuhadā la-lžayš el-libnān-ī, niḥnā bd-nā nʔūl bas ʔawel šī ta'āzina bi-ʔismé we ʔism kil el-fanān-in we kil ʔusrī MBC la-kil ʔawāʔil ʔaš-šuhadā we b-nitmanā ʔaš-šifā? al-'āzil la-kil el-žarḥā. wa lākin bad-dī ʔūl kamān haydé libnān mit'awad dayman yiʔadim ba-yʔadim šihadé ba-yʔadim šuhadé?, we niḥnā séʔāfit el-ḥéyāt 'in-nā ʔakbar bi-ktīr min séʔāfit el-ʔižrām taba'-un. haydé ʔižrām, haydé ġadr, haydé ʔirḥāb bi-kul mā li-l-kalimé min ma'nā, b[not clear]. ḥayātné bad-dā (not clear) tistamir we haydé libnān mitl mā ʔult, dāyman ʔit'awad yiʔadim šuhadé.

[I would like to say something, even if I would transgress from the context of the show. While we were shooting tonight, we heard the news about an explosion that took place in Lebanon, Baalbek, where some martyrs from the Lebanese military died. First, we would like to say in my name and the name of all the artists, the program, the whole family of MBC, we give our condolences to the families of the martyrs, and we wish a speedy recovery for the causalities. However, I would like to say also that this is Lebanon. Lebanon is used to give martyrs. Our culture of life is much bigger than their culture of crime. This is a crime, a betrayal; this is terrorism in the whole sense of the word. Our life should continue. And, as I said, this is Lebanon, which is used to give martyrs.]

These comments did not only imply an identification with the country, but also constituted a political stance about the events that were taking place at the time the show was broadcast.

From the above presentation, the total number of times a national belonging was voiced is 86, out of a total of 142 references to national indexicality (60.5%). All instances proceeded smoothly in the show without creating any tensions. They were usually accompanied by feelings of pride and accomplishment and applaud from the audience. The next section looks at the pan-Arab references.

7.3 Pan-Arab indexicalities

The *pan-Arab* index was used when there was an indication of belonging to or a reference to the Arab world or the totality of all Arab countries. The data contained 46 pan-Arab mentions (about 33% of the identity mentions).

As seen above, utterances often belong to more than one sub-category. In order to investigate any patterns, I counted how often two labels are combined. As seen in Figure 7.2 above, pan-Arab mentions shared 13 instances with *national* index ones and 8 with the *universal* ones. Twelve instances are cross-labelled *pan-Arab* and *national delegation*, while 5 instances are labelled *pan-Arab* and *national representation*. None of the 46 utterances shared the label *bonding*. Figure 7.3 presents the percentage distribution of national and universal indexes within the pan-Arab category.

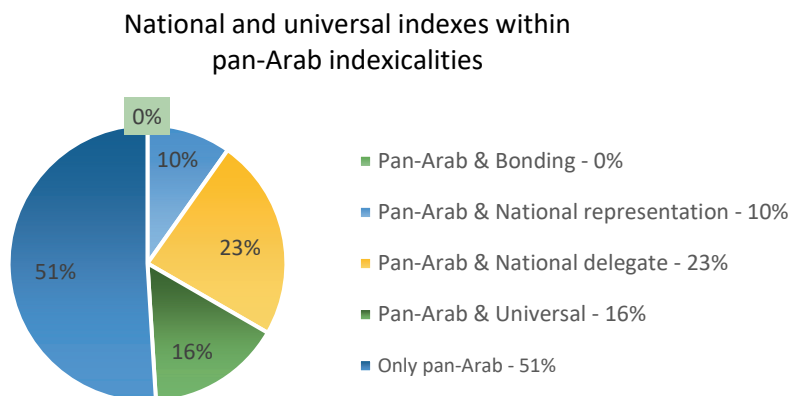


Figure 7.3 National and universal indexes within pan-Arab indexicalities

Out of the 46 times, 12 were of the refrain quoted at the beginning of this chapter. Each of the main media presenters, the Egyptian Muhammad Kareem and the Lebanese Aimée Sayaah, repeated this refrain. Both read it from a teleprompter every time before the announcement of the contestant who won the votes of the audience. By the design of the show, the mention of the refrain started in the live shows from Episode 9 up until Episode 14. Kareem and Aimée pronounced the refrain in their own respective dialects. Therefore, Kareem used Egyptian features: *mīn el-mawheba ʔel-lī ʔagmaʻ ʻalē-hā el-ʻalam el-ʻarabī kul-lu?* [Which talent did the whole Arab world agree on?]. The Egyptian features were the open flat beginning and end vowels, such as *el-mawheba* [the talent], *ʔel-lī* [which], and *ʻalē-hā* [on it]. Aimée pronounced the same stretch with Lebanese features: *mīn el-mawhebé ʔil-lé ʔažmaʻ ʻalē-hā el-ʻalam el-ʻarabê kil-lu?* as clear in the *imāla* (see Chapter 5 for definition of *imāla*) in *el-mawhebé* [the talent], *el-ʻarabê* [the Arab], and *kil-lu* [all of it].

Out of the remaining 34 instances, 6 were mentioned in the blind auditions and the battles. The rest of the pan-Arab instances were in the live episodes. Table 7.5 presents the count by episode and indicates the participants and their roles.

Episode (instances)	Speaker (nationality)	Role	Interlocutor (nationality)	Role
2 (2)	Assi (leb)	judge	Amaar (syr)	contestant
	Asmaa (mrc)	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter
7 (1)	Saber (tun)	judge	Rabie (leb)	contestant
8 (3)	Sherine (egy)	judge	Khawla (mrc)	contestant
	Sherine (egy)	judge	Everyone	
	Saber (tun)	judge	Everyone	
9 (1)	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Mihvaan (kur, irq)	contestant
10 (5)	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Sherine (egy)	judge
	Dihlaab (tun)	contestant	Nadine (leb)	presenter
	Wahm (egy)	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter
	Assi (leb)	judge	Rim (leb)	contestant
	Adnaan (irq)	contestant	Aimée (leb)	presenter
11 (5)	Nile (sud)	contestant	Nadine (leb)	presenter
	Wahm (egy)	contestant	Nadine (leb)	presenter
	Samer (irq)	contestant	Kareem (egy)	presenter
	Samer (irq)	contestant	Aimée (leb)	presenter
	Amaar (syr)	contestant	Nadine (leb)	presenter
14 (17)	Assi (leb)	judge	Hala (syr)	contestant
	Ricky Martin (Puerto Rico)	guest	Aimée (leb)	presenter
	Wahm (egy)	contestant	Everyone	
	Simur (irq)	contestant	Nadine (leb)	presenter
	Nadine (leb)	presenter	Simur (irq)	contestant
	Simur (irq)	contestant	Khald (syr)	contestant
	Kadim (irq)	judge	Sattar (irq)	contestant
	Assi (leb)	judge	Everyone	
	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Hala (syr)	contestant
	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Ricky Martin (Puerto Rico)	guest
	Kareem (egy)	presenter	Ricky Martin (Puerto Rico)	guest
	Wahm (egy)	contestant	Everyone	
	Sattar (irq)	contestant	Everyone	
	Hala (syr)	contestant	Everyone	

Episode (instances)	Speaker (nationality)	Role	Interlocutor (nationality)	Role
	Ricky Martin (Puerto Rico)	guest	Kareem (egy)	presenter
	Hala (syr)	contestant	Everyone	
	Saber (tun)	judge	Aimée (leb)	presenter everyone

Table 7.5 Pan-Arab instances

Before the live shows, the comments that referenced the Arab world were mostly about the style of singing and the voice, except for comments made by Saber and Sherine about the song performed by Iraqi Samer and Syrian Amaar in their battle in Episode 8. For example, Saber referred to Rabie as ‘Justin Bieber of the Arab homeland’. Similarly, Sherine called Khawla the ‘Beyoncé of Arabs’. In Episode 2, Assi praised Syrian Amaar for his style of singing saying that for a young person to sing such classical singing *haydā ʔešī yi-ṭamenā ‘alā al al al-fan el-‘arabī we ‘alā aṭ-ṭarab el-‘arabī* [This brings assurance on the Arab art and the Arab singing]. In the same episode, Asmaa was talking about the show, *The Voice*, saying that it had a unique character which *yi’nī yi-tmayiz bī-hā f-el-‘ālam el-‘arabī* [distinguishes it in the Arab world].

In Episode 8, Iraqi Samer and Syrian Amaar competed with a nationalistic song. While singing, Samer bonded with Amaar saying *yā aḥī yā surī* [Oh, my brother, the Syrian!]. The audience and the judges cheered, and many emotions were stirred on the show. As a part of his comment on their performance, Saber said *ʔint-um lamas-t-ū finā ʔiḥsāsnā ʔid-dāḥilī al-‘urūba* [You touched our inner emotions of Arabness]. Sherine was next to comment, and she said:

ya’nī ʔanā ʔit-ʔassart gidḍan bi ḡunā sāmer, we ʔit-ʔassart bi-ḡunā-hum hummā le-tneḥn we ʔatmanā ʔin ʔiḥnā ni-lāʔī naḥs-īna liʔan ʔiḥnā ka-‘arab kulenā dilwaʔī miš laʔyīn naḥsīnā miš ḥasīn bi-l-ʔamān, fa ʔatmanā ʔinn šōt-hum yi-wṣal l-il-nās ʔil-lī mā ‘anda-h-āš ʔalb, l-il-nās ʔil-lī miḍamar-al-nā ‘iṣitnā we mḥaliy-ā-nā miš ‘arfīn ni-nbiṣīṭ, we yā rab bin-nagāḥ we ʔahl-u-hum yi-fraḥū bī-hum li-ʔin-nu-hum le-tneiḥn ʔin-nahārda ya’nī ‘amal-ū ḥāga fī fī ʔalb-ī ʔanā šaḥṣi-yan.

[I was touched by Samer’s singing, and I was touched by their singing both. I hope that we find ourselves because, as Arabs, we feel lost, and we don’t feel safe. I hope their voice reach the heartless people who are destroying our lives and depriving us from feeling happy. I wish them success, and I hope their families feel happy with them because the two of them touched my heart, personally.]

Although it was not specific who Sherine referred to by ‘the heartless people’, it might have been obvious to the audience that what she meant was the intervening forces and powers including terrorist groups. At this time of the show and up until the time of writing this thesis, many Arab countries such as Syria, Iraq, Egypt, and Libya, have been plagued with waves of terrorism and fighting sects formed by international powers.

Assumingly, Sherine refrained from specifying an entity in order not to take a clear stance on the political situation – a stance that would have otherwise turned the show into a political arena.

As shown in Table 7.5, the final episode had the biggest number of pan-Arab mentions (17 out of the total 46 – 36.9 %). For instance, Syrian Hala sang a passionate nationalistic song about her country Syria, wishing that it would be rebuilt and rise again. Kareem commented on the song by wishing that the whole Arab world would get rebuilt again: *ʔin-šā-llah kul ʔid-diwal el-ʔarabiy-a tiʔla we ti-tʔamar bi ʔizn allah!* [Hopefully, all the Arab countries rise and get rebuilt, God’s willing!].

This pattern of moving from the national to the pan-Arab was also instantiated by Kareem in two other occasions. In Episode 9, after the greeting Kareem gave to Mihvan and Kurdistan Iraq, he ended the conversation by saying *wel-salām le-kul ʔid-diwal el-ʔarabey-a ʔakīd* [And greetings to all the Arab countries for sure]. In Episode 10, after Sherine asked the Tunisian people to vote for Muhammad Dihlaab, Kareem added *we ʔakīd ʔabaʔan el-tašwīt min kol el-ʔālam el-ʔarabī ʔakīd* [And, of course, the voting is from the whole Arab world for sure].

Moving from the national to the pan-Arab level was also evident in comments from the contestants. In Episode 10, Adnaan dedicated the song he performed not only to Iraq, but to the whole Arab homeland: *we hay el-ʔuḡniyé mū taḥdīd-an li-l-irāq, taḥdīd-an le-l-waḡan el-ʔarabī kul-la* [And this song is not particularly [dedicated] to Iraq, it is particularly [dedicated] to the whole Arab world]. In the same episode, Tunisian Muhammad Dihlaab asked the Arab countries to vote for him after thanking his fans in Tunisia and several other countries: *el-bildān el-ʔarabey-a kul-hum nu-škur-hum we n-qul-hum šawt-ū-lī* [The whole Arab countries, I thank them and ask them to vote for me]. When asked about what she was thinking, Wahm replied *ba-fakkar fī balad-ī we ba-fakkar fe-l-waḡan el-ʔarabī kul-lu we ba-fakkar fe-l-fōz* [I am thinking about my country, my Arab homeland, and winning]. The pattern was also seen in comments by Iraqi contestant Samer in Episode 11, in the exchange between Lebanese presenter Nadine, the Sudanese contestant Nile, and Egyptian Wahm in Episode 14, when Lebanese judge Assi commented on Hala’s song on Syria, and in a comment by Iraqi contestant Simur.

However, in Episode 11, Wahm showed the opposite pattern, starting from the Arab world. She said *we ba-ḥeb el-waḡan el-ʔarabī kul-lu, ba-ḥeb balad-ī, we ʔatamanā min el-waḡan el-ʔarabī kul-lu yi-šawaḡ, we ʔanā ba-škur širīn we ba-škur kul nugūm-nā el-waḡan el-ʔarabī* [I love the Arab homeland. I love my country. I hope the whole Arab homeland vote for me. I would like to thank Sherine and all our stars [of the] Arab homeland]. Similarly, Hala shifted from the Arab world to the national belonging in Episode 14. She attached the attribute Arab to the Syrian people: *bid-dī ʔi-škur žumhūr el-waḡan el-ʔarabē kil-lu ʔil-lī ʔāman bi-mawhibtī, bid-dī ḥiḡ bi-šikir ʔahl balad-ī ʔišaʔb el-ʔarabī ʔis-surī* [I would like to thank the audience of the Arab homeland who believed in my talent, and especially, the people of my country, the Arab Syrian people]. Also Sattar, when asked to whom he would dedicate his winning if he won, said *ʔahd-i-h ʔilā kil el-*

waṭan el-'arabī, we ḡilā balad-ī el-'irāq [I dedicate [the win] to the whole Arab homeland and to my country, Iraq].

Finally, the pan-Arab index occurred combined with the *universal* index. For example, the conversations that took place with Ricky Martin in the last episode bear pan-Arab and universal indexes. Both Kareem and Aimée interviewed Ricky Martin, whose very presence indexed the universal franchise of *The Voice*. As mentioned in Chapter 6, the use of English indexed internationalism, modernity, and globalization. In these interviews, the pan-Arab index appeared when both Aimée and Kareem asked Ricky Martin about his plans in the region and what to say to the Arab viewers. Kareem estimated the viewers from across the Arab world as 100 million viewers. The combined label of pan-Arabism and universality appeared in Episode 14 as well. In her interview with Iraqi Simur, Nadine moved from the universal to the pan-Arab, saying *ḡinn fī hay el-'ēlé li-kbiré el-'alām-iy-é el-'arab-iy-é ḡawal-ék* [That there is this big international Arab family surrounding you].

Pan-Arabism was also present in titles given to the contestants and in praise. Assi called Reem *ṡoltḡān-ét al-ḡinā? al-'arabê* [the sultana of Arab singing] and named Hala *malaké fi-l-ḡiné? el-'arabê* [a queen of the Arab singing]. Syrian contestant Amaar referred to his co-contestants as *ni-'tibir-hum qudwa la-l-waṭan el-'arabī* [I consider them role models for the Arab homeland]. The Iraqi contestant Simur wished that Syrian Khaled would become a big star in the Arab homeland: *we ḡatmanā-l-ak ḡitkūn naḡim kibīr bi-l-waṭan el-'arabī ya ḡllā! ḡin-šā-lla!* [I hope that you become a big star in the Arab homeland, by God! God wills!]. Finally, Kadim praised Sattar saying that it was not only him who was proud, but the whole Arab homeland: *ya'nī sattār mū bas faḡūr bīk, el-waṭan el-'arabê kula faḡūr-īn fīk* [Not only me proud of Sattar, but also the whole Arab homeland].

Despite all these examples, the occurrence of the pan-Arab index was lower than expected from the preliminary observations of the show. To investigate this further, I made a separate analysis of references to this type of identity indexicality outside of the data of the 166 CIs. The results of this analysis are mentioned after the following section, which presents the universal indexes in the data.

7.4 Universal indexicalities

The label *universal index* was used when there was a reference to the whole world versus specific Arabic countries or the Arab world at large. Universal indexicalities were found ten times in the data (about 7%). Of the ten incidents indexed as universal, eight were in the last episode. The other three instances were in Episodes 7, 8, and 10. The resemblance Saber and Sherine gave to Rabie and Khawla as 'the Justin Bieber of the Arab world' and 'the Beyoncé of the Arab people' respectively, were indexed as

instances of this category. The third instance in Episode 10 appeared in the interview between the Tunisian contestant Muhammad Dihlaab and Nadine when he was given the title ‘the ambassador of Tunisia’, as mentioned above. In his response, Dihlaab said *šay yi-farraḥ we famma barša nās ma’nāta kalim-ūn-ī min ?iṭṭaliyā min ?asbāniyā min ?es-sa’ūdiya min tunis min mašr* [This brings happiness. There are a lot of people who sent [posts] to me from Italy, Spain, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Egypt]. And to that, Nadine replied *min kil li-blād, niḥnā ni-škur-ak ?iktīr!* [From all the countries, thank you very much!].

This last CI was the only one in the data that indexed the three labels of identity (see Figure 7.1 above). The fans of social media considered the Tunisian contestant as a ‘representative’ of his country as is clear from the title ‘ambassador of Tunisia’. At the same time, the contestant himself accepted this role and acted as a ‘delegate’ of his country. In his response, he then extended the identity indexes to the ‘pan-Arab’ and ‘universal’ by including more Arab countries and European countries.

Before proceeding further with the ‘universal’ mentions, Figure 7.4 below adds another perspective on the presentation of the data by showing the occurrences of the three major identity indexes by the different phases of the show. This helps better to visualize the overall distribution of the indexes across the show.

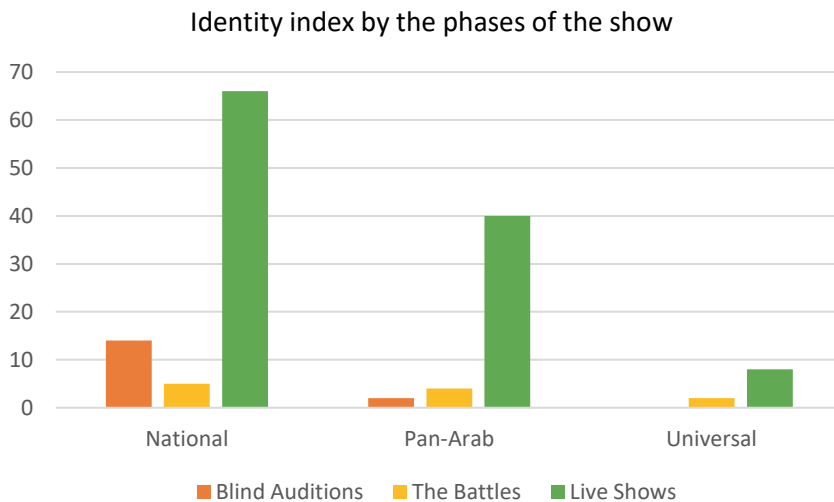


Figure 7.4 Identity indexes by phases of the show

As seen in the Figure 7.4, although the majority of the ‘universal’ mentions occurred in the live shows, they were not as much as compared with the ‘pan-Arab’ and the ‘national’ mentions. Six of the eight ‘universal’ occurrences that appeared in the live shows were in the exchange between Ricky Martin, and Aimée and Kareem in the final episode. Mentioning the Arab world or the region was the indicator in these exchanges, positioning Ricky Martin as a foreign international symbol. Ricky Martin was also the

connector to the universal franchise of *The Voice*, being a judge at the time in the Australian version of the show.

Another index of *universality* in these instances was the use of English in the interviews run by Aimée and Kareem, instead of talking in Arabic and providing an instant translation to Ricky Martin via an earpiece. In the first interview with Ricky Martin, Aimée asked him: ‘Ricky Martin, do you have any plans to be in the region any time soon again?’ The question extends the locality of Lebanon to the whole region of the Arab world. Ricky interpreted it as such as he said in one of his comments: ‘I always say the warmth, the warmth of the Lebanese people of the Arab people is very beautiful.’ Again, extending his praise from the locality of Lebanon to the whole Arab people. Similarly, Kareem asked Ricky Martin: ‘Hundred million viewers right now watching us from all over the Arab world and the Middle East right now, what would you like to tell’em?’, and ‘What would you like to tell’em right now, all the Arab world?’

As the data showed, Episode 14 incorporated a move towards universality and internationality in the show. The presenters and the presence of Ricky Martin carried out most of this incorporation process. The presenters produced six out of the ten ‘universal’ mentions. For example, in the interview with Simur mentioned above, Nadine asked him *ʔinn fī hay el-ʔēlé li-kbīré el-ʔalām-iy-é el-ʔarab-iy-é ḥawal-ék* [That there is this big international Arab family surrounding you]. Apart of his presence and the use of English language, Ricky Martin voiced the rationale behind this move towards ‘universality’ when he commented: ‘Music is to break boundaries, and that is what happens with concepts like *The Voice*. Bring people from different parts of the world together to sing and that’s fantastic.’ It seems by projecting these ‘universal’ indexes, even though very few, the producers of the show were trying to break the boundaries of the Arab region and cross to the international community by adding an ‘international’ dimension to the national and pan-Arab identities of the community of *The Voice*.

In the final episode as well, the program included a special report on the contestants who were able to compete in an Arab show in FLs, like Nile, Khawla, and Sahar. Nile and Khawla were competing until the semi-finals in Episode 13. After the report, Saber commented on this universality aspect of the show. Saber said:

The Voice ʔin-nuḥa mtāʔu aw el-birnāmiḥ ḥāḡa the voice bi-l-ʔaṣwāṭ el-ʔarab-iyé we bi-l-nuḥa el-ʔarab-iyé taḥaṭṭā el-ʔalām-iyā, huwa ʔasās-an nuḥa ʔalām-iyā, fa lāzim ni-fham ʔin-nu el-ʔaṣwāṭ ḥāḡī ma-trakizš ʔalā ʔin-nu the voice huwa ḥḡš lel lel le žumhūr el-ʔarabē, la-ʔan the voice ʔalāmī. yaʔnī ʔintuma muš ʔarab faqaṭ ʔintum ʔalām-iy-īn.

[This version of *The Voice* and this show with the Arab voices and the Arab version has gone beyond universality. It is an international version. So, we must understand that these voices should not focus on that *The Voice* is only for Arab audience, because *The Voice* is universal. You are not only Arabs, but you are international.]

This report and the quote seem to mark a peak point of the universal indexes in the show. The report reveals the ambition of the producers and the contestants, especially those who competed in FLs. By highlighting the ability of Arab contestants to sing in FLs, the producers aimed to be part of the international franchise of *The Voice*, and in turn,

the Western world. By so doing, another dimension was added to the national identities of different participants and to the collective identity as Arabs. It seems the show has taken the contestants from their local and national belonging, extending their belonging to the whole Arab world, which adds the universal dimension and westernized indexicalities.

Saber's comment seems to counter this technique of the producers. Saber underscored that the Arabic version and the Arab voices were enough to attribute a universal index to the show. He implied an opposition to the idea that singing in FLs, as projected in the report, was the only channel through which a level of universality can thus be endowed upon the show and the talents of the contestants. He rather argued that by being an Arab and singing in Arabic, the talents were already worthy of the label *universal*.

It is noteworthy that both the technique of the producers and Saber's counter comment seemed to agree on one thing: the universal index was a positive attribute that the participants and the show were ambitious to achieve. The difference, as it seems, was on which features that qualify the show for that level.

However, as mentioned above, the relationship between pan-Arab indexes on the one hand, and both the national and universal indexes on the other hand, occurred less often than what I expected from the first observations of the show. I was curious to investigate this issue beyond the data set used for the study and looked therefore at other moments in the show. Below are the results of this spin-off analysis.

7.5 More identity indexed: a spin-off analysis

The data from the 166 CIs inspired me to carry out an extension of the investigation. As explained earlier, for the current study the analysis was limited to the identity indexes found in 166 CIs. However, the questions raised by the results with regards to the relation between pan-Arab indexicalities and the national and universal levels were intriguing but inconclusive due to the relatively low number of occurrences. Therefore, I decided to investigate these indexes also outside the main data set used in this study. The purpose of this analysis was to obtain a more complete picture of how the show triggered identity references. Comparing the results of these two sets of data should lead to a better understanding of the dynamics behind the distribution of identity indexes as was presented in Figure 7.4 above.

The data investigated in this spin-off analysis included the comments and narratives that were not part of the CIs (as defined in Chapter 4). These were not communication exchanges between interlocutors, but rather a speech made during the show, produced by a contestant, a presenter, or a judge. The objective of the investigation was to pin down the identity references and their meanings in these instances. For that purpose, the instances of identity were translated and not transliterated.

The instances were collected in an Excel sheet marking the episode, the time, the speaker, and his or her role. The listener in these instances were, by nature, the audience. The identity references were given labels based on their meanings. Similar to the main study, the analysis yielded labels of *universal*, *pan-Arab*, and *national*. A fourth meaning was found that was labelled *diaspora*, where references were made to Arabs who did not reside in their original Arab countries. For instance, the instances referred to a participant who had to leave his or her country and at the time of the show was living in a foreign country, such as Rabie who was living in Sweden, Rita who was living in Austria, and Amaar, a Syrian living in Lebanon. Based on the preliminary observations of the show combined with the results of the main analysis above, I had a hypothesis that the presenters of the show produced the majority of the pan-Arab indexes.

The total number of indexical instances was 62. As mentioned, identity indexes were labelled as diaspora, universal, national, or pan-Arab. Table 7.6 presents the distribution of these labels.

Index label	Count
Diaspora	4
Universal	4
National	18
Pan-Arab	32
Pan-Arab / diaspora	1
Pan-Arab / universal	1
Pan-Arab / national / diaspora	2

Table 7.6 Outside data identity indexicalities

The 8 instances counted as *diaspora* and *universal* were produced by the presenters. Egyptian Kareem made the 4 comments for the diaspora and 1 comment for the universal instance. Lebanese Aimée made 2 comments for the universal instance; the report made in Episode 14 on the ability of the contestants to sing in a FL was also counted as an instance.

In this report, many contestants and judges gave comments on the meanings of singing in a FL in the show. For example, Nile, the Sudanese semi-finalist who performed in English said: ‘*The Voice* helps me keep my artistic identity.’ Kadim described the show as: ‘*The Voice* is the identity; it is the passport.’ Sherine commented: ‘English voices turned the earth upside down.’ Ayoub, a Moroccan contestant performing in English said: ‘Music is a universal language, whether Western or oriental.’ Assi described Rabie as ‘an international artist, not Arab’. Kadim also mentioned: ‘Those who sing in English have proved that they have a wide audience in the Arab world.’ Similarly, *universal* mentions off this report indicated either that the talents presented in the show deserved to be universal, an introduction of Ricky Martin to the show, or hailing the ability of the contestants who competed in a FL to reach a wide Arab audience.

Comments referring to the diaspora went along the lines of *The Voice* helping to bring the contestants back to the Arab homeland, or that singing in Arabic brought solace for the contestants who had to leave their home country. This was in the narrative background for Iraqi Samer and Moroccan Hamza. For example, Kareem mentioned that by joining *The Voice*, Rita had made a solid step in her journey back to her roots. On Hamza, a Moroccan contestant living in France, Kareem said that distances did not stop the show to bring talents from afar.

In contrast, presenters did not make any of the instances that indicated a *national* reference, but it was the contestants and the judges. Comments having this index indicated that either a contestant was a representative or singing to his country, an actual song was dedicated to the contestant's country, or that the war in Syria or Iraq was the cause that a contestant had to leave his/her country. For instance, Sattar, the Iraqi winner, narrated how due to the bad conditions in Iraq, he had to maintain his father who lost his job. Kadim commented that the contestants presented the face of their countries. Nile expressed his happiness that he was a source of pride to the Sudanese people.

My expectation was valid: from the 32 instances that were counted as indicating pan-Arab indexicality, the presenters produced 18 (56.25%). Presenters projected a pan-Arab identity in the show as a whole. This was in juxtaposition to the higher count of national identity indexes found in the main data analyzed in the study. Instances with this label commented, for example, that a contestant had a dream to reach the Arab audience, that the show was empowering contestants to reach the Arab audience, and that contestants were actually able to reach a wide Arab audience because the show was now in every Arab household.

The contestant Rabie produced the example that was double-labelled as *pan-Arab/diaspora*. Rabie was a Lebanese contestant who lived in Sweden and who competed in English. According to his own words, he wanted to come to *The Voice* to bring his voice to all Arabs, even if singing in English. It was a chance to make up for all the years he did not live in the Arab world, and a chance to achieve something in 'our' Arab countries ('our' is a translation of Rabie's comment). He came from Sweden because he thought that nothing could prevent a good voice, neither distances nor chairs (referring to the judges sitting on their turned chairs).

In Episode 14, Lebanese Aimée announced the casting of the following season of *The Voice* saying that no matter what the talent was, no matter what the nationality was, if someone had one of the most beautiful voices in the Arab world, this was their chance. This came amidst a surrounding atmosphere of universality in this episode. Her comment that nationality did not matter in joining the coming season made this comment receive the label *pan-Arab/universal*.

The last two comments, labelled *pan-Arab/national/diaspora*, came from Iraqi Rita, who was living in Austria, and Moroccan Hamza, who was living in France. In Episode 2, Rita said in the background report that while leaving Iraq was hard, she found her homeland in the music inside her. She was afraid of losing the connection with her fans

in the Arab world. Music helped her build a home in a foreign country, and music would help her return to her homeland. In Episode 3, Hamza said that to achieve his dream, he had to leave his country and now he would be happy to reconnect with his roots because he was an Arab.

The supplementary analysis added two interesting results. First, the presenters seemed to produce more pan-Arab references in the show overall. Second, the index of diaspora occurred in the extra data while it did not occur at all in the main data of CIs. A general discussion of the results will follow in the next section.

7.6 Discussion

This chapter looked at the explicit expression of identity indexicality in order to build on the meaning of the linguistic features and patterns presented in Chapter 5 and the related values, shared knowledge and meanings presented in Chapter 6. The answer to the research question central to this chapter is that identity indexes expressed in the show are most often *national* by nature (60.5%), but also fairly often *pan-Arab* (32.3%), and fairly infrequently *universal* (7%). These results support those of previous chapters. As far as I know, this may be the first study to provide quantifications of Arab identity expressions in a corpus of spontaneous speech, albeit in a TV program and therefore produced in a public setting.

The results of this chapter align with those in Chapter 5 on three levels. First, the majority of overt identification being national mirrors the dominant linguistic pattern of using the ND. Second, the mostly unidirectional use of SA by the participants higher up in the hierarchy of the show, i.e., presenters and judges, talking to the contestants, is mirrored by the projection of pan-Arab indexes by the presenters of the show but not the contestants, especially in the supplementary data. That this projection of a pan-Arab index by the presenters may be stimulated by their role as representatives of the media group, is also seen in the resort to SA in subtitles. The media company is still employing SA as the unified intelligible code among Arabs in situations when intelligibility through RM is not assumed. Finally, that indexes of knowledge and authority associated with the use of FL features increase towards the final episodes of the show, is mirrored by the appearance of more universal indexes in the last episode of the show; seven out of the ten instances occurred in Episode 14.

That 60% of the instances of overt identification projected national indexicalities also aligns with the shared knowledge among Arabs in their cross-country communication, discussed in Chapter 6. This is possible because of a shared awareness of the existence of linguistic differences to which Arabs may cross in order to negotiate, greet, praise, or joke. Recall that greeting and praising were also often carried out by crossing to a NND, emphasizing the social value of welcoming and appreciation.

However, two other issues arise as well from these results. First, it was seen that it is mostly the judges and presenters who build a national bond (11%) with a contestant

and that they grant contestants the identity of representing their country (27%). This suggests that the hierarchical relation between participants in the show plays a role in triggering national identity indexicalities. Second, as shown in Figure 7.4, the distribution of the three indexes of identity differs between the three phases of the show, with a respective increase in the live shows. There is, thus, a difference between the blind auditions, the battles, and the live shows. Understanding the reasons for this may help us understand the identity of the show itself as a public event that cannot be completely separated from the events that were taking place in the world surrounding it during the show's running time.

In order to understand these two points, I draw from the concept of the CofP, which was introduced in Chapter 3. I focus on three CofP processes: construction of membership, construction of the identity of the show, and how the local community of the show is related to global surrounding events. First, I briefly once more review the essential components of a CofP. Wenger (1998, as cited in Holmes & Meyerhoff, 1999) specified three crucial dimensions of a CofP: mutual engagement, a joint negotiated enterprise, and a shared repertoire of negotiated resources accumulated over time. The mutual engagement is triggered by a shared interest, which in this case study is the singing competition. People in *The Voice* claim their membership in the community by participating and that implies they have a commitment to the domain of singing and music. This shared interest enables them to have a shared competence that distinguishes members of this community from other people. The community of *The Voice* is a joint negotiated enterprise, either on screen or behind the screen. Participants interact and learn from each other. Members engage in joint activities and training; they help each other, and they share information. Through these joint negotiations, the special characteristics of *The Voice* as a community take shape. The shared practice in *The Voice* allows the members, as practitioners, to develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, and ways of addressing recurring problems. This is what is meant by a shared practice. This shared repertoire of resources accumulates by time and sustained interaction. Within this CofP of *The Voice* as described, the following three subsections discuss the three dimensions mentioned above respectively.

7.6.1 Constructing membership

Membership to the CofP *The Voice* is granted by the sponsors to a contestant who, first, belongs to an Arab country and who, second, has shown to possess a good voice in the audio recording which they have sent before the show. What is seen on the screen is usually the contestants celebrating the endowment of their membership in the background reports. Afterwards, membership can either continue into the final phases or end at any point during the competition. The membership is given or taken away at the discretion of the judges and the votes from the audience.

In this dynamic, MBC Group gives preliminary membership, placing itself at the top of the hierarchy. Second in the hierarchy seems to be the judges. The audience, with the power of their votes, share this position later, when the live shows start. Lowest in the

hierarchy are the contestants, who try to maintain or negotiate their level of participation by listening to and applying the comments given to them by the judges.

Within all this structure, different members claim or get assigned different identities. MBC Group is the sponsor and the host of the all-Arab TV show. The judges are not just judges, but also coaches, advisors, mentors, godfathers, team builders, leaders, professional singers, stars, and celebrities who influence the future career of other singers. They are Egyptian, Tunisian, Iraqi, Lebanese, and of course Arab. The contestants are also Arabs, and learners, competitors, would-be stars, fathers, mothers, brothers, friends, and daughters (depending on who accompanies them), and they carry the nationality of the country they mention when they introduce themselves: they are delegates of this country.

Even though some contestants announce that they belong to a specific Arab country while living in a non-Arab country, the sponsors still assign them membership and a belonging to this Arab community. In the show, belonging to an Arab country extends to contestants in the diaspora as well, such as Rabie who lives in Sweden but announces his belonging to Lebanon, and Rita who lives in Austria but announces her allegiance to Iraq. Another example is Mona, a contestant who speaks English better than Arabic. She says she is from England, but her father is Palestinian, and her mother is Tunisian. She is, therefore, granted the membership to the show. This highlights the diaspora index mentioned by Rita, the Iraqi contestant, and Kareem, the presenter in the spinoff data. In so doing, the sponsors structure the show as embracing all Arabs.

A noteworthy factor is that speaking fluent Arabic does not play a decisive role in determining membership in the show's CoFP. The community-defined 'regime of competence' that determines membership (Farnsworth, Kleanthous, & Wenger-Trayner, 2016) is the good voice of the participant and his or her belonging, even if it is indirectly, to an Arab country. In the case of 'English' contestant Mona, MBC group makes sure to provide SA subtitles whenever she uses English features. It is worth noting that these subtitles are given to the audience. Using features of a FL does not seem to bother any of the participants, i.e., other members of the community (see Chapter 6). Similarly, when Mona made a gender-agreement mistake in her final comment in the show, saying *ʔanā mabsūt* [I am happy – masculine] instead of *ʔanā mabsūt-a* [I am happy – feminine], there was no indication that this jeopardized her membership status: belonging to an Arab country is important but not fluency in Arabic.

Therefore, we can say that the contestants, on the lower level on the hierarchy, request membership to the show by announcing their belonging to an Arab country. By maintaining this index of representing a country or by emphasizing a bonding relationship with it, the membership to the community is maintained. This explains why these two indexes are mostly unidirectional, going from the higher hierarchies of the judges and presenters to the lower levels of the contestants. The dynamic of this relationship may also explain why the practice of moving from the national index to the pan-Arab index (see Section 7.3), which occurred 11 times, is more common than the opposite pattern of moving from pan-Arabism to a national index, which was observed

only three times. This practice in itself implicitly indexes the national belonging or representation as both Arab, on the individual level, and, consequently, pan-Arab, on the collective level of the community.

However, as seen from the discussion in Chapter 6, Maghrebi contestants may sometimes resort to what is for them the NND of Mashreqi Arabic of the judges and coaches (higher levels) to negotiate their position and membership in the show. The only nine points of crossing occurred when Maghrebi contestants conversed with Mashreqi judges or coaches. In the light of these admittedly few instances, contestants who claim a Maghrebi identity may be indexed as vulnerable when they need to negotiate their membership in the community of *The Voice*. While the regime of the community grants the membership based on national belonging to any Arab country, when negotiating their vulnerable position, Maghrebi contestants may feel forced to waive their right to use their ND, which otherwise is their prime index of nationality in the show.

To summarize, membership is constructed by maintaining an index of belonging to an Arab nation. This is then extended to convey a sense of belonging to the whole Arab world. In other words, the national index of the individual participant carries within it a collective pan-Arab affiliation.

The following subsection looks into the process of constructing the identity of the show in its entirety, so at the level of the entire CofP.

7.6.2 Constructing the identity of the show

As reflected in Figure 7.4 above, the number of times identity is indexed increases overall in the live shows, with the national identity always the one being indexed the most often. We saw above that references to national identity can often be explained by the mechanisms of granting and maintaining membership to the contestants. It can also be explained through two other aspects of the live shows: there is less editing, and there is interaction with the audience when contestants ask viewers to vote for them. It is noteworthy, that the national identity indexes are mentioned the least in the battles when compared to the blind auditions and the live shows. This may be a deliberate media technique, to avoid turning the battles into national battles between the countries. It seems that, in the recorded shows, the media are aware of the distribution of the national indexes and that they are trying to control national rivalries.

It is interesting that when someone higher up in the hierarchy, a presenter or a judge, builds a relationship of national bonding with a contestant, the pan-Arab index was never found. National bonding seems to pre-empt any non-national identity whether pan-Arab or universal. However, caution is needed, due to the low percentage of the bonding indexes that occurred only 15 times out of the 142 identity mentions overall (10.5%; see Section 7.2.1), this cannot be generalized.

The media play an important role in promoting the pan-Arab index. In her study that explored pan-Arab corporate media management of linguistic diversity in televised talent show competitions from 2003 to 2013, Schulthies (2015) has argued that

capitalizing on pan-Arabism is to guarantee commercial and economic gains, as it elicits more votes from across the Arab countries. In agreement with this result, this case study exemplified this capitalization, for instance, in the repeated iconic refrain from the presenters Aimée and Kareem, always mentioning the Arab world after any national references, and the supplementary data I analyzed showing that the presenters often produce pan-Arab indexes, as well as mentions of universality and diaspora. All of these findings indicate that the pan-Arab indexicalities in the show are driven more by the sponsors and the positions higher in the hierarchy, including MBC Group and the media.

Regarding universal indexes, out of the ten instances of the universal indexicalities, seven are counted in the final episode of the show. Universality is added to the show by the increased use of English (see Chapters 5 and 6), hosting Ricky Martin, the background report of contestants who perform in FLs, and the counter quote of Saber that this version of *The Voice* is by itself international and universal. These indexes play a part in membership construction of the show by adding an international dimension to its identity. The very low percentage of these occurrences and their concentration in the final episode may indicate another technique from the media producers. The production of the pan-Arab show is primarily based on the national belonging of the participants. The media then, as mentioned above, tries to assemble these diverse national belongings under the umbrella of pan-Arabism. Building on that, the producers add this last touch of universality to the show in order to project an image of modernity. They appeal to a wider audience, especially those in the diaspora, those who are part of an international franchise, and who garner more profits.

Recall that singing in Arabic language was not part of the defined 'regime of competence', as it was not a necessary condition for being selected as 'The Voice' of the Arab world. In the first episode, Khawla and Rabi' were both selected even though they sang in English. In Episode 6, Mona and Sahar compete in singing an English song. In Episode 13, Khawla and Nile have made it to the semi-finals of the show singing in English. Therefore, the level of participation can be changed from peripheral to active despite not singing in Arabic. With the increase in the use of FL features (see Chapter 6) and the increase of universal indexes towards the final episode, it can be argued that singing in a FL is another tool that the show employs in order to add a tinge of universality throughout the show.

The acceptance of having 'The Voice' of the Arab world singing and get trained to sing in English, without negotiation on the part of the sponsor, the judges, the coaches, and the audience who had been giving their votes since Episode 9, mark a number of identity indexicalities that are constructed by the show. These include bilingualism, biculturalism, westernization, globalization, and above all, acceptance of multiculturalism for Arabs. This practice is of course linked to the individual background and experiences of the contestants. Living in Sweden, in the case of Rabi', or in England, in the case of Mona, and not having the skills to sing in Arabic does not keep the sponsors from granting them the identity of an Arab competing with other Arabs who do live in

an Arab country and do sing in Arabic. The audience similarly grant these contestants the Arab identity of a would-be winner of *The Voice* of the Arab world.

These findings reveal the dynamics of identity construction in the show. The identity is founded mainly on the national belonging of its members. This belonging is then extended to mean Arab. Within the high percentage of national belonging and the lower percentage of pan-Arabism, the identity of the show is also colored with universality. The concentration of the universality at the end and the incorporation of pan-Arabism as such may show the metaphorical path which the producers imagine for the show. It seems that the producers wanted to metaphorically move their winner contestants from their micro regional belonging to a pan-Arab reach and finally crossing borders to universality. This last phase was voiced in Ricky Martin's quote mentioned in Section 7.4. To recall, he said: 'Music is to break boundaries, and that is what happens with concepts like *The Voice* bring people from different parts of the world together to sing and that's fantastic.' The community of *The Voice* embraces members who can come from across the Arab world, or have ancestral belonging to an Arab country, or live in the diaspora, seem to have good knowledge of FLs, and even if they have relatively limited proficiency in Arabic. Yet, it is crucial to remember that it was the national flag of Iraq that took central stage in the finale, reminding everyone of the prime identity index of the winner; not the universal or the pan-Arab, it is the national identity.

The following subsection elaborates on how the identity of the show was negotiated concerning the global events that happened during the broadcast of the show.

7.6.3 From the local to the global

Looking at the political references made in the show, that often seem a bit off topic, helps to understand the positioning of the show amidst what was happening in the Arab world during time the show was broadcast. Kraidy (2006) argues that national rivalries between different countries naturally exist in talent shows. Regarding *The Voice*, each nation has its own special presence, highlighted by the use of the ND and the implicit expressions of national belonging. These nations' political realities sometimes surface in explicit comments. Sherine, for instance, argues that the defeat of her Egyptian contestant was due to the instability that Egypt was witnessing. Pondering that it is strange that no Egyptian won in the first two seasons, she argued that Egyptians' minds were busy with what was happening in their country (Saeed, 2014). Regarding Iraq, since the 2003 US-led occupation, the mentioning of the country in Arab media has been mostly related to the political and military situations. This can be the reason why the Iraqi coach Kadim As-Saher hailed the victory of Iraq saying that this might open the way to more talents from Iraq to appear and to the complex and rich Iraqi music to be known more widely, since it was like 'a deep ocean of talent out there'.

Kraidy (2006) sees such shows as a 'harbinger of an alternative future'. In the show *Star Academy*, he analyzed the scene of all Arab contestants carrying the flags of their countries as an Arab protest march in which all the Arab countries were revolting against their situation and aspiring for more freedom, justice, and a better life (see Chapter 2).

This all came true at the end of 2010 with the revolutions that swept many Arab countries and that were initiated by youth. This illustrates how talent shows can be a fruitful site of investigation. Since conflict and political instability are still major features of the current Arab world, the reflections on this situation as voiced in these programs continue to be an interesting source of socio-political data.

In the political comments made by Assi, Sherine, and Saber, positioned as they are at the higher level of the hierarchy that defines the community, the stance that the show takes amid the conflicts that many of the Arab countries witnessed during the airing of *The Voice* in 2014 becomes visible. This is even more special considering the interplay between national identities and the pan-Arab identity.

In Episode 8, the song performed by Samer and Amaar, as Saber mentioned, touched on their feelings of Arabness. Sherine's quote about the feeling of Arabs as lost and unable to live their lives because of those who take their happiness and lives away, combined with her remark that 'we have problems with Turkey', makes the political stance clear that the show supports the current governments of Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Assi gave his condolences to the Lebanese army, therefore confirming a stance in favor of the national governments. This makes sense, given that if the celebrities with higher positions in the show's hierarchy would want to be seen as against the government, they would probably not have been on the show; the show would not have been funded by MBC Group, nor have been broadcast from Lebanon, on MBC, and MBC Masr.

These comments index a relation between the national and the pan-Arab identities. Assi's comments about the killings of the Lebanese soldiers and Sherine's comment about the tension between Egypt and Turkey are very specific to certain countries. Assi's comment was at the same time an all-Arab one by the fact that it is said on behalf of MBC Group and the rest of the participants (see Section 7.3). The broad acceptance of Sherine's comment as well makes it the stance of the entire show and its participants. Similarly, although Samer and Amaar's song was specific to Syria and Iraq, the comments index a pan-Arab emotion as was explicitly expressed in the comments of both Tunisian Saber and Egyptian Sherine. The applause and warm feeling extended to them by the audience further add to the extension of these national indexes to include a pan-Arab identity.

It is this attitude and stance projected from the national to the pan-Arab that enables communication in the mode of RM (see Chapters 3, 5 and 6). There is a shared political stance towards what is happening in the Arab countries, a common acceptance of the higher indexes of national identities, shared knowledge and shared value of recognizing and welcoming diverse linguistic differences and biographies, and an unmarked desire to become universal while still bearing, first and mostly, one's national identity and, secondly, the pan-Arab one.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter provided the answer to the last research question. The chapter introduced the identity indexes expressed in the show and projected by the media. There was some alignment between the expressions of identity and the linguistic features and patterns, and their related meanings and values presented in Chapters 5 and 6. In order to understand the indexes found in the data, in this chapter I looked at the show as a CofP in order to understand the dynamics among the hierarchies of roles and identities present in the show.

As a CofP, memberships are granted from the higher positions in the hierarchy of the show, the sponsors, the media, and the judges, to the lower positions, the contestants, by announcing they belong to one particular Arab country and have a good singing voice, though they do not necessarily sing in Arabic. The membership is maintained by indexing the participant's bonding with this Arab country, and their role of representing it, or being a delegate. In many times this national index is stretched to index pan-Arabism, therefore implicitly indexing the national belonging as Arab and pan-Arab. More universal indexes are maintained by competing in a FL, accepting foreign linguistic features, and a projection of internationalism in especially the last episode, which featured a report and the appearance of international star Ricky Martin.

The sponsors and the media control the distribution of the identity indexes. They allow more national indexes in the blind auditions, as these help to grant membership. These national indexes are then checked in the battles, to avoid turning the battles between contestants into battles between countries; this would ruin the success of the show. Instead, a more pan-Arab index is projected in the live shows and in the background data. Finally, universal indexes appeared more in the last episode in order to incorporate an international element to the mostly dominant national and frequent pan-Arab. As if *The Voice* has taken the winner from his local presence, introduced him to all Arab countries, and finally to an international audience – building on a dream that comes true, a dream held by most of the contestants.

By building on, organizing, and distributing all these superdiverse indexes and their meanings, with the acceptance from all participants, the operations of polylingualism and RM within a superdiverse CofP were illuminated on micro and macro levels in this chapter and the two previous ones. The results of the study are presented as a first attempt for future studies to build on or to engage with.

Conclusion

One of the major tasks of linguistics is to explain how speakers manage to produce output that is 'well-formed,' in the sense that it makes sense ('felicitous') and that it follows grammatical rules ('grammatical'). The reformulation of this in a usage-based framework is that linguistics needs to discover and explain the conventions found in human communication.

(Backus, 2021, p. 117)

This explorative study aimed to 'discover and explain the conventions' (Backus, 2021, p. 117) found in Arabic communication in a pan-Arab TV talent show. I argued that the Arabic sociolinguistics literature was suffering from a gap, lacking realistic descriptions of how communication was carried out among Arabs from different countries and backgrounds. There were loose ends in accounting for how people managed the fact that the diverse varieties of Arabic are different, yet familiar. Initial observation of the data and the results of a pilot study (Attwa, 2019) showed that the differences on the linguistic level among the Arabic varieties did not keep intelligible communication from taking place. This communicative success implied a logic pattern and organization of these linguistic differences that had not yet been identified in the literature. In order to fill part of this gap, the study adopted a multidisciplinary approach that drew upon variational sociolinguistics, interactional sociolinguistics, and the sociolinguistics of globalization.

I started the thesis by highlighting the diversity within some Arab countries and the influence of their specific nature, history, and politics on the linguistic landscape of each country. The field of Arabic sociolinguistics, as seen in the critical review presented in Chapter 2, appeared in need of a new approach to describe and interpret the reality of language use. I was interested in investigating communication within an overarching usage-based approach (Backus, 2015, 2021; Blommaert & Backus, 2011; Hakimov & Backus, 2021; see also Chapter 3). The flexibility of the usage-based approach and its emphasis on linguistic conventions as emergent was compatible with the explorative nature of this study. Globalized talent shows seemed to present a unique opportunity to study such emerging conventions.

It was important to start this thesis with an explorative mindset to avoid preconceived ideas about communication. Gathering the pool of language features used in cross-Arabic communication provided concrete material of the linguistic resources available to Arabs. As seen in Chapter 5, these resources included the national dialects, Standard Arabic, and foreign languages, i.e., English, French, and Italian. Although

participants used mostly their own national dialects, the data revealed instances where participants used features of Standard Arabic, foreign languages, and each other's national dialects.

In this thesis, I have tried to understand the pattern and logic behind employing these features. I was curious to understand their distribution and organization. I found that Arabs adopted the practice of crossing (see Chapter 6), when using each other's national dialect. Use of this out-group code was generally a convivial practice to welcome and embrace each other. To a lesser extent, some Maghrebi speakers crossed to Mashreqi dialects in an appeal to fit in. The Egyptian variety and identity seemed to occupy a special position within the diverse Arabic varieties. Yet, it was interesting to see that the dynamics of using non-national features differed from that of using foreign languages. Unlike non-national dialects, some Arabs showed a level of global competency, using foreign features. As opposed to crossing, this phenomenon seemed better described as acts of code switching, interlocutors sharing an in-group unmarked code. The use of Standard Arabic, finally, served yet different communicative goals. The main finding was that the specific discourse function, and more generally the role of the speaker, played a large role in explaining the use of Standard Arabic features. Among other indexes, Standard Arabic largely provided a tone of objectivity and professionalism to the discourse.

The use of these different resources not only revealed the values and social meanings but also the identities that Arabs projected through their ways of communicating. Humor was a significant index that marked the practices of using these features. Playful humor created a lively and festive atmosphere, as Arabs seemed to celebrate their diverse linguistic features.

Identity was the topic of the third and last part of the study. I investigated explicit expressions of identity and their level of alignment with the indexicalities marked by the use of the various linguistic features that were studied. Chapter 7 presented the levels of identification with either a national, a pan-Arab, or a universal identity. The agreement between the results of Chapter 7 and the Chapters 5 and 6 is a significant outcome of this study. Participants in the show projected mostly national identities, rather than the pan-Arab or universal identities promoted by the media regime behind the talent show.

Arab cross-country communication can be understood through the integration of these three parts of the study, i.e., the linguistic, pragmatic, and identity levels. Interpreting this through a generally usage-based approach, 'a relative newcomer to the field of linguistic theories' (Backus, 2021, p. 110), has allowed me to frame my study as contributing to the fields of Arabic linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics.

Linguistically, the study presented the features of the spoken repertoire of Arabs during their communication. The analysis investigated the synchronic variation of the linguistic features against the background of the diachronic changes that have occurred in the major dialectal regions of the Arab world (see Chapter 2). Shedding light on the

level of accessibility of and competence in these features was an important dimension guiding the interpretation of the use of these features.

Recognizing the intended pragmatic or social meanings and values of the use of these features and their organization contributes to the field of Arabic sociolinguistics. Why speakers use their various languages or dialects at the moments they do, is a basic and important question in the field of language contact. The interpretations in Chapters 5, 6, and 7, provided answers to this question in the context of pan-Arabic communication and helps to outline the conventions of the pan-Arab speech community within a globalized setting.

Psycholinguistically, the study sheds light on when Arabs seem to override their basic choice of using their national dialect. Feelings of excitement, appeals to fit in, or gestures to welcome and embrace fellow Arabs played an important role in breaking through the basic pattern. This suggests that the communication observed in the shows can be characterized as speakers largely speaking the way they always do when in their home environments, but being aware that they are in a multinational pan-Arab environment and making strategic use of this. While this is evidently not a psycholinguistic study, this does raise questions about activation levels and intentionality. The communicative moves discussed in this thesis were often explained as acts of languaging. As described in Chapter 3, Jørgensen (2008) and Møller & Jørgensen (2009) argue that language users rationally and intentionally choose from a number of linguistic features which they have access to, or which belong to them, in order to achieve their communicative aims. While I often explain the use of linguistic features in terms of possession and accessibility (see Chapter 6), the intention of the speaker can generally not be fully determined. How to recover speaker intentions remains a difficult methodological challenge.

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Summary

Arabic and Globalization: Understanding the Arab Voice

I started this research because I was intrigued by the ability of Arabs from different Arab countries to communicate with each other. As shown in the illustrations below, the scope of linguistic diversity among Arabic dialects is evident on the phonological, lexical, and syntactic levels. I was interested to probe into the mechanisms and dynamics of how this communication is taking place despite this diversity. In this regard, I found pan-Arab talent shows a fertile area for such investigation due to the success of these shows across the Arab countries. These shows not only reflect the diversity of the Arab world, but also they are a commodity produced by globalized media and corporate franchise in a pre-packaged format that broadcast worldwide. Within this globalized multi-layered setting, this study explored the linguistic features that form the shared repertoire of Arabs in their cross-country communication on pan-Arab talent shows.



Dialects vary around the Middle East and North Africa region

Illustrations by Yasmina Allouche/Illustration MEE in: Allouche, Y. (2022, February 21). Shou, shinou, ey: Five major Arabic dialects and what makes them unique. *Middle East Eye*. Retrieved October 14, 2022, from <https://www.middleeasteye.net/discover/five-major-spoken-arabic-dialects-unique>

Chapter 1 of the dissertation identifies the challenge: 'sociolinguistically, the world has not become a village' (Blommaert, 2010, p. 1). Globalization has affected new modes of communication that shift traditional fixed ideas of space and time, bringing histories, biographies, and linguistic resources to new multi-layered levels of contact. Looking at cross-border communication in the Arab World, sociolinguists need to consider these new shifts along with the long history, several languages, multiple varieties and

ethnicities, and the constant political, economic, and social changes that span all over the region. The study takes the second season of the pan-Arab TV show, *The Voice* or *ʔaḥla Ṣōṭ*, as a case study for cross-country communication in the Arab World.

After the introduction, the study maps out the scope of the linguistic diversity in the five major dialectal regions of the Arab World (Versteegh, 2007). The mapping identifies the social, historical, and political indexicalities of the different linguistic varieties and codes. The diversity on the level of each nation witnesses a ‘tremendous diversification of diversity’ (Blommaert & Backus, 2011, p. 4) when Arabs from different Arab countries communicate together. In a cross dialect communicative practice, each Arab individual brings, on the one hand, biographical indexicalities of values, meanings, and identities from his or her own country. On the other hand, in such communicative practice, pan-Arab indexicalities are also present. These indexicalities can be a projection of a commonly shared pan-Arab history, culture, and ideologies, or a reflection of hierarchies of hegemony and histories among different Arab countries.

The review shows that the media plays an important role in the linguistic landscape of almost all the regions presented. The media either capitalizes on or diminishes these diversified identities and ideologies, employing language as a key tool to enforce or change a certain index. The media tries to bridge the diversity as seen in the homogenized version of Arabic presented in the Gulf media or the unified identity presented in public discourse in Egypt. Yet, media and artistic expression may capitalize on a unique identity and lifestyle. It creates a space to express a distinct unique identity, such as the case for emphasizing Moroccanness by means of using Darija in Morocco. The media can also be the voice of different religious, political, or ethnic ideologies and identities as seen in Lebanon and Iraq. The chapter ends with a review of the field of Arabic sociolinguistics, guided by the last chapter of the second edition of *Arabic Sociolinguistics* (Bassiouney, 2020). Bassiouney’s chapter is titled ‘A critical approach to Arabic sociolinguistics’. The chapter states the rationale for a need of change in the approach adopted by researchers examining the field of Arabic sociolinguistics. Bassiouney touches upon the main points of contention to which the current study aims to contribute some answers.

The dissertation then introduces the main theoretical frameworks that were applied in analyzing the data-driven corpus. The corpus was built of the communication interactions in ten episodes of the second season of *The Voice* (*ʔaḥla Ṣōṭ*). The frameworks are presented in a sequential, yet inter-related, order. This order follows the three dimensions of the study. The first dimension explored the linguistic features employed in Arabic cross-country communication. In understanding these features, the study adopted a usage-based approach as a tool to interpret Sociolinguistics of Globalization. The second dimension investigated communication strategies used by Arabs during their communication. In order to understand these strategies, the analysis resorted to ideas from Interactional Linguistics, such as schema building, code-switching, and crossing. The analysis of these strategies revealed a display of diverse identities. Sequentially, in the third dimension of the study, the focus was to delve into

the nature of these identities. In order to understand the different layers of this diversity, the study employed a community of practice approach where identity is seen as a construct that built up by virtue of the practices among the members of the community of the show.

The following three chapters present the results of each of these dimensions. The analysis revealed that Arabs had different levels of accessibility to the resources of their national dialects, Standard Arabic, and foreign languages, namely English, French, and Italian. Communication strategies revealed the shared values and meanings that enabled an intelligible communication in which each participant maintained his or her national dialect. Arabs showed a high level of receptive multilingualism in their inter-dialectal communication. Crossing to another dialect was used either to be inclusive or to add a humor tone to the conversation. At the same time, using features of Standard Arabic added either a humorous or a professional tone. Third, in terms of identity, the study found that there were three layers of identity expressions, the national, the pan-Arab, and the universal. Different linguistic features and strategies by media producers and individual participants manifested the levels and reasons of these identity expressions.

It was important to start this thesis with an explorative mindset to avoid pre-conceived ideas about communication. The flexibility of the usage-based approach, 'a relative newcomer to the field of linguistic theories' (Backus, 2021, p. 110), and its emphasis on linguistic conventions as emergent was compatible with the explorative nature of this study. The integration of the three dimensions of the study, i.e., the linguistic, pragmatic, and identity, enabled a deeper understanding of Arabic cross-country communication. As such, the study has contributed to the fields of Arabic linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics. Linguistically, the study investigated the synchronic variation of the linguistic features against the background of the diachronic changes that have occurred in the major dialectal regions of the Arab world. Shedding light on the level of accessibility and competence in these features was an important dimension guiding the interpretation of the use of these features. Moreover, recognizing the intended pragmatic or social meanings and values of these features and their organization contributes to the field of Arabic sociolinguistics. Why speakers use their various languages or dialects at the moments they do is a basic and important question in the field of language contact. While this is evidently not a psycholinguistic study, the dynamics of communication presented raise questions about activation levels and intentionality. The communicative moves discussed in this thesis were often explained as acts of languaging. That is, as explained by Jørgensen (2008) and Moller & Jørgensen (2009), language users rationally and intentionally choose from a number of linguistic features which they have access to, or which belong to them, in order to achieve their communicative aims. While the use of linguistic features was often interpreted in terms of possession and accessibility, the intention of the speaker can generally not be fully determined. How to recover speaker intentions remains a difficult methodological challenge.

This presents one limitation of the study. I tried to reach out to MBC Group to understand whether there was any language policy set for the show, but I didn't receive a response from the media agency. I was hoping as well for more cooperation from the agency in providing me with better quality recordings of the shows. The recordings used in this study were satisfactory, however, better quality recordings would have enabled sharper and clearer sounds and images, especially in moments when the differences between the sounds of the different dialects were very close.

It is important to emphasize that this study did not aspire to present a revolution in the field. However, as the investigation of the multi-layered communication among Arabs is still under-researched, the contribution this study has made to this pursuit is an achievement I am proud of. Guided by previous prominent scholarly works, I tried my best to pursue a 'careful and conscientious search for error in one's own work' (Labov, 1972, p. 99).

Tilburg Dissertations in Culture Studies

This list includes the doctoral dissertations that through their authors and/or supervisors are related to the Department of Culture Studies at the Tilburg University School of Humanities and Digital Sciences. The dissertations cover the broad field of contemporary sociocultural change in domains such as language and communication, performing arts, social and spiritual ritualization, media and politics.

- 1 Sander Bax. *De taak van de schrijver. Het poëtische debat in de Nederlandse literatuur (1968-1985)*. Supervisors: Jaap Goedegebuure and Odile Heynders, 23 May 2007.
- 2 Tamara van Schilt-Mol. *Differential item functioning en itembias in de cito-eindtoets basisonderwijs. Oorzaken van onbedoelde moeilijkheden in toetsopgaven voor leerlingen van Turkse en Marokkaanse afkomst*. Supervisors: Ton Vallen and Henny Uiterwijk, 20 June 2007.
- 3 Mustafa Güleç. *Differences in similarities: A comparative study on Turkish language achievement and proficiency in a Dutch migration context*. Supervisors: Guus Extra and Kutlay Yağmur, 25 June 2007.
- 4 Massimiliano Spotti. *Developing identities: Identity construction in multicultural primary classrooms in The Netherlands and Flanders*. Supervisors: Sjaak Kroon and Guus Extra, 23 November 2007.
- 5 A. Seza Doğruöz. *Synchronic variation and diachronic change in Dutch Turkish: A corpus based analysis*. Supervisors: Guus Extra and Ad Backus, 12 December 2007.
- 6 Daan van Bel. *Het verklaren van leesgedrag met een impliciete attitudemeting*. Supervisors: Hugo Verdaasdonk, Helma van Lierop and Mia Stokmans, 28 March 2008.
- 7 Sharda Roelsma-Somer. *De kwaliteit van Hindoescholen*. Supervisors: Ruben Gowricharn and Sjaak Braster, 17 September 2008.
- 8 Yonas Mesfun Asfaha. *Literacy acquisition in multilingual Eritrea: A comparative study of reading across languages and scripts*. Supervisors: Sjaak Kroon and Jeanne Kurvers, 4 November 2009.
- 9 Dong Jie. *The making of migrant identities in Beijing: Scale, discourse, and diversity*. Supervisors: Jan Blommaert and Sjaak Kroon, 4 November 2009.
- 10 Elma Nap-Kolhoff. *Second language acquisition in early childhood: A longitudinal multiple case study of Turkish-Dutch children*. Supervisors: Guus Extra and Kutlay Yağmur, 12 May 2010.
- 11 Maria Mos. *Complex lexical items*. Supervisors: Antal van den Bosch, Ad Backus and Anne Vermeer, 12 May 2010.
- 12 António da Graça. *Etnische zelforganisaties in het integratieproces. Een case study in de Kaapverdise gemeenschap in Rotterdam*. Supervisor: Ruben Gowricharn, 8 October 2010.

- 13 Kasper Juffermans. *Local languaging: Literacy products and practices in Gambian society*. Supervisors: Jan Blommaert and Sjaak Kroon, 13 October 2010.
- 14 Marja van Knippenberg. *Nederlands in het Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs. Een casestudy in de opleiding Helpende Zorg*. Supervisors: Sjaak Kroon, Ton Vallen and Jeanne Kurvers, 14 December 2010.
- 15 Coosje van der Pol. *Prentenboeken lezen als literatuur. Een structuralistische benadering van het concept 'literaire competentie' voor kleuters*. Supervisor: Helma van Lierop, 17 December 2010.
- 16 Nadia Eversteijn-Kluijtmans. *"All at once" – Language choice and codeswitching by Turkish-Dutch teenagers*. Supervisors: Guus Extra and Ad Backus, 14 January 2011.
- 17 Mohammadi Laghzaoui. *Emergent academic language at home and at school: A longitudinal study of 3- to 6-year-old Moroccan Berber children in the Netherlands*. Supervisors: Sjaak Kroon, Ton Vallen, Abderrahman El Aissati and Jeanne Kurvers, 9 September 2011.
- 18 Sinan Çankaya. *Buiten veiliger dan binnen. In- en uitsluiting van etnische minderheden binnen de politieorganisatie*. Supervisors: Ruben Gowricharn and Frank Bovenkerk, 24 October 2011.
- 19 Femke Nijland. *Mirroring interaction: An exploratory study into student interaction in independent working*. Supervisors: Sjaak Kroon, Sanneke Bolhuis, Piet-Hein van de Ven and Olav Severijnen, 20 December 2011.
- 20 Youssef Boutachekourt. *Exploring cultural diversity. Concurrentievoordelen uit multiculturele strategieën*. Supervisors: Ruben Gowricharn and Slawek Magala, 14 March 2012.
- 21 Jef Van der Aa. *Ethnographic monitoring: Language, narrative and voice in a Caribbean classroom*. Supervisors: Jan Blommaert and Sjaak Kroon, 8 June 2012.
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- 23 Arnold Pannenburg. *Big men playing football: Money, politics and foul play in the African game*. Supervisor: Wouter van Beek, 12 October 2012.
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- 26 Mary Scott. *A chronicle of learning: Voicing the text*. Supervisors: Jan Blommaert, Sjaak Kroon and Jef Van der Aa, 27 May 2013.
- 27 Stasja Koot. *Dwelling in tourism: Power and myth amongst Bushmen in Southern Africa*. Supervisor: Wouter van Beek, 23 October 2013.

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