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THE MULTILINGUAL NATURE OF SPOKEN ARABIC AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION IN LIGHT OF DISCOURSE MARKERS

Abdelaadim Bidaoui

1. Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on showing the multilingual nature of Maghrebi and Egyptian dialects and illustrating how the linguistic behavior contributes in constructing complex identities. The study of identity was based on a variety of forms such as nationality (Suleiman 2003), ethnicity (Fishman 1999; Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985), gender (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992), religion (Joseph 2004), region (Cramer 2011), among other forms. The discussion of identity construction in this chapter is based on a project that I have carried out for many years and that examines the use of Discourse Markers (DMs henceforth) in spoken Arabic by participants from Algeria, Morocco, and Egypt. The Moroccan and Algerian dialects represent what is referred to as the Maghrebi variety, while the Egyptian dialect represents the Egyptian variety. The Maghrebi variety is known for its heterogeneous linguistic situation and is characterized by variation in language use as described in many articles (Bentahila and Davies 1983; Belazi et al. 1994). The multilingual nature of countries in the Maghreb is linked to their colonial history. As explained by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985), the colonial past is always a driving force leading to linguistic heterogeneous situations. They have also indicated that the long period of colonial history may give rise to the need to create a “new identity with new social patterns and structures” (1985, 5).

Understanding the complexity of the linguistic situation in the Arab world in general, and in spoken Maghrebi and Egyptian dialects in particular, is crucial to understanding identity construction in this chapter. As we all know, many dialects of spoken Arabic may contain elements from Standard Arabic, dialectal Arabic, and from a foreign language such as French or English depending on the history of a given country (Bidaoui 2016a, 2016b). Of the countries represented in this study, Morocco and Algeria were colonized by France for a long period of time. Morocco was colonized by France between 1912 and 1956 (Bidwell 2012), while the colonial history of Algeria lasted from 1830 to 1962 (Shepard 2008). Egypt, on the other hand, was under British protectorate between 1914 and 1922 (Cole 1999). Although the three countries are known for their colonial past, the effect of the colonial past on the linguistic behavior may be seen in the Maghrebi variety more than in the Egyptian variety due to the length of the colonial period.

The goal of this chapter is to examine how the use of elaboration and causality DMs by participants representing Moroccan, Algerian, and Egyptian Arabic reflects identity construction. Based on the sociolinguistic landscape in the Arab world in general and in these countries in particular which is characterized by a heterogeneous linguistic situation, it is hypothesized that these participants may use different DMs to express the meanings of elaboration and causality. The hypothesis put forward is that the choice of DMs may serve the need to construct complex identities. Thus, a participant may have access to one or more variants and the choice of a given DM is hypothesized to be shaped by the choice of the type of identity that a participant wishes to project.

The projection of identity through the linguistic behavior serves the need to bind people belonging to the same community together (Jansen 1999). In the Arab world, the Arabic language has always been used as a tool to bind people together as stated by Suleiman (2003, 224) who argues that

formulations of Arab nationalism, whether embryonic or fully fledged in character, are invariably built around the potential and capacity of Arabic in its standard form to act as the linchpin of the identity of all those who share it as a common language.

This claim may hold for some Arabic-speaking countries but not for others, particularly those with a long colonial past. As it will be shown in this chapter, it is not only standard forms that may act as the linchpin of identity but also local and foreign forms.

Building on the results of published work on DMs and on ongoing research, I argue that the use of DMs reflects the multilingual nature of spoken Arabic and displays the correlation between the linguistic behavior and the complex identities a participant exhibits as he or she uses language. In light of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's (1985) theoretical model, this chapter shows this correlation and provides an explanation for the social motivations that shape the linguistic behavior. Thus, any linguistic behavior is seen as an "Act of Identity" which lies in the need to "behave according to the behavioral patterns of groups we find it desirable to identify with" (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985, 182). This chapter also argues that identity is dynamic and is socially constructed as it stems from social interactions (Bucholtz 1999). The implications of this chapter are twofold, theoretical and empirical. At the theoretical level this chapter shows how two models can work together to account for the social meaning of the linguistic behavior; empirically this chapter brings new data to the study of Arabic identity.

2. Background

Language was, and is still, considered by some formal and structural linguists as an internal linguistic product. For these linguists who do not incorporate the social conditions of language use, language is an autonomous and homogeneous object. Saussure, for instance, separated language from social factors and considered it an internal structure. For Saussure language is an 'application' of a linguistic system that already exists. Within the same line of thought, Chomsky looked at language as an idealized linguistic competence. Chomskian analysis does not include historical and social forces that help in shaping and understanding language. On the other hand, linguists such as Fishman & Nahirny (1964), Labov (1972), Gumperz (1971, 1982), Le Page and Tabouret-Killer (1985), Bucholtz and Hall (2004, 2005), among many others have tried to correlate the linguistic diversity with social motivations such as identity projection.

Identity has been studied in light of many theoretical frameworks such as "Accommodation Theory" (Coupland 1984; Giles and Coupland 1991), "Audience Design" (Bell 1984), "Acts of Identity" (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985), and "Language and Identity" Bucholtz and Hall (2004, 2005) among other theories. Giles and Coupland (1991) argued that participants

either tend to ‘converge’ by using the same styles of speaking as their addressees or ‘diverge’ by speaking differently. The linguistic behavior may also serve the purpose of accommodation (Coupland 1984). In other words, the speech of a person may serve the need to adjust with the speech of others. “Accommodation Theory” relates changes in speech to the need to emphasize or minimize the social differences between the participants and their interlocutors. Along similar lines, Bucholtz and Hall (2004, 2005) came out with a new model for the study of identity in light of the semiotic nature of the processes of identification. Practice, indexicality, ideology, and performance are key elements for the understanding of the semiotic processes of identification. Practice refers to the “habitual social activity” (2004, 377), indexicality applies to linking a linguistic behavior to a group of people, linguistic ideology is related to how language is perceived, performance lies in the evaluation of identity projection by a given audience. The Bucholtz and Hall model focuses not only on *how* identity is constructed but also on *why* it is constructed. They argue that identity construction serves the need to establish “relations of similarity and difference, of genuineness and artifice, and of legitimacy and disempowerment vis-à-vis some reference group or individual” (Bucholtz and Hall 2004, 383).

This chapter relies heavily on the Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) model to show the correlation between the linguistic behavior and identity construction. The Le Page and Tabouret-Keller model was meant to provide a sociolinguistic account for linguistic variation which is considered the rule rather than the exception in linguistic behavior (1985, 247). Le Page and Tabouret-Keller examined the linguistic behavior of children of West India immigrants residing in Britain, in addition to some groups from Malaysia and Singapore. They noted that the long period of colonial history in these communities gave rise to the need to create a “new identity with new social patterns and structures” (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985, 5). The creation of a new identity is achieved by the linguistic choices a participant makes. These choices constitute “Acts of Identity” which indicate that the linguistic behavior is not random but is loaded with social meanings. Thus, if linguistic items are used by an individual it is “because they are felt to have social as well as semantic meaning in terms of the way in which each individual wishes to project his/her own universe and to invite others to share it”. That is, linguistic decisions are made depending on how an individual wants to project himself or herself, and on the desire and ability to identify with a given group (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985).

Interestingly, the ability to speak a given language may not necessarily predict its use in communication without considering the factors that shape the linguistic behavior. As argued by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, the linguistic behavior is shaped by four qualifications which are placed in the same rank,

- 1 We can identify the groups
- 2 We have both adequate access to the groups and ability to analyze their behavioral patterns
- 3 The motivation to join the groups is sufficiently powerful, and is either reinforced or reversed by feedback from the groups
- 4 We have the ability to modify our behavior (1985, 182).

These qualifications are necessary to perform any “Act of Identity” such as the need to “behave according to the behavioral patterns of groups we find it desirable to identify with” (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985, 182). It seems that the desire to identify with a given group is valued. However, when the desire to identify with a given group is present, then the question remains what linguistic choices would achieve this goal. In some contexts participants may feel the need to resort to a given language as a means of identification with the participants they interacted with while others may resort to another language.

Since this chapter focuses on how DMs, as a linguistic behavior, reflect complex identities, it is worthwhile to give an overview of the study of Arabic DMs. Al-Batal (1994) examined connectives, the term he used to refer to DMs, from a semantic perspective. Al-Batal used the word “connectives” to allow for the term to cover not only conjunctions but also adverbials and prepositional phrases. Al-Batal posited that connectives are used by the writer as “text-building elements” that signal to the reader how different parts in a text are linked. For Al-Batal (1994), connectives “render processing of a text more economical by overtly signaling to the reader the underlying semantic relationship”. A move from a focus on the occurrence of Arabic DMs in written texts to their occurrence in spoken texts started recently. Based on data from conversations in colloquial Cairene Arabic, Ghobrial (1993) studied three DMs, *yaʕni* (=I mean), *tayyib* (=well), and *inta-ʕaaref* (=y’know). The study focused on showing the functions of DMs. Ghobrial showed that *tayyib* signals introduction of a new topic (1993, 135), resuming the conversation after interruption, and showing a contrastive point of view. *Inta-ʕaaref*, on the other hand, is used to signal shared knowledge between the participant and hearer. As to *yaʕni*, it is used by the participant to show his/her understanding of the requirements of the conversation and his or her assessment of the prior participant’s contribution.

Owens and Rockwood (2008) also looked at DMs based on data from spoken Arabic. The authors argue that the core meaning of elaboration can mean specification, generalization and continuation. The authors argue that *yaʕni* is used to guide the listener to relate the propositional content of an utterance to another one. Hence, *yaʕni* connects two utterances which are semantically comparable in a context where B complements A. Among the functions of *yaʕni* is its use as a politeness marker in a context where it is used as a way of acknowledging what has been said before proceeding to disagree with it (i.e. a concession marker) (2008, 108). Owens and Rockwood argue that *yaʕni* can also be used to signal code-switching in a context where it signals a switch between local and high variants.

The DM *yaʕni* was also studied by Rieschild (2011) who examined the use of *yaʕni* in four Arabic dialects, namely Lebanese, Jordanian, Palestinian, and Egyptian Arabic. Rieschild argued that DPs in Arabic are derived from different origins. He also stated that a great deal of DPs are assessment and response words such as *tayyib* ‘fine/ok/well/now’, *saʕiiH* ‘right/yes’, *mazbuut* ‘correct/right/maybe/ok’, *kwayyis* ‘good’, *mash il-Haal* ‘ok/very well’. Other DPs are derived from deictic words such as *haida* ‘this like’, *haik* ‘like this/this’, or derived from complementizers such as *innu* ‘that/that is/well/so/like’. Idiomatic expressions are also at the origin of a number of DPs as is the case for *shu ismu* ‘what’s its name’. As to *yaʕni* which is found both in classical texts, regional colloquial Arabic dialects, and media interviews, it is derived from the verb *ʕana* ‘to mean’, *ʕtana* ‘take care’, and *maʕna* ‘meaning’ (Rieschild 2011, 318–319).

In order to examine identity construction in Maghrebi dialects, this chapter focuses on the use of DMs. As mentioned, the discussion in this chapter is carried out in light of the results of a project that examines the use of DMs in spoken Arabic and mainly in light of three studies: Bidaoui (2016a, 2016b), and Bidaoui (2017). The first study focuses on the use of elaboration DMs, the second focuses on causality DMs, while the third study examines both elaboration and causality DMs.

3. Identity construction in light of Discourse Markers

3.1. Identity construction based on spontaneous data

As I said before, the discussion of identity construction in this chapter is carried out in light of published work focusing on the use of DMs (Bidaoui 2016a, 2016b, 2017). This subsection uses

data from two studies (Bidaoui 2016a, 2016b) which was elicited through two tasks: informal multi-party conversations and structured interviews. The interactions included in the informal multi-party conversation are divided into two types: same nationality and mixed nationality. The reason for dividing this task into two types is that linguistic choices when talking to people from the same nationality may differ from talking to people from a different nationality due to reasons of intelligibility and relative prestige of the varieties involved. The same participant took part in more than one interaction to create more likelihood of variation in the choices of any single participant. As argued by Weinreich (1953, 73), variation in language is triggered by the environment and speech situation. The second task was structured, one-on-one interviews. In this task, the participants interacted with the investigator, a native participant of Moroccan Arabic.

The results of the first study (Bidaoui 2016a) show that participants used different DMs to express the meaning of elaboration. The DMs used are two Arabic-origin, endoglossic DMs, and four foreign-origin, exoglossic DMs. The endoglossic variants are *yaʕni* and *zəʕma*, while the exoglossic variants are: *ça veut dire*, *c'est-à-dire*, *je veux dire*, and *I mean*. French DMs were used only by the Algerian participants, the dialectal DM, *zəʕma*, was used by both the Algerian and Moroccan participants, while *yaʕni*, the most frequent elaboration DM, was used by the Egyptian, Algerian, and Moroccan participants. Before further discussion of the results, one should know that *yaʕni* is derived from the Standard Arabic verb *ʕana* ‘to mean’, *ʕtana* ‘take care’, and *maʕna* ‘meaning’ (Rieschild 2011, 318–319). Though we can trace the derivation of *yaʕni* to words in Standard Arabic, knowing its current status is problematic. Owens and Rockwood (2008) consider *yaʕni* to be Lebanese, not a Standard Arabic borrowing, and they agreed with Al-Batal (1994) on this point. Owens and Rockwood also listed some dictionaries of dialectal Arabic such as Yemeni, Gulf, Libyan, and Moroccan Arabic dictionaries where *yaʕni* is defined as meaning “that is, in other words” (2008, 5). Rieschild (2011) stated that *yaʕni* is found both in classical texts, regional colloquial Arabic dialects, and media interviews. This implies that *yaʕni* has a special status. It is an expression that can be used as a local form as well as a Standard form shared among all Arabic-speaking countries. Hence, it will be referred to in this chapter as the Standard or shared DM.

Interestingly, the Algerian participants used more diverse DMs for elaboration and expressed diverse “Acts of Identity” compared with the Egyptian and Moroccan participants. Their most frequent elaboration DM is *yaʕni* followed by a dialectal DM, *zəʕma*. While the dialectal DM was reserved for same nationality interactions and was used as an “Act of Identity” to express belonging to the Algerian community, *yaʕni* was mainly used in mixed nationality interactions and structured interviews to express belonging to a larger community, the Arab world. Here is an example of the use of *yaʕni* taken from a mixed nationality interaction:

1 Context: An Algerian speaker, from the East of Algeria, is talking about the West of Algeria:

- a *ʔana ʔazazjri bsʕaħ ma-ruħt-f l-yarb*
 I Algerian but neg.went.1sm.neg the-west
 “I am an Algerian but I have never been to the West.”
- b *l-yarb ʔasʕlan manəʕrəff*
 The-west in fact neg know.1s.neg
 “In fact, I do not know anything about the West.”
- c **yaʕni**, *fʕadat w-taqalid mafi kifkif*
 DM, in-tradition.p and-costume.p neg same-same
 “I mean, in terms of habits and traditions it is not the same” (Bidaoui 2016a, 28).

The Algerian participants opted for *yaʕni* when speaking to non-Algerians as it is part of a shared linguistic repertoire among the three nationalities. That is, the choice of DMs correlates with type of interaction. Knowing that *yaʕni* is a shared DM among participants in the Arab world, the participant used it to project an identity which is wider than the Algerian and Maghrebi identity, the Arab identity.

In other contexts, *zəʕma* was used as an elaboration DM by the Moroccan and Algerian participants but not by the Egyptian participants. This suggests that this DM is typical to the Maghrebi dialects. Here is an example of *zəʕma* used by an Algerian participant in an interaction that includes Algerian and Moroccan participants:

2 Context: An Algerian participant is explaining a word in Algerian Arabic:

- a *ʔafnu ka-təʕni qarnit*
what present-mean octopus
“What does the word *qarnit* mean?”
- b *qarnit smart*
octopus smart
“Octopus means smart”
- c ***zəʕma***, *wahəd qafəz*
DM one smart
“I mean a smart person” (Bidaoui 2016a, 31).

I would like to note that though Moroccan Arabic and Algerian Arabic are mutually intelligible, each dialect may contain words that are used differently. In example (2), the word *qarnit* was not clear to the Moroccan participant who asked for elaboration in line a. Elaboration was provided in line b explaining that the word *qarnit* refers to someone who is smart. The DM *zəʕma* was used only among participants representing Maghrebi dialects. The Algerian participants used *zəʕma* as it is part of a shared linguistic code among Maghrebi participants. Le Page and Tabouret-Keller categorized the vernacular as “a positive force” that “may be used in direct conflict with the standardized norms, utilized as a symbol by participants to carry powerful social meanings so resistant to external pressures” (1985, 246). The elaboration DM, *zəʕma*, is used to “index locality” and serves as an “Act of Identity” to express belonging to the Algerian and Maghrebi community.

What characterizes the Algerian participants is their use of four exoglossic elaboration variants, *ça veut dire*, *c’est-à-dire*, and *je veux dire*. The use of an exoglossic DM serves the need to be identified with a certain group and project an “Act of Identity”, in this case the French heritage of the Algerian and Maghrebi community. Here is an example from structured interviews which includes an Algerian participant and the investigator:

3 Context: An Algerian participant is discussing the difference in access to knowledge between the US and Algeria:

- a *nas li rahum hna ils savent utiliser l’information*
people that see.them here they know.3p use.inf the information
“People who live here know how to use knowledge.”
- b ***Je veux dire***, *ils savent utiliser the means*
DM they know.3p use.inf the means
“I mean, they know how to use the means” (Bidaoui 2016a, 34).

The participant starts line a in example (3) with Algerian Arabic and then switches to French. In line b, the participant opts for the French DM, *Je veux dire*, followed by a sentence beginning in French and ending in English. The Algerian participant used an exoglossic variant which may serve to perform an “Act of Identity” on behalf of the participant (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985). In the context of (3), the participant used *je veux dire* to project his identity and at the same time to be identified with the investigator who is from a country known for its French heritage, Morocco.

The French elaboration DMs were used only by the Algerian participants in structured interviews and in same nationality interactions. None of the French DMs was used in mixed nationality interactions which include Egyptian participants. This is also explained by the fact that the exoglossic French elaborations DMs are not part of a shared code between the Algerian participants and Egyptian participants. According to Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, topic, audience, and setting are crucial to the shaping of an utterance. Depending on these factors, a participant may create “patterns of his linguistic behavior so as to resemble those of the groups with which from time to time he wishes to be identified or so as to be unlike those from whom he wishes to be distinguished” (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985, 181).

To provide depth to our understanding of the correlation between the linguistic behavior and identity construction we are going to look at the results of the causality study (Bidaoui 2016b). Along similar lines with the results of the elaboration study, the results of the causality study show the use of a variety of causality DMs and the projection of various “Acts of Identity”. The DMs used to express the meaning of causality are five endoglossic DMs, *li?anna*, *li?annu*, *hit*, *lahqaf*, and *ʕafan*, and two exoglossic DMs, *parce que* and *because*. All the participants from the three nationalities used the shared DM *li?anna*. In addition to the shared DM, the Egyptian participants used the dialectal DM *ʕafan*, the Moroccan participants used the dialectal DMs *hit* and *lahqaf*, and the Algerian participants used the dialectal DM *li?annu* and the French DM *parce que*. There was only one case of the use of *because* by an Egyptian participant. Overall, the results of the causality study reinforce what has been found in the elaboration study in terms of the correlation between the use of DMs and identity construction.

The causality study reinforces the claim made in this chapter that linguistic choices are not haphazard but indicate a desire to project an identity. The overuse of the exoglossic DM, *parce que* which outranked the other DMs, indicates that the Algerian participants have a strong desire to project an identity associated with their French heritage. Consider the following example which shows both the use of *parce que* and the use of French in Algerian Arabic:

4 Context: An Algerian participant explains how Algerians use French in their speech by telling a story about the difficulty a person from Saudi Arabia faced when he tried to understand a group of people speaking Algerian Arabic:

- a *Bdina nhadru* avec une rapidité terrible
Start.3mp talk.3mp with a speed terrible
“We started to talk with high speed.”
- b *Hadak Saʕudi qaʕd jfuf qalina: samhu li ?af mən luʕa katatkalmu?*
that Saudi stay look.1s told.us excuse me what from language talk.3mp
“That Saudi was looking and asked us: ‘Excuse me, what language were you talking?’”
- c **Parce que**, *hna luʕna taʕna* tellement était rapide
DM we language of.us very was fast
“Because, we were talking in a very fast way.”

- d Yqul wahed 40% kant Français
Say.3ms one 40% was French
“One can say 40% was in French.”
- e **Donc** huwa tbaħar
so he sailed
“So, he was lost” (Bidaoui 2016b, 602–603).

In example (4), it is not only the use of the DM *parce que* which shows that French is part of the Algerian identity but also language use in general. As we can see, French is used in many utterances in example (4). The fact that French is part of the Algerian identity is also clearly and explicitly stated by the participant who mentions in line d that 40% of their speech was in French. This means that the Algerian participant is aware of the fact that French signals the Algerian identity and he uses it as an “Act of Identity”. In addition to that, the content of example (4) also shows how the use of French distinguishes the Algerians from the Saudis. For the Algerian participant, the Saudi who was listening to the Algerians speaking was lost because of the use of French. In line with Bucholtz and Hall, the linguistic behavior may establish both “relations of similarity and difference . . . vis-à-vis some reference group or individual” (2004, 383). In the context of example (4), the use of French establishes similarity among the Algerians and difference from non-Algerians, in this case the Saudis.

The projection of an identity linked to the French heritage through the use of the causality DM is also clearly seen in example (5), which reveals how French is part and parcel of the Algerian identity. As we see in example (5), the whole conversation in structured interviews with the investigator was conducted in French:

5 Context: An Algerian participant is talking about the overuse of French in his speech:

- a *J' t'ai dit j'ai rêvé parce que il m'est arrivé un truc*
I you.aux said I.aux dreamed because it me.aux arrived a thing
“I told I had a dream because something happened to me.”
- b *J'étais dans un café avec des collègues on parlait en Français*
I was at a café shop with some colleagues we talked in French
“I was at a café shop with some colleagues and we were talking in French.”
- c **Parce que** on avait une éducation Française
DM we had an education French
“Because we were educated in French” (Bidaoui 2016b, 603).

The participant in example (5) shows that French is used to signal the participant’s desire to “behave according to the behavioral patterns of groups we [he] find [finds] it desirable to identify with” (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985, 182). The use of French in example (5) carries different social meanings; in addition to being a feature that characterizes Algerian Arabic and signals the Algerian identity it also projects the level of education of the speaker. The choice of French therefore also helps the participant to identify himself as someone who is educated and knowledgeable. The fact that linguistic choices vary from one interaction to another indicates that identity is a “relational and sociocultural phenomenon that emerges and circulates in local discourse contexts of interaction rather than as a stable structure located primarily in the individual psyche or in fixed social categories” (Bucholtz and Hall 2005, 585–586).

Contrary to the Algerian participants, the Egyptian participants favored the Standard endoglossic DM *li?anna* which outranked *ʕafan*. While *li?anna* serves to project an Arab identity,

Ṣafan serves to project a local identity, the Egyptian identity. Here is an example of *liʔanna* used by an Egyptian participant:

- 6 Context: An Egyptian participant is comparing the situation of Egypt before and after the Arab Spring.

- a *hadʕritak gibt lklam Sʕ -Sʕah*
 Sir.you brought.2ms the-speech the-right
 “Sir, now you are totally right.”
- b *liʔanna, law huwa bilmaqajis l-ʔiqtisʕadija, jbʔa kan Husni MubaraK ʔafidʕal*
 DM if he with-measure the-economic become was Husni Mubarak better
 “Because, if we are to talk in economic measures, then the period of Husni Mubarak was better” (Bidaoui 2016b, 599).

The participant used *liʔanna* to project an identity which is wider than the Egyptian identity. This point is worth considering for a moment; what might account for the preference of the Standard DM is its indexicality. As discussed in Johnstone, “some variants index supra-locality, and can be used in the accommodative speech. Other forms index locality, and can be used in discourse that shape people’s sense of place and the social identities with place” (2010, 399). The use of *liʔanna* is meant to “index supra-locality”; it serves the need to signal membership to the Arab world.

For the Moroccan participants, the dialectal DM *hit* outranked the Standard *liʔanna*. The Moroccan participants also used another dialectal DM *lahqaf*. Consider the use of *hit* in structured interviews:

- 7 Context: A Moroccan participant is talking about the challenges he faced after joining Parkland College.

- a *l-maatʕ lqit muʕkil mʕah bzaf*
 the-mathematics find.2s problem with.it a lot
 “I faced many problems with Mathematics.”
- b **hit** *l-muʕkil l-mustawa ʕali*
 DM the-problem the-level high
 “Because the problem lies in the high level (of the courses offered)” (Bidaoui 2016b, 601).

The dialectal DM, *hit*, was reserved for same nationality interactions among Moroccan participants and was used as an “Act of Identity” to express belonging to the Moroccan community. The dialectal DM *hit* serves the goal to “index locality” and is “used in discourse that shapes people’s sense of place and the social identities with place” (Johnstone 2010, 399). Interestingly, the desire to project a local identity, the Moroccan identity, outranked the desire to project a broad identity, the Arab identity. So far, I have discussed identity construction based on spontaneous data. The next subsection will bring light to identity construction based on data from a satellite Arab news channel.

3.2. Identity construction in light of data from Al Jazeera

While the two studies investigated how identity is constructed via multi-party conversations and structured interviews, this subsection will shed light on identity construction in light of data from *Al Jazeera*. This popular satellite Arab news channel targets audience from all the

Arabic-speaking countries. This explains why most of its programs are presented in Standard Arabic. *Al Jazeera* requires from its journalists to use Standard Arabic and it highly recommends staying away from the use of dialectal forms unless it is strongly needed. Data was taken from *Al Jazeera*'s program *Shahid Ħala Ħas'r* "A Witness of a Period in History". This data consists of three interviews with participants from Morocco, Algeria, and Egypt.

While the results of the two multi-party conversations and structured interviews show a variety of DMs to express causality and elaboration, the results of *Al Jazeera* show the use of a single DM for each meaning, *yaĦni* for elaboration and *liĦanna* for causality. Here is an example of the use of *yaĦni* by the Moroccan participant:

8 Context: The Moroccan participant describing the protests that resulted when Mohamed X, the previous king of Morocco, was exiled in 1953–1954:

- a *xarazna wa Ħtafalna bi-ruzuĦ l-malik*
Left.us and celebrated.us with-return the king
"We went out and asked for the return of the king."
- b *wa qat'aĦna l-Ħaslaak wa ĦaĦalna n-naar*
And cut.us the-wires and burnt-us the fire
"And we cut wires and burnt fire."
- c **yaĦni**, *qumnaa bimud'aĦaraat Ħaniifa*
DM tood.us with-protests violent
"I mean, we led violent protests" (Bidaoui 2017, 68).

In example (8), *yaĦni* and all the words in the example are in Standard Arabic. This may be an indication that the participant may be using *yaĦni* as an "Act of Identity" to display his familiarity with the formal context of *Al Jazeera* which is seen by viewers from all over the Arab world. In this case the Moroccan participant opted for Standard Arabic as a way of identifying with the audience. This finding may also suggest that though *yaĦni* may not be borrowed from Standard Arabic, it has gained some prestige and formality. I believe that the fact that *yaĦni* is shared among the dialects of Arabic, a feature that characterizes Standard Arabic, has led to its gaining the status of a formal expression in addition to its informal status.

Along similar lines with elaboration DMs, the use of causality DMs in *Al Jazeera* featured the use of the Standard variant *liĦanna* for the three participants representing the three nationalities. Consider the use of *liĦanna* by the Algerian participant:

- 9 Context: The Algerian participant explains why he intended to specialize in psychology
- a *kuntu Ħanwi Ħan Ħataxs'aĦ fi l-amraad' n-nafsija*
was.2s intend.1s specialize.1s in-disease the-psychological
"I was intending to specialize in psychological problems."
- b **liĦanna**, *fi l-Ħamraad' n-nafsija hunaaka jamĦ bajna l-Ħilm wa l-Ħadab*
DM in the diseases psychological there addition between science and the-literature
"Because, dealing with psychological problems involves knowledge about science and arts" (Bidaoui 2017, 69).

The consistency in the use of the Standard DMs in *Al Jazeera* data can be accounted for by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's (1985) theoretical framework in light of their two concepts: projection and focusing (1985, 181). The participants' linguistic behavior in the *Al Jazeera* data is an act of projection of their Arabic identity. The use of Standard DMs is meant to identify with

both the animator and the general audience. Due to the positive feedback they got from the animator and to the impression that they are understood by the audience which represents the whole Arab world, their linguistic behavior is reinforced which makes it more *focused* (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985). By *focused*, I mean that the same variants are used and maintained. The linguistic choice of Standard DMs became *focused* due to the “the motivation to join the groups” which is “sufficiently powerful” and is “reinforced . . . by feedback from the groups” (1985, 182).

The results of *Al Jazeera* show the projection of a single identity, the Arab identity, shown in the use of the shared Standard DM *liʔanna*. In other words, selecting Standard Arabic as a choice serves to identify with the Arabic-speaking people all over the Arab world and to project an Arab identity. According to Le Page and Tabouret-Keller,

the individual creates for himself the patterns of his linguistic behavior so as to resemble those of the groups with which from time to time he wishes to be identified or so as to be unlike those from whom he wishes to be distinguished.

(Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985, 181)

In the context of *Al Jazeera*, the linguistic behavior that should be used to resemble and identify with the audience is Standard Arabic. To sum up, one can say that the context of use, the motivation to join a given group, as well as the feedback participants receive are needed to account for the exclusive use of the Standard DMs in *Al Jazeera* data.

4. Discussion

The findings of the study of DMs discussed in this chapter clearly bring to light the correlation between the linguistic behavior and identity projection. An important factor shaping this correlation is the context of the linguistic behavior. While informal settings in the two studies (Bidaoui 2016a, 2016b) resulted in the projection of various identities and variation in the use of DMs, the results of *Al Jazeera* (Bidaoui 2017), which represents the formal setting, showed the projection of a single identity through the use of a single DM for each meaning, *yaʕni* for elaboration and *liʔanna* for causality. For the formal setting, the use of the shared DMs, *yaʕni* and *liʔanna*, reflects a desire to project an identity shared among the whole Arabic-speaking world, the Arab identity. As to the informal setting, it was characterized by variation in language use. This diversity in the linguistic behavior found in Bidaoui (2016a, 2016b) supports the claim that language use represents “Acts of Identity” that speakers perform (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985). The Algerian participants, for instance, projected various identities through the use of various DMs. While the foreign DM, *parce que*, reflects an identity associated with the French heritage, the dialectal DM reflects a local and Maghrebi identity, and the shared DM reflects the broad Arab identity. Thus, the linguistic behavior is seen as “Acts of Identity” which lie in the need to “behave according to the behavioral patterns of groups we find it desirable to identify with” (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985, 182). Unlike the Algerian participants who used exoglossic causality DMs excessively, the Moroccan participants used only endoglossic DMs. This finding supports Le Page and Tabouret-Keller claim about the four qualifications of “Acts of Identity”. In this context, even if the Moroccan participants have the ability to speak French they refrained from doing so due to the lack of the desire to project an identity associated with the French heritage.

It is important to note that the correlation between the linguistic behavior and identity construction may be impacted by factors other than identity projection. One of these factors is

what Matras (2010, 79) refers to as implicational hierarchies when it comes to the borrowing of foreign elements. Based on the results of a study conducted in 1998, Matras argued that coordinating conjunctions follow a hierarchy of borrowing wherein if a language borrowed *and* it should have already borrowed *or* and *but*, while a language may borrow *but* without borrowing *or* and *and*. This suggests that the process of borrowing involves stages wherein some types of expressions precede others. Focusing on the type of meaning expressed by a given expression, Matras posited that the pragmatic meaning of contrast is a driving factor for borrowing (2010, 80). This is accounted for by the fact that there is “a correlation between borrowability and the semantics of elements that convey relative vulnerability of the participant’s assertive authority” (2010, 81). Hence, Matras indicated that there is high likelihood of borrowing elements that are related to modality, obligation, condition, purpose, and causality (2010, 81). This suggests that the meaning of causality may be a driving force behind the excessive use of exoglossic causality DMs by the Algerian participants compared to their scarce use of the exoglossic elaboration DMs.

Contrary to the view that considers identity to be fixed, this chapter endorses the dynamic perspective of identity. The view that considers identity to be fixed was endorsed by linguists such as Turner (1999) who argues that identity reflects “social group membership with the associated value connotations and emotional significance” (1999, 8). In line with Bucholtz (1999), this chapter argues that identity is dynamic and is socially constructed as it results from social interaction. As discussed in this chapter, language choices are related to the way we project ourselves and establish social networks. Thus, identity projection may vary from one context to another depending on our desire to join a given group and also which social networks we are willing to establish. This means that the linguistic behavior should be seen as

a concept we form as individuals, and to the extent to which, and the manner in which, we project our concepts on to those around us and establish networks of shared suppositions determines the nature of the groups in our society and their mode of operation.

(Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985, 247)

Interestingly, the theoretical framework used in this chapter is similar to what Irvine and Gal (2000) refer to as “iconization” or “iconicity”. Irvine and Gal argued that “iconization”, a semiotic process used to examine the correlation between texts and “ideological representations”, shows the watertight relationship between a linguistic sign and the linguistic images that it represents. “Iconization” or “iconicity” refers to the fact that linguistic features are iconic representations of social activities. To understand this iconic relationship, one should have an idea about the historical and conventional forces that led to this iconicity. To illustrate how linguistic features can be explained through social, political, and conventional methods, Irvine and Gal discussed the motivation of language change in Southern Africa. Their study shows that a formalistic and internal study of the sound system of Nguni language cannot explain how clitics are used in this language. It is only through knowing the language ideology in the Nguni community that one gets an idea about clitics. Along similar lines, the choice of DMs in this chapter cannot be understood without looking at the correlation between the linguistic behavior and identity projection.

Finally, it is important to note that even if Le Page and Tabouret-Keller’s theoretical model shows some similarities with “Accommodation Theory”, these two models are different. While the latter focuses on interactive linguistic behavior and on accommodation taking place with the goal to converge or diverge with the interlocutors, the former is about “the way people

perceive of other groups, whether in intermediate contact or not and the way they clothe those perceptions with linguistic behavior” (1985, 2). The type of sociolinguistic account provided by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller provides the background for the understanding of the correlation between the linguistic behavior and identity projection in this chapter.

5. Conclusion

The goals of this chapter are twofold: the first goal is to show how the linguistic behavior contributes in constructing complex identities and the second goal is to bring light to the impact of the colonial past on the linguistic production of identity. These goals have been achieved in light of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller’s theoretical framework, which seems to work well for understanding identity construction in the Arab world. This model foregrounds the need to study language in the light of the correlation of the linguistic behavior with broad social categories such as nationality and also in light of psychological choices made by either the individual or the group. Le Page and Tabouret-Keller’s (1985) theoretical model predicts that if linguistic items are selected by an individual it is “because they are felt to have social as well as semantic meaning in terms of the way in which each individual wishes to project his/her own universe and to invite others to share it”. Furthermore, this model captures how psychological factors should be included in the study of the linguistic behavior. Thus, the linguistic behavior is seen as “Acts of Identity”, which lie in the need to “behave according to the behavioral patterns of groups we find it desirable to identify with” (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985, 182). Additionally, this model has helped us understand how the colonial past can shape language use. As explained by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985, 5), the colonial past is always a driving force leading to linguistic heterogeneous situations. The authors have also indicated that the long period of colonial history gave rise to the need to create “new identity with new social patterns and structures”. It is true that the model was developed in (1985) as a complete model; however, it still does a good job in helping us understand the correlation between the linguistic behavior and identity projection. Though the model focused on data from the Caribbean, it was meant for any language situation as it was supposed to be universal. Finally and as a suggestion for future studies, this chapter has looked at the correlation between the linguistic behavior and identity construction in spoken Arabic from a production perspective, it would be interesting if this correlation can be studied from a perception perspective. The perception perspective will test listeners’ perception of the correlation between the linguistic behavior and identity construction. In other words, the perception study would tap into language attitudes towards this correlation.

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