

**Multilingualism and occluded diversities within the superdiverse conditions of the  
United Arab Emirates:  
A study of the multiple language  
resources, practices and ideologies of young Emirati women.**

Gary Thomas O'Neill

BSc (Hons), University of Bradford, UK, 1981

M.App. Ling., Macquarie University, Sydney Australia 1998

This thesis is presented for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

2017

Department of Linguistics

Macquarie University



# Table of Contents

---

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>  | <b>III</b>  |
| <b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>  | <b>VI</b>   |
| <b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....</b>   | <b>VIII</b> |
| <b>ABSTRACT.....</b>   | <b>IX</b>   |
| <b>DECLARATION.....</b>  | <b>XI</b>   |
| <b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>  | <b>XII</b>  |
| <b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>   | <b>13</b>   |
| 1.1 RESEARCH CONTEXT .....   | 13          |
| 1.2 RESEARCH TRAJECTORY .....  | 16          |
| 1.2.1 <i>Literacy</i> .....  | 17          |
| 1.2.2 <i>Language in Daily Speech</i> .....  | 19          |
| 1.2.3 <i>Bourdieu’s Theory of Practice</i> .....   | 20          |
| 1.2.4 <i>Language Ideology and Indexicality</i> .....  | 21          |
| 1.2.5 <i>Latour’s Actor-Network Theory</i> .....   | 23          |
| 1.2.6 <i>Linguistic Ethnography</i> .....  | 24          |
| 1.2.7 <i>Superdiversity</i> .....  | 26          |
| 1.2.8 <i>Research Lacuna</i> .....   | 27          |
| 1.3 RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY.....  | 28          |
| 1.4 THESIS BY PUBLICATION .....  | 37          |
| 1.5 OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS.....  | 39          |
| <b>PREAMBLE TO CHAPTER 2 .....</b>   | <b>43</b>   |
| <b>CHAPTER 2 ‘JUST A NATURAL MOVE TOWARDS ENGLISH’ – GULF YOUTH ATTITUDES TOWARDS ARABIC AND ENGLISH LITERACY (O’NEILL, 2014A) .....</b> | <b>46</b>   |
| 2.1 INTRODUCTION.....  | 46          |
| 2.2 NEW LITERACY STUDIES .....   | 48          |

|   |   |            |
|---|---|------------|
| 2.3   | METHOD .....  | 51         |
| 2.4   | RESULTS.....  | 55         |
| 2.4.1   | <i>Attitudes to Free time Literacy</i> .....  | 55         |
| 2.4.2   | <i>Preferred Language of Undergraduate Study</i> .....  | 62         |
| 2.5   | TWO CASE STUDIES.....   | 66         |
| 2.5.1   | <i>Afra (EMPrS Background)</i> .....  | 66         |
| 2.5.2   | <i>Amna (AMPuS Background)</i> .....  | 69         |
| 2.6   | DISCUSSION .....  | 72         |
| 2.7   | CONCLUSION .....  | 75         |
| <b>PREAMBLE TO CHAPTER 3 .....</b>  |   | <b>77</b>  |
| <b>CHAPTER 3 HERITAGE, HETEROGLOSSIA &amp; HOME – MULTILINGUALISM IN EMIRATI FAMILIES</b> |   |            |
| <b>(O’NEILL, 2016).....</b>   |   | <b>80</b>  |
| 3.1   | INTRODUCTION.....   | 80         |
| 3.2   | THEORY OF PRACTICE, INDEXICALITY, LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY AND HETEROGLOSSIA.....                                | 82         |
| 3.3   | METHOD .....  | 84         |
| 3.4   | LINGUISTIC CHANGE ACROSS THREE GENERATIONS.....   | 86         |
| 3.5   | LANGUAGES IN CONTEMPORARY EMIRATI HOMES .....   | 91         |
| 3.6   | CONCLUSION .....  | 106        |
| <b>PREAMBLE TO CHAPTER 4 .....</b>  |   | <b>108</b> |
| <b>CHAPTER 4 ‘IT’S NOT COMFORTABLE BEING WHO I AM’ : MULTILINGUAL IDENTITY IN</b>         |   |            |
| <b>SUPERDIVERSE DUBAI (O’NEILL, 2017) .....</b>   |   | <b>110</b> |
| 4.1   | INTRODUCTION.....   | 110        |
| 4.2   | THEORY OF PRACTICE, LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY AND THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION AND MANAGEMENT OF<br>IDENTITY ..... | 111        |
| 4.3   | METHOD .....  | 114        |
| 4.4   | BIRTH FAMILY IN CHILDHOOD .....   | 115        |
| 4.5   | PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.....  | 119        |

|      |   |            |
|------|---|------------|
| 4.6  | WORKPLACE.....  | 120        |
| 4.7  | BIRTH FAMILY IN ADULTHOOD.....  | 123        |
| 4.8  | MARRIED FAMILY .....  | 129        |
| 4.9  | HIGHER EDUCATION.....   | 133        |
| 4.10 | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.....  | 138        |
|      | ADDENDUM - RELIGIOUS PRACTICE.....                                      | 143        |
|      | <b>CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION.....</b>  | <b>145</b> |
| 5.1  | SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS .....                                | 145        |
| 5.2  | LANGUAGE POLICY.....  | 155        |
| 5.3  | LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH.....                                    | 161        |
| 5.4  | APPLICATIONS .....  | 163        |
|      | <b>REFERENCES .....</b>   | <b>171</b> |
|      | <b>APPENDIX A – LITERACY SURVEY (TRANSCRIPT OF ONLINE SURVEY) .....</b> | <b>187</b> |
|      | <b>APPENDIX B – NVIVO NODES .....</b>                                   | <b>213</b> |
|      | <b>APPENDIX C – ERP EVALUATION.....</b>                                 | <b>215</b> |
|      | <b>APPENDIX D – ETHICS CLEARANCE .....</b>                              | <b>218</b> |

## List of Tables

---

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Table 1 First Languages of Emirati Nationals .....  | 87  |
| Table 2 Second Languages of Emirati Nationals .....   | 89  |
| Table 3 Emirati Nationals' Languages of Literacy .....  | 91  |
| Table 4 Shaikha's family tree with ages (at time of second interview), nationalities, marital statuses and<br>language repertoires..... | 124 |
| Table 5 Shaikha's friendship network .....  | 138 |

## List of Figures

---

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Figure 1 Percentage of respondents who report free time enjoyment of reading and writing in English and Arabic at each stage of their lives ..... | 56 |
| Figure 2 Percentage of respondents reporting enjoyment of free time reading in English at each stage of their lives (by school background).....   | 58 |
| Figure 3 Percentage of respondents reporting enjoyment of free time writing in English at each stage of their lives (by school background).....   | 59 |
| Figure 4 Percentage of respondents reporting enjoyment of free time reading in Arabic at each stage of their lives (by school background).....    | 59 |
| Figure 5 Percentage of respondents reporting enjoyment of free time writing in Arabic at each stage of their lives (by school background).....    | 60 |
| Figure 6 Study Language Preferences (All Respondents) .....   | 63 |
| Figure 7 Study Language Preferences (by School Background) .....  | 64 |

## List of Abbreviations

---

This list excludes abbreviations in common usage, such as TV, UAE, UK, US.

ALC - Arabic Language Charter

AMPrS - Arabic-Medium Private School

AMPuS - Arabic-Medium Public School

CA - Classical Arabic

CGPA - Cumulative Grade Point Average

DB - Discussion Board

EA - Emirati Arabic

ELF – English as a Lingua Franca

EgA - Egyptian Arabic

EMPrS - English-Medium Private School

ERP - Extensive Reading Project

GA - Gulf Arabic

JA - Jordanian Arabic

KHDA - Knowledge & Human Development Authority

LA - Lebanese Arabic

LE - Linguistic Ethnography

LFE – Lingua Franca English

MA - Moroccan Arabic

MSA - Modern Standard Arabic

NLS - New Literacy Studies

NSM - New School Model

PA - Palestinian Arabic

SA - Saudi Arabic

SyA - Syrian Arabic

WA - White Arabic

YA - Yemeni Arabic

ZULO - Zayed University Learning Outcomes

## Abstract

---

This thesis by publication explores multilingual language choices in oracy and literacy in a superdiverse context, the Emirate of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Much of the literature to date on multilingualism in superdiverse societies has been based on research conducted in contexts in which migration has risen rapidly in the last twenty years (e.g. London, UK or Antwerp, Belgium), bringing the opportunities and perceived threats of languages and cultures in contact, even though the traditional inhabitants of these countries represent the majority of the population, and their languages continue to be used and valorized. There is relatively little literature focusing on contexts in which recent accelerated migration has led to the minoritization of the resident dominant population and the marginalization of its language or dialect. One such context is the UAE, which is a quintessential superdiverse society in that the traditional inhabitants of the region are now a minority in their own country, albeit a powerful minority, and their variety of Arabic, Emirati Arabic, has become just one of many languages and dialects that are in daily use in its cities, including Dubai.

The study examines how this superdiversity manifests itself in the language choices of young Emirati women. It employs an ethnographically-inspired methodology, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods, in order to describe the choices made by female Emirati undergraduates and graduates of a national university, in (varieties of) Arabic, English and other languages, and the reasons for these choices. It also explores the opportunities and tensions inherent in these language choices in an increasingly superdiverse context.

The thesis consists of three main parts. Firstly, there is an analysis of Emirati women's reported preferences with regard to reading and writing for pleasure in Arabic and English, along with their preferences regarding languages of university study. The study finds that predispositions developed in the home and at school significantly influence these women's orientations towards Arabic or English, but also that leisure time interests developed through either language can influence their preferences. The second part of the thesis

examines changes in language and literacy across three generations and then goes on to examine language choices in Emirati homes. It finds that there have been significant changes in terms of first and second languages used by Emiratis, along with a major change in literacy levels. With regard to languages of the home, the study finds that a variety of language ideologies affect home language policy. For some families, Emirati Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic index their identities as Arabs, Muslims and Emiratis, while English may be seen as an invasive force, necessary for economic development and personal success, but appropriate only outside the home. In contrast, other families adopt a language ideology, and home language policy, that sanction drawing on wider language repertoires while still identifying as Arab, Muslim and Emirati. The third part of the thesis is a case study of the language choices of one Emirati woman in her early thirties. The study finds that factors influencing language choice are complex and individual, and that while superdiversity may present many opportunities for Emirati citizens, there are also tensions, particularly for those Emiratis with links to other communities. Such Emiratis must constantly negotiate their identities using the linguistic choices at their disposal, either by aligning with the key indexicalities and 'performing' their Emirati identity, or by deliberately constructing other identities.

## Declaration

---

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work, which has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution. Ethics approval has been obtained both from Zayed University, Dubai, United Arab Emirates and from Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia (Ref: 5201100607 – Appendix D).

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "G. T. O'Neill.", is shown on a light gray background.

---

Gary T O'Neill

## Acknowledgements

---

I would like to sincerely thank the research project participants who gave their time and thoughts very generously. In particular, I would like to thank Afra, Amna, Mona, Shaikha and AlShaima for their very insightful comments, and Professor Ingrid Piller, Dr David Palfreyman and Dr Amir Kaviani for their invaluable help, advice and support.

I would also like to give special mention to my beloved parents, Tom and Eunice, for their belief in the power of education, and for their belief in me, and my precious wife Brenda, for her wisdom and love.

I dedicate this work to my Mum, Dad, Brenda and our wonderful children, Thomas Edwin and Saskia Eloise.

## Chapter 1 Introduction

---

### 1.1 Research Context

It is the first day of Fall semester 2010. I walk into the classroom for my first session with a new cohort of students. Twenty young women, aged from 17 to early twenties sit in front of me. They are all dressed in a similar manner, each wearing a black abaya and black headscarf, or shaila. On most desks, there is a smart phone and a designer handbag, from Gucci, or Prada perhaps; some also have laptops. Despite the fact that Dubai is a very diverse city, the initial impression here is one of homogeneity, uniformity. Almost all of the students are Emirati nationals, except for one student with an 'M' in her student ID number, which could mean that she is an international student (probably from another Arab country), or that she is the daughter of an Emirati mother and non-Emirati father.

The first lesson is an orientation to the course – letting students know the course requirements, getting to know them, helping them become comfortable with me and each other. As the lesson progresses, some students are more vocal than others. Their English is fluent; some have American accents. They are confident, keeping eye contact with me, giving their opinions and asking questions in a relaxed way. Others sit silently, looking down, sometimes speaking Arabic to each other, reluctant to ask questions. When asked a question directly, they may respond in Arabic, or in a less fluent English with a strong Arabic English accent, marked by non-standard grammar use. Others may share their level of English but be more confident to speak out. The 'getting to know you' questions cover a range of areas. When asked about reading for pleasure, approximately half put up their hands to signal that they are 'readers'. Among the more vocal group, there is a higher proportion of raised hands and these students comment that they love reading, but only or mostly in English, rarely or never in Arabic. A few others mention reading in Arabic. A small number say they 'hate reading' and that they have never read a book, either in English or in Arabic (apart from their holy book, the Qur'an). Another question relates to leisure time interests – films and music. One or two students state that they never watch films. The majority enjoy both, but there are big differences. Some visit the cinema regularly with

friends and family, others with family only, and others are not allowed to go to the cinema at all, or only with a family member, preferably a male. Many watch films at home but there are a number of different tendencies. Some will only watch American films and would never dream of watching an Arabic language film; others enjoy Arabic films such as comedies from Egypt; others state a preference for Bollywood films and others Turkish films. Some also mention Korean and Japanese anime and TV drama series. With regard to music, tastes differ. Members of the vocal 'American' group loudly proclaim their love for English-language pop, indie, rap or RnB, while others say they only listen to Arabic music. One or two may state their preference for 'nasheed' ('a capella' or accompanied chants on Islamic themes), and others might express the view that music is regarded as 'haram' (forbidden) and so they do not listen to it, or 'try not to'.

I then give the students the opportunity to ask me questions about myself. Some students readily ask questions; others are reluctant or unable to do so. In response to their first question, I ask them to guess from my accent where I come from. Some guess 'Canada', others 'Australia'. One woman in the more vocal group ventures 'the north of England', which is correct. I enquire as to how she had known that and she replies that I sound like her A Level English teacher in high school, who came from Liverpool. I go on to tell them that I am married with two children, that I am aged 49, that I have lived in the UAE for eight years, and that I have been teaching English for 27 years. They ask me what languages I speak apart from English, and I tell them that I speak a little of several languages, having lived in several countries, but that I am most comfortable in Indonesian, and I am trying hard to learn Emirati Arabic (EA), which they are pleased to hear.

The rest of the lesson is devoted to a 'diagnostic' writing test, a short essay on whether it is preferable to undertake undergraduate studies in English or in their native language. As they set about the task, it is clear that there are differences among the students in terms of written fluency in English. Several of the more vocal students appear to write quickly and relatively effortlessly, while some of the others labour over each word, erasing and rewriting frequently. Consequently, some students finish well ahead of the others, hand in their papers, and ask to leave. By the end of the lesson, a few students are still writing and have to hand in their work incomplete.

After the lesson, I walk along one of the seven wings that fan out from the University's central atrium. As I walk, I overhear groups of students standing talking, or sitting on the floor in groups, simultaneously talking and checking mobile phones. One group chat loudly in a form of English that would not be out of place on an American high school or college campus. Another group converse in Emirati Arabic (EA). Another group mix the two languages. These observations are continued as I walk across the atrium, which resembles a shopping mall or airport concourse, and across to the cafeteria. The room is full of young women, mostly dressed in traditional black. As this is a segregated university, there are few men to be seen, save for cafeteria staff, cleaners, administrative staff and academic faculty. Male students are accommodated in a separate part of the university behind doors gate-kept by African, Egyptian and Philippines security guards.

After lunch with colleagues, an international group comprising men and women from the USA, the UK, Lebanon, Turkey and Iran, I wander back to my office and begin looking at the writing that the students have submitted for their diagnostic. The diversity that was apparent in class is evident, too, in the writing samples. A few clearly write with ease and with a high degree of accuracy, though there is non-standard usage here and there, particularly in terms of collocation (largely prepositional) and mechanics (e.g. run-on sentences, fragments and so on). For others, the task has clearly been more of a challenge. There is considerable non-standard usage in terms of tense, subject-verb agreement, spelling and so on. On looking at the student identity numbers, I notice that the students vary in age, from 17 to 20, and it appears that the most successful essays are those from the younger students, the 'direct entry' students who, having attained an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 5.0 or above (and in some cases 6 or above), have not been required to go through the one to four semester foundation program. The older students will have done up to two years in this program, acquiring key skills in English for Academic Purposes and preparing for IELTS exams. Though these students have come a long way, they will clearly need continued language support. The content of the students' responses varies also. Some students state that they wish that all of their university studies were conducted in English as they are 'weak in Arabic' (by which they mean Modern Standard Arabic - MSA), while others say that English is very important but they would like to do some Arabic-medium

courses too. Broadly, the former set of responses tends to come from the younger students, who are more proficient in English writing, while the latter set tends to be from the students who are less fluent and accurate in their English writing.

After reading through the essays, I walk across the atrium, across the inner quadrangle and out to the faculty car park. The campus is green and pleasant, for the most part, set within its own walled grounds, with great scope for future expansion. When first built, it was one of the few buildings in the area, surrounded by desert scrub, but now there are several residential estates and other new, mostly private, universities close by. I drive along a six-lane highway back towards Dubai. The University is situated twenty minutes from the central business district of Dubai, with its multistory skyscrapers, including the tallest of them all, Burj Khalifa. The city is home to over 2,000,000 people (Dubai Statistics Center, 2016b). Though somewhat difficult to discern upon superficial acquaintance, a walk through any of Dubai's shopping malls quickly illustrates the true meaning of the term 'superdiversity' (defined in 1.2.7 below) as people of over 180 different nationalities (KHDA, 2016b), speaking many more different languages and dialects, go about their business. This is the context in which young Emiratis are growing up, in a society markedly different from that of their parents and worlds away from that in which their grandparents lived their early lives.

## **1.2 Research Trajectory**

As a university teacher developing the English language and literacy of young female Emiratis, for the most part, I wanted to understand both the apparent homogeneity and the diversity that I encounter on campus every day. What accounts for the differences in the students' language proficiency, literacy, interests and inclinations, and opinions, but also the similarities, for example in terms of dress, body language and so on? How do these traditionally-dressed young women interact with the diversity of the city in which they live?

### *1.2.1 Literacy*

In order to begin answering these questions, in Fall semester 2010, I decided that I would undertake my own research. My initial interest and focus was on the students' literacy and I began reading work by the key writers in the cross-disciplinary field of literacy studies. Anthropologists such as Goody (1975, 1977, 1986) write of the transformative power of literacy on societies – how the spread of reading and writing has the power to bring about cognitive changes, new ways of interacting with time and space. For example, with reference to Ancient Greece, Goody and Watt (1963) argue that the invention of a phonetically-based reading and writing system allowed it to become a literate society from the seventh century BCE onwards, a society in which the evolving written records allowed historical enquiry to become possible, which in turn enabled skepticism to develop with regard to received wisdom. This skepticism led to a search for new ideas and new ways to test those ideas, which led to the development of an intellectual tradition based on logic in Ionia in the sixth century BCE. Goody and Watt argue that this transformation would not have been possible without the invention of literacy:

The kinds of analysis involved in the syllogism, and in the other forms of logical procedure, are clearly dependent upon writing, indeed upon a form of writing sufficiently simple and cursive to make possible widespread and habitual recourse both to the recording of verbal statements and then to the dissecting of them. It is probable that it is only the analytic process that writing itself entails, the written formalization of sounds and syntax, which make possible the habitual separating out into formally distinct units of the various cultural elements whose indivisible wholeness is the essential basis of the ‘mystical participation’ which LevyBruhl regards as characteristic of the thinking of non-literate peoples. (Goody & Watt, 1963, pp. 344-345)

Thus, for literacy researchers such as Goody, literacy has a power that directly influences the development of human cognition. Applying this to Emirati society, although literacy is not exactly a new phenomenon, the current generation of young adults is probably the first in which literacy is almost universal. Some of the

parents of these young people, and their mothers in particular, are unable to read and write in Arabic or Roman script, and a significant proportion of their grandparents cannot read and write in any language, while some may have learned to read the Qur'an by rote memorization but are unable to read other texts. Yet Emirati society is to this day often referred to by some of my colleagues as an 'oral culture', in that the strongly preferred channels of communications are speaking and listening. I have certainly noticed that the majority of students prefer oral instructions for classroom tasks, and will often ask their teacher or, more likely, their peers, how to complete a task rather than engage with written instructions. The cognitive transformations that Goody writes about may be the result of a long-term process, but they are contingent on a willingness to engage with literacy, and such an engagement appears to be strongly influenced by the social context into which literacy is introduced.

The importance of social aspects of literacy has been highlighted in recent years. Gee (2000) refers to a 'social turn' apparent in a number of fields, including the field in which he has contributed, New Literacy Studies (NLS). NLS researchers (e.g. Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanic, 1999; Heath, 1983; Street, 1984) have emphasized that literacy practices are socially-situated, not decontextualized and autonomous, and best understood through ethnographic research. Street argued for a view of literacy that takes into account issues of power and ideology in societies. For him, literacy does not work autonomously, as they believe Goody's work suggests, to bring about changes in society; the effect literacy has depends on the interaction of a range of socio-economic and cultural factors. My reading of NLS researchers led me to see the importance of understanding literacy in the context of my students' lives as young people growing up in a society that has changed markedly in the last three generations – changed not only in terms of education and literacy, but economically, materially, environmentally and so on. Inspired by NLS research, I decided to adopt an ethnographically-inspired methodological framework, with the intention of drawing data from participant observation in a range of formal and informal campus and online contexts. In the ethnographic spirit of being very open to the findings that the data would reveal, I set out, in late 2010, with the very general question: how do female Emirati undergraduates interact with literacy?

In addition to field notes, which I began writing then and continued into 2015, I devised and administered, in 2011-13, an extensive online questionnaire, which asked participants questions about literacy and language in their families, their academic literacy and their non-academic literacy (details are provided in the methods sections for Publication One in Chapter Two and Publication Two in Chapter Three below, and in Appendix A). Thus, although my overall framework was ethnographically-inspired, I have adopted a 'mixed-methods' approach (Dörnyei, 2007) to some extent. This is particularly evident in Chapters Two and Three, where I present some quantitative analysis, including inferential statistics, before turning to more typically ethnographic qualitative findings. In Publication Three (Chapter Four), however, the data is entirely qualitative. My first experience of published research was as part of a team investigating affective factors and English language attainment among Emirati High School students (Midraj, Midraj, O'Neill, & Sellami, 2006). This project mainly used quantitative methods and analysis and employed a statistician to assist with the inferential analysis. The 'ethnographic turn' in my research interests came about largely as a result of my NLS readings. However, having had some experience with quantitative research, I was keen to use quantitative methods to capture a 'snapshot' of language and literacy in the University, before drilling down to the qualitative detail by means of ethnography.

From the 700+ respondents who filled out the survey and opted to supply their contact details, 30 students were selected for in-depth semi-structured interviews. These interviews were based on the questions in the survey, but participants were encouraged to go beyond the questions to describe their literacy practices in greater detail and mention anything that they considered to be important or interesting.

### *1.2.2 Language in Daily Speech*

As the field notes grew and I began interviewing, transcribing and coding, I realized that much of the emerging data related both to literacy and to language in daily speech. Participants had much to say about their language choices, not only in literacy but also in their daily lives at home, at university and in their leisure time online and out about in the UAE. They were often very engaged talking about the place of English

and Arabic, and other languages, in their lives, and often puzzled or intrigued by their own language choices in various contexts. For example, some mentioned that they often engage in what they call ‘Arabizi’ (Cruickshank, 2012) – a mix of English and EA, but stressed that they would only ever do this with friends, siblings, or other younger members of their families, such as their female cousins or aunts of a similar age. Others underlined their antipathy towards Arabizi and made it clear that although English was vital to them, they felt a strong need to protect their mother tongue and speak only Arabic in certain contexts, particularly at home. Yet others emphasized the fact that Arabic, in its local colloquial form, EA, or its standard form, MSA, had little relevance in their lives and English was almost their native tongue and the only language in which they tended to read and write.

On the basis of these kinds of observations, I decided that it would be fruitful to expand the scope of my research to cover both literacy and language in daily speech, but to make my research question more specific, as follows: *What are the factors that lead to language choices in literacy and daily speech among young Emirati graduates and undergraduates?* My decision to include graduates was motivated by my interest in exploring language choices in work contexts beyond university, in addition to those in academic, family and leisure contexts.

### *1.2.3 Bourdieu’s Theory of Practice*

My reading in the NLS clarified the situated social and ideological nature of literacy practices. I was nevertheless interested to note the criticisms of the NLS approach, both from within and without the NLS group. Brandt and Clinton’s (2002) and Luke’s (2004) criticism that NLS gives insufficient regard to the interplay of local and global forces that bear upon literacy were of particular interest since the observations I was beginning to make about the ways in which participants engage with literacy suggested that literacy practices were in a state of flux in the UAE, influenced both by local historical factors and by globalizing forces that were transforming the lives of the local inhabitants. Consequently, I began to look for additional theoretical tools that would enable me to link observations at both levels. Through NLS researchers such as

Grenfell (2012) and Pahl (2008), I began to see the possibility of incorporating the work of Bourdieu into my research. Bourdieu's theory of practice (Bourdieu, 1977a) is of particular value since it can be applied to all social practices, including literacy as NLS researchers would view it, and it has the additional advantage of including a cognitive element, which is not emphasized in NLS (Hardy, 2013). In his theory, an individual's historically and environmentally conditioned psychological and physical dispositions ('habitus'), along with their socially-recognized skills and abilities ('capital') operate within specific 'fields' or contexts (e.g. education, the home, Dubai), according to the 'doxa', or the taken-for-granted commonly-held beliefs or rules of the field. To apply this to my research context, the literacy practices of an Emirati woman in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century can be analyzed in terms of her 'hexis' (embodied dispositions) and attitudes towards reading and writing in the languages that she is exposed to (e.g. MSA and English), and her skills in reading and writing in these languages in the context of home, education and work in a rapidly-changing globalized and superdiverse society in which traditional commonly-held beliefs and practices may be in flux. For my purposes, Bourdieu's theory is not only useful in analyzing literacy practices at local and global, and social and psychological levels, but it is also of value in investigating other practices, including language practices in daily speech. Language practices such as the use of English between Emiratis in chatrooms or face to face, for example, can be investigated to discern what might predispose young people to use their second language (L2) rather than their first language (L1), what the value is of this form of capital in UAE society, or among young people, the nature of the backdrop against which these practices are set, and the global forces that shape them.

#### *1.2.4 Language Ideology and Indexicality*

Another term that is useful in investigating language and literacy practices, which also fits well with NLS's ideological view of literacy, and Bourdieu's 'doxa' (Zizek, 1994), is that of 'language ideology' (as Bourdieu's interview with Terry Eagleton, reproduced by Zizek, reveals, Bourdieu tended to be wary of the term 'ideology', preferring the term 'doxa'). The term 'language ideology' has a complex history (Woolard &

Schieffelin, 1994), but it has been succinctly defined by Piller as ‘beliefs about language, the ideas we hold about what good language is and “what the right thing to do” linguistically is’ (Piller, 2011, p. 158).

For Bourdieu, human experiences occur in a ‘doxic environment’ (Stevens, 1998), where our unconscious taken for granted beliefs about the world we live in operate. How we see the world is arbitrary, yet it feels natural – we ‘misrecognize’ it as the natural order. Hence, when we enter a novel socio-cultural context, our doxa may produce in us the sense that something is unnatural or ‘out of kilter’. Our individual habitus, our dispositions to think, feel and behave in certain ways, as ‘structured structures’ (Bourdieu, 1977a) are formed by our life experiences, our group habitus (e.g. the dispositions of our social class) and doxa, among other things. However, habitus is also ‘a structuring structure’ so our dispositions can lead us to new attitudes and practices, new ways of thinking and being, new doxa.

In this thesis, ‘language ideology’ refers to unconscious beliefs about language (in the sense of doxa), but also to conscious beliefs and opinions about language. Viewing individuals’ language and literacy practices and/or their reports of these practices, through a language ideology lens, gives the researcher insight into the sociocultural significance of these practices. This is particularly true when practices are analyzed from the point of view of both language ideology and the allied concept, indexicality (Silverstein, 1976, 1998, 2003), which relates to beliefs that specific language practices typify or ‘point to’ facts about aspects of social life.

One insight of analysis of this kind that is of relevance to this study, for example, is that individuals may subscribe to language ideologies that treat languages as discrete bounded entities, even though, as Piller (2016, p. 11) points out, ‘in real life and everyday usage, languages are not usually as neatly compartmentalized as our usage of language names suggests’. Nevertheless, this perception of a boundary may have social significance in that linguistic behavior ‘on either side’ of this perceived boundary may be seen to index different social facts.

To take another example, applying this lens to my own life, as a child I was taught not to pronounce the word ‘water’ with a central glottal stop as my mother regarded this local dialectal pronunciation as being ‘common’ - indexical of membership of a lower socio-economic group (lower working class v upper working class). I see

this as being both a consciously-held belief (she was able to articulate the indexicality – why she felt such language was socially inappropriate), but also an embodied disposition. She would wince when she heard the word pronounced this way, particularly in our family, and would have been deeply uncomfortable pronouncing the word in this way herself, except in ludic or socialization contexts (she would sometimes exaggerate the pronunciation in order to invoke its ‘inappropriateness’). I see this disposition as being structured by her experiences growing up in Leeds in the 1940s and 1950s, where distinctions such as the pronunciation or choice of certain words, or the degree of shine on a front door step, could index nuances in working class social standing and respectability. This socialization clearly worked in me because to this day, I have generally pronounced this word as she taught me to. However, the ‘dual indexicality’ (Kulick & Schieffelin, 2005) of this example of language socialization led me, as a teenager, to pronounce the word in the ‘proscribed’ way with friends and associates at school (though not with teachers). In my current positionality as a linguist and university language teacher, I have a very different view of language than the one I grew up with. My dispositions, and my doxic environment, have changed somewhat, along with my conscious opinions and beliefs about language. I tend to celebrate and valorize differences in accent and aim to take a less prescriptive view, but I am aware that this, too, is a language ideology, and I am sure that my dispositions are structured by countless ideologies, old and new, of which I am unaware.

Language choices in the Emirati community are explored from the point of view of language ideology and indexicality in Chapters Three and Four of this thesis.

### *1.2.5 Latour’s Actor-Network Theory*

Another criticism of the NLS approach raised by Brandt and Clinton (2002) was that the approach paid insufficient attention to the ability of literacy to ‘act’ in specific contexts. They drew on the work of Latour (e.g. 1996) to advocate an alternative approach, in which the NLS focus on literacy as a concept that is given meaning by people in local contexts is supplemented by the concept that ‘objects’ and technologies such as literacy are ‘actants’ in themselves, and that local literacies are never entirely local, in that they bear traces of

distant or global events, decisions and practices. Indeed, they argue that literacy ‘can function to delocalize or even disrupt local life’ (Brandt & Clinton, 2002, p. 338). This idea is particularly noticeable with regard to digital literacies, which have become a major part of Emiratis’ lives in the last 15 years or so. I incorporated Latour’s ideas in one publication (O’Neill, 2014b), which is not included in this thesis as it is not directly related to my central enquiry here but focuses on the affordances and constraints of tablet technology in the classroom. Although I did not cite Latour in the three publications included here, the process of reviewing the three works and writing this introduction have reminded me of the value in Latour’s approach and I will return to it in Chapter Five (Conclusion).

### *1.2.6 Linguistic Ethnography*

My growing interest in language choices in literacy and daily speech brought me into contact with writings in the areas of Linguistic Ethnography (LE). According to Rampton et al. (2004, p. 2) ‘linguistic ethnography generally holds that to a considerable degree, language and the social world are mutually shaping, and that close analysis of situated language use can provide both fundamental and distinctive insights into the mechanisms and dynamics of social and cultural production in everyday activity’. Rampton (2007) describes LE as an inter-disciplinary ‘discursive space’ bringing together researchers in Interactional Sociolinguistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, NLS (2007, p. 587), ‘Neo-Vygotskian research on language and cognition’ (2007, p. 588) and ‘interpretive applied linguistics for language teaching’ (2007, p. 589). An important influence on LE was Hymes’ work, particularly his ‘ethnography of communication’ and his assertion of the importance of the study of Saussure’s ‘parole’ over ‘langue’ (Hymes, 1974), which in turn was influenced, in particular, by the work of Edward Sapir, who argued for the inseparability of language and culture: ‘language does not exist apart from culture, that is, from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the textures of our lives’ (Sapir, 1921, p. 207).

Culture is typically viewed by LE ethnographers as a dynamic phenomenon. Street (1993) goes as far as to say that 'culture' is a verb. The notion that both language and culture are not static, monolithic, reified phenomena, but dynamic, inter-related and ever-changing processes is an important one in LE:

Language is not an unchanging social structure unresponsive to the communicative needs of people. Rather, languages and cultures are practices and processes in flux, up for negotiation, but contingent on specific histories and social environments. (Copland & Creese, 2015, p. 14)

This dynamic, mutually-constitutive view of language and culture was very salient in my own research. Also of particular interest and relevance was recent work on multilingualism by researchers working within the LE space. Blackledge and Creese's (2010) study of UK multilingual youth employed concepts such as language ideology and indexicality, as outlined above, along with the notion of 'flexible bilingualism', which they link with 'translanguaging' (Garcia, Bartlett, & Kleifgen, 2007; García & Li, 2014) and 'heteroglossia' - 'the simultaneous use of different kinds of forms or signs' (Blackledge & Creese, 2010, p. 19). Using a socio-constructivist approach, they draw on Blackledge's work with Pavlenko (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004) to show how young people negotiate and construct their identities using the linguistic (and other) resources at their disposal, in line with indexicalities and ideologies that are constantly in flux:

Language choice, use and attitudes are intrinsically linked to language ideologies, relations of power, political arrangements and speakers' identities. Identity options available to individuals at a given moment in history are subject to change, like the ideologies that legitimize and value particular identities more than others. (Blackledge & Creese, 2010, pp. 36-37)

Since writing the publications in Chapters Two and Three, I have further developed my understanding of the difference between 'translanguaging' and 'heteroglossia'. Blackledge & Creese (2014, p. 13) state that 'translanguaging refers to linguistic practice...which gives *voice* to speakers in ways which allow them to activate the full range of their linguistic repertoires', while 'heteroglossia provides a theoretical lens which enables us to understand *voice* as filled with social diversity'. The value of 'heteroglossia' as a term lies in

describing the tensions inherent in multilingual practices, particularly in superdiverse settings. In all three of the publications in this thesis, I have described situations in which linguistic diversity has brought tensions, often related to language ideologies and prevailing indexicalities, and I have referred to these examples of heteroglossia as cases of ‘cleft habitus’ using Bourdieu’s term (described in sections 2.8, 3.5, 4.10 and 5.1 below). However, I have also referred to multilinguals who are able to draw on their linguistic repertoires without any sense of conflict or tension, despite occasional frustration (e.g. Mona and Muntaha in Chapter Three), and their language practices may be described as ‘translanguaging’, though I did not use this term in these publications.

### *1.2.7 Superdiversity*

Another key concept employed in this study is ‘superdiversity’. Vertovec (2007) coined the term ‘superdiversity’ to refer to:

...a multiplication of significant variables that affect where, how and with whom people live. In the last decade, the proliferation and mutually conditioning effects of a range of new and changing migration variables shows that it is not enough to see ‘diversity only in terms of ethnicity, as is regularly the case both in social science and the wider public sphere. In order to understand and more fully address the complex nature of contemporary, migration-driven diversity, additional variables need to be better recognized by social scientists, policy-makers, practitioners and the public. These include: differential legal statuses and their concomitant conditions, divergent labour market experiences, discrete configurations of gender and age, patterns of spatial distribution, and mixed local area responses by service providers and residents. The dynamic interaction of these variables is what is meant by ‘super-diversity’. (Vertovec, 2007, p. 1025)

Dubai is perhaps a quintessential superdiverse city in that its modern-day demographics have been significantly affected by inflows of temporary migrant labour. Not only does this mean that the national

citizen population is in a minority, but also, because a large proportion of this migrant labour consists of males employed in the construction industry, the majority of whom are unmarried or unaccompanied by wives and children, the gender balance in the Emirate has changed dramatically, such that men significantly outnumber women. According to Dubai Statistics Center (2016c), in 2015, the total population of Dubai was 2,446,675, of which 1,703,355 were male, which is approximately 70%. Vertovec's 'differential legal statuses' are another aspect of Dubai's superdiversity in that the majority of people living in Dubai have temporary residence status and not citizenship, since most are employed on short-term renewable contracts. There is thus a perpetual inward and outward flow of people. While the Emirati population is not generally part of this inward and outward flow, except perhaps for educational and recreational purposes, and though the gender demographics of the Emirati community are more balanced, living amidst this superdiversity has had tangible impacts on Emirati lives, as will be seen, and language plays an important role in how they manage the opportunities and threats of life in this dynamic city.

#### *1.2.8 Research Lacuna*

Much of the literature on multilingualism and superdiversity, has to date focused on European contexts (e.g. Blommaert, 2014; De Bock, 2015; Padilla, Azevedo, & Olmos-Alcaraz, 2014).

Cities such as London, UK, and Antwerp, Belgium, have seen accelerated migration in the last twenty years, and this new diversity has often been celebrated by scholars working in LE. However, despite the opportunities of superdiversity, the perceived threats posed by increased migration have become a major issue in Europe and other parts of the world (e.g. the US) and have contributed to political change, as in the Brexit decision in the UK in 2016, or the election of political leaders who pledge to be tough on immigration (e.g. Donald Trump in 2016).

Literature on multilingualism and superdiversity has mostly focused on countries in which the resident dominant population continues to be the powerful majority and the dominant language continues to be used and valorized. However, there is relatively little research focusing on contexts like Dubai, and the UAE in

general, in which the resident dominant population of a country or city, and its language or dialect, have been significantly minoritized as a direct result of accelerated migration.

This study aims to fill the gap that I see in literature related to the Arabian/Persian Gulf, as there is relatively little linguistic ethnographic research that focuses on multilingual choices in language and literacy in the context of superdiversity. In fact, a Google Scholar search in March 2017, using the string *multilingualism 'language choices' superdiversity Dubai* returned only seven hits (of which two relate to publications in this thesis), compared with 272 hits for London, 246 for New York, 58 for Cape Town, 57 for Sydney, and 37 for Antwerp. If Dubai is a quintessentially superdiverse city, as I have suggested, this is a research lacuna, which my publications have begun to address, and which this doctoral thesis will further develop. The contribution that I am making is in showing how young Emirati women respond to the opportunities and tensions of superdiversity through their language and literacy choices, and how they manage, with varying success, to steer a course through modernity and tradition, concepts which are often constructed as being in conflict, each ideologically and indexically-linked to a specific set of language resources – particularly Arabic and English.

### **1.3 Researcher Positionality**

Bourdieu promoted sociology as a 'reflexive' discipline (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), and Ethnography has developed as a methodology that requires of researchers that they reflect on themselves and be transparent with regard to their possible subjectivities:

The concept of reflexivity acknowledges that the orientations of researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer upon them. What this represents is a rejection of the idea that social research is, or can be, carried out in some autonomous realm that is insulated from the wider society and from the biography of the researcher, in such a way that its findings can be unaffected by social processes and personal characteristics. (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p. 18)

Thus, in the penultimate part of this Introduction, I will continue this process of reflection (which I began in 1.2.4) by examining my researcher positionality with regard to subjects that are germane to this project – namely, multilingualism and literacy.

As a first language speaker of English, the current ‘hyper-central’ language (de Swaan, 2001), it could be argued that I have a ‘monolingual habitus’ – a term, as Piller (2016) points out, that was coined by Ingrid Gogolin (1994) – in that I spend the vast majority of my day conversing, listening, reading and writing in one language, English, and it feels normal to do so. Even though my language repertoires include seven European and Asian languages, I rarely find myself in a situation in which I am required to use anything other than my mother tongue. I spent the first 21 years of my life in the United Kingdom, mostly in Yorkshire. I grew up speaking English exclusively. My parents were predominantly monolingual, though my father knew some words of Swahili, having done national service in Kenya, and my mother knew a little French from her schooldays. I began learning French at the age of ten and enjoyed the experience for the first few years. Unfortunately, the classes were conducted largely in English and used a grammar-translation approach, with very little emphasis on speaking, or even listening, skills, so by the time I travelled overseas to France with friends at the age of 18, I was unable to have anything more than a very halting, basic functional conversation. A foundation course in my first year at the University of Bradford in ‘French for the Social Sciences’ allowed me to develop my French academic literacy and listening somewhat, though my spoken French did not develop significantly, and I was perhaps one of the least vocal members of the class as a result. My first degree was in European Literature and the History of Ideas, which involved reading works by writers from across Europe, but as these were either in English, or translated into English, my foreign language capital did not increase.

It was not until I started my first English teaching job, in 1983, in the south of Italy that I began to have some success in speaking a foreign language. In San Severo di Puglia, English was not widely spoken and so I had the opportunity on a daily basis to develop my Italian, without an English ‘safety net’. During my six months in San Severo, I learned a fair amount of Italian, along with the local Pugliese dialect, though it was not a ‘total

immersion' situation as I was teaching English on weekdays and much of my leisure time involved speaking English as I spent a good deal of time with a young English woman in the town, also an English teacher, Brenda, who would later become my wife.

Later Brenda and I moved to Turin, where English was more widely spoken, but I nonetheless managed to develop my Italian and was able to use it every day. By the end of my 12 months in Italy, I was perhaps at a pre-intermediate level in terms of speaking, and lower intermediate in terms of reading. I was able to assist my wife in completing an extensive technical translation from Italian into English during this period. My next teaching position, however, enabled me to develop a satisfactory level of oral fluency in a foreign language for the first time. While living and working in Bandung, Indonesia in the mid-eighties, learning Bahasa Indonesia was absolutely essential as English was uncommon. Our housemaid, for example, spoke not one word of English, and so my wife and I had to quickly learn some of the technical vocabulary of cooking and other household tasks. Fortunately, the basics of Bahasa Indonesia proved fairly easy to pick up, especially 'Bahasa Pasar' (market language, or everyday colloquial usage). During our eight years in the country, we became reasonably fluent speakers of Bahasa, though did not develop our literacy skills in the language, and did not pick up the local language, Sundanese (West Javanese), as our housemaid, Sri, was from Solo (Surakarta) and thus spoke Javanese. Indonesian was a second language for Sri and her language of literacy.

Between our two spells in Indonesia, we lived for three years in Tokyo, and our first child, Tom, was born there. Living in a major international city, it was quite possible to conduct daily business in English, though the language was not very widely spoken at the time (late 1980s). I nevertheless learned approximately 300 words of Japanese. Unlike Bahasa Indonesia, Italian and French, the syntax of Japanese was something of a challenge for me, and this was my first experience with a language not written in Roman script. I found the process of looking up the meaning of kanji pleasurable, but also challenging and time-consuming. Nevertheless, along with the vocabulary I learned, I managed to acquire some kanji and learned to read katakana and hiragana scripts.

After the second spell in Indonesia, where our daughter Saskia was born, we decided to migrate to New Zealand, in the mid-nineties. This was our first time living as a family in an English-speaking country. Though I learned a few words of Te Reo Māori, this was a fairly mono-lingual period, but my wife and I did use (and continue to use) Indonesian for ‘covert communication’ within the family, though this is now somewhat compromised as Tom learned the language as part of his degree studies in Ethnomusicology and went back to Bandung to teach English for a time.

After six years in Aotearoa, I applied for a job at my current University in Dubai, where I have now been based for over 15 years. In my daily business around the city, I do not think twice about using English, assuming that I will be understood and that it is a ‘legitimate language’ (Bourdieu, 1977b) in this context, though it is not the official language of the country. I can, without awkwardness, begin a conversation in English without first asking ‘Do you speak English?’ (which in some countries, France or Germany for example, I feel obliged to ask, more out of politeness than the expectation that English will not be spoken). People that I meet in customer service roles in Dubai, very often from the Philippines, generally have an excellent command of English, as do many Indian and Pakistani taxi drivers and administrative workers. Sometimes, however, I have contact with a stratum of Dubai society that constitute the majority of people living here – workers from the Indian sub-continent who work in construction, haulage, security and so on – who might have a very limited grasp of English. When I pay my monthly car parking fees, for example, the various Afghani, Pakistani and Indian attendants that issue my tickets communicate with me in a pidgin of English, Urdu and Arabic (Naylor, 2008). On campus, I tend to speak English for the most part, although I will occasionally attempt Arabic, or break into Indonesian, for the amusement of my students. I have attempted to learn Arabic and currently know around 300 words. I have also taught myself to read Arabic script. Learning Arabic has been somewhat problematic. Because MSA is mostly a language of literacy, this form of Arabic would not serve me well in daily conversation – indeed, my students are highly amused when their teachers attempt to speak MSA, as we might be if the students began to speak Shakespearean English. Among colloquial forms of Arabic, it would seem obvious that Emirati Arabic would be the appropriate form to learn. However,



fifteen dirham coming.

Me: This morning, OK?

Attendant: OK, inshallah [God willing - Arabic], boss.

I also encounter various forms of written English in my work when in contact with University administrative staff. Indian English is particularly noticeable in some of these communications, with phrases such as 'Kindly revert' ('Please reply') and 'Please do the needful' cropping up from time to time. This variety of Indian business English also appears to cross into the emails of Emirati and Philippine staff. 'Kindly' as a polite request is particularly common, to a far greater extent than it is in UK, for example. With regard to Arabic, though I rarely encounter documents written in MSA, occasionally this happens, for example when I renew my vehicle registration (though the majority of these documents are translated) and while accompanying a friend to Dubai Prosecution and Law Courts, I learned that most daily business is conducted in various forms of Arabic (EA, SyA, EgA etc.) and legal documents are generally written in MSA, without translation. In my workplace, University documents and emails were generally written only in English until around 2014. Now official emails and announcements appear firstly in Arabic, followed by an English translation, which seems reasonable given that Arabic is the country's official language and the University is a federal institution. However, it is interesting that the reverse of this linguistic hierarchy is true with regard to course offerings, as I will discuss in Chapter Five.

Recently, I have begun to expand my linguistic repertoires using mobile phone technology. As my son Tom is currently living in Sweden and has a Danish girlfriend, and as I am a fan of 'Scandi-dramas', including 'Scandi-noir', I am using several mobile phone apps in order to learn Danish. I find Danish interesting from a comparative linguistic point of view, given the common ground with English (and particularly northern English and Scottish dialects). I also spent some time learning Russian ahead of a trip to St Petersburg earlier this year. In future, I plan to develop some basic Hindi and Tagalog (two languages that I hear a great deal as I travel around Dubai), and I may return to French at some point.

Thus, although I developed a monolingual habitus growing up, in my adult life, as I have mostly been an expat living in countries in which English was not the official language, I have developed a multilingual habitus. However, multilingualism is perhaps less of a daily reality for me than it is for Dubai residents who do not have English as their L1. In terms of my language choices, English is, by far, the language I speak most on a daily basis. As noted above, I will speak Indonesian with my wife, and my son, for coded communication, or just for fun, and I use Arabic relatively rarely and mostly at work, to model language learning practices for my students, to show respect for their language, and to amuse them. On my occasional trips into remote parts of Oman, however, there has been the necessity to use my elementary Arabic, for example with an Omani commercial fisherman who came to chat with me while I was fishing on the beach at Ras Madrasah in Duqm, Oman, who spoke almost no English.

The vast majority of life, however, is conducted in my native language. I must therefore constantly reflect on this and remind myself as I conduct this research project, that for my students, multilingualism is a daily reality to a far greater extent than it is for me. Thus, their emic perspectives on multilingualism are not only the topic of my research but also an educational experience for me.

Another aspect of my life that I have reflected on, going into this research project, is my literacy. My grandparents were all literate in English, unlike the situation for many of the research participants in my study, and as far as I know, so were all my great grandparents. Literacy has been a part of my family history for several generations, but to varying extents. My father was mildly dyslexic and so claimed that he was unable to read properly until the age of 14, after which time he began to read avidly, developing a love of Greek myths. He was therefore keen to ensure that I had a head start with reading and taught me to read when I was four years old. Although I did not grow up in a house in which bedtime stories were read to my two younger siblings and me, reading was nonetheless a normal household activity. My father would read *The Daily Mirror* and *The Yorkshire Evening Post* newspapers from cover to cover, mostly while also watching TV, and occasionally read novels, for example the horse-racing thrillers of Dick Francis, and my mother has always been a reader of novels, particularly historical novels and horror, which she mostly reads at bedtime. Not

surprisingly, I was a keen reader from an early age, though perhaps not a ‘book worm’. Comics were an important part of my reading (*The Beano*, *The Dandy*, *Whizzer & Chips*, *The Victor*, *Cor!*) and around the age of eleven my mother bought me a subscription to the more explicitly educational *Look and Learn* series. Later, in my teen years, as I became interested in music, she would buy me a weekly *Melody Maker* music newspaper, which I read voraciously. At Christmas we were bought ‘annuals’ related to our favorite comics, and the children’s TV magazine show *Blue Peter*. I was also a reader of novels throughout my childhood, reading Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Treasure Island* and Dickens’ *Oliver Twist* around the age of nine and later, in teenage years, books about youth sub-cultures – such as *Skinhead* and *Suedehead* by Richard Allen, and *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess. Visits to the public library were a regular feature of my childhood from the age of eight or nine, when I was able to visit them independently, relishing this quiet time alone with books. School also played a role in the development of my reading dispositions through the weekly class periods in the school library, and the encouragement of key English teachers, Beryl Bitton, Geoff Innes and John Pettitt, in the second and fifth years of high school, and in the Lower and Upper Sixth Forms when I studied A Level English Literature and enjoyed works by William Shakespeare, Harold Pinter, D.H. Lawrence, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, William Wordsworth and others (admittedly a heavily-male reading list in retrospect, which was not untypical of the times – late 1970s!) . Thus, by the time I started university, I was already an established reader and enjoyed reading in my free time and for academic work. In this sense, I am unlike many of my research participants, who may not have developed enjoyment of, and/or skills in, reading in their native language (e.g. Afra in Chapter Two).

I continued my literary interests at Bradford University, where I majored in European Literature and the History of Ideas. Later, in my thirties I studied for a Masters degree in Applied Linguistics, and thereby expanded my academic reading and writing significantly. In my forties, I began to publish academic articles, starting in 2006 with a co-authored article on motivation, and continuing with my PhD candidacy and the three publications in this thesis, among others, into my fifties. Thus, I have reasonably well-developed academic literacy in my native language.

However, although I am proficient in terms of English language literacy, I have very little experience of extensive reading and writing in any of the foreign languages in my repertoire, and this, too, makes my experience very different from that of my research participants. Though I do read *Facebook* posts written by Indonesian and Italian friends, and have occasionally written posts and messages in Indonesian and Arabic, reading and writing in languages other than English is a relatively infrequent activity for me. However, my recent experience with language learning phone apps (e.g. *Memrise*, *Duolingo* and *Nemo*) has given me more experience with reading and writing (albeit elementary) in other languages (e.g. last year I learned the Cyrillic alphabet in order to be able to read some Russian, and I am currently learning the diacritics involved in written Danish), and I often practice reading Arabic signs and notices as I am out and about in Dubai. Nevertheless, literacy in a foreign language is largely elective, not an essential part of my life as far as my own literacy is concerned. Yet, I make a living from teaching young people to be literate in what is for them a foreign or second language. My positionality as a person who regards himself as an enthusiastic reader and writer, though one with largely mono-literate predispositions and practices, means that I must be ever vigilant in attempting to understand and empathize with my research participants, for whom multilingual literacy is a daily reality, and for some of whom reading and writing in any language may not be an enjoyable or comfortable experience.

Understanding how the research participants engage with literacy and language, understanding the dispositions and ideologies underlying their daily practices, and understanding the diversity among them in this regard, is of interest to me not only from the point of view of this research, but also as a means of reflecting on and better understanding myself as an English teacher, as a native speaker of this hyper-central language, and as a multilingual human being. Such insights and understandings can only serve to improve my professional practice, and go some way to mitigating the asymmetry of the researcher-researched relationship (Martin-Jones, 2016).

## 1.4 Thesis by Publication

Before embarking on the Overview of the Thesis (1.5), I would like to preface with some comments on the genre ‘Thesis by Publications’ (TBP), of which this thesis is an example. There is widespread awareness in the academic world of the conventions of a traditional monographic PhD thesis or dissertation, and the genre has been described and researched by a number of scholars (e.g. Dudley-Evans, 1999; Paltridge & Starfield, 2007; Swales & Feak, 1994). Though there may be disciplinary differences in the academic style and format of traditional theses, there is nevertheless a good deal of agreement on the key elements. There is likely to be an Introduction setting out the context and research problem and a Literature Review, which may or may not be part of the Introduction, detailing prior work in the research area and aiming to identify gaps that the research aims to fill. There is normally, then, a Methods chapter detailing methodology, approaches and methods employed in the study, followed by Results and Discussion chapters which describe, analyze and interpret the key findings. The Conclusion chapter summarizes the key discussion and findings and goes on to describe limitations of the research, directions for future research and applications. In other words, it typically follows an ‘Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion’ (IMRAD) structure (Dudley-Evans, 1999), in a somewhat similar way to journal articles but at far greater length. In contrast, there is much less awareness of, and agreement about, the conventions of the ‘Thesis by Publications’ (TBP) genre. A TBP may be an entirely retrospective exercise in which the researcher combines publications dating to before the PhD candidacy and creates a coherent thesis from them, normally by adding introductory and concluding commentary – termed ‘Thesis by Prior Publication’ by some universities (Jackson, 2013). A growing number of TBPs, however, could be described as ‘PhD *with* or *alongside* publications’ (Niven & Grant, 2012) as the publications are researched, written and published, or accepted for publication, during the PhD candidacy. Clearly, creating a coherent body of work from several pieces of published writing which have been written over several years and are, in a sense, ‘set in stone’, is one of the major challenges of the TBP. One very clear difference between the TBP and the traditional monographic thesis is that the former consists of chapters which may in themselves follow an IMRAD structure. Hence, there is likely to be a degree of intertextuality and repetition in any coherent set of

TBP publications. There is likely, for example, to be a Literature Review and Methods section in each of the main chapters. There is also likely to be a degree of self-citation, since their will necessarily be overlap between the publications. Niven & Grant (2012, sec. Abstract) argue that ‘the particular affordance of the [TBP] model is that it privileges accounts of the process of knowledge building’. In order to create a sense of coherence in the thesis, TBP writers often create a meta-narrative describing the research, writing and publication process, with overt reference to the author and to the thesis itself, including the publications, as artefacts, retrospectively accounting for developments in thinking or changes of emphasis, and critically evaluating their content.

The three publications that make up the body of this thesis (Chapters Two, Three and Four) each broadly follow an IMRAD structure. Hence, within the three chapters (two journal articles and a book chapter), there are three Methods sections (2.3, 3.3, 4.3), which necessarily share information since they refer to the same overarching, ethnographically-inspired research project. Similarly, there are three sections that describe theoretical tools used in the analysis, which overlap somewhat (2.2, 3.2, 4.2), though there are clear and substantial differences in the specific focus of each publication in addressing the central research question. The meta-narrative creating coherence from these publications has already begun, in the Abstract and in the early sections of this Introduction. The opening vignette established the research context (section 1.1) while section 1.2 combined elements of traditional Literature Review and Methods in charting the author’s research trajectory from the initial research context and literacy-based research interests through to his growing interest in multilingual language and literacy choices in superdiverse contexts. Section 1.3 described the researchers’ biographical positionality with regard to multilingualism and literacy, while section 1.5 gives an overview of the key arguments, as in a traditional monograph thesis. The preambles to Chapters Two, Three and Four serve to provide coherent links and critical evaluation between the publications, and the Conclusion (Chapter Five) continues the meta-narrative, synthesizing findings across the three publications and showing how the author’s thinking has developed since the publication of the last article, before going on to discuss limitations and applications.

## 1.5 Overview of the Thesis

My central research question in this thesis is: *What are the factors that lead to language choices in literacy and daily speech among young Emirati graduates and undergraduates?* The three publications on which the thesis is based (Chapters Two, Three and Four) answer this question with slightly different emphases and the Conclusion (Chapter Five) extends the discussion. In this section, I will briefly preview the main arguments and findings of each of these chapters.

In Chapter Two (O'Neill, 2014a) I adopted a mixed methods approach utilizing the literacy questionnaire along with two case studies based on in-depth interviews with two participants to investigate attitudes to free time reading and writing in Arabic and English, and preferences with regard to language of study in higher education. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they enjoyed / did not enjoy reading and writing in these languages at three stages of their lives – childhood, high school and 'now' (late teens, early twenties in most cases). The results showed a marked difference depending on educational background. Participants with backgrounds in Arabic-medium public primary and secondary schools (AMPuS) reported high levels of enjoyment of Arabic reading and writing at all stages, along with fairly low reported enjoyment of reading and writing in English in childhood and high school years, but a gradual rise overall. Participants with backgrounds in English-medium private schools (EMPrS) showed a marked preference for English reading and writing at all stages, and reported low levels of enjoyment of reading, and particularly writing, in Arabic. There was a statistically significant difference between these two groups with regard to childhood and high school years, but the difference narrowed to statistical non-significance for the early adulthood stage. With regard to study language preferences, the majority of respondents favored studying in Arabic and English equally, but the private school background respondents were more likely to favor English. Very few selected 'Arabic only' or 'mostly in Arabic', suggesting that although some respondents are oriented towards Arabic in many aspects of their lives, they see the importance of English for their futures in this superdiverse context. The two case studies involved one participant with a private school background (Afra) and another with a public school background (Amna). The differences observed in the statistical data were very apparent in these

two case studies, with Afra showing a strong preference for English at all stages of her life and Amna reporting a strong preference for Arabic. Afra's reported enjoyment of reading and writing in Arabic has remained low throughout her life, though she is conflicted about this, whereas Amna's enjoyment of reading and writing in English have increased, though her English literacy is mostly academic or professional, or related to pursuing leisure time interests. She nevertheless strongly prefers reading for pleasure in Arabic. The article argues that predispositions developed at home, at school and during teenage years and young adulthood, strongly influence language choices. The narrowing of differences between these two groups of women with regard to literacy choices is largely a result of their increasing exposure to a super-diverse society, and to the extremely super-diverse online world.

In Chapter Three (O'Neill, 2016), which is a chapter in an edited book, I also employed quantitative and qualitative methods and analysis, but this time the focus was on language choices in daily speech in the home and generational changes in L1, L2 and literacy. The quantitative data showed that there is considerable linguistic diversity in the Emirati community, which is particularly evident in the data on L1 for the grandparents' generation. Though most participants selected Emirati Arabic as their L1, up to 25% of grandparents, and grandmothers in particular, were reported as being L1 speakers of other languages, such as Ajami (Farsi dialect), Urdu, Tagalog etc. There has also been a change in L2, with English being the L2 of the vast majority of participants, but lower levels of English, and more monolingualism, in the parents' and grandparents' generations (alongside linguistic diversity). There has also been a dramatic increase in literacy rates in three generations. The qualitative data was based on a discussion board topic on 'languages of the home'. The findings showed that there are differences in terms of home language policy, with 'Arabic only' policies in some homes and more heteroglossic ideologies in other homes, and differing perceptions of the indexicalities of local Arabic and English. The chapter describes several cases of 'cleft habitus', to use Bourdieu's term, where predispositions developed, for example, at home and at school, are felt to be in conflict, causing some anxiety or tension.

Chapter Four (O'Neill, 2017) employs qualitative methods in the form of a case study based on three in-depth interviews over a three year period. It examines the language choices of one young Emirati-Moroccan woman in her early thirties. The study found that language choices are highly individual, based on unique personal histories, predispositions and ideologies. Shaikha's multilingual habitus means that she is comfortable using a variety of languages and dialects in her daily life, but from a language ideology point of view, she feels that she should not mix languages and also that various forms of Arabic and English have domain-specific uses. Being part of several communities (Emirati, Moroccan expat and Palestinian expat) she identifies herself as having a hybrid identity, though she points out that this can be challenging to manage. She has learned to use language and dress in order to perform various identities, as the context requires, but admits that 'being herself' can be fraught with tension, due to the pressure to conform to the indexicalities of the powerful minority and her husband's family.

In the Conclusion (Chapter Five), I synthesize the findings of the three publications and then extend the discussion to include two additional influences on language choices. I discuss the role of UAE government policies in influencing language choices in these young people's lives, arguing that laudable policies that aim to protect and promote Arabic in the UAE are at odds with other policies, particularly with regard to labour, migration, education and residency, which tend to valorize the use of English as a lingua franca and minoritize Arabic, particularly Emirati Arabic. I also discuss how Latour's ideas can be applied to this study of language choices in the sense that technology, through its affordances and constraints, can be seen as an 'actant' in the lives of young Emiratis, influencing their language choices significantly. The chapter then goes on to discuss limitations of the study, areas for future research and applications in the areas of language policy and curriculum development.

The three publications are presented in the form in which they were published, without significant subtractions or additions (with the exception of a short addendum to Chapter Four containing material that was not included in the final version of that publication). Publication One (Chapter Two) was accepted in 2013 and published in 2014 in the electronic journal *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: Gulf*

*Perspectives*. Publication Two (Chapter Three) was accepted in 2015 and published in 2016 in an edited book (*Language, Identity and Education on the Arabian Peninsula - Bilingual Policies in a Multilingual Context*). Finally, Publication Three (Chapter Four) was accepted in 2016 and published online in February 2017 in the journal *Multilingua*, with print publication scheduled for issue 36(3), the May/June edition 2017. The changes that have been made to the publications as they are displayed here are minor. For example, I have made the referencing style, heading numbers, abbreviations and punctuation consistent between the publications, and I have placed the entire reference list at the end of the thesis, instead of having a separate list immediately after each publication. I have also deleted footnotes and incorporated this material into the body of the dissertation. I have deleted abstracts from Chapters Two and Four, in the interests of consistency with Chapter Three, which has no abstract in the published version (the summaries in this section function as substitutes). I have also made minor changes to the wording of the articles in the interests of consistency. Prior to chapters two, three and four, I have added a short preamble which describes the process of writing each article and the progression in my thinking and focus over the four-year period in which I was data gathering and analyzing, writing and publishing.

## Preamble to Chapter 2

---

The first publication arising from this research project was written in the second half of 2013. At that time, my focus was still largely on literacy practices – how these young women engage with literacy, particularly with regard to their attitudes to literacy. I had spent the early part of the year writing up field notes and memos, transcribing and coding interviews and carrying out statistical analysis of the survey data. A picture was beginning to emerge of changing literacy practices across the participants' lives, particularly with regard to English, and both the quantitative and the qualitative data confirmed very significant differences in literacy practices with regard to certain sub-groupings in the data, particularly a propos the high school background of the participants. Alongside these findings regarding literacy, I was beginning to realize that there was also a reasonable amount of interesting data regarding language practices in daily speech. Thus, although the main focus of this article was on attitudes to leisure time literacy in English and Arabic, and preferences with regard to language of study in higher education, in the two case studies examined in O'Neill (2014a) I also included data on the participants' reported language practices, including their language choices in literacy and daily speech. The journal in which the article was published, in early 2014 (*Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: Gulf Perspectives*) aims to bring together research that is of relevance to teachers across all disciplines in higher education. With this audience in mind, I aimed to write the article with a minimum of specialist lexis, and I applied key concepts and findings to classroom examples.

The article contributes to the literature on language choices in superdiversity, although at this stage in my research I did not use the term explicitly. I did however argue that predispositions with regard to literacy in English may change in teenage and early adult years as these young women have more exposure to linguistic diversity in Dubai's multilingual marketplace, to use Bourdieu's metaphor. The article provides evidence of sociolinguistic change in UAE society, at least among its young adult female population, with regard to attitudes to Arabic and English as their lives unfold. It is also innovative in that it describes, through the two case studies, the complexity in how these young women view English and Arabic, and the tensions that some

Emiratis may feel when their linguistic predispositions clash with their identities as Emirati Arabs (cleft habitus) – themes I developed in subsequent work (Chapters Three and Four). Looking back at the article three to four years after it was written, I see that it would have been useful to introduce the concept of heteroglossia in this article, to complement the notion of cleft habitus, since it too is a useful lens for examining tensions in language practices.

Additionally, though I did not explicitly mention in this article the role of government policies on the changing predispositions of these young people, I did argue that medium of instruction in educational background has a decisive influence, and school language policy is a direct result of government policy, as will be discussed in Chapter Five.

An aspect that I did not include in any of the three articles is an explanation of the diglossic nature of Arabic, with which some readers may be unfamiliar. Arabic is widely viewed, ideologically, as one language by Arabic speakers, yet there is a significant degree of variety in its various forms. As Ferguson (1964) pointed out in an early article on diglossia, Arabic is a diglossic language in that there is a classical form of the language – CA, and a modernized version thereof – MSA, which are used for literacy purposes. CA, for example, is the language of the Qur'an and other Muslim religious texts, and MSA is used, for instance, in newspapers. However, at the same time, it is also a pluricentric language (Cruickshank, 2008) in that each area of the Arab world has its own variety of colloquial spoken (and, increasingly, written) Arabic, and some of these varieties may be mutually unintelligible for some speakers – e.g. Moroccan Arabic (MA) and EA. This emphasis on varieties of Arabic is important in my study because I make observations about attitudes to different varieties. For example, it will be seen that some of the participants report that they have a command of their local version of Arabic (EA) but feel that their skills in CA or MSA are lacking. It will also be seen that the extent to which these young Emiratis view EA and MSA as one language differs somewhat, dependent on predispositions developed mostly as a result of primary and secondary education. An additional point is that Arabic may also be viewed as being on a continuum, from Classical Arabic and Standard Arabic at one end to

colloquial forms at the other (Cruickshank, 2008). Thus, Arabs may view a piece of writing as being more or less standard.

The article has so far been cited six times (apart from my own self-citations in later articles), including citations by researchers working in the area of English as a Medium of Instruction (Mouhanna, 2016), Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) and Writing in the Disciplines (WID) (Hodges & Kent, 2017), English and Cultural Identity (Hopkins, 2016) and an important recent article on the sociolinguistics of Dubai (Piller, 2017).

## Chapter 2 'Just a natural move towards English' – Gulf Youth Attitudes towards Arabic and English Literacy (O'Neill, 2014a)

---

### 2.1 Introduction

In three generations, the geographical area known since 1971 as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has undergone dramatic changes. Three generations ago, the main occupations of people in this region revolved around the sea (fishing, pearl diving), nomadic pastoralism and work in emerging oil industries in other Gulf countries (Al Fahim, 1995). Since significant oil exports began in the UAE in the 1960s, there has been an increasing inflow of migrant labour to help build and maintain the infrastructure of a developing and globalizing country. This expatriate labour force, which represents 90% of the population of the country (Findlow, 2006) has expanded rapidly and now includes an extremely diverse range of nationalities from across the world. Given the short-term basis on which they tend to be employed, there is a constant outflow and inflow of these workers, and, in some cases, their families. Thus, the remaining 10% of the population, Emirati citizens, live amidst constant change, both in terms of the demographics of the country and in terms of the socio-economic changes that their country is experiencing.

A key component of this change is education. Three generations ago, literacy was the exception rather than the norm. Although some formal schooling was evident from the early 19th Century (Davidson, 2008), prior to 1971 education in the UAE still largely consisted of the al-katateeb system – rudimentary literacy instruction involving rote memorization of the Qur'an and other religious texts, which was sometimes, though not always, extended to both male and females. Indeed, in 1971, literacy rates for those over 16 years of age are reported to have been less than 50% for males, and less than 30% for females (Davidson, 2008). By contrast, today the UAE has a comprehensive education system, for both males and females, including internationally-accredited private and public universities (Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research, 2014).

The UAE is a linguistic marketplace in which a large number of languages and dialects are available as potential resources for citizens and residents. Naturally, certain resources are valued differently from others.

Emirati Arabic (EA) represents the spoken language of the most powerful group in the country (albeit a demographic minority); MSA is the official language of the country and of the public sector; English is the language of much of the private sector. In the field of education, several languages are used in schools across the country (e.g. Urdu, Farsi etc.), but for Emirati citizens, MSA and English are the languages of greatest educational importance. For many Emirati parents, English is seen as a vital resource for educational and career success - so much so, that some of those who have the means send their children to private schools where there is the option of largely English-medium education. Others send their children to public sector schools, where the education is largely in Arabic until tertiary level when the main language of instruction is English.

The public university which was the site for the present research was established in the 1990's, and conducts the vast majority of its classes in English, with a few in Arabic. Nevertheless, key outcomes established by the University require students to be bilingual in Arabic and English upon graduation: it is thus important for students to develop literacy in both languages. Since the majority of the University's academic faculty is non-Emirati, and largely non-Arab, an understanding of the socio-cultural context in which students live is imperative. In addition to understanding Emirati society and the immense changes it is undergoing, it is important to understand how these changes impact students' lives, and to be aware of their attitudes and predispositions with regard to language and literacy. Understanding these attitudes is important for university educators, not only because of general institutional outcomes but also because language and literacy are key to successful learning in all subject areas. Differences in ability in a subject area may be due to differences in language and literacy practices. In a multilingual context, this is particularly important since students may have different literacy practices in their native language and the language(s) of instruction. Attitudes and predispositions to language and literacy are a key component of these practices and may have their roots in learners' experiences of language and literacy in the home, at school, in their social networks and in their free time interests. An understanding of these attitudinal factors can help educators to understand differences in language and literacy practices among students and in turn to understand differences in ability in a particular

subject area. This knowledge can then be used for a number of pedagogic purposes, such as tailoring classroom methods and materials to the needs of learners and providing additional support beyond the classroom.

This paper aims to answer the following questions:

- a) What are the predispositions of young, educated Emirati women with regard to reading and writing in English and Modern Standard Arabic, and to what extent have these predispositions changed throughout these women's lives?
- b) What are some of the factors that appear to affect these predispositions?

Following outlines of the theoretical framework and research methods used in the study, the results section focuses on enjoyment of free time reading and writing in Arabic and English and on study language preferences, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data. This section is followed by two short case studies, and then by a discussion of the findings.

## **2.2 New Literacy Studies**

Research in the framework of the New Literacy Studies (NLS) has highlighted the importance of viewing reading and writing in their social contexts of use, rather than as sets of autonomous skills having predictable cognitive and social consequences regardless of sociocultural context. Street (1984) contrasted the (sociologically) 'autonomous' or 'great divide' views of literacy, which he associated with the work of literacy researchers such as Goody (e.g. 1975) with what he termed an 'ideological' perspective on literacy, which describes literacy with regard to issues of power in society. In this framework, the ways in which societies take up and utilize various 'literacies' are researched ethnographically by focusing on literacy events, a term defined by Heath (1982, p. 50) as 'occasions in which written language is integral to the nature of participants' interactions and their interpretive processes and strategies', and on literacy practices. For Street (1984), literacy practices are 'general cultural ways of utilizing written language which people draw upon in their lives' (Barton & Hamilton, 1998, p. 6). These practices may not be directly observable, but may be gleaned from the

observation of literacy events and involvement with participants in the field. Hence, ethnographic approaches have come to dominate research in the field.

An example of a literacy event is the use of Powerpoint slides by a university teacher to get across key course concepts. For the professor, the slides might be seen as the starting point for student learning and he/she might provide additional readings for students to extend and reinforce the concepts, which students are advised to read in their own time. A typical scenario, however, is that a handful of students actually completes the additional reading while others rely on different strategies (which may involve minimal reading), such as seeking oral explanations from peers, who may or may not have done the assigned reading, approaching the teacher in office hours for additional explanations, relying solely on the Powerpoint slides, or a combination of these. An 'autonomous' view of literacy would tend to focus on the skills and knowledge that a learner demonstrates, and point to the 'skills gap' if the learner's skills were insufficient for a particular academic task. An NLS perspective acknowledges the importance of skills but tends to take a broader view of literacy, focusing on socio-cultural context and literacy practices. In other words, how do these undergraduates' experiences of literacy in the home, at school, and in their social lives, in both Arabic and English, affect the way that they engage in academic literacy tasks in English in the higher education context? Why do some students willingly engage with academic texts while others do anything to avoid such engagement? Are there differences in the way that students from different backgrounds engage with literacy – for example, those from English-medium private as compared with those from Arabic-medium public schools?

The NLS approach has yielded a large number of interesting and insightful local ethnographic studies – 'first generation' studies (Mastin Prinsloo & Baynham, 2008) such as Heath's seminal (1983) study of literacy in the Carolina Piedmonts, Street's (1984) work in Iran, and 'second generation' studies such as Barton & Hamilton's (1998) study of literacy practices in Lancaster, England, and Besnier's (1995) work on a Polynesian atoll, among many others (Baynham, 1995; Kral, 2007 etc).

Although the central principles of NLS have been widely taken up, critics have pointed out a need for more development of its theory. Brandt & Clinton (2002), for example, argue that the NLS approach pays insufficient attention to the interplay between global and local contexts. Luke (2004), extends this criticism by arguing that although NLS claims to focus on issues of power and ideology, these tend not to be sufficiently developed in most ethnographic accounts of local literacies. He argues that ‘ethnographies of literacy must bridge not just home and school, but the local and global, and the micro and macro political-economic domains’ (2004, p. 334).

To better understand the links between literacy practices and social contexts at micro and macro levels, the work of Bourdieu has been employed by some scholars working in the NLS framework (e.g. Grenfell, 2011), particularly concepts such as ‘habitus’, ‘field’, and ‘capital’. ‘Habitus’ refers to the embodied predispositions of individuals, groups and institutions to act in specific ways, which are structured by experience and circumstances, but which are also structuring with regard to current and future practices (Maton, 2008). Habitus operates within structured social spaces, or ‘fields’, such as education, culture or television, utilizing various forms of ‘capital’ (cultural, linguistic, scientific, etc.). Bourdieu’s (1984, p. 101) equation shows how these three concepts work together:

$$[(\text{habitus})(\text{capital})] + \text{field} = \text{practice}$$

Or in other words: ‘practice results from relations between one’s dispositions (habitus) and one’s position in a field (capital), within the current state of play of that social arena (field)’ (Maton, 2008).

A particular focus of this paper is the linguistic habitus of these Arab women in the context of a linguistic market, or field that is diverse and multilingual. I follow a use-based (rather than a competence-based) definition of what constitutes a bilingual or multilingual speaker – that is, any speaker who uses ‘two or more languages or dialects in their everyday lives’ (Pavlenko, 2007, p. 6). Because the focus here is predominantly on literacy, I will also use the terms ‘biliterate’ and ‘multiliterate’, in a similar way, but with reference to readers and writers. Most of the women in this study are indeed bilingual and biliterate since they use both MSA and

English, to varying degrees, in their everyday lives, in spoken and written contexts. In fact, given the diglossic situation among Emiratis in the UAE (Al Wer, 2006), whereby the local dialect – EA, or Gulf Arabic (GA) (Holes, 2011) is used in quite different domains to MSA, not to mention other Arabic dialects such as Palestinian (PA) and Egyptian (EgA) - they could be regarded as multilingual and possibly also multiliterate.

The NLS emphasis on literacy events and practices as socially-constructed, locally-specific phenomena is employed in this study to gain an understanding of the multilingual literacy practices of young women in this context. In order to analyze these local literacy practices with reference to national and global contexts, the study also employs Bourdieu's view of the ways in which habitus, field and capital interact to create practices. The notion of habitus is particularly germane to this study, as the focus is on language attitudes in literacy. These women's linguistic predispositions as manifested in their language choices, their language and literacy skills (capital) and the social spaces (fields) in which they operate, interact to form specific literacy practices. Understanding local literacy practices is of value both to educators and academic advisors working outside their home countries, in new or changing sociocultural contexts (as in my case), and to those working in their countries of origin with students from diverse backgrounds.

## **2.3 Method**

This study, which is part of a larger research project investigating first and second language literacy among female undergraduates and alumnae of a public university in the UAE, focuses on attitudes to literacy in both Arabic and English. In particular, it focuses on attitudes to free time enjoyment of reading and writing in the two languages at three stages of the students' lives, and on their attitudes with regard to studying in Arabic and English. To develop an understanding of these aspects of the respondents' literacy practices, an ethnographically-informed approach was used, which enables the researcher to develop an in-depth understanding of a particular socio-cultural situation through active involvement in the field, interviews with participants, participant observation and so on (Baynham, 2004). It enables the literacy researcher to observe literacy events and to gather data on less directly observable literacy practices. However, within this overall

methodology, both qualitative and quantitative mixed methods were used: in addition to interviews with participants and the writing of field notes based on my observations, a literacy questionnaire was used in order to develop a broader understanding of literacy practices across the University.

The data on which this article is based was taken mostly from the second stage of the larger research project. The first stage had involved gathering data and writing field notes based on classroom observation of literacy events, discussion board postings and social network postings on literacy-related themes. The second stage involved a 'two-phased design' (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 167): quantitative research in the form of the questionnaire, followed up with qualitative research in the form of semi-structured interviews with students and alumnae. The questionnaire was based on the themes that had begun to emerge in the first part of the project, and on my understanding of literacy in this context after ten years teaching Foundation-level and undergraduate English for Academic Purposes (EAP) at this university. This stage of the project involved enquiry into both English and Arabic literacy.

The questionnaire incorporated both closed and open-ended questions focusing on several areas of literacy as a socially situated phenomenon. As this particular paper focuses on literacy predispositions in English and Arabic, data from two of the survey questions is presented here: (1) a question related to free time enjoyment of reading and writing in English and Arabic across three time periods of the participants' lives, and (2) a question asking participants' opinions as to what they feel should be the main language(s) of instruction in the University.

The language used in the questionnaires was English, but an attempt was made to create questions that would be comprehensible to students with an IELTS score of 5.0 or higher. The questions were piloted and subsequently edited for greater clarity. It might be argued that the use of English rather than Arabic, and the fact that the questionnaire was sent out by a non-Arab faculty member, might encourage a certain amount of bias with regard to English in the responses. However, because the respondents were given the option of anonymity, they were free to express their thoughts without being identified. In fact, the results reveal a wide

range of opinions with regard to English and Arabic literacy, from those with a very pro-English stance, to those who are concerned for the future of Arabic as a language.

A sampling procedure was selected which would enable me to capture data from a reasonably representative sample of participants while at the same time minimizing any impact on teaching and learning. An email was sent out to all female students on the University's Dubai and Abu Dhabi campuses, and also to former students via the University's Alumni Office. Over 1,000 students attempted the questionnaire; however, as some responses were incomplete, I decided to exclude respondents who had completed fewer than half of the questions. The remaining 712 respondents represented approximately 10% of the University population in the 2011-12 academic year. Around 500 students completed 95-100% of the questions and a further 212 completed at least half of the questions.

The final sample was representative of the University's population of female students and alumnae, with approximately 20% of respondents from each of the four years of study and 20% graduated students. 269 (38%) of the respondents were Abu Dhabi campus students or graduates while the remaining 443 (62%) were studying on or had graduated from the Dubai campus. Reported Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) scores ranged from 1.7 to 4.0, which is reflective of the typical range.

The data was filtered in order to obtain descriptive statistics on various sub-groupings – for example by respondents' school background and school medium of instruction. The mean response on each question was then analyzed. Based on prior findings (in stage one of the project) and indications based on my knowledge of the context, it was predicted that there would be significantly different responses between respondents (e.g. with regard to study language preferences), depending on school background (public or private) and school medium of instruction (English or Arabic). Inferential statistical analysis was carried out on the filtered data using a two-tailed, two-proportion Z test. In order to reject the null hypothesis (i.e. that there would be no difference in the responses), results at  $p < 0.05$  were considered to be statistically significant. Statistics were calculated using an online two-proportion Z test tool (Stangroom, 2013).

The in-depth interviews were semi-structured (Dörnyei, 2007), in that the questionnaires and the interviewees' online responses were used as the basis for the questioning, but space was given to the participants to expand on their answers and mention anything that they considered to be relevant, in order to develop an 'emic' or 'thick' description (Geertz, 2007) of literacy practices in this context. They were also retrospective in that participants were asked to look back over their lives and, for example, describe how their attitudes to literacy in Arabic and English had changed (or otherwise) during their lives.

In order to select a group of participants for in-depth interviews, purposive sampling was used. From the pool of 318 questionnaire respondents who were happy for me to contact them to ask for further information, 84 were already known to me. A sub-grouping of 30 of these known participants was identified for the in-depth interviews. I selected known participants for a number of reasons. Having already developed a good working relationship with these young people while I was teaching them, I knew that they would feel comfortable talking with me, which increased the likelihood of their being willing to take part and meant that they were more likely to open up and give in-depth answers to my questions. Secondly, as I have some biographical knowledge about each of my students, I was able to predict, and not dwell on, questions that might be sensitive for individual participants.

All of the in-depth Interviews were conducted in English. As with the surveys, it could be argued that conducting interviews in English, rather than the respondents' first language, could lead to some bias in favor of English, especially as the participants were already known to me, and might wish to 'tell me what I want to hear'. This is of course a possibility. However, to minimize the impact of these factors on the data, I purposively sampled respondents to reflect a range of 'typical' backgrounds – for example respondents with pre-university backgrounds in Arabic-medium public schools and those from English-medium private schools, or respondents with a particularly high or low CGPA/ IELTS score. I also ensured that they were drawn from across the University – from the General Education program (i.e. first and second year of undergraduate studies), and from Majors (third and fourth years), and included a number of working graduates. As an additional step, I ensured that all key interviewees were given the opportunity to review the transcript of their

interview and a draft of any report that included their survey/interview data (e.g. drafts of this article) in order for them to reflect in their own time on the content and clarify anything that they felt might be inaccurate, overstated or misunderstood. In general, as with the questionnaire data, the data that I gathered from the interviews reflects a wide range of views and attitudes, suggesting that respondents were able to express their views and attitudes regardless of the language in which the interviews were conducted.

For the purposes of this paper, data from two of the interviews was selected, based on the closeness of fit between respondents' attitudes as measured by the two survey/interview questions, and the overall tendencies in the survey data. However, the results section also includes data from other interviews. In addition to asking key participants to review this paper, I also asked a recent Emirati International Affairs graduate, AlShaima, to read a draft of this paper for an additional Emirati perspective on my findings.

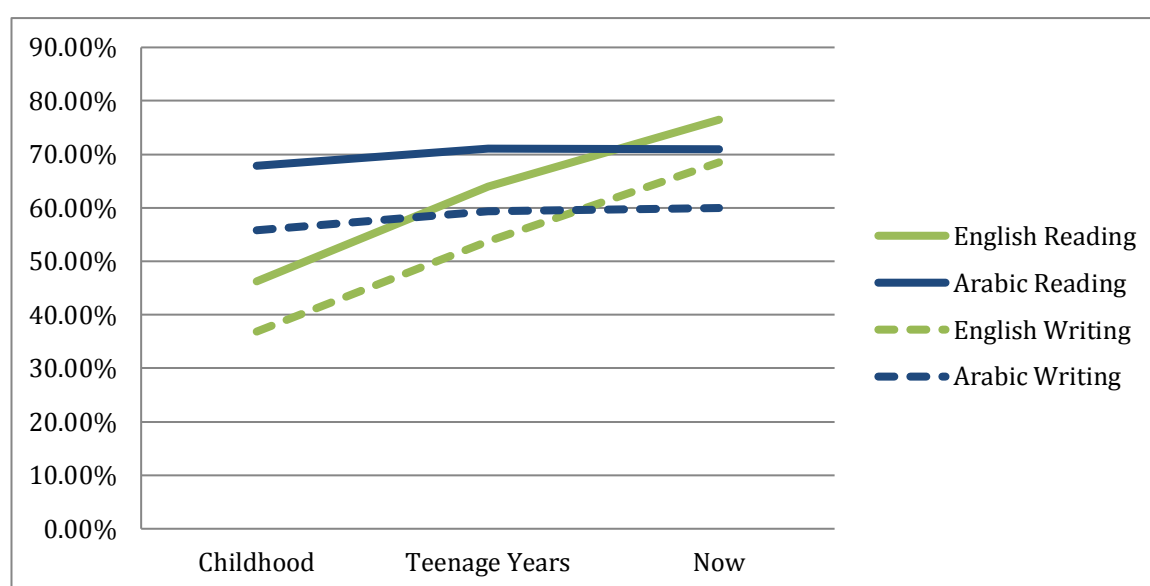
## **2.4 Results**

### *2.4.1 Attitudes to Free time Literacy*

Respondents were asked in the survey to express their attitudes towards free time reading and writing in English and Arabic at three stages of their lives – childhood, teenage years and currently (young adulthood) – by selecting one of six statements about the extent to which they enjoyed reading and writing in their free time ('Strongly Agree', 'Agree', 'Neutral', 'Disagree', 'Strongly Disagree' or 'I don't/didn't read/write in my free time').

Although the trends for English and MSA were dissimilar (see Figure 1 below), for each language those for reading and writing were similar, suggesting fairly parallel trends from 'childhood' to 'now' for the two skills; and for both, reading was more frequently rated as enjoyable than writing. For MSA, a fairly high proportion of respondents reported enjoyment of free time reading in childhood (67.9% 'strongly agree' or 'agree') and a lower number reported enjoyment of writing (55.8%) ( $z$ -score = 4.628;  $p = 0$ ). This pattern continues over the three time periods, with no significant rise or fall. Similarly, English reading was more frequently rated as

enjoyable than writing for the ‘childhood’ period (46.26% vs. 36.87%) ( $z$ -score = 3.5564;  $p$  = 0.00038), and the pattern continues across the three time periods. The overall trends for Arabic and for English are quite dissimilar, however. The figure for MSA starts relatively high, and there is little change across the three time periods. The data for English, however, shows a marked change over the three time periods. From a starting point of 46.3% for English reading, which is significantly lower than the figure for reading in MSA (67.87%), it rises sharply to 64% for the teenage years, which remains lower, though less so, than the figure for MSA (70.7%) ( $z$ -score = -2.819;  $p$  = 0.0048), and rises again to 76.5% for the current period, which is higher than the corresponding figure for MSA (71%) ( $z$ -score = 2.3158;  $p$  = 0.02034).

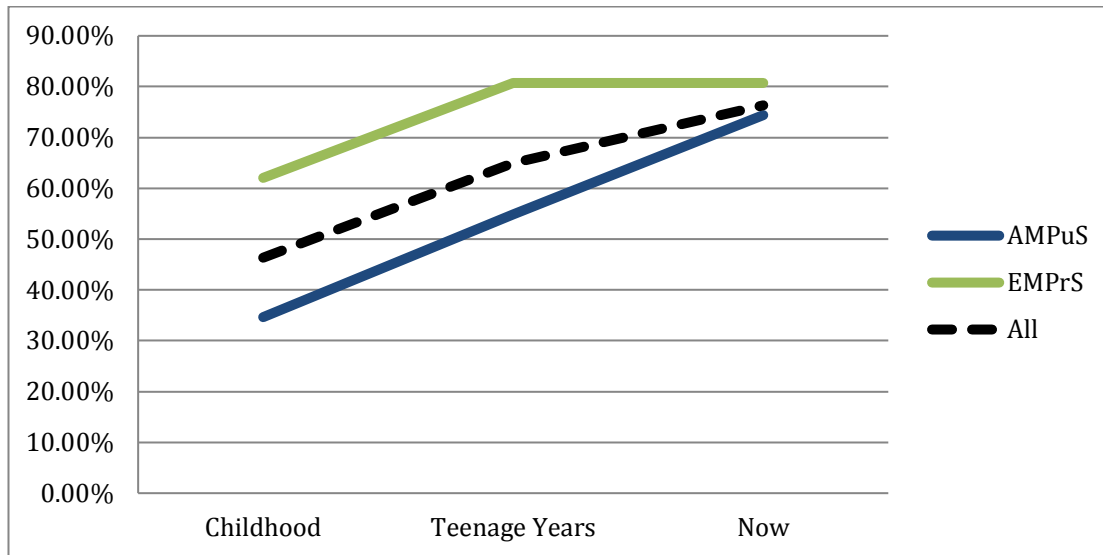


**Figure 1 Percentage of respondents who report free time enjoyment of reading and writing in English and Arabic at each stage of their lives**

In other words, enjoyment of MSA reading was reportedly more widespread than enjoyment of reading in English for the childhood period. However, by the teenage years, although the Arabic reading enjoyment figure is at a similar level, enjoyment of English reading has become more widespread. Enjoyment of reading in English is reported by the majority of respondents, but is still less widespread than Arabic. By the current period, young adulthood, enjoyment of English reading has become even more widespread than enjoyment of Arabic reading, to a statistically significant extent.

The data for writing shows a very similar trend, with the figure for English writing rising sharply from 36.9% to 53.8% and 68.5% across the three periods, and a relatively high yet stable trend for MSA. Enjoyment of writing in English is less widespread than enjoyment of writing in MSA until the current time period when greater numbers of respondents report enjoyment of English writing than for Arabic (z-score = 3.3082;  $p = 0.000094$ ).

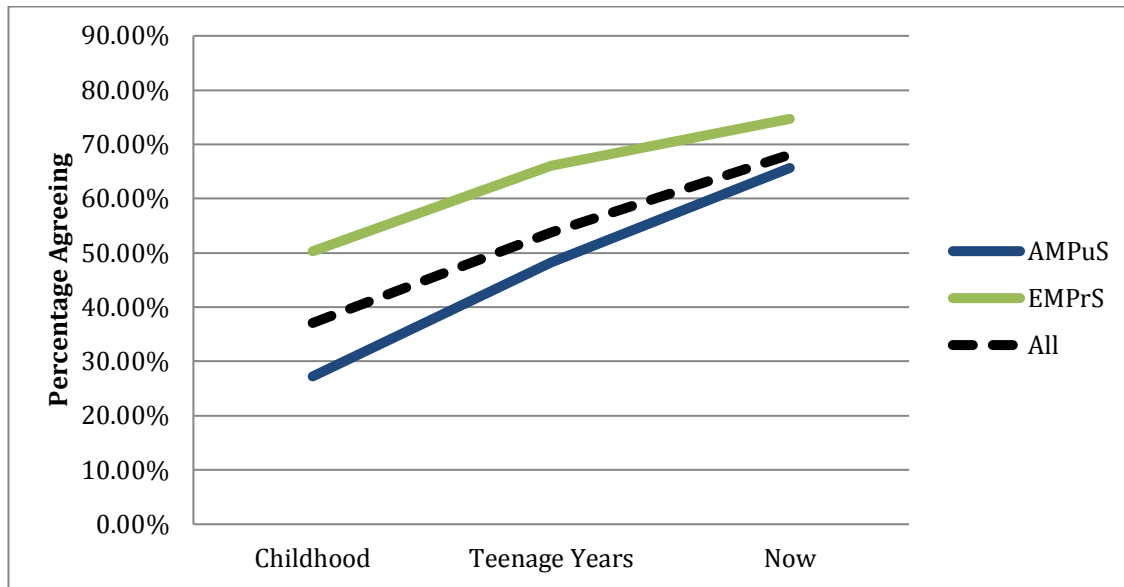
With regard to how sub-groups of students viewed MSA and English reading and writing in their lives so far, there were significant differences in the data. AMPuS and EMPrS background respondents represented the main sub-groupings but there were also other sub-groupings, such as those respondents who reported that they came from Arabic-medium private Schools, English-medium public Schools, or public and private schools in which there was an equal balance between English and Arabic. This study focuses predominantly on the AMPuS and EMPrS background respondents. The data from AMPuS background respondents shows substantially different trends from that of the EMPrS background respondents. With regard to English, 34.6% of AMPuS respondents report childhood enjoyment of English reading, compared with 62% of EMPrS respondents - a statistically significant difference (z-score = -5.8121;  $p = 0$ ) (Figure 2). From childhood to the teenage years, reported enjoyment of reading in English rises among both groups (54.8% vs. 80.7%), but a statistically significant difference remains (z-score = -5.6587;  $p = 0$ ). However, from the teenage years to the current period, reported enjoyment of reading in English continues to rise among the AMPuS respondents, but levels out among the EMPrS group, and the difference is no longer statistically significant in the third stage (74.4% vs. 80.7%) (z-score = -1.5695;  $p = 0.05821$ ).



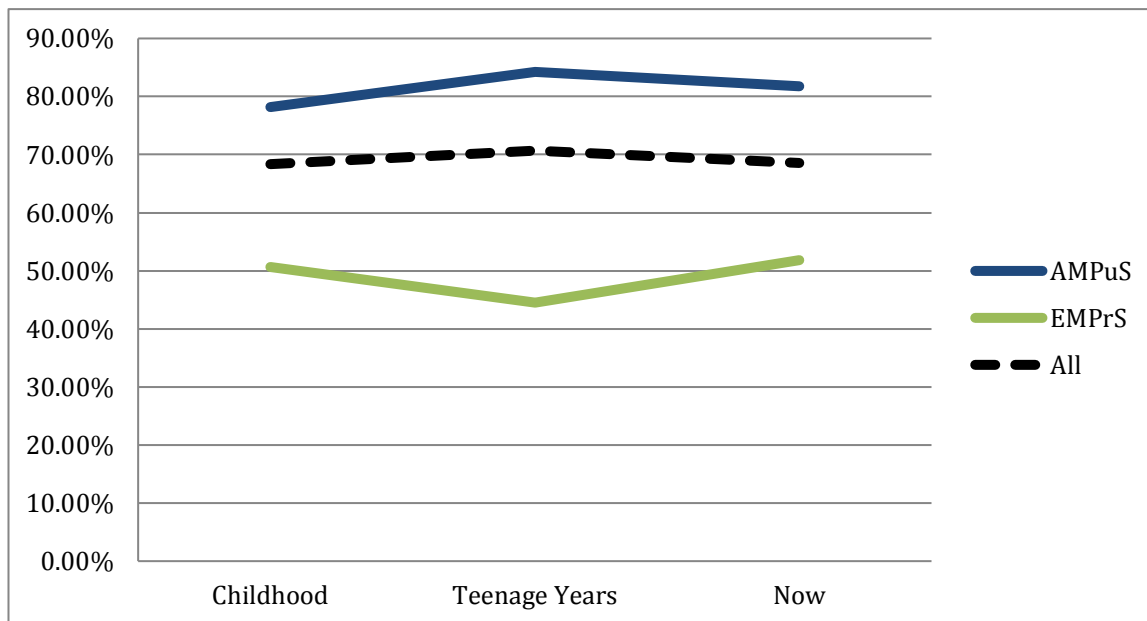
**Figure 2 Percentage of respondents reporting enjoyment of free time reading in English at each stage of their lives (by school background).**

A similar pattern is evident for English writing (Figure 3), with an overall rise among both groups over the three time periods, and with significant differences in the data for the two groups for both childhood (27.2% vs. 50.3%) ( $z$ -score = -5.1023;  $p = 0$ ) and the teenage period (48.2% vs. 66%) ( $z$ -score = -3.7914;  $p = 0.00016$ ), but (unlike the data for English reading) there is also a significant difference, though to a lesser extent, in the current period (65.7% vs. 75%) ( $z$ -score = -2.0487;  $p = 0.04036$ ).

The trends for MSA reading and writing are very different from those for English reading and writing. With regard to MSA reading enjoyment (Figure 4), there is a sizeable difference between the two sub-groups for the childhood period (78.2% vs. 50.6%) ( $z$ -score = 6.2005;  $p = 0$ ); then for the teenage period there is a rise in reported enjoyment of reading among the AMPuS respondents, and a fall among the EMPrS respondents (84.2% vs. 44.5%) ( $z$ -score = 9.2587;  $p = 0$ ). For the current period, reported enjoyment of reading then falls slightly among the AMPuS participants, and rises slightly in the EMPrS group (81.8% vs. 51.8%) ( $z$ -score = 7.1883;  $p = 0$ ).



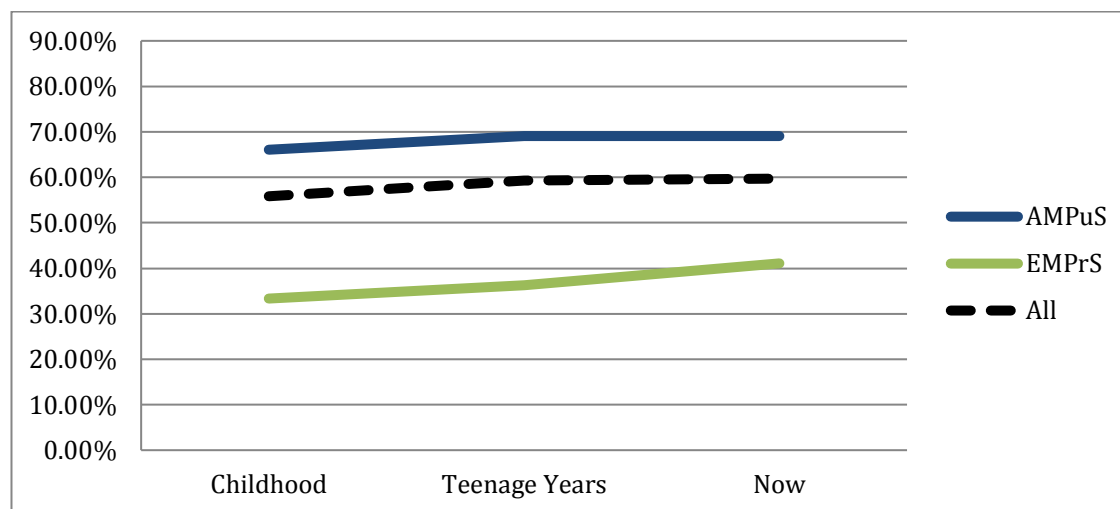
**Figure 3** Percentage of respondents reporting enjoyment of free time writing in English at each stage of their lives (by school background).



**Figure 4** Percentage of respondents reporting enjoyment of free time reading in Arabic at each stage of their lives (by school background)

Overall, there is no significant change for the two groups in reported enjoyment of MSA across the three time periods, and the differences between the groups remain statistically significant. For most respondents with Arabic-medium school backgrounds, there is a high level of reported enjoyment of free time MSA reading, but this is much less the case for those with backgrounds in English-medium private schools. The trends for MSA writing are somewhat similar to those for reading (Figure 5). However, there is generally a lower level of

reported enjoyment of writing than reading. Among the AMPuS group, there is nevertheless a fairly widespread enjoyment of MSA writing for the childhood period – almost double that of the EMPrS figure (66.07% vs. 33.33%) (z-score = 6.8354;  $p = 0$ ). There is a very slight rise in the data for both groups for the teenage years (69.1% vs. 36.3%) (z-score = 7.0595;  $p = 0$ ), then no further overall rise in the AMPuS figure to the current period, but a slight rise in the EMPrS figure. However, the difference between the two groups remains statistically significant (69.1% vs. 41.1%) (z-score = 6.014;  $p = 0$ ).



**Figure 5 Percentage of respondents reporting enjoyment of free time writing in Arabic at each stage of their lives (by school background)**

Interview and other field data shows unique trajectories for all participants. There are EMPrS background women for whom reading and writing in English have never been enjoyable, and those for whom MSA is more enjoyable than English. There are AMPuS participants who have loved reading in English and MSA since childhood, and those who report having been neutral about MSA their whole lives. Nevertheless, much of the qualitative data mirrored the trajectories evident in the quantitative data.

EMPrS background women often reported enthusiasm for reading and writing in English from an early age and mentioned early encouragement by parents to read in English and Arabic. Indeed, they often report starting to learn to read and write in both languages even before kindergarten. In primary, middle and high school, there is a far greater emphasis on English, however. They are often encouraged by teachers to read in English (one interviewee mentioned being given summer holiday reading lists), but there is much less

encouragement to read in Arabic, and several mentioned never having read an Arabic book in their free time (apart from the Qur'an). They often evaluate their English literacy skills as being above their Arabic skills, particularly with regard to writing. Although these students generally value EA very highly and view the Classical Arabic of the Qur'an as very precious indeed, their orientation generally appears to be strongly towards English, especially in terms of their own engagement in reading and writing. In terms of daily speech acts, they often report codeswitching in English and EA, or using English in daily conversations with friends of a similar background.

AMPuS background participants often reported a love of reading and writing in Arabic from an early age, encouraged by parents or other family members. Relatively few mentioned being encouraged to read in English. Very few reported being encouraged to read and write in free time by teachers at school (in either language). The majority of their school classes were in Arabic, with around one hour per day of English. However, many participants commented that the English classes were often conducted wholly in Arabic and that they were very grammar focused (rather than developing communicative or literacy skills). The view that these school English classes were very weak was often expressed by AMPuS respondents, and they frequently attributed their relative weakness in English to insufficient preparation at school. Those who regarded their English skills as being adequate often commented that they succeeded despite schooling, and frequently attributed their success to leisure time interests developed particularly from grades 5 and 6 and onwards into the teenage years. Interests in popular culture (e.g. English sub-titled Japanese anime and manga, Korean drama, Bollywood movies, and American music, TV and movies), along with online social networking and increased, though often still limited, use of English outside the home contributed to a rising enthusiasm for English, including reading and writing. As they enter young adulthood, encounters with English outside the home increase further, in social spaces such as shopping, eating out and travel, but particularly in the educational field, in the University, where AMPuS students have extended conversations with 'native-speaker' English teachers, often for the first time, and, crucially from a literacy point of view, begin to engage with academic content in English textbooks and to write assignments in English. Enthusiasm for free time English

reading and writing are often reported as being very high at this stage. In some cases, this may be an intentional effort to improve their English to survive or do well at University, while others emphasize being motivated by the leisure time interests to which English gives access. It should be noted that the students who have passed through the foundation program, or who have entered directly into undergraduate programs, may be more predisposed to English than those who have failed the foundation program, or who have not proceeded to higher education institutions. Thus, the views expressed in this sample may not reflect the views of all young Emirati women. At the same time, it is important to recall that these AMPuS background participants are often still oriented strongly towards Arabic and report that Arabic reading and writing were enjoyable free time activities from childhood onwards. Their leisure time interests might engender literacy practices in Arabic, such as reading newspaper articles on UAE football or reading and writing Arabic poetry, or listening to and reading Arabic song lyrics. Some may engage in free time reading and writing in Arabic in a conscious effort to maintain their Arabic as they progress through university, worried that English is 'taking over' their Arabic.

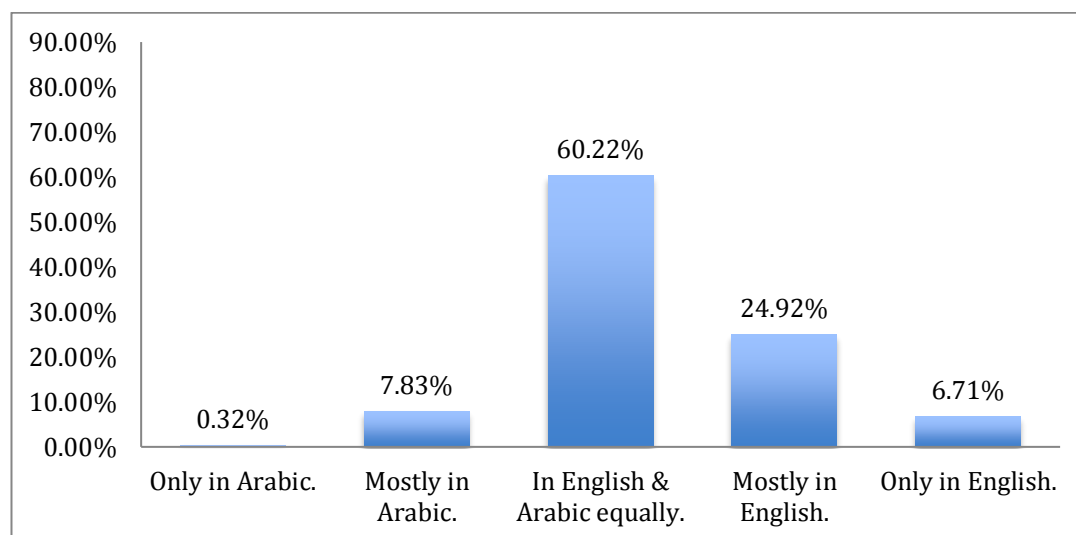
Thus, the interviews and other field data tend to confirm that there are significant differences in the leisure time literacy trends for these two groups. However, it is also clear that each individual has her own story, as we shall see in the case studies below.

#### *2.4.2 Preferred Language of Undergraduate Study*

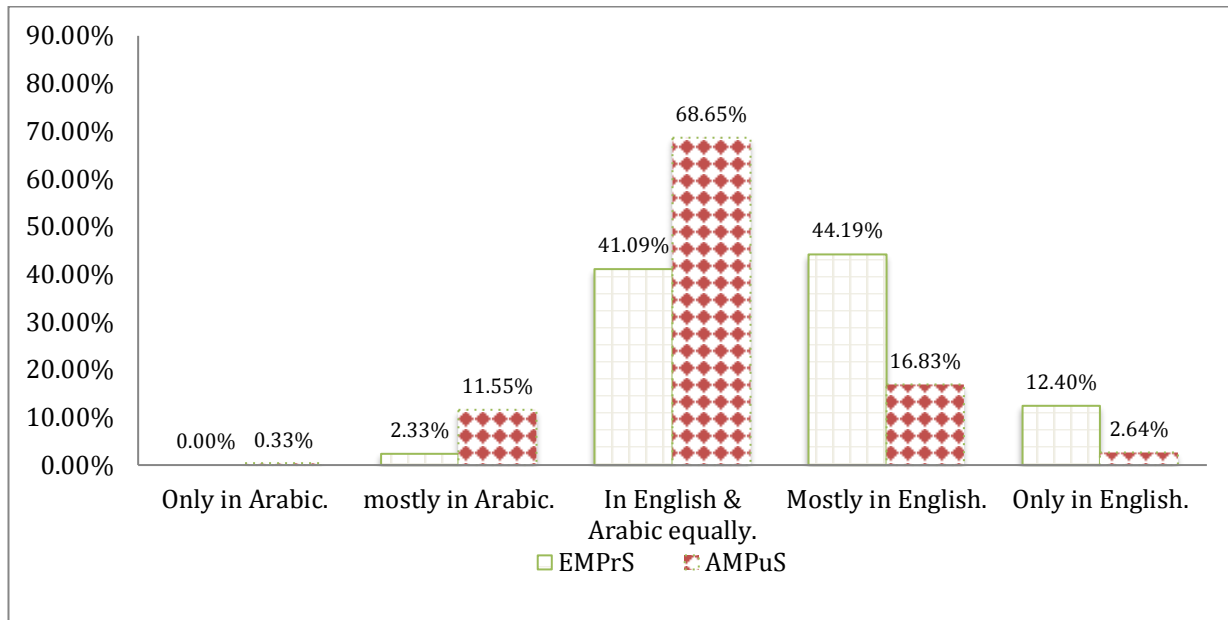
Respondents were asked to state their study language preference by completing the sentence 'In my opinion, we should study...', selecting from the following options: 'only in Arabic', 'mostly in Arabic', 'in English and Arabic equally', 'mostly in English' and 'only in English'. The results (Figure 6) revealed that the majority of respondents would prefer a balance of study languages quite different from that which is currently in operation in the University. Of the 626 respondents to this question, only two (0.32%) were in favour of studying exclusively in Arabic, and a further 49 (7.83%) supported studying mostly in Arabic. In contrast, 42 respondents (6.71%) expressed a preference for studying in English only, while 156 (24.92%) favoured

studying mostly in English. The majority of respondents, however, stated a preference for studying in English and Arabic equally (377 respondents, or 60.22%).

As above, there were significant differences between AMPuS and EMPrS sub-groupings (Figure 7). 68.65% of AMPuS respondents selected 'English and Arabic equally', compared with 41.09% of EMPrS respondents (z-score = -5.361;  $p = 0$ ). 19.47% of the AMPuS group selected 'mostly' or 'only' in English, as against 56.59% for the EMPrS group (z-score = -7.6645;  $p = 0$ ). 11.55% of the AMPuS respondents selected 'mostly' or 'only' in Arabic, compared with only 2.33% of EMPrS respondents (none of whom selected 'only in Arabic') (z-score = 3.1717;  $p = 0.00152$ ). Thus, there was a strong tendency for EMPrS background respondents to favor studying in English, while AMPuS background respondents strongly favored an equal balance of Arabic and English.



**Figure 6 Study Language Preferences (All Respondents)**



**Figure 7 Study Language Preferences (by School Background)**

Interview and other field data revealed ambivalent feelings with regard to study language preferences among EMPrS individuals. Because these students tend to have higher levels of English proficiency on entering the University than their AMPuS peers, the majority enter directly, without going through the pre-sessional English program. Because they are familiar with studying in English, and may have taken international examinations such as General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and International Baccalaureate (IB), the transition into tertiary studies is relatively smooth. However, these women often comment on the challenges they face in the compulsory Arabic-medium courses in the first three semesters of University. Although Arabic-medium classes in Arabic and Islamic Studies are compulsory for Emirati citizens in primary, middle and high schools, many EMPrS respondents mentioned feeling poorly prepared for their tertiary Arabic courses. As a result, they often stated a preference for studying only or mostly in English. However, the interviews revealed somewhat conflicted feelings in this area. They were often torn between their own strong preferences for English and their ability to perform better academically (and professionally) in English, on the one hand, and their loyalty towards Emirati Arabic and MSA as the languages associated with Emirati national identity and Islam on the other.

Though some AMPuS background individuals enter the bachelors program directly, the majority spend between 10 weeks and two years in foundational English. They may thus be a little older than their EMPrS peers on beginning their degrees. The transition from high school to tertiary studies can be challenging given the shift from Arabic to English, but many students commented on how valuable the foundation English program was in making this transition easier. Nevertheless, once they enter the General Education program, they may see themselves as competing with younger students who ‘sound American’ and ‘speak fluently in English’ and this can be daunting at first. The higher-achieving AMPuS interviewees often talked of their struggles and strategies to bring their academic reading and writing in English up to an adequate level in the first year. In contrast, the Arabic-medium classes they take were often reported as being low-challenge in that they cover similar ground to what has been covered in high school. Lower achieving AMPuS background interviewees often mentioned the immense challenge of developing academic literacy skills in English and talked of coping strategies that they had developed in order to avoid extensive reading.

Several interviewees, particularly those in their third and fourth years, where almost all courses are taught in English, reported anxiety at ‘losing’ their ability to read and write in Arabic. One AMPuS participant reported having to ‘think in English and translate’ when doing (occasional) written assignments in MSA, which she clearly found disturbing. Another issue is that some of these women feel that they have never been able to excel academically in English. A fourth year commented in the interview that her CGPA of 2.6 would have been ‘much better’ if she had been able to study more courses in Arabic. Whereas she generally achieved grades in the range ‘C’ to ‘B-’ in her English-medium Communications major courses, she received ‘B’ to ‘A’ grades in the few Arabic-medium courses she took. At the same time, it is interesting to note that students from Arabic-medium schools were very well represented among the highest CGPA’s reported by survey respondents.

Most AMPuS background women in this study clearly saw the value of English for their studies, careers and future family lives, yet they also tended to be more strongly oriented to Arabic than their EMPrS peers. Thus, they were more likely to select ‘English and Arabic equally’ in terms of study language preference.

## 2.5 Two Case Studies

I report here the results of two interviews: one with a respondent I shall refer to as Afra (EMPrS), and the other whom I shall refer to as Amna (AMPuS).

### 2.5.1 Afra (*EMPrS Background*)

At the time of the interviews, Afra was a 19-year-old second year student who had recently declared her major, in Finance. Her parents are both university educated, and her father, now retired, held a managerial position in a government department. Unusually for the majority of survey respondents, Afra's mother had a lengthy career, working as a high school science teacher and later as a hospital X-ray technician. Although both parents are university educated, and are literate in Arabic, her father is not able to read or write in English, but 'speaks a few words'. Afra's mother is literate in both languages.

Afra's father enjoys reading in his free time, mostly newspapers and religious texts in Arabic, and her mother has similar reading tastes, but often reads in English also. They both read (and told) stories to their children as they were growing up, in Arabic and/or English, and taught Afra the basics of English and Arabic alphabets before kindergarten. Afra also points to the help that she received indirectly:

It was mostly my mum would be sitting and she would be helping my older brother with his homework and I'd be sitting with them just doing the same things.

Afra attended a private primary school with an American curriculum that was largely English-medium, though she points out that the Arabic curriculum was relatively strong in that she studied not only Arabic and Islamic Studies in Arabic but also History from Grade 5. She later moved to an international high school, where all subjects except Arabic and Islamic Studies were in English.

Afra's trajectory in terms of Arabic and English literacy is fairly typical of the overall trajectory for EMPrS background respondents. Although she strongly agreed that Arabic reading was enjoyable in childhood, and she read newspapers and stories her parents bought for her, for the teenage years and 'now', she evaluated her

enjoyment of Arabic as 'neutral'. As a child, she very much enjoyed reading in English and read 'random stories' bought for her by her parents, along with those available from school, and English language newspapers. Unlike for Arabic, however, her enjoyment of reading in English did not decrease, but remained at a high level into the teen years. From fifth grade and into her teens, she began reading series such as *Lizzy McGuire* (Bevan, 2005) and *Mary Kate and Ashley* (Willard, 2002) along with English newspapers and *Friday* magazine in the local *Gulf News*. Her strong enjoyment of English contrasted with her 'neutral' feelings for reading in Arabic, and this was something she was not entirely happy about:

It's kind of really sad...it was just that phase where I started reading novels in English. They were just more enjoyable. There were more things I can relate with. I just remember going to [local bookstore] and getting stuff in English I don't even remember an Arabic section - it was probably somewhere at the back.

Aged 19, she still expressed strong agreement that free time reading in English was enjoyable, though she reported not reading as much as she had, due to the pressure of University work. She was still neutral about reading in Arabic, however. Although the Qur'an clearly has immense value to her, and she reported reading it, in Arabic, every Friday and in its entirety during Ramadan, Afra claimed to have read only one other book in Arabic: a translation of *The Secret* (Byrne, 2006), which she chose to read for an extensive reading assignment in a University Arabic course.

Afra's strong orientation towards English was very evident in both academic and non-academic contexts. With regard to her university studies, she felt that her English reading and writing were far stronger than her Arabic; in fact, she felt her Arabic was weak. When asked why she felt that, she said, 'It's not a feeling... it's been confirmed by grades'. Afra's overall Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) was high, at 3.6 (approximately A-), but her grades in compulsory Arabic language classes were in the C range, which had an adverse effect on her CGPA. She attributed her self-professed weakness in Arabic to 'my schooling

background, lack of interest in Arabic.' When asked why she thought she was not interested in Arabic, she replied:

I don't know...it wasn't planned...it was just a natural move towards English, when I started reading books in English...in fifth or sixth grade.

Despite her relatively weak Arabic, Afra wrote in the survey that she believed that the University should offer its curriculum in English and Arabic equally. However, in the interview she expressed surprise that she had written that. On reflection, she clarified that from a personal point of view, she preferred an English-medium curriculum - otherwise her CGPA would be much lower than it is - but she conceded that both languages are important for the development of the UAE and so a balance would be preferable.

It is important to point out that Afra's lack of enthusiasm for Arabic relates mostly to reading, and particularly writing, in MSA. The language of her home, and the language she frequently used around campus, was EA; and she was entirely comfortable using it, unlike MSA. She did point out that with Emirati friends of a similar background to hers, she tended to speak English, or a mix of EA and English. At primary school, where her social network included Emiratis, she often spoke EA, but at the international high school, most of her social circle were non-Arabic-speaking expatriates, or expatriates from other parts of the Arab world. English became the preferred language of daily communication (in the case of the Arab students, to avoid issues with differing Arabic dialects). In contrast to her daily life outside the home, however, Afra reported that she very rarely speaks English at home. Although her parents were clearly predisposed to her acquiring cultural capital in the form of an English language education, Afra felt that it was not acceptable to speak English in the home. Indeed, she recalled being laughed at and gently taunted by her parents and brothers for speaking English. This may be partly due to the strong perceived role that Arabic has in the construction of Emirati and Arab identity; but in Afra's case it may also be because English is not a language shared by all members of the household. However, it was entirely acceptable for Afra to engage in literacy practices in English in the home.

Indeed, it was positively encouraged. These literacy practices might include both EA and English in that she would often discuss with her parents, in EA, issues arising from her English reading and writing assignments.

In looking to the future, Afra envisaged a career in which English would be of prime importance. She hoped to find a job that would enable her to travel around the world. She did not intend to use MSA to any great extent, and because of that, did not intend to pursue a career in the UAE public sector.

In August 2013, about to start her senior year, and having switched majors to Marketing, Afra commented as follows on my written account of the survey and interview:

Everything represented was accurate to how I felt at the time of the interview. I did not think I would feel this different so soon, but almost starting my senior year with a concentration in marketing I am much more aware of the importance of Arabic communication skills.

Afra now saw the value of being multilingual and multiliterate for career purposes, particularly in the field of marketing (i.e. more so than for finance, her previous major), so she was more predisposed towards MSA than previously; yet she was still very clearly oriented to English in many aspects of her life, and continued to feel more comfortable reading and writing in English than she did using MSA.

### *2.5.2 Amna (AMPuS Background)*

Amna is a 24-year-old graduate student currently working as a government auditor. She has been a very high-achieving student, graduating with a CGPA of 3.9. The youngest of nine children, Amna is the daughter of a university graduate father who works for a government department, and a mother who is a housewife and who, Amna informs me, is illiterate apart from being able to recite parts of the Qur'an from memory 'for prayer purposes'. Amna started her literacy journey in kindergarten and does not recall being read to at home prior to that, nor being helped to develop her literacy at home (however, she is careful to point out that her mother was generally very encouraging, despite her inability to read or write). Amna attended Arabic-medium public schools. Only one of her classes – English – included a language other than Arabic, yet most of

that class was also conducted in Arabic. She attributes her success in English mostly to the instruction and feedback she received during university foundation and general education English courses, and to the extensive reading she did in this period. In the interview, she also mentioned that during the teenage years, her English improved greatly as a result of watching American TV and movies, which she watched with Arabic or English sub-titles until she reached a point at which they were no longer necessary.

In terms of free time reading in English (which she interpreted as 'reading fiction'), Amna disagrees that it was enjoyable when she was a child and teenager, and she did not engage in it to any great extent. Now she is 'neutral' about reading in her free time in English. A very different trajectory is reported for Arabic, however, with strong agreement that reading in Arabic has been enjoyable from childhood onwards. She says that she is more 'at home' reading fiction in Arabic:

I understand every single word, so I can really be involved with the characters and erm, when I have to do it in English I lose my focus very easily. It's true, I just lose my focus. It's not that they're not interesting, and there's really amazing pieces, but for me Arabic is more enjoyable.

The pattern for writing is similar. She is neutral about English, does not write English in her free time and agrees, though less enthusiastically than for reading, that writing in Arabic is enjoyable. However, she also says:

I don't write, writing's not my thing, I prefer reading, but er, I think writing in Arabic is nice. However, the grammar of Arabic is a little bit complicated...I'm very good at the grammar in Arabic, but it's complicated to be honest.

The perceived difficulty of MSA compared to English (writing in particular) was expressed many times in both the survey and the interviews.

Amna clearly sees the instrumental value of English and is a very empowered reader. Though she claimed not to be a free time reader of English, she did point out that sometimes she is obliged to read English in order to achieve certain free time goals:

Unless it is like because I like technology, so in order to keep up you have to read a lot of articles in English. When it comes to how to jailbreak the [brand of phone] for instance...So yes, I have to read in detail in English and I've been breaking a lot of [brand of phone], and [brand of tablet] (laughing).

Here she reports willingly engaging in free time English reading, not for the intrinsic enjoyment of reading (which she clearly experiences reading Arabic novels), but for its instrumental value. Amna's self-professed loss of focus while reading English fiction appears to be entirely absent from this kind of reading, and from her academic and professional reading, which she does almost entirely in English. She recalls that in order to catch up with students from private school backgrounds and then excel in her studies, she would read every single item that was given to her by her professors, and more. She believes that to 'add value' in an assignment, she must read at least 30 pages for every page she is to write. For her, English is the language of academia and of the professional world.

All the terms I know are in English. Even now, if I read something, the same major, in Arabic, I don't understand it because the terms varies a lot so I prefer...reading in English when it comes to my field because I understand.

Although it is true that working for a UAE government department requires the use of Modern Standard Arabic, as stipulated in Articles 2-4 of the Arabic Language Charter (UAE Government, 2012), because Amna is assigned for periods of several months at a time to private sector companies that conduct their business in English, most of her daily work is in English; on the other hand, final reports are written in MSA. Unlike the majority of AMPuS respondents, she believes that the University should conduct its courses mostly in English.

I'm not against Arabic but many thinkers and scholars and knowledge is made in other languages so we need to take the best of that and not just to be very erm, into Arabic without considering that there's even material. Like, I don't think that we can carry most of the courses

in the University only in Arabic, I don't assume there's very advanced research and stuff like that in Arabic.

Amna's response to my written account of our interview was as follows:

I believe you have presented my thoughts correctly, I just want to clarify one thing regarding the [above] quote...I meant that I personally could not find neither researches and academic journals written in Arabic nor translated into Arabic regarding my field (finance, accounting and banking) during my time at the university or currently as I am doing my MA.

## **2.6 Discussion**

The results suggest that, in general, MSA and English are both highly valued languages of literacy among female Emirati graduates and undergraduates, although there are significant differences in the data with respect to the language involved, the skill (reading or writing), primary and secondary schooling background and medium of instruction during schooling.

Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and capital are useful in explaining the differing predispositions of the respondents in the sample. AMPuS background students' reflections on their childhood suggest that they tend to operate in a relatively monoliterate (MSA) and diglossic (EA/MSA) social space of home and school. Although they have English classes from early in life, these may be conducted largely in Arabic, there may be little encouragement to read in English at home or school, and they may not be using English in their daily lives to any great extent. There may consequently be no particular linguistic habitus, and very little linguistic capital, in English, but a strong linguistic habitus and growing linguistic capital with regard to MSA. Thus, at this early stage in their lives, AMPuS background participants tend to engage in few literacy events and practices in English, but are engaging in a growing number of literacy practices in Arabic.

As they become teenagers, predispositions change for many. Although the level of English-medium instruction remains modest, a growing interest in other areas, or fields and more encounters outside home and

school brings these young women into contact with a larger linguistic marketplace, in which English is predominant. They begin to develop predispositions and capital with regard to English, and gradually start to become biliterate (English and MSA) and multilingual (English, MSA, EA). As they transition into adulthood, switching from an Arabic-medium high school to a largely English-medium university, a number of English literacy practices have already begun to be established, but it is in early adulthood that English predispositions and capital develop most. Here the combined effects of studying in English, more English encounters outside the home, and more literacy events around leisure time interests lead to the establishment of English literacy and speech practices alongside those in Arabic. For some, the balance between the two can be challenging to negotiate. In some senses, there may be what Bourdieu (2007) referred to as a 'cleft habitus', in that the linguistic predispositions that these young women develop by young adulthood, as a result of their higher educational, social and leisure time experiences might contrast markedly with predispositions developed in the family home and through primary and secondary education. They may perceive their focus on, and progress in, English as being detrimental to their Arabic proficiency. They might also be concerned that their changing predispositions towards English conflict in some ways with their established Arab and Emirati identities, or that their relative lack of capital in English conflicts with their view of their own academic abilities.

The predispositions of EMPrS women are greatly influenced by the predominantly English language educational 'field' in which they grow up. Although they may be encouraged at an early age, at home, to engage in MSA literacy practices, reports suggest that little encouragement is received during school years to pursue Arabic reading and writing as leisure time activities. In addition, MSA is generally not seen as an instrumental language for developing the kinds of interests that these women gravitate towards in teenage years and young adulthood (see also Kamhieh et al., 2011). As a result, the development of linguistic capital in MSA is limited and their repertoire of MSA literacy practices somewhat truncated (Blommaert, 2010). Almost all respondents emphasized the precious nature of the Qur'an and some underlined the sacred nature of Classical Arabic for Muslims ('the language to be spoken in Paradise'). EMPrS respondents were no less emphatic in this regard; nevertheless, in terms of most other forms of literacy, they tend to be more strongly

oriented towards English. The concept of 'cleft habitus' might also be applicable to these individuals in that their strong orientation towards English may conflict with the predispositions developed in the home. Although these EMPrS participants are generally comfortable speaking EA in the home, the language used in the home may often be very different from the EA-English hybrid used in daily conversation with their EMPrS background peers (hence Afra's family's gentle taunting when she uses English at home), and apart from their Arabic literacy practices with regard to the Qur'an, their general literacy practices may be considerably different from those of their parents and grandparents. This difference in predispositions may be felt as an internal conflict (e.g. Afra's feeling of sadness at her relative weakness in Arabic).

With regard to study language preferences, AMPuS background women generally see the importance of studying in both languages, both from a career point of view and in terms of their identities as Emiratis, Arabs and Muslims. EMPrS background women are more ambivalent, but many see that an emphasis on both languages might be beneficial overall, even if it might not be in their best interests from a CGPA point of view. Findlow (2006) reported data on the same question (though not according to educational background), gathered in the late 1990's. Her data revealed that 50% of students favored studying in English, while 28% preferred MSA and 22% 'both'. This contrasts with the 32% of respondents in this sample who chose 'only or mostly in English', the 8% who chose 'only or mostly in Arabic' and the 60% who chose 'both'. Findlow's data was gathered at a different national university in the UAE, where there is a higher proportion of Arabic courses than there are at the institution in this study. Some of Findlow's informants might have selected that university because of the possibility of taking Arabic language courses – hence the higher percentage of students selecting 'Arabic only'. For similar reasons, however, one might expect respondents in the present study to have selected 'English only' to a greater extent, whereas in fact the majority expressed a preference to study in both languages. This suggests a growing awareness among Emirati youth that both English and MSA are important for their personal and national futures

What might be seen as a 'cleft linguistic habitus' might also be described more constructively as a 'dual habitus' in that these young women have linguistic predispositions in both English and Arabic that will be

crucial in their future lives. They are products of an environment markedly different from the one in which their parents, and particularly their grandparents, grew up. The national and transnational, physical and virtual social spaces (fields) that they move through, which are in constant dynamic flow and flux, work to structure their predispositions, yet these women are also in themselves potential agents of change, creating social identities and ‘culturing’ through their daily discursive acts, events and practices (Heath & Street, 2008; Piller, 2011) to the extent that their sociolinguistic capital allows.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

The NLS approach views literacy practices as the general cultural ways that individuals use written language in their lives. Local linguistic practices in the UAE are in a state of flux, becoming increasingly diverse as the nation takes its place in the world economy and as it experiences, on a daily basis, constant transnational flows of people and languages. In former days, the inhabitants of this region would predominantly employ oral Emirati Arabic and written MSA to create and recreate social identities, and Arabic was seen as vital to these identities. Today, young people in this country are discursively constructing cultural identities in a number of languages, but principally in Emirati Arabic, MSA and English. As Canagarajah (2013, p. 199) points out,

Languages don’t determine or limit our identities, but provide creative resources to construct new and revised identities through reconstructed forms and meaning of new indexicalities.

Though Arabic has immense value to the majority of these women, English increasingly takes a significant role in their lives, and not just from a study or career point of view. Indeed, for some, English has a wider range of uses than Arabic. Yet there seems to be a growing awareness among Emiratis of the critical importance of safeguarding the Arabic language while still developing substantial capital in English. Many would thus welcome a higher education curriculum that gave equal prominence to English and Modern Standard Arabic.

For university educators in the Gulf teaching in English or Arabic, the development of literacy practices is a key to successful learning regardless of subject area. Many of our students may have had very limited exposure to English reading and writing prior to university study, either in their school work or in the home. Some may

have had limited exposure to literacy in Arabic. It is thus important that we provide opportunities for students to read and write as part of our courses. For example, rather than simplifying course materials in order to 'get the point across' (e.g. in the form of Powerpoint slides) we can include required readings in our courses, ideally as a regular classroom activity, that present key course content. These readings should be carefully selected (possibly with the help of language teaching or learning specialists) so that they are sufficiently challenging but not overwhelming for our students. It is also essential that key vocabulary items be taught prior to reading. Through the use of such expository texts, vocabulary development, and other literacy building activities across the curriculum, we can play a role in developing our students' literacy practices, equipping them with the literacy skills they will need throughout their undergraduate years and beyond.

## Preamble to Chapter 3

---

Having published the first article in early 2014, in the first half of that year, I continued work writing field notes on my ongoing observations, transcribing and coding interviews, doing follow-up interviews with a small group of participants, and performing further statistical analyses on the survey data. During this period, I also reformulated my main research question so that it focused on language choices in literacy and daily speech practices. I became particularly interested in multilingual practices and language policies in Emirati homes, and this happened to fit perfectly with a publication project devoted to *Language, Identity and Education on the Arabian Peninsula - Bilingual Policies in a Multilingual Context*. I already had some data on this, both from the survey and from the interviews, but in order to examine the problem comprehensively, more data was needed. I, therefore, devised an online discussion board question on ‘Languages of the Home’ for my four cohorts of Composition students, as follows: *What is/are the main language(s) that you speak at home with the various people in your house (parents, siblings, staff) and do you tend to mix languages? If so, can you give a real-life example?* The data that I gathered from this discussion formed part of the qualitative data for the book chapter, along with selections from the interviews. I also made use of the quantitative data on generational differences in language and literacy. I worked on the article over the Summer of 2014 while on holiday in London, and into the Fall semester on campus. In terms of my background reading, during the Summer break I read key texts on Multilingualism (e.g. Blackledge & Creese, 2010, 2014; Blommaert, 2010) which introduced me to concepts such as indexicality, heteroglossia and language ideology, which I was to incorporate in this chapter. The book, titled *Language, Identity and Education on the Arabian Peninsula - Bilingual Policies in a Multilingual Context* was published in November 2016.

The contributions I made with this publication were twofold. First of all, there is a dearth of data relating to language and literacy across the generations in the UAE. The quantitative data that I reported shows statistically-significant changes across three generations in terms of reported L1, L2, literacy levels and languages of literacy. It also gives statistical evidence that shows that diversity is not a new phenomenon for

the UAE, yet this diversity is not often referred to in public forums, as will be discussed further in Chapter Four. Secondly, the qualitative data on languages of the home is innovative in that there are, to my knowledge, no other publications that explore Emirati home language policies and ideologies. The editor of the book, Louisa Buckingham, felt that my chapter was appropriate as a 'scene-setter' for the book, and so it became the lead chapter of the volume. As it was published only recently, there are as yet no citations, so I am yet to see what impact the chapter will have. In reflecting on the chapter, two years after writing the first draft, I see a development in my thinking from the first publication (Chapter Two). The incorporation of concepts such as language ideology, indexicality and heteroglossia facilitates a more sophisticated analysis of the complexities of language choice. Were I to write this chapter again, however, I would incorporate a distinction between heteroglossia and translanguaging (as mentioned in 1.2.6 above), and aim to be more explicit in discussing the role of government policies in home language choices, which I will nevertheless address in Chapter Five.

I would also clarify an aspect that may not be clear in the publication, which is the difference between the phenomenon of 'Arabizi' and situations in which individuals 'switch' or 'move' between languages. By 'Arabizi' I mean the mixing of Arabic and English within a written sentence or short stretch of speech (as in the example I give in the introduction to the chapter). In contrast, some speakers/writers do not mix in this way but will use one language for a time and then move to another language. Indeed, it may be part of their language ideology not to mix languages in the way that Arabizi does, in an attempt to preserve the ideologically-constructed boundaries between languages (e.g. Shaikha in Chapter Four). A perspective on the kind of contact language use apparent in Arabizi, which I did not explore fully in the publications in Chapters Three and Four, is that it can be seen as a language practice resulting from contexts of use, rather than as a new codified variety combining, in the case of Arabizi, English and EA. Canagarajah (2013) makes this point with reference to English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), preferring the term Lingua Franca English (LFE) (Firth, 1996) to emphasize the pragmatic nature of the practice, rather than any grammatical normativity. In fact, he argues that such language practices could not be easily codified as each context of use might produce different kinds of language, different 'inter-subjective accomplishments' (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 69). Jørgensen et al. (2011)

suggest that the term ‘linguistic feature’ is more useful than ‘language’ in describing hybrid language practices. The relevance of these ideas for my work in Chapter Three is that the kind of language practice evident in Arabizi is subject to home language policies that are linked to prevailing language ideologies and indexicalities. Such practices may be permitted, encouraged, discouraged or even forbidden in Emirati households depending on these ideological positions. However, in the Conclusion of this publication (3.6) I argue that Emiratis may need to reach a new consensus on what the parameters of Emirati Arabic and being Emirati are – I ask, ‘how much English can someone speak and still be said to be speaking EA and indexing Emirati identities?’. It may be that what is needed is a new tolerance of the kinds of language practice, and novel linguistic features, exemplified by Arabizi, rather than seeing Arabizi as a threatening new hybrid variety.

Another addition I would make if I were writing this book chapter now is that I would refer to work on language socialization, as it is very pertinent to my work (e.g. Duranti, Ochs, & Schieffelin, 2012; Garrett, 2007). The data that I present reveals several reports of situations in which the reactions of parents or grandparents (and teachers in Chapter Four) can be viewed as examples of ‘socialization of habitus’ (Kulick & Schieffelin, 2005), of how predispositions are built and reinforced in everyday interactions with key people in our lives.

## Chapter 3 Heritage, Heteroglossia & Home – Multilingualism in Emirati families

### (O'Neill, 2016)

---

#### 3.1 Introduction

The United Arab Emirates is an increasingly diverse country due in part to the steady transnational inflow of expatriate labour that has occurred over the past fifty years. Linguistically, it is becoming a superdiverse society (Vertovec, 2007) in which several varieties of Arabic, Indian languages, Tagalog, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, English and many other languages can be heard by simply walking through one of its many palatial shopping malls. Expatriate workers and their families represent 88.53% of the country's population, while Emirati nationals account for the remaining 11.47% (UAE National Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Globally, the fact that migrants outnumber locals to such a degree is an unusual state of affairs. Public debates demonstrate that Emiratis feel some ambivalence about being a minority in their own country. While there is widespread recognition of the need for foreign expertise and labour to build and service the economy, newspaper editorials frequently voice Emirati concerns that the national language, culture and traditions are under threat (e.g. Ahmed, 2013; Swan, 2014; Zayed, 2013). English, in particular, is seen as a seductive influence by some (Pennington, 2014), dominating many aspects of life in the country. Consequently, the emergence of 'Arabizi' or 'Arabish', a mix of Emirati Arabic (EA) and English, in both spoken and online written contexts, particularly among young people, is a frequent cause for concern and debate (Leech, 2013; Pennington, 2015). Arabizi may involve the mixing of Arabic and English words in daily speech, as follows (two students overheard recently by the author on a university campus – translation follows):

Student A: Agoolich...Inti finished the homework

hag el Communication class?

Student B: Still...You're done, sah?

Student A: No, wallah. I didn't even start it.

Student A: Hey [lit. 'I say to you' ]...Did you  
finish the homework for the  
Communication class?

Student B: Not yet...You're done, right?

Student A: No, honestly. I didn't even start it.

Arabizi may also be seen in online written contexts involving either the mixing of Arabic and English words using Arabic script or, more commonly, a modified Roman script (see Bianchi, 2012; Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003).

In addition to the Arabizi phenomenon, young Emiratis can also often be heard switching between English and Emirati Arabic (EA) for extended stretches, or may be seen chatting or posting online (e.g. on Instagram or Twitter) in EA using Arabic script in some postings and in English in Roman script in others, often when addressing their fellow Emiratis.

It is against this background that this study asks how the changes that the UAE has experienced in the last fifty years have impacted language practices in Emirati homes. It focuses in particular on language practices in the homes of female Emirati graduates and undergraduates of a mainly English-medium national public university based in Dubai and Abu Dhabi that caters largely for Emirati nationals, the majority of whom are female. The families of these young women generally support English-medium higher education for their daughters. They are, to varying degrees, persuaded of the instrumental necessity of English in the UAE and see it as a vital part of the country's development and their daughters' future careers and married lives. They expect their children to be able to communicate successfully in English in encounters outside the home; they also expect them to be literate in both MSA and English. However, attitudes to the use of English (and other foreign languages) in the home vary considerably from family to family, leading to diverse home language practices across Emirati society that might be arranged along a continuum from monolingual to multilingual, or diglossic to

heteroglossic. The degree of linguistic diversity and language mixing among some Emirati families was summed up by AlShaima, a graduate of the University and one of the Emirati reviewers who read a draft of this chapter:

I could see one or two of my friends in your samples, like S - her mom is from Iran and they speak a mixture of Emirati Arabic and Farsi, N - her mom is Indian and they speak EA, Urdu and English, R - she is a Bedouin who speaks EA with her family while mixing EA, other Arabic dialects and English with us, her friends. Her younger sister on the other hand tends to prefer and uses mostly English at home and with her peers and siblings but definitely not with her Bedouin grandparents. There are many other examples, and those only from my social arena...

Following an outline of the key concepts and methods used in the study, I will draw primarily on quantitative data to describe linguistic change in Emirati families over the past three generations before going on to present and discuss qualitative findings related to the place of Arabic, English and other languages in contemporary Emirati homes.

### **3.2 Theory of Practice, Indexicality, Language Ideology and Heteroglossia**

The research reported here forms part of a larger project which is investigating first and second language and literacy practices in English and Arabic in a national university. The study uses Bourdieu's theory of practice and the concepts of indexicality, language ideology and heteroglossia to focus on the home language and literacy practices of these young women and their families, with particular emphasis on their linguistic predispositions and beliefs within rapidly changing local and global contexts. Bourdieu's theory of practice aims to connect everyday practices, including language practices, with the social and historical forces that created them. For Bourdieu (1977b, p. 653), a 'whole social structure is present in interaction'. Three key terms he employs are 'habitus', 'field,' and 'capital'. 'Habitus' refers to the embodied dispositions of people and institutions that prompt them to act in particular ways, which are structured by historical life experiences but which are also structuring in themselves (Bourdieu, 1984). Habitus operates within 'fields' or structured social

spaces, using various types of ‘capital’ (cultural, scientific, linguistic, etc.). These three concepts work together to create practices, as follows (1984, p. 101):

$$[(\text{habitus})(\text{capital})] + \text{field} = \text{practice}$$

In other words, ‘practice results from relations between one’s dispositions (habitus) and one’s position in a field (capital), within the current state of play of that social arena (field)’ (Maton, 2008). These concepts will be used in this chapter to examine how changing linguistic predispositions across and within generations, changes in the nature of linguistic capital (e.g. growing English language proficiency in the younger generation) and an increasingly diverse ‘linguistic market’ - a term used by Bourdieu (1991), similar to ‘linguistic field’ - are leading to changing language and literacy practices in Emirati homes.

Three other concepts that link micro and the macro contexts, and which are of value to this study, are ‘indexicality’ ‘language ideology’ and ‘heteroglossia’. ‘Indexicality’ refers to ‘language’s ability – through the sign – to call up social knowledge and association in an immediate and local context’ (Blackledge & Creese, 2010, p. 64). Choices as to which language or dialect to use in a given context, for example, may index subject positions (Davies & Harre, 1990) related to membership in a specific cultural or national group. Language choices are motivated by personal dispositions and indexicalities rooted in language ideologies, i.e. ‘beliefs about language, the ideas we hold about what good language is and ‘what the right thing to do’ linguistically is’ (Piller, 2011, p. 158). Traditional ideologies of language and multilingualism tended to view languages as separate bounded autonomous entities. However, several researchers working in the field of multilingualism and linguistic ethnography (e.g. Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Rampton, Maybin, & Roberts, 2014) view the perceived boundaries between languages as socially and ideologically constructed yet permeable. The term ‘heteroglossia’ (Bakhtin, 1981) has been employed by several of these scholars to describe situations in which people negotiate meaning using whatever signs they have at their disposal. Ivanov (Ivanov, 1999) defines heteroglossia as ‘the simultaneous use of different kinds of

speech or other signs, the tension between them, and their conflicting relationship...’, and the concept has considerable purchase in describing phenomena such as ‘Arabizi’ in multilingual contexts such as the UAE.

Although language and literacy researchers may see linguistic boundaries as socially-constructed, permeable and blurred, emic or participant-relevant beliefs may tell a very different story. Local language ideologies may construct languages as bounded entities with differing indexicalities, and this may lead members of particular national and cultural communities to fiercely patrol the boundaries of ‘their’ languages (or dialects) and the identities that they index, particularly in times of social change.

This study uses the above concepts to show how Emirati homes have become key locations in which locals, with their various predispositions, negotiate identities and position themselves with regard to cultural heritage and rapid sociocultural change and in relation to distinct ideologies of multilingualism.

### **3.3 Method**

The methodological framework employed in this project to focus on socially-situated language and literacy practices, is that of the Ethnography of Literacy (e.g. Baynham, 2004; Street, 1984). To find answers to the broad initial question of how female Emirati undergraduates engage with literacy in Arabic and English, I observed and interacted with students in the University, both in class and out of class (e.g. in office hours meetings, or informal meetings around campus). The field notes deriving from these observations, in addition to other data, such as discussion board postings, literacy journal entries, and social network comments were part of Stage One of the project, which began in 2011. Additionally, a ‘selective intermittent time mode’ of ethnographic enquiry (Jeffrey & Troman, 2004, p. 540) continued throughout the project until the time of writing this article, in the second half of 2014.

In addition to the ethnographically-informed methods in Stage One, the second stage of the project involved what Dörnyei (2007, p. 167) refers to as a ‘two-phased design’ - a questionnaire followed by semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was based on the themes emerging in the first part of the project as well as close observations of language and literacy in this context based on ten years’ teaching experience in the UAE. Thus,

the research employs quantitative and qualitative survey methods within an overall ethnographically-informed design (Blommaert & Van de Vijver, 2013). The questionnaire incorporated both closed and open-ended questions which focused on several aspects of literacy as a socially-situated phenomenon. For the purposes of this study, questionnaire data on the following topics was used: stated L1 and L2 of respondents, parents and grandparents; ability to read and write in L1 and L2 of respondents, parents and grandparents.

The questionnaire was sent out by email to all female students and alumnae on both Dubai and Abu Dhabi campuses. 500 respondents completed 95-100% of the 42 questions and a further 212 completed at least 50%. The final sample of 712 respondents represented approximately 10% of the University population and was made up of approximately 20% of respondents from each of the four years of study and 20% graduated students. Mean responses on all questions were compared and in order to test for significant differences and similarities between sub-groupings - e.g. with regard to L2 of participants and their grandparents - inferential statistical analysis was carried out using an online two-tailed, two-proportion Z test (Stangroom, 2013). In order to reject the null hypothesis (i.e. that there would be no difference in the responses between sub-groupings), results at  $p < 0.05$  were considered to be statistically significant. However, in most cases the significant findings were significant at  $p < 0.01$ . The data presented here relates to Emirati nationals only and the sample sizes range from 676 to 686.

The in-depth interviews, which were conducted in English, were semi-structured and retrospective (Dörnyei, 2007). The interviewees' responses to the questionnaires were used as the basis for the interviews, but participants were given space to expand on their responses, with the aim of developing a participant-relevant, emic or 'thick' description (Geertz, 2007) of literacy and language practices in this context. A purposive sampling procedure was used to identify 30 participants for the interviews, from the survey respondents who agreed to be contacted for further information (details of the sampling procedure are given in O'Neill, 2014a).

As I gathered data and began the analysis, it became clear that there were differing practices among the respondents with regard to literacy in English and MSA due to factors such as family, home and school

background, leisure time interests, local and online social networks and differing degrees of exposure to life in an increasingly diverse country (reported in O'Neill, 2014a). It also became clear that there were differing predispositions with regard to language choice in daily spoken interactions involving Emirati Arabic (EA) and English, and so predispositions in daily speech practices became a concurrent focus of the project along with literacy. In addition to the survey and interview data, I have drawn on data from responses to an online discussion board (DB) question which arose from a classroom conversation about languages used at home and at university and the importance of the native language.

Wherever participant comments such as these DB postings are quoted directly in this chapter, they are reported verbatim, retaining any 'non-standard' usage in spelling, grammar, capitalization or punctuation, and one of the comments is presented in its original 'chat room language' form. The name of each quoted participant is given (mostly using real first names, as was the preference of all but one of the participants, along with the initial letter of patronyms where there are participants with the same name, e.g. Hessa A and Hessa M), along with their age and an indication as to their school background: Arabic-medium public school, Arabic-medium private school or English-medium private school.

Finally, in addition to asking some of the key respondents to review my findings, to ensure that they 'ring true' for Emirati readers, I also asked AlShaima, a recent International Studies graduate, to read a draft of the chapter for an additional Emirati perspective.

### **3.4 Linguistic Change Across Three Generations**

I begin my analysis by giving some background, based on the questionnaire data, on the changing linguistic profile of Emirati families over the past three generations.

The vast majority of respondents (95.29%) consider Emirati Arabic as their L1 (see Table 1). The same is true, though to a lesser degree, of their parents and grandparents. There is no significant difference between daughters and fathers with regard to L1, but daughters are significantly more likely to have Emirati Arabic as their L1 than their mothers (Z-Score 6.5084, p-value 0), which reflects the fact that marriages between Emirati

males and non-Emirati females are far more common than those between Emirati females and non-Emirati males. Although EA is the most common first language of Emirati mothers (84.68%), almost 15% are L1 speakers of other languages, such as Urdu, Ajami (the local unofficial name for a Farsi dialect spoken in the south of Iran and in several Gulf Arab countries), English, Farsi, Balochi, Tagalog (and other Philippine languages/dialects), and other Arab dialects. There is an even greater statistical difference in the data for respondents and maternal grandparents, with approximately 25% of the latter group reportedly having languages other than EA as their L1. There are also statistically significant differences between the respondents and paternal grandparents. For example, approximately 15% of paternal grandfathers are reportedly not L1 users of EA. Among both paternal and maternal grandparents who are not L1 EA users, Ajami is identified as the most common language/dialect spoken.

**Table 1 First Languages of Emirati Nationals**

| What is your first language, and what about other members of your family? |                 |               |                       |               |                  |               |                |
|---|-----------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Emirati Nationals   | Emirati Arabic  | Urdu          | Ajami (Farsi Dialect) | English       | Another Language | I don't know  | Response Total |
| Yourself  | 95.29%<br>(647) | 0.15%<br>(1)  | 0.44%<br>(3)          | 3.09%<br>(21) | 0.74%<br>(5)     | 0.29%<br>(2)  | 679            |
| Father  | 94.4%<br>(641)  | 0.44%<br>(3)  | 3.53%<br>(24)         | 0.29%<br>(2)  | 1.18%<br>(8)     | 0.15%<br>(1)  | 679            |
| Mother  | 84.68%<br>(575) | 4.86%<br>(33) | 4.27%<br>(29)         | 0.88%<br>(6)  | 5.3%<br>(36)     | 0%<br>(0)     | 679            |
| Grandfather (Father's side)   | 85.08%<br>(576) | 1.03%<br>(7)  | 10.19%<br>(69)        | 0.15%<br>(1)  | 1.92%<br>(13)    | 1.62%<br>(11) | 677            |
| Grandmother (Father's side)   | 82.72%<br>(560) | 1.62%<br>(11) | 11.37%<br>(77)        | 0.3%<br>(2)   | 2.81%<br>(19)    | 1.18%<br>(8)  | 677            |
| Grandfather (Mother's side)   | 74.78%<br>(504) | 5.49%<br>(37) | 10.53%<br>(71)        | 0.89%<br>(6)  | 7.12%<br>(48)    | 1.19%<br>(8)  | 674            |
| Grandmother (Mother's side)   | 72.36%<br>(487) | 6.24%<br>(42) | 12.04%<br>(81)        | 0.89%<br>(6)  | 7.28%<br>(49)    | 1.19%<br>(8)  | 673            |
| <b>AVERAGES</b>   | 570.00          | 19.14         | 50.57                 | 6.29          | 25.43            | 5.43          | 676.86         |
|   | 84.21%          | 2.83%         | 7.47%                 | 0.93%         | 3.76%            | 0.80%         |                |
| Total Respondents   |                 |               |                       |               |                  |               | 680            |
| (skipped this question)   |                 |               |                       |               |                  |               | 5              |

With regard to second language (L2), there have also been some significant changes across the three generations (Table 2). English is overwhelmingly the reported L2 of the respondents (91.32%) but there is a significant difference between this generation and that of their parents. While the most common L2 of

respondents' fathers is reported to be English, the percentage is significantly lower, at 66.77% (Z-score of 11.1121, p-value of 0). The figure for mothers is lower still, at 53.81%, though it is still the most common L2. However, the main differences can be seen in the grandparents' generation, where English is not the majority L2. Only 12.97% of paternal grandfathers, for example, are reported to have English as L2. Compared with the current generation, this is an enormous statistical difference (Z-score of 28.7516, p-value of 0), and compared with the respondents' fathers' generation, it is also significant (Z-score of 20.0673, p-value of 0). The figure for English as L2 for paternal grandmothers is even lower, at 7.55%.

In terms of other L2 languages, among the fathers' generation, languages such as Urdu (5.64%) and Ajami (7.86%) are reported, and a significant number reportedly have no L2 (8.61%). As many as 14.65% of mothers have no L2 and other languages are reported, such as Emirati Arabic (8.16%), Urdu (2.39%), Ajami (9.72%) and others such as Tagalog and other Philippines dialects, Balochi or Farsi (2.99%).

Among grandparents, a large number reportedly have no L2 (e.g. 41.99% of maternal grandmothers). When this is compared to the figure of 0.59% of respondents who report no L2 for themselves, a significant difference is evident (Z-score of -18.6141, p-value of 0). The figure of 0.59% relates to a small number of respondents who regard English as being their L1 and do not speak Arabic or any other L2. Other languages are reported as being L2 for grandparents. For example, 20.39% of maternal grandmothers are reported as Emirati Arabic L2, and other languages are reported, such as Urdu (3.32%), Ajami (8.46%) and others as mentioned above. Additionally, respondents were more likely to respond, 'I don't know' when asked about grandparents' L2 (e.g. 13.14% for maternal grandmothers). This is partly due to the fact that grandparents may be deceased, but in some cases, respondents had no evidence as to whether or not their living grandparents spoke a second language and in other cases, they could not decide which language could be regarded as their L2.

AlShaima commented that in the pre-oil era, maritime occupations such as fishing and pearl diving and trade with the Indian sub-continent, Iran and Eastern Africa were among the most prominent economic activities.

Thus, there was a need for some locals to have a knowledge of Urdu, Farsi and Swahili, and little need at that time for English (despite the fact, I would add, that the Trucial States were a British protectorate from 1820 to 1971).

**Table 2 Second Languages of Emirati Nationals**

| <b>What is your second language, and what about other members of your family?</b> |                       |             |                              |                |                         |                           |                     |                       |
|---|-----------------------|-------------|------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Emirati Nationals</b>  | <b>Emirati Arabic</b> | <b>Urdu</b> | <b>Ajami (Farsi Dialect)</b> | <b>English</b> | <b>Another Language</b> | <b>No Second Language</b> | <b>I don't know</b> | <b>Response Total</b> |
| Yourself  | 4.41% (30)            | 1.03% (7)   | 1.76% (12)                   | 91.32% (621)   | 0.59% (4)               | 0.59% (4)                 | 0.29% (2)           | 680                   |
| Father  | 8.16% (55)            | 5.64% (38)  | 7.86% (53)                   | 66.77% (450)   | 1.34% (9)               | 8.61% (58)                | 1.63% (11)          | 674                   |
| Mother  | 15.4% (103)           | 2.39% (16)  | 9.72% (65)                   | 53.81% (360)   | 2.99% (20)              | 14.65% (98)               | 1.05% (7)           | 669                   |
| Grandfather (Father's side)   | 17.95% (119)          | 6.64% (44)  | 8.75% (58)                   | 12.97% (86)    | 2.87% (19)              | 33.33% (221)              | 17.5% (116)         | 663                   |
| Grandmother (Father's side)   | 21% (139)             | 2.57% (17)  | 8.01% (53)                   | 7.55% (50)     | 3.47% (23)              | 42.45% (281)              | 14.95% (99)         | 662                   |
| Grandfather (Mother's side)   | 18.55% (123)          | 6.49% (43)  | 8.3% (55)                    | 13.57% (90)    | 4.52% (30)              | 32.58% (216)              | 15.99% (106)        | 663                   |
| Grandmother (Mother's side)   | 20.39% (135)          | 3.32% (22)  | 8.46% (56)                   | 8.61% (57)     | 4.08% (27)              | 41.99% (278)              | 13.14% (87)         | 662                   |
| Total Respondents (For this Question)   |                       |             |                              |                |                         |                           |                     | 681                   |
| (skipped this question)   |                       |             |                              |                |                         |                           |                     | 4                     |

Languages of literacy and literacy levels show a similar change across the three generations (Table 3). The majority of respondents can read and write in their first and second languages, as one would expect of undergraduates and alumnae of a university that requires students to be bilingual. Biliteracy is also evident in the parents' generation, but to a lesser extent. The majority of fathers are reported to be able to read (89.84%) and write (85.86%) in their first language and 71.43% and 66.42% (respectively) are able to read and write in their L2. Some fathers are described as being unable to read and write (5.30% and 5.89% respectively). The figures for mothers are generally lower but not significantly different from those for fathers except that fathers are significantly more likely to be able to read in L2 (Z-score of 3.5186, p-value of 0.00044) and write in L2 (Z-score of 3.845, p-value of 0.00012). Also, fathers are slightly less likely to be reported as 'not able to write' than mothers (Z-score of -2.3574, p-value of 0.01828, significant at  $p < 0.05$ ).

The data for the grandparents' generation is quite different. Only in the case of maternal grandfathers is a majority reported as being able to read in L1 (50.81%), and as few as 39.18% of maternal grandmothers are reported as being able to read in their L1. Grandfathers are significantly more likely to be able to read in L1 than their spouses (for maternal grandfathers and grandmothers, Z-score of 4.3092, p-value of 0) and grandparents are significantly less likely to be able to read and write in L1 than their children and their grandchildren. For example, for granddaughters and paternal grandfathers with regard to reading, data analysis gives a Z-score of 20.821, and a p-value of 0. The data for writing in L1 is similar (Z-score of 21.2612, p-value of 0).

With regard to L2, a minority of grandparents is reported as being literate (e.g. only 16.64% of paternal grandfathers and 7.22% paternal grandmothers are reported as being able to read in L2, and 12.81% and 5.74% (respectively) are reportedly able to write in L2). Once again, the males of this generation are more likely to be literate than the females (for paternal grandfathers and grandmothers with regard to reading, Z-score of 5.358, p-value of 0).

The grandparent generation is far more likely to be reported as unable to read and write than their children and grandchildren. With regard to reading, for example, 17.38% of maternal grandfathers and 28.87% of maternal grandmothers are reported as being 'not able to read' and 18.11% and 31.08% respectively, 'not able to write'. This is significantly different from the data for their children and grandchildren's generations. The data also confirms the pattern of greater male literacy in this generation. Several interviewees and literacy journal respondents commented on the fact that in some families girls were less likely to be educated than boys, and that it was often '*aiib*' or 'shameful' for girls to be seen reading, especially when there were household chores to be done. AlShaima commented as follows:

I think...education was viewed as something that would change the feminine nature of girls and would make them develop unusual aspirations, such as working/getting a job, or perhaps develop a brain or a personality that would enable her to contest men or patriarchal social rules.

Another interesting finding from this data is that almost a third of respondents were unsure as to whether or not their grandparents could read or write. Interview data suggests that this may be due to the fact that some grandparents may be deceased or not living locally, or that some respondents had never seen their grandparents engaged in literacy events or practices. Another possibility suggested by the interviews is that some respondents drew a distinction between being able to read and rote memorization. At *katateeb* schools, many of this generation were taught to read through rote memorization of the Qur'an, and may not have developed the ability to read other texts in Arabic, or even other published versions of the Qur'an.

**Table 3 Emirati Nationals' Languages of Literacy**

| What languages can you / they read and write in? (Choose one or more in each row) |                            |                             |                             |                              |                  |                   |                     |                |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Emirati Nationals   | Can read in first language | Can write in first language | Can read in second language | Can write in second language | Not able to read | Not able to write | Not sure about this | Response Total |
| Yourself  | 97.5% (662)                | 95.29% (647)                | 93.37% (634)                | 93.08% (632)                 | 0% (0)           | 0% (0)            | 0% (0)              | 2582           |
| Father  | 89.84% (610)               | 85.86% (583)                | 71.43% (485)                | 66.42% (451)                 | 5.3% (36)        | 5.89% (40)        | 4.12% (28)          | 2233           |
| Mother  | 87.48% (594)               | 83.06% (564)                | 62.44% (424)                | 56.26% (382)                 | 7.36% (50)       | 9.28% (63)        | 4.57% (31)          | 2108           |
| Grandfather (Father's Side)   | 46.83% (318)               | 41.68% (283)                | 16.64% (113)                | 12.81% (87)                  | 20.47% (139)     | 20.77% (141)      | 33.14% (225)        | 1306           |
| Grandmother (Father's Side)   | 35.5% (240)                | 26.66% (181)                | 7.22% (49)                  | 5.74% (39)                   | 29.46% (200)     | 31.66% (215)      | 32.99% (224)        | 1148           |
| Grandfather (Mother's Side)   | 50.81% (345)               | 45.51% (309)                | 19% (129)                   | 16.2 (110)                   | 17.38% (118)     | 18.11% (123)      | 31.37% (213)        | 1347           |
| Grandmother (Mother's Side)   | 39.18% (266)               | 31.08% (211)                | 10.46% (71)                 | 8.98% (61)                   | 28.87% (196)     | 31.08% (211)      | 29.31% (199)        | 1215           |
| Total Respondents (For this Question)   |                            |                             |                             |                              |                  |                   |                     | 679            |
| (skipped this question)   |                            |                             |                             |                              |                  |                   |                     | 6              |

Against this background of dramatic language change in the UAE over the last three generations, what do young Emiratis report about language practices in their homes?

### 3.5 Languages in Contemporary Emirati Homes

The background statistical data has shown that there has been a great deal of change in the linguistic and literacy landscape of the UAE in the last three generations. There has been a move towards a greater degree of

multilingualism, English as the main L2, and higher levels of literacy and biliteracy. This has occurred alongside great changes in the physical landscape of the country over the 43 years since its establishment, the construction of world-famous cities such as Dubai, greater diversity in the local population due to the inflow of expatriate labour, the introduction of formal education, the shift in Emirati employment patterns and the almost universal take-up in the younger generation of online and mobile technologies.

Responses to the DB thread on languages of the home, in addition to the interview data, revealed that many Emiratis subscribe to an ideology of multilingualism that accepts the need for developing linguistic capital in languages other than Arabic, particularly English, but asserts the view that languages should be domain-specific. EA is regarded by most Emiratis as the appropriate language of the home and families differ in the extent to which other languages, and language mixing, are considered acceptable in this environment. At one end of the continuum, some families have a monolingual policy of 'Arabic only' in the home - or diglossic EA/MSA to be more precise - and do not allow other languages to be used in daily home conversation. In these families, English is seen as appropriate only outside the home:

Usually I speak with my family, friends and parents Arabic. I feel comfortable and more confident if i talk in Arabic. My parents actually didn't like us to use english with them and let it only for outside.

(Hessa N, aged 20, AMPuS, DB Posting)

A common reason given for a policy of 'Arabic only' in some families is the fact that EA and MSA are widely regarded as precious resources that represent Emirati, Arab and Muslim heritage and identity. Speaking and understanding EA in the home indexes Emirati nationality for the majority of participants:

Local Arabic is vital in Arabs' life. When people use the common Arabic accent that is used amongst each other (local Arabic), both parties feel a strong cultural bond that connects them, and the flow of the conversation makes it easier for them to understand what is being said. Also, it's a great way of expressing their complex variety of emotions in words that they feel

comfortable and confident when using. Using the idioms and proverbs in local Arabic will summarize the complicated thoughts people want to deliver, in simple yet meaningful words that possess the past civilization of ones country and truthful, pure words.

(Muna, aged 18, EMPrS, DB Posting)

The main languages I speak at home are Arabic and English. I prefer Arabic because I can explain all my feelings, ideas and thoughts easily without adding any emotions or unreal description. I mix English with Arabic all the time without feeling and maybe because I hate English sometimes. It's very important to speak our native language at home or out of the home because it's represent our identity of Arab and Emirati. Also it's important for the next generation. They should know their language better than the others.

(Fetoon, aged 19, AMPuS, DB Posting)

Because of the rise of Arabizi and the fact that Emiratis can often be heard speaking English together (and chatting in English online), EA is often mentioned as being a language in danger of erosion or extinction. Its use in the home is therefore seen as key to its survival:

Keeping your native language as the main language in the household is very important, because if you don't speak it in the house, then you wouldn't speak

it in the outside world either. We, Arabs, can't afford to lose our language too.

(Hessa N, aged 20, AMPuS, DB Posting)

The home is one of the main venues for EA use, since in the multilingual, often heteroglossic, world outside the home, EA is a minority language. Respondents' use of other languages in the home, particularly English, or Arabizi, is met with a variety of reactions, from anger to amusement:

The main language spoken in the house is Arabic, I also add a few English words when I speak with my parents and siblings. My mother hates it when we speak English because she finds it disrespectful when we do not speak in our native language.

(Hamda, aged 20, EMPrS, DB Posting)

Speaking our native language is very important especially if we are dealing with elders since most of them don't speak English, they always make fun of us whenever we speak in English and say 'do you think you are Americans?'.

(Mahra, aged 19, EMPrS, DB Posting)

As the statistical data above has shown, English tends not to be a shared L2 for respondents and their grandparents and, to some extent, respondents and their parents. Therefore, much of the English linguistic capital that exists in Emirati families resides in the younger generation. Aside from the cultural objections parents and grandparents might have, the use of other languages such as English is not even a possibility for communication in some families, particularly at the weekly family gatherings, which are normally held at grandparents' homes. In other words, there are strong dispositions within these families towards Arabic, greater linguistic capital in Arabic and Arabic holds greater value for them in the multilingual marketplace of modern day UAE due to the fact that it indexes Emirati, Arab and Muslim identity positions. Therefore, home language practices in these families tend to be almost exclusively in Arabic, particularly EA. The instrumental value of English for daily life outside the home is widely recognized, but it is seen by some families as almost invasive in the home context – hence there are strong reactions when English or Arabizi are used.

In some households, the preferred language of parents is EA but their children may have different preferences. This is particularly true in the families of respondents who attended English-medium private schools and/or those who have developed strong leisure time interests through the medium of English, or who identify strongly with being a part of a social network (online or 'offline' in the 'real world') in which English is the lingua franca. These young people often have a strong habitus towards English (O'Neill, 2014a) and may be

more comfortable speaking English than Arabic, or mixing the two languages heteroglossically, often without being aware of doing so. One Discussion Board respondent, Latifa, an EMPrS graduate, daughter of Emirati Arabic-speaking parents, commented as follows:

Growing up watching a lot of television and movies, and reading quite an amount of comics, I generally speak English more than Arabic, but it's a mix at home. At home, I speak nothing but Arabic with my parents, grandmother, and driver. With my siblings, I speak to most of them in English, but I speak Arabic with my younger sister and brother half the time. My closest sister and I always make fun of ourselves in how we lack Emirati qualities in the way we speak and act. My parents make fun of us too, of course.

(Latifa, aged 19, EMPrS, DB Posting)

She goes on to describe a speech event which might be seen as an example of 'cleft habitus' (Bourdieu, 2007; O'Neill, 2014a) 'where the dispositions a child develops as a result of early experiences in the home are at odds with the attitudes learnt through other experiences, most often at school' (Hardy, 2011, p. 172):

Just last month, I was having lunch at home with my family, when my little brother was telling us about his day at school (my father was there, so he had to speak Arabic). I asked him a question, and he began to respond to me in Arabic, but slowly shifted his language to English. After that, my brother, along with me and two of our sisters, were having a conversation in English. My father quickly interrupted us, telling us to stop speaking English and to speak in Arabic instead. I never speak Arabic with my youngest sister. It was very awkward.

(Latifa, aged 19, EMPrs, DB Posting)

Latifa concedes that she and her siblings '...are technically Emirati' and that they 'are supposed to try to fit in' and she says of herself in this regard: 'I don't think I'm doing a good job at that.' She claims that she does not feel particularly Emirati nor Arab, nor that she has any particular cultural identity, even in terms of English. Indeed, she reports that when she is online, members of the forums to which she contributes are often

surprised to learn that she comes from this part of the world given the opinions she expresses and the way that she expresses them. She believes also that she does not sound Emirati in daily conversation. She recalls being comfortable using Arabic in her early years and even though she attended English-medium primary school, used EA regularly at school. However, once she left mixed classes, from Grade 5 onwards, and was in segregated, girls-only classes, she says English began to dominate and she started, unconsciously, to develop a non-Emirati accent in Arabic. Her sisters went through a similar process, and to the present day other Emiratis sometimes comment on their 'non-local' accent. One of her older sisters recently married and is reportedly now trying to adapt her accent so that she sounds more Emirati to her husband's family. Latifa is unsure as to where this 'non-Emirati' accent comes from since both parents are from families that have spoken Emirati Arabic for several generations. Several months after writing the DB posting, Latifa reports that she is now trying to make more effort to speak Arabic with her siblings, though she still does not strongly identify with the language.

Several participants mentioned concerns in their families about children who have difficulty using Emirati Arabic in the home. Some talked of siblings or cousins who had picked up MSA in their speech as a result of watching cartoons in MSA or other Arabic dialects due to their social networks at school or in the local neighbourhood. However, more concern was expressed about those children who replace EA with English. Interviewee Hessa M, for example, mentioned that there was concern in her family about her sister, a senior in an English-medium private high school who uses only English in the home even when spoken to in EA. One of the reasons Hessa gives for this is that at school, her sister happens to have been placed in a class in which half of the students are in 'Special Arabic' – a class for non-native speakers of Arabic. Thus, although she is not placed in Special Arabic classes herself, her social circle is made up largely of Iranians and other non-native Arabic speakers, so English has become her primary language of communication, and this has transferred to the home. Hessa recalled how she had attempted to encourage her sister to speak EA for a two-day period by only speaking EA with her but had eventually abandoned the project as it had proved too difficult for both of them. Hessa reported that her parents had begun using English words with their daughter in order to be able

to communicate with her. Hessa explains that her own trajectory was somewhat different in that although she too attended English-medium schools and is very oriented to English, especially in terms of her literacy, she mostly mixed with Emiratis at school and so became used to using EA, albeit mixed with English. At home she is generally able to use EA by itself, though finding the right word can be difficult on occasions and she is forced to consciously translate from English, or use English words. When chatting with friends at university, she uses 'Emirati Arabic with English words inserted.' Hessa might be described as having a heteroglossic 'dual linguistic habitus' in that she is willing and able to operate in English and Arabic (and Arabizi); however, her sister's case might be described as a particularly marked example of cleft habitus.

The DB postings of another respondent, Hessa A, are further evidence of cleft habitus and illustrate how complex it can be to negotiate life in an Arabic-speaking family when embodied linguistic predispositions tend more towards English. Hessa values Arabic greatly and is able to use EA for basic daily conversations, though struggles somewhat with reading and writing MSA, which is something she is not happy about. She is most fluent in English, yet this has effects on her family life, she feels:

Another personal experience is not being able to express my feelings in arabic. My mother knows basic english. So whenever I want to talk to my mother about something bothering me I can't express myself and she tries her best to understand who [how] I feel. This made me prefer to talk to my sisters and close friends rather than her. Its not a great feeling not being to express your feeling because you basically do not know your language.

(Hessa A, aged 19, EMPrS, DB Posting)

Hessa's twin sister, Hind, also mentions the expressive value of English for her and how it leads her to shift from EA to Arabizi to English:

For example when I speak to anyone I will start talking in arabic after that I will say an english word here and there and when the conversation starts to get really deep I end up talking in english only because I know thats the only way I fully express myself.

(Hind A, aged 19, EMPrs, DB posting)

Hessa and Hind's predispositions contrast markedly with those of Fetoan, quoted earlier in this section, who explained in a short interview recently (and I paraphrase) that she feels that she is not able to communicate her feelings in a nuanced way in English as she either expresses herself too strongly, or not strongly enough, in contrast to Arabic, in which she feels that she is able to communicate with precision. Thus, even though she sometimes mixes Arabic and English when interacting with her mother (mostly when they do not want her younger siblings to understand the conversation), if she wishes to express deeper feelings, she reports that she tends to use Arabic exclusively.

Regardless of her predispositions towards English, Hessa A feels that Emirati Arabic is vital for family cohesion. She gives the example of a relative who comes from a family in which English has been prioritized:

I have a cousin that has a 3 year-old girl called Reem, and from birth she has spoken to her in english. She can barely say that her name is Reem in arabic. When we have family gatherings we all feel closer and play with the ones that speak more arabic than english. I have not noticed we all do this, until I read this question and tried to notice it in the gathering today. It is vastly important for children to be taught their native language before being taught any foreign language.

(Hessa A, aged 19, EMPrs, DB posting)

Adopting a monolingual policy of 'English only' or 'English mostly' may be a deliberate attempt by some parents to give children a head start by building capital in English from an early age and paying little or no attention to EA or MSA. Although only a small minority of families appeared to take this particular approach, several respondents knew of such cases among family members, friends or acquaintances, and usually reported it disapprovingly. One respondent, the mother of a three-year-old girl, Mahra, described a similar situation she knew of:

I wanted her [Mahra] to be like first in Arabic and then English can be learned...because I see some other people like mothers talking to their child in English...I don't really agree about that because they should know their first language and then this should be second language and her boy is older than my daughter but till now he can't communicate well. The thing is she's communicating in English but sometimes he's listening to Arabic so I think he's confused...he just says words in English, only like one word and then you can understand...it's really bad and I don't know what's the purpose behind that...they even took him to an English school I think.

(Hessa AlQ, aged 26, EMPrS/AMPuS, Interview)

Here, two ideologies of language and multilingualism appear to be at work. Both see languages as being distinct entities, but one assigns languages to specific domains, prioritizing heritage and tradition in the home environment, indexed through the exclusive use of Emirati Arabic; the other prioritizes modernity, internationalism and 'getting on', indexed through the use of English across all domains, apparently relegating Arabic almost to foreign language status.

In a large number of families, although EA is the main language of daily communication in the home, a more heteroglossic atmosphere exists, in which children are encouraged to speak English, or not discouraged from doing so. This may be because parents wish their children to develop English skills alongside their Arabic skills, or in some cases, parents themselves wish to develop their English skills by learning from their children, while in other households English is viewed as a resource from which to draw just as much as Arabic, and the boundaries between languages may be blurred. An interviewee who appears to have grown up in such an environment is Muntaha. Although she attended a private Arabic-medium school (AMPrS), she is very strongly oriented towards English. She explained that her father's vision was that English would be important in the future of the UAE and so he and his wife encouraged their children to develop their English through extensive reading and using English words at home:

We kind of speak like we do at the university, Arabic with English mixed in equally. Whenever my mum asks us for something and she thinks we won't understand what she meant, she will say it in English. For example, if my mother wants something from the kitchen, she'll ask in Arabic and then we would have a blank face, and then she says it in English, for example, the word 'can opener' I know in English but not local Arabic.

(Muntaha, aged 21, AMPrS, Interview)

Despite her private Arabic-medium primary and secondary education, Muntaha is most comfortable speaking English, or Arabizi, yet she claims that her 'brain just works in English', that during the teenage years 'it became a part of my personality that I'm the person who's good at English' and that (like Hessa A and Hind A above), 'I can express myself in English...like even my mother when she sees me upset or something I just said "look I don't know how to express myself in Arabic"'.

Unlike Hessa A, Muntaha seems comfortable with her level of Arabic, even though she feels it is not that strong. Yet she points out that her family's heteroglossic policy can be a source of disapproval in the wider family:

Just in our house, we are the only English-speaking children... between like my cousins and everything...they don't speak English that much, they hate English...they think like 'it's not good to speak English, your first language is Arabic'. They always like used to tell my mum 'stop letting them, stop encouraging them for English'. She's like 'wait we'll see in the future what will happen'.

(Muntaha, aged 21, AMPrS, Interview)

AlShaima, commented that this kind of peer and family pressure is one reason why some Emirati families have a policy of 'Arabic only' in the home – fear of criticism for their children being heard to speak English or Arabizi, particularly with non-English speaking elders. She added that for some, this may be grounded in the

fact that EA performs the indexical function of allowing them to distinguish ‘pure Arabs’ from, for example, Emiratis of Ajami descent, and that Arabizi, or the use of English only, dilutes this indexicality.

Multilingualism is most obvious in the families of respondents of mixed Emirati / non-Emirati parentage, who may be regarded by other Emiratis as ‘not pure Arabs’ (mentioned by several interviewees, including Sarra’a, who is the daughter of Kumzari/Ajami L1 parents). Mixed marriages account for approximately 20% of marriages involving Emirati nationals (Shaaban, 2012). As indicated earlier, mixed-nationality marriages between Emirati males and non-Emirati females are far more common than those between Emirati females and non-Emirati males; this is due in part to legislation in effect until recently around citizenship rights, which tended to reduce the likelihood of marriage between Emirati females and non-Emirati males (see Emirates News Agency, 2014 for recent news on this issue). Often with several languages at their disposal, these families negotiate communication in various ways.

One interviewee, graduate Mona, for example, comes from a family in which multilingualism and heteroglossia are very evident. In the interview and in subsequent social network posts, Mona explained that her father is an Emirati national who himself grew up in a mixed environment, with an Emirati Arabic speaking father and an Ajami speaking mother. While reviewing this chapter, Mona commented, on the issue of Ajami not being regarded as ‘pure Arab’, that many Ajami were originally Arabs who moved from Arab countries to Iran for economic reasons and then returned speaking their Farsi dialect, which includes a large number of Arabic words. Mona’s father used both EA and Ajami growing up, so Mona is unsure as to what he would regard as being his L1. Her mother is Iranian and settled in Dubai after marrying. Farsi is the main language of communication between her parents as her mother’s Arabic is minimal, and her father’s knowledge of Ajami would have been of assistance in acquiring his wife’s language. Farsi is also the language of daily communication when both parents and the children are together. When interacting just with her father, Mona uses both Farsi and EA, but the former to a slightly greater extent. In more public situations, such as at family gatherings with her father’s family, they tend to use Arabic. At such gatherings Mona’s mother speaks Farsi, and other family members reply in Ajami. Mona and her siblings use either Farsi, Arabic

or English with each other at home, 'depending on the context of the conversation and the mood...for example in serious talks we tend to speak either Arabic or Farsi. I dunno why, but we just do that.' In contrast, she states that they use English 'when we r in "cheesy" or crazy moods ☺'. But she goes on to say that '...sometimes we tend to use a word from different languages when we feel that we cant think of the right word in the language that we r supposedly talking in at that time'.

Mona's comments demonstrate both sides of heteroglossia. She sees being multilingual as a blessing, in general; she enjoys speaking and reading several languages, and mixing them with those close to her, yet she also feels some internal conflict between her three main languages and some difficulties when communicating in one language only, as if part of her lexicon has been closed off:

Sometimes it's like frustrating because my mum sometimes doesn't understand, ya'nee [I mean],  
I want to prove a point but I'm finding it very difficult to, to do so, as I have three languages in  
my head and I don't know how to put things right.

(Mona, aged 21, AMPuS, Interview)

Although she is generally able to separate the three languages as the interaction demands, it seems that Mona feels most comfortable, most expressive, in a heteroglossic space where she can select freely from the three languages at her disposal, as if they were one language, and know that she will be understood.

In some mixed families, English is used as a lingua franca. Interviewee Safeeya's father is an L1 EA speaker while her mother speaks Cebuano (the Philippine language referred to by its speakers as 'Bisaya', or 'Visayan' in English). The parents communicate in English and English became the language of family communication. Safeeya and her father do not interact in EA and she sees herself as being very weak in Arabic, particularly MSA, while English is her L1, and Cebuano and Tagalog her L2 and L3. She and three of her siblings were sent to Arabic-medium schools initially, but because they were unused to Arabic at home, this proved to be difficult:

My Dad tried, it didn't work...I couldn't take it, it's in Arabic and he had a hard time too I mean like it was me and my sister and my brother all together and...he had to teach each of us. My mum doesn't know Arabic so he had to teach us and he got so tired so he's like 'You know what? Go to private English school'.

(Safeeya, aged 21, EMPrS, Interview)

She was sent to English-medium schools and struggled in Arabic class and so was placed in Special Arabic as she was regarded as a non-native speaker of the language. When she arrived at university, she campaigned for the introduction of a similar Arabic class and also successfully lobbied the institution to open Islamic Studies classes in English so that she would not have to struggle to take them in Arabic. Safeeya commented that her father has changed his policy in the family after seeing the difficulties that his first four children had with Arabic at school. He now speaks EA with the fifth and sixth children in the family to develop their Arabic, but English is still the overall family lingua franca.

Communication with domestic staff is another aspect of daily home interaction that is negotiated in different ways by different families. 97% of respondents' families 'bring maids and drivers', from the Philippines, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka etc, and the majority (62%) of respondents communicate with them using Arabic. In some families there is a preference for employing Indonesian maids, as they are predominantly Muslim; in addition to religious reasons, this is also for linguistic reasons:

The main language that I use is Arabic and we never mix languages at home. All of us speak only Arabic, my parents, brothers and sisters, even the staff my mother brings them from Indonesia especially because most of them tend to work in Arab places, so they can speak Arabic very well.

(Sara R, aged 20, AMPuS, DB Posting)

In addition, Bahasa Indonesia contains a considerable number of Arabic words (Campbell, 1996), which may facilitate more rapid learning of Arabic in the workplace. Regardless of background, however, in most families, domestic staff are required to have, or to quickly acquire, Arabic, though English may be used as a lingua

franca initially. In the interview data, several respondents reported that they were more likely to speak with staff in English than were their parents and grandparents, though most tend to follow the family policy. 34% of respondents use English to communicate with domestic staff.

The employment of maids is a controversial topic among Emiratis in the University, and in wider Emirati society, as evidenced in the local media (e.g. Zayed, 2013). In course discussions and written compositions, the view is regularly reiterated that employing maids has negative effects on Arabic language and culture and on the upbringing of Emirati children, for example children learning ‘non-Emirati’ accents in Arabic and ‘bad grammar’; some express the view that children’s English may also be in some ways tainted by contact with maids whose proficiency in the language may be minimal. All of these anxieties arise from a situation in which Emiratis are increasingly dependent on domestic staff.

The above findings suggest that the home has become a locus for the negotiation of Emirati identity to a far greater extent than ever before as linguistic predispositions change, particularly in the younger generation. One powerful ideology of multilingualism that is at play in UAE society views languages as bounded and domain specific – EA as the language of Emirati heritage and home; Standard Arabic (Modern and Classical) as the language of Arab heritage, faith, and public-sector education and business; English as the main language of private sector education, business and contacts with the wider world. Emirati families position themselves in relation to this ideology in various ways. As we have seen, some families align themselves very closely with this ideology, adopting a policy of ‘EA only’ in daily home language practices, with no language mixing and careful selection of domestic staff in line with this. While they understand the need for their daughters to develop sufficient linguistic capital in English for education and work purposes, there is also considerable concern arising from the feeling that their culture is endangered, and a potent symbol of this is the Arabic language, particularly their local variety. For most Emiratis, use of Emirati Arabic is indexical of heritage, tradition and local identity; in contrast, use of English in certain contexts indexes a modernity that is seen by some as both constructive and destructive. English is seen, in Bourdieu’s terms, as the language of symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1991; Findlow, 2006). In the younger generations, this conflict, or cleft habitus, may be

felt internally, viscerally and emotionally. Linguistic capital and predispositions push them in the direction of English literacy practices and English speech practices, yet they feel that something is amiss, that they are losing something precious, linguistically, culturally, and even in terms of family relationships. For others, the requirement to develop linguistic capital in English creates conflict since they are more strongly predisposed and oriented to Arabic, which may lead them to 'hate English' on occasion.

Other families position themselves in relation to a different language ideology, adopting a monolingual home language policy ('English only'), and constructing and prioritizing English as the language of modernity and 'the future', in contrast to Arabic which they may view as the language of the past. It is understandable that mixed nationality families might adopt English as a lingua franca, but this also appears to be happening (although still relatively infrequently) in families where both parents are L1 EA speakers. Further research with these families might focus on whether or not they feel that EA and MSA are significant in terms of their Emirati identities, i.e. whether or not it is considered possible to identify as a 'pure Arab' Emirati speaking English as L1.

The families who allow a certain degree of English or Arabizi to be spoken in the home in addition to EA (e.g. Muntaha's family) might be regarded as pioneers of a new multilingual ideology in the UAE, in that although they appear to regard languages as bounded entities to some degree, they take a less domain-specific view, using the full range of linguistic capital at their disposal to facilitate communication in a variety of contexts, including the home. In other words, a more heteroglossic ideology may be emerging. As Ivanov's definition suggests, however, heteroglossia may be challenging at times, with the ideological, cognitive and emotional pressures around languages conflicting and affecting each other. An example is Mona's need to use words from her other languages in cases where she wants, or is required, to speak only one language, and her frustration at not being able to use her full lexicon to express herself to her mother. It is interesting, however, that she is generally happy with her multilingualism, possibly because she has developed a fair degree of linguistic capital in all three of her languages so that in most cases she feels she is able to negotiate her identities successfully and there is no sense of conflict or cleft habitus. In contrast, Hessa A has developed strong linguistic capital in

English, but feels that her MSA is relatively weak and that she is not able to express herself completely in EA. She and her family appear to subscribe to a domain-specific multilingualism ideology. Thus, she feels that she is somehow falling short in terms of her Emirati identity and this cleft habitus causes some psychological discomfort. At the same time, she also seems to subscribe to a more heteroglossic ideology. In the class discussion preceding the Discussion Board question, Hessa said of English and Emirati Arabic: 'I kind of see them as one language.' This apparent ambiguity is an example of the dialectic currently at work in UAE society.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

In an increasingly diverse globalized country such as the UAE, in which the traditional language of the indigenous inhabitants is now spoken by a minority, it is understandable that there should be some concern about the future of that language, and that English might be seen both as an opportunity and as a threat. Emirati parents have important choices to make with regard to the language policy of the home, type of school to which to send their children, and so on. These decisions have an impact on the predispositions that their children develop. However, there are other linguistic influences beyond their control, such as those arising from social networks, media, leisure-time interests, and increasing exposure to a globalizing world. The predispositions that develop in children may be seen as being at odds with those of the family and with those of Emirati tradition. Language mixing clearly happens very frequently, particularly among young people, but it is still not regarded as being acceptable to most Emiratis, even to those who practice it (although some are also comfortable with it, as we have seen). Steps are being taken in Emirati society to bolster the use of Arabic while still encouraging the acquisition of linguistic capital in English. The Arabic Language Charter (UAE Government, 2012) positions Arabic as the official language of the country, the language of government and government services, and a key aspect of the education system. It reinforces the requirement that private schools offer high quality teaching and curriculum in Arabic as well as English. Ambitious projects such as the New Schools Model (Abu Dhabi Education Council, 2014) aim to develop bilingualism and biliteracy in Arabic

and English in the public sector. However, in addition to these initiatives, the home is a crucial locus for the protection and development of Arabic, both EA and MSA. As parents become increasingly bilingual and biliterate, moving into the next generation, it may be that English, MSA and EA will increasingly become one set of resources, that heteroglossia will become the accepted norm. After all, Emirati Arabic has a long history of incorporating words from other languages – particularly Farsi and Urdu (Holes, 2011). This would, of course, require Emiratis to reach a new consensus about what is meant by ‘Emirati Arabic’ – i.e. how much English can someone speak and still be said to be speaking EA and indexing Emirati identities?

Canagarajah (2013, p. 199) argues that languages ‘don’t determine or limit our identities, but provide creative resources to construct new and revised identities through reconstructed forms and meaning of new indexicalities’. Similar views were also expressed in recent articles in *The National* newspaper (AlMazroui, 2014; Leech, 2013). It is of course true that languages can be threatened and that they can change and even die out. Emirati Arabic is spoken by a minority of the inhabitants of the UAE; however, because it is the dialect of the powerful minority, it has every likelihood of surviving as long as Emiratis themselves use the dialect, take it as a source of pride, and allow it to adapt to reflect, and to create, the changes in their society. Rather than being a threat to Emirati Arabic, Arabizi may be a key to its survival.

## Preamble to Chapter 4

---

Having submitted O'Neill (2016) for peer review early in 2015, I then began making plans for the final major piece of analysis that would make up this thesis by publication. I had become very interested in language ideology, indexicalities and post-structuralist ideas regarding subject positioning and the construction of identities through language. Furthermore, in my research to date it had become increasingly apparent that the languages choices of young Emirati women are highly individualized and that a wide range of factors are at play. In the previous articles, in keeping with the mixed-method methodology espoused here, I had presented qualitative data on a number of participants, in addition to quantitative data. These case studies demonstrated that each participant had a rich and interesting story to tell which would shed light on my research question. To take my research further, it would be useful to aim for an even deeper level of investigation and analysis than had been possible with a wider group of participants. I therefore decided that my research to date would need to be complemented by an in-depth case study of one single participant. The participant that I chose to write about, Shaikha, has had an eventful and interesting life trajectory to date and she is very frank, thoughtful and communicative about her multilingualism. As with some of the participants described in Chapter Three, Shaikha has experienced the opportunities and the joys of living in a superdiverse city, but her experiences show that superdiversity can also be discomfoting and difficult.

Again, it was necessary to extend my data set in keeping with the revised research aim. During the first half of 2015, I interviewed Shaikha for a second and third time (having originally interviewed her in 2013), and was able to gather data about her language choices within her birth family, as a married woman and mother, at work and in education, and in her religious practice. I wrote the article in the Fall semester of 2015 and into Spring semester 2016, and finally submitted it in May 2016 after receiving Shaikha's feedback on my observations. The article was accepted for publication in the journal *Multilingua* in 2016 and was published online in February 2017, and the print version will appear in May 2017. Due to space considerations, the

section on language choices within religious practice was not included in the final article, but I have resurrected it here, as an addendum at the end of the chapter.

The unique contribution of this article is in giving a very comprehensive and detailed biographical account of the reported language choices of one person in this context and showing the complexity and individuality of these choices. The article also aims to capture some of the sociolinguistic tensions inherent in superdiverse Dubai, particularly with regard to the boundaries and indexicalities of being ‘a local’, which may be most keenly felt by Emiratis who are members of more than one community through birth or marriage. Although this article was published in February 2017, it has already been cited in an article on the sociolinguistics of Dubai (Piller, 2017), which, like this thesis, contributes to the literature on superdiversity in this city. I am satisfied with this article and feel that I have ‘found my voice’ as a researcher. I feel that the theoretical framework and tools that I have used have enabled me to explore Shaikha’s language choices in some depth. However, as with the previous publication (Chapter Three), what is missing from this article is an analysis of the role of national policies that have a bearing on some of the choices and tensions that Shaikha faces (addressed in Chapter Five).

## Chapter 4 'It's not comfortable being who I am' : Multilingual Identity in Superdiverse Dubai (O'Neill, 2017)

---

### 4.1 Introduction

The United Arab Emirates is a country that has witnessed massive transformations in the last half century, following the discovery of oil. Fifty years ago, the Trucial States, as they were then known, were a relatively poor and undeveloped group of Emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Um Al Quwain, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah), making a living largely from maritime occupations such as fishing, and trade with the Indian sub-continent, Eastern Africa and Iran. As oil began to flow in the sixties, and the UAE was established as a united country in 1971, the economy began to change and to develop rapidly. Large numbers of expatriate workers were brought in to build and service an economy that grew at a dramatic pace, and by the new millennium, cities such as Dubai and Abu Dhabi had become world-famous. The inflow of migrant labour changed the demographics of the country and meant that the local Emirati population became a minority in their own land, albeit a powerful minority, representing, by official estimates, approximately 11% of the total population of 8,264,070 (UAE National Bureau of Statistics, 2011). The remaining 89% of the resident population is made up of expatriates of many nationalities. Though official information on the number of nationalities is scarce, according to one unofficial estimate, there are over 70 different nationalities in the UAE (Snoj, 2015), which suggests significant linguistic diversity. Not only are there many varieties of Arabic, but also Indian languages, Philippine languages, Bahasa Indonesia and other Indonesian languages, European languages, Korean, Japanese, Chinese etc. Amidst such superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007), English has become something of a lingua franca, along with Urdu/Hindi and a local pidgin based on 'Khaleeji' or Gulf Arabic (GA), Urdu and English (Holes, 2011). Although a degree of superdiversity can be observed in all of the seven Emirates, it is in Abu Dhabi and Dubai that it is most evident, and in Dubai most of all. The city has a resident population of 2,446,675, which rises to an estimated 3,552,175 during peak hours (Dubai Statistics Center, 2016b) as nationals and non-nationals flow into the city from the neighboring Emirates of Sharjah, Ajman and

Ras Al Khaimah, for work or educational purposes. The most recent official published estimate of the resident Emirati population of Dubai was 168,029 (UAE National Bureau of Statistics, 2011), which is an indication of the ‘superdiversified’ context in which citizens of Dubai now live.

Among the first generation of Emiratis growing up in this superdiverse context, English has become the main second language; some even regard it as their first language; and Arabic-English language mixing (dubbed ‘Arabizi’ or ‘Arabish’ by some local commentators) is a growing phenomenon, both in daily speech and in online social networking contexts, as is the unmixed use of English in some contexts, even between Emiratis, along with the use of hybrid forms of colloquial Arabic. For these young ‘locals’ growing up in a multilingual society, what are the factors that lead to language choices in daily speech and literacy, and how do they negotiate identities in a rapidly changing society and world? My previous studies in this context (O’Neill, 2014a, 2016) have shown that there are clearly identifiable factors that lead to multilingual choices, but also that these factors are complex and somewhat individualized. Therefore, in order to explore this complexity further, this study will focus in particular on one individual, Shaikha, an Emirati woman in her early thirties. Following a discussion of the key concepts and methods used in the study, I will present and discuss findings related to Shaikha’s language and literacy practices with particular focus on her practices within personal relationships and also in relation to daily academic/professional roles and responsibilities.

#### **4.2 Theory of Practice, Language Ideology and the Discursive Construction and Management of Identity**

This study focuses in particular on language choices in multilingual settings, both in terms of choices in daily speech practices and in terms of literacy practices in leisure, study and work contexts. In order to examine these contexts at both a local and a global level, the study employs Bourdieu’s theory of practice along with the concept of language ideology and post-structuralist ideas regarding the discursive construction of identities.

Bourdieu’s work is useful for a study of this kind in that he identifies the key components of social practices in terms of individual dispositions (‘habitus’), individual abilities or social status (‘capital’), and the social arena or

structured social spaces in which capital operates ('field'). The following equation summarizes this interaction (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 101):

$$[(\text{habitus})(\text{capital})] + \text{field} = \text{practice}$$

Linguistic predispositions that develop in multilingual contexts as a result of unique personal histories, along with the individual's degree of proficiency in the languages that are available, lead to conscious or unconscious decisions about which language to use in a given social situation. These decisions are also influenced by 'beliefs about language, the ideas we hold about what good language is and "what the right thing to do" linguistically is' (Piller, 2011, p. 158) – in other words, by language ideologies.

Language practices and language ideologies are central to the construction of identities since 'language and social identity are mutually constitutive' (Piller, 2002). Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) distinguish three types of identity: '*imposed identities* (which are not negotiable in a particular time and place), *assumed identities* (which are accepted and not negotiated), and *negotiable identities* (which are contested by groups and individuals)' (2004, p. 21). They build on the concept of 'positioning' (Davies & Harre, 1990), arguing that selves are located in, and constructed through, discursive practices 'which may position individuals in particular ways or allow individuals to position themselves' (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p. 20).

Elsewhere, I have suggested that the ideology of multilingualism to which many Emiratis still subscribe, views languages as bounded, separate entities that operate in specific domains (O'Neill, 2016). Multilingualism is seen as inevitable given national demographics, and English in particular is seen to be essential to economic and personal career development. Thus, parents expect their children to develop linguistic capital in English as well as Arabic. However, many families position themselves very closely to a domain-specific language ideology in which Arabic, particularly Emirati Arabic (EA), indexes Emirati identity and local heritage, while MSA and CA index broader Arab identities and Muslim faith. In some families, this means that a strict policy of 'Arabic only' is applied in the home, and English is assigned to outside the home, to education, the private sector and contacts with the wider world. In other homes, a more heteroglossic ideology is emerging, in which

the boundaries between languages are becoming blurred and Emiratis communicate with the linguistic and non-linguistic resources that they have at their disposal – for example, mixing Arabic with English ('Arabizi'), or switching between languages freely.

My previous studies (O'Neill, 2014a, 2016) have shown considerable variation among young Emiratis with regard to language and literacy practices. School background is one factor that appears to affect language orientation. The UAE education system comprises both public (government-funded) and private primary and secondary schools. The former are almost exclusively Arabic-medium schools (except for English Language classes, where some English is used) while the majority of the latter are English-medium (except for Arabic Language and Islamic Studies classes, where some Arabic is used). However, at the tertiary level, the majority of government-funded university courses are taught in English. Those Emiratis who have a background in Arabic-medium public schools are likely to demonstrate stronger linguistic predispositions and capital vis-à-vis Arabic than English but due to the influence of higher education, and increasing exposure to English-speaking contexts, predispositions begin to change and these young people find themselves engaging in language and literacy practices in English to an increasing degree, which may or may not be a welcome change. In contrast, those with a background in English-medium, private schools tend to be oriented towards English, sometimes to the extent that they are unable to express themselves fully in EA, and feel, in particular, that they lack linguistic capital in terms of literacy in MSA and CA. This might be regarded as a form of 'cleft habitus' (Bourdieu, 2007; O'Neill, 2014a, 2016), in that 'the dispositions a child develops as a result of early experiences in the home are at odds with the attitudes learnt through other experiences, most often at school' (Hardy, 2011, p. 172). Given the embodied nature of these predispositions, this 'cleft' may be felt internally, causing some psychological discomfort to those who experience it. It may also be felt by those with greater orientation to Arabic when required to study predominantly in English at undergraduate level.

Although there are clear differences based on school background, it is important to point out that there are also great variations within these school sub-groupings as I have shown previously (O'Neill, 2014a, 2016). There are, for example, young Emiratis who attended Arabic-medium public schools but who are nevertheless

strongly oriented towards English, possibly due to extensive time spent in ‘affinity spaces’ (Gee, 2007) during teenage years and young adulthood, where they might, for example, spend time playing and discussing online games, discussing young adult fiction, Japanese anime, or K-pop (Korean pop music). Similarly, there are EMPrS background students who are oriented towards Arabic and spend time reading Arabic novels or writing Arabic poetry, though this is comparatively rare. Linguistic habitus is clearly affected by family language practices and language ideology, school background, degree of exposure to a multilingual environment and personal interests, but the particular combination of these and other factors is unique in each individual.

Thus, the ways in which individuals ‘perform multilingualism’ in their daily lives through their linguistic and literacy practices can be quite distinct. Identity options and issues multiply as society becomes more diverse and the online world opens Emiratis up to a global marketplace of languages, lifestyles and ideas. The opportunities and pleasures of globalization and superdiversity may be alluring, but for young Emiratis, the first generation to grow up amidst such rapid change in the UAE, making ‘the right choices’ socially and linguistically can be very challenging. I will use Bourdieu’s theory of practice along with the concept of language ideology and the idea that identities are discursively constructed and managed in order to explore how Shaikha navigates these choices and challenges.

### **4.3 Method**

This case study is part of a larger research project examining language and literacy practices in a UAE national university, which utilizes the methodological frameworks of linguistic ethnography and ethnography of literacy. The initial research question was very broad: how do female Emirati undergraduates engage with literacy? As I progressed with the data gathering and analysis, I became interested in the factors that affect language choice in literacy in these young people’s lives. I also began to focus on language choice in daily speech practices. Stage one of the project involved participant observation of literacy events and practices in-class, out of class (e.g. in office hours meetings or in informal meetings elsewhere on campus), along with discussion board postings, literacy journal entries, course compositions and so on. Stage two involved a ‘two-

phased design', involving an extensive online questionnaire followed up with semi-structured interviews (further details on the survey, interviews and subsequent data analysis can be found in O'Neill, 2014a). Previous reports on this data have included both quantitative and qualitative findings. The current study, however, focuses on qualitative findings resulting from extensive interviews with one participant in order to capture some of the complexity of language and identity issues across several aspects of life.

Shaikha (all names are pseudonyms) was one of the undergraduates who filled in the questionnaire and she was subsequently chosen to be one of the thirty participants who were interviewed, in mid-2012. Shaikha's openness and frankness with regard to the challenges she faces in terms of identity and language made for a very interesting interview and her insights and experiences persuaded me that a case study focusing mostly on this participant would be very productive. In addition, being older than many of the other participants, she has more life experience on which to draw, which enabled me to focus on several domains of language use – personal, academic and professional. Thus, she was an ideal choice for this case study.

I kept in touch with Shaikha after the initial interview and conducted a follow-up interview in late 2014. After transcribing and coding the interviews using NVIVO, and writing this article, all of my findings and observations with regard to this participant have been fed back to her to ensure the emic validity of the information and the plausibility of the observations and analysis.

#### **4.4 Birth Family in Childhood**

Shaikha is the daughter of an Emirati father, Ibrahim, and a Moroccan mother, Salama. Mixed marriages such as this, between Emirati males and non-Emirati females, represent 20% of marriages involving Emirati nationals (Shaaban, 2012) and in Dubai in the period 2013-2015 averaged 41.45% of such marriages (Dubai Statistics Center, 2016a). Marriages between Emirati females and non-Emirati males are relatively unusual, partly because the children of such couples are not automatically eligible for UAE citizenship and the associated benefits (free education to tertiary level, health care, land to build a house on marriage etc.). Thus, because her father is 'a local' (as Emiratis refer to themselves), Shaikha, her mother, and her eight siblings

were eligible for UAE citizenship. Though exogamy involving Emirati females is relatively uncommon, in Shaikha's family and social circle, it is almost the norm, as will be discussed later.

Until the age of ten, Shaikha lived in a household in which both EA and MA were spoken. EA and MA are two forms of colloquial Arabic that are mutually incomprehensible for some speakers of these languages. In addition to differences in pronunciation and prosodic features, there are substantial differences in vocabulary since MA has incorporated words from Amazigh, French and Spanish, which are not present in EA.

However, Shaikha points out that Moroccans are more likely to be able to understand EA than Emiratis are to understand MA for two main reasons. Firstly, Kuwaiti TV series are very popular in Morocco, so many Moroccans are familiar with Kuwaiti Arabic, which is a form of GA, as is EA. Secondly, for economic reasons, it is more likely that Moroccans would be familiar with GA or EA, and migration from Morocco to the Gulf is far more common than in the other direction.

At home, in conversations with her father, or with the whole family, EA was the predominant language used, whereas with her mother, when her father was not present, MA was the norm. However, even in family conversations, Salama would speak MA since she had little proficiency in EA. Ibrahim did not speak MA and would chide his children if they attempted to speak what he called 'Chinese' with him. However, Shaikha points out that he was not entirely against MA being used in the home as he accepted his wife's use of MA and would sometimes joke with them using MA words. His insistence that they speak EA instead of MA was rooted in his concern that his children be seen as Emirati in his wider family and in UAE society, rather than as expatriates, since it is part of the language ideology of the majority of locals that speaking EA is highly indexical of being Emirati, and this is a very prestigious identity in the UAE. Another reason for his insistence on EA was that in patriarchal Arab societies, the father is the head of the family and so his language, religion, customs and so on tend to be given priority – as Shaikha put it, the paternal language 'is the language that you are supposed to speak'. That being said, Ibrahim does appear to have established a fairly heteroglossic home

language policy in that he was happy for his children to speak other languages, aside from MA, particularly English, and multilingualism was valued.

Both of Shaikha's parents were in possession of significant multilinguistic capital. Salama was a daughter of mixed parentage herself – with a Moroccan father who spoke MA and French, and a French mother who grew up in Morocco who spoke French, MA and Amazigh. Salama was proficient in MA and French, and French was the main language of her birth family, but she never taught her children French, so they have no proficiency in the language. Shaikha feels this was because 'it was her language of conversing with her family without us...her own way keeping in touch with her...pre-marital identity.' Salama wrote a private journal in French and would read French magazines and novels in her leisure time. These were private literacy practices which were not shared with her children.

Ibrahim was multilingual to an even greater extent than his wife. In addition to his proficiency in EA, he was highly literate in MSA and CA. Also, as an Abu Dhabi police officer, he had received training in criminology in Germany and Switzerland; thus, he was proficient in German. He also spoke English to an advanced level. Ibrahim's library in the family home reflected his literacy practices in these languages, with many religious texts in Arabic and books on criminology and other subjects in German and English. In the first ten years of her life, Shaikha was strongly influenced by her father's multilingualism and literacy. He encouraged her to read in MSA and CA, reading her stories about the prophets and buying her books on various aspects of Islam. Shaikha was fascinated by his library and would spend time browsing his books, reading mostly in Arabic in these early years. She would also see him talking to his international friends in English and German and dreamed that one day she would be able to have intellectual discussions with him in foreign languages. She recalls many happy memories of being with her father as a child – how she would accompany and entertain him on trips to Abu Dhabi and 'keep him awake' by asking questions on all manner of topics, and how she would watch TV series such as *Colombo* with him and ask him questions about English.

Clearly, Shaikha's home was a place in which it was normal to see, hear and use a number of languages, and she was already motivated from an early age to develop her capital in some of these languages, so a multilingual habitus had already begun to form. Another influence on Shaikha's linguistic habitus may have been her trips to Morocco to visit members of her mother's family.

Since her maternal family has connections to non-Arabic speaking family members in France and Germany, as well as to Arabic and French speakers in Morocco, these annual visits were often multilingual events. Though much of the daily speech was in French, from which Shaikha and her siblings felt excluded, they also communicated in 'broken Moroccan Arabic', and English was used to some extent as a lingua franca. She and her sisters had relatively little linguistic capital in English initially, and no French, so for this and other reasons, they felt like 'the poor relations', but they managed to cope, she says, because 'we used to connect things...we had the skill... we didn't have one language...we had the skill, and we applied the skill in everything'. They became used to reading the context and making intelligent guesses about what was being said, even if it was in French. One literacy practice associated with these visits was letter writing. Aged 13, when the family was no longer able to visit Morocco, due to their financial situation, Shaikha would write simple letters in English to her uncle in France, whom she missed greatly, but, interestingly, she would not send them to him and had no intention of doing so. She has continued this private literacy practice in English into her adult life, writing to important people in her life who are no longer with her.

Shaikha describes her first decade of her life as a 'rosy time,' but at the age of ten, all of this was about to change when her parents separated and Ibrahim moved out of the family home, leaving Salama with nine children (aged from 12 down to three years old). From that point on, the family had very little contact with their father. She says of this, 'I've never been a child after ten years old'. At ten she became an adult in the sense that she was the child who came to provide most help and support to her mother through some very difficult times and who helped her to bring up the rest of the family. From this point onwards, MA became the main language of a matriarchal household. Although Shaikha still used EA in educational contexts, she became

somewhat distanced from it, and MA became her mother tongue, the language with which she still has the strongest emotional bond.

#### **4.5 Primary and Secondary Education**

At five, Shaikha started schooling in an Arabic-medium public (government-funded) school where most of the teachers were Emirati nationals and the main languages used were EA (in daily classroom speech) and MSA (for religious and literacy purposes). English classes, from Grade Four, were conducted largely in Arabic and were often taught by non-Emirati Arab nationals, as at that time (the 1980s and 1990s), Emirati teaching staff were less likely to have proficiency in English (See O'Neill, 2016, which describes linguistic change over three generations in the UAE). The multiple linguistic habitus that Shaikha had begun to develop in the home seems to have been evident in these early days of her education since she felt comfortable attempting to use English in class, drawing on her knowledge of the language gleaned from home practices, such as watching English-language TV with her father, and communicating in 'broken English' with her uncles and cousins in Morocco. She believes that the very fact that she lived in an environment in which two quite distinct Arabic dialects (EA and MA) were used, also contributed to the relative ease with which she attempted to use and explore English. Additionally, her insistence on using English in English classes is an indication of an emerging language ideology in that she believed, and continues to believe, that it is not appropriate to mix languages.

In terms of literacy, Shaikha mostly enjoyed reading in MSA as a child, and rarely read in English. AMPuS background interviewees often commented that public schools rarely encouraged students to read for pleasure, even in Arabic (with the exception of religious texts). This contrasted markedly with the EMPrS background students, who were often strongly encouraged by their teachers to read for pleasure in English (though rarely in Arabic). Shaikha's enjoyment of reading in Arabic appears to have been encouraged by her father. Interestingly, she was more likely to enjoy writing in English as a child, rather than writing in Arabic. This was partly to avoid dialect issues (having to clearly differentiate between EA, MA and MSA), but there were also social reasons to do with her interactions with peers. Because she was willing to use English in class,

interact with and even challenge her teachers on occasions, she was teased greatly by her classmates. She recalls that on one occasion she had noticed the minimal pair 'fox/folks' and was interested in how similar they sounded. She had mentioned this to her teacher in class, in English, and from that moment on became the teacher's star student but was nicknamed 'fox' by her classmates, who would also taunt her with 'insults' such as 'Your father is American!' and 'Miss Half-half' and 'Miss Mommy Moroccan'. She says, 'everybody looked at me differently...or you know, refused [rejected] me for being the perfect student in English'. As a result of the negative attention she received from her classmates, she decided that English writing would be something private, to her alone, even though she was not very proficient in the language – 'I thought...it's mine, why don't I just use it between me and myself?' The unsent letters to her Moroccan uncle were one product of this private world of English, which may have been influenced by her mother's literacy practice of writing her journal in her 'private language', French, which Shaikha was aware of but not permitted to share.

Although Shaikha was a bright and successful student during primary and secondary school years, she did not graduate at 17 like her peers. In her last year of high school, Shaikha decided to drop out of education. This decision, with which her mother strongly disagreed, was largely financial, since her seven younger siblings were all at school by now and times were hard, but she recalls that it was also motivated by a desire to escape the taunting (about her looks, her origins, her language), which had intensified in the teenage years, from her peers, and, more alarmingly, from her teachers. In order to help bring money into the house, Shaikha volunteered to leave school to look for work, and so the next chapter of her life began.

#### **4.6 Workplace**

The multilingual family language and literacy practices Shaikha experienced growing up enabled her to feel comfortable using English in educational contexts to a greater extent than many of her peers who had relatively little exposure to the use of languages other than EA and MSA. As a result, when she left school at 17, she had developed multilingual dispositions and sufficient linguistic capital to actively look for work in what to some might be a dauntingly diverse marketplace. In the UAE workplace, several key languages

predominate. In the private sector, English is the most common language used, in addition to Urdu/Hindi and various forms of Arabic. In the public sector, Arabic is the main language used, as specified in the Arabic Language Charter (UAE Government, 2012) and as the process of Emiratization goes on, Emiratis are increasingly represented in government departments, so EA is prominent.

Shaikha applied to a national airline to become a cabin crew trainee, which meant nine rounds of challenging selection interviews and tests, many of which were conducted in English. She reports that the airline staff that she met during the selection process were surprised that she had been an AMPuS student, due to her relative proficiency and willingness to communicate in English. She was offered a place on the training program.

She began training, one of only two Emiratis alongside men and women from many nationalities and backgrounds, but partly because of her young age and the different lifestyles that her fellow-trainees lived (most of whom were in their twenties), she decided that the life of a cabin crew staff member was not for her. She switched to a customer service role in the airline's loyalty program office. Later, she transferred to the Human Resources Office in a smaller company, where she was the only Emirati (this was in the early days of the Emiratization drive). However, following a government Emiratization ruling that all public relations officers must be Emirati nationals, she was required to switch from HR to take up a PR role in the company.

Shaikha's work experiences further strengthened her multilingual habitus in that she engaged in daily speech and literacy practices largely in English in the private sector, though in one of her private sector jobs, she was required to visit the Ministry of Labour to arrange visas and so on, so she had the opportunity to use Arabic in this context. During these years, Shaikha began to develop her practice of convergent accommodation, or 'mirroring' as she refers to it, whereby she attempts to match the Arabic dialect of the person with whom she is conversing. For example, with an Egyptian Arabic speaker she will switch to EgA, with a Syrian she will switch to Syrian Arabic (SyA). She also developed the use of what she calls *lahja bayda* – 'white accent' or 'white dialect,' which I will refer to here as 'White Arabic' (Schulthies, 2015) (WA) – a term that she associates with the Moroccan singer and talent show winner, Mona Amarcha, referring to a form of Arabic that includes

‘all accents and dialects.’ Amarcha’s repertoire includes songs in MA, EgA, Lebanese Arabic (LA) and GA. When she is interviewed, Amarcha uses a form of Arabic that is understandable in the Gulf, where she is based, but which is still recognizably MA, though adapted in terms of accent, intonation and vocabulary.

An illustration of the use of WA by Emiratis was provided by Reem, another interviewee in my larger study. Reem said that speakers of EA would normally say, for example, *baseer al bait* (‘I’ll go home’) but if they are speaking to a non-Emirati, say to a Lebanese person, they might say *barooh al bait* (i.e. choosing vocabulary that is known across several Arabic dialects); they may also adapt their pronunciation, e.g. pronouncing the name ‘Majid’ as [madʒɪd] instead of EA [mayɪd]. Since there are many expatriate Arabs living and working in Dubai, from all over the Arab world, the use of WA as a pan-Arabic contact variety is increasing and might be regarded as a monolingual outcome of a superdiverse situation.

Shaikha developed her Arabic mirroring practice and her WA during these years in the workplace, and English became increasingly important in her life. At this time, she was as far away from her ‘Emirati side’ as possible. One of the key indexicalities of being Emirati relates to clothing choice. The standard national dress worn routinely in public by Emirati women involves a black headscarf (shaila) and a black dress/gown (abaya). In this period of her life, Shaikha wore western-style business clothing, without a headscarf. These clothing choices, along with her tendency to use Arabic dialects other than EA, and English, meant that she was rarely taken for an Emirati at this time. Through her linguistic and sartorial choices, she was constructing herself as a trans-national, cosmopolitan young woman, and she reports that she was the object of admiration and envy in the workplace because of these qualities. However, this positive perception changed when she entered university, as will be discussed.

Shaikha worked to help support her mother and siblings for seven years, until her older sister Khulood began working, at which point she was able to go back and graduate by attending evening school, which she did in one year, before being accepted as an undergraduate student at a government-funded university.

#### 4.7 Birth Family in Adulthood

Shaikha reflected that the way that she and her siblings behave when they are eating together in a restaurant is a good example of 'what globalization looks like'. She explains that while they are sitting together, they will flit between various dialects of Arabic – MA, EA, EgA etc, 'making fun in' these dialects. They will be speaking in one variety and then one of them will say something in a different variety and trigger a conversation among all of them in that variety. At the time of the first interview, one of her sisters was expecting to soon be engaged to a Sudanese man, or at least they were teasing her to that effect; hence, Sudanese dialect had become a part of their fun and games. Interestingly, when it comes to choosing food during these restaurant outings, they will tend to use the English menu, even in Lebanese or other Arabic restaurants, except when they are eating with their maternal aunt, when they feel obliged, out of respect, to use the Arabic menu because she does not speak English. Shaikha says of her birth family that 'the environment is like a parent to us', that she and her siblings have each developed differently due to the slightly differing situational and physical environments in which they have grown up. She suggests that their different physical appearances reflect these differing language practices (see Table 4).

Khulood, the eldest sister, for example, tends to dress in public in a very 'Emirati way', with black abaya (long black dress/gown) and shaila (black head scarf) and has generally been oriented towards EA as her social circle was, and is, mostly Emirati. Her preference has been to speak EA but she has recently begun to feel some nostalgia for MA and now sometimes speaks EA 'with a Moroccan taste' or WA. Although she was married, for a time, to an Englishman, Khulood tends not to be strongly oriented towards English, has relatively little linguistic capital in English and prefers to use Arabic. She speaks EA with her son Badr, but interestingly, his aunts tend to speak English with him since he is officially a UK citizen and 'who knows what will happen in the future'.

**Table 4 Shaikha's family tree with ages (at time of second interview), nationalities, marital statuses and language repertoires**

| Shaikha’s Grand-parents  | Shaikha’s Parents  | Shaikha & her Siblings   | Shaikha’s Children +Nephews/Nieces  |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Ahmed</b><br>(deceased)<br>Moroccan<br><i>MA, French</i>  | <b>Salama</b> (deceased)<br>Moroccan (by birth),<br>Emirati (by marriage)<br><i>MA, French</i> | <b>Khulood</b> (33)<br>Emirati, m. to UK citizen, Tim<br>(divorced)<br><i>EA, MA, English, some Urdu</i>               | <b>Badr</b> (7)<br>UK citizen<br><i>EA, English</i>   |
|  |  | <b>Shaikha</b> (31)<br>Emirati, m. to Jordanian Palestinian, Salem<br><i>MA, EA, PA, WA, EgA, MSA, JA, SA, English</i> | <b>Adnan</b> (3)<br>Jordanian / Canadian<br><i>PA, MA, WA, English</i><br><b>Jassim</b> (16 m)<br>Jordanian / Canadian  |
| <b>Sarah</b><br>(deceased)<br>French (by birth);<br>Moroccan (by upbringing)<br><i>MA, French, Amazigh</i> |  | <b>Khadija</b> (30)<br>Emirati, m. to Egyptian, Amir<br><i>EA, MA, English, Arabizi</i>                                | <b>Yahya</b> (8), <b>Tariq</b> (6), <b>Ruqayah</b> (5), <b>Marwa</b> (14 m)<br>(all Egyptian)<br><i>EgA, English</i>  |
|  |  | <b>Taibah</b> (29)<br>Emirati, m. to Syrian, Khaleel<br><i>EgA, SyA, MA, English, Arabizi</i>                          |   |
|  |  | <b>Ayesha</b> (28)<br>Emirati, unmarried<br><i>EA, English, mix of EA/MA, Arabizi</i>                                  |   |
| <b>Sultan</b><br>(deceased)<br>Emirati<br><i>EA</i>  | <b>Ibrahim</b><br>(age unknown)<br>Emirati<br><i>EA, MSA, German, English, Farsi</i>           | <b>Jameela</b> (26)<br>Emirati, unmarried<br><i>EA, English, Arabizi</i>   | <b>Key</b><br>Arabizi – English & Arabic mix<br>EA – Emirati Arabic<br>EgA – Egyptian Arabic<br>JA – Jordanian Arabic<br>MA – Moroccan Arabic<br>MSA – Modern Standard Arabic<br>PA – Palestinian Arabic<br>SA – Saudi Arabic<br>SyA – Syrian Arabic<br>WA – ‘White Arabic’<br>YA – Yemeni Arabic |
| <b>Zainab</b> (25)<br>Emirati, recently m. to UK citizen<br><i>EA, some MA, English</i>                    |  |  |   |
| <b>Jadida</b> (24)<br>Emirati, unmarried<br><i>EA, English, mix of EA &amp; MA, Arabizi</i>                |  |  |   |
| <b>Marwan</b> (24)<br>Emirati, unmarried<br><i>EA, YA, PA, English</i>                                     |  |  |   |
| <b>AlYazia</b><br>(deceased)<br>Emirati<br><i>EA</i>   |  |  |   |

Shaikha does not dress in a typically Emirati way and is most comfortable wearing a brightly coloured headscarf (she no longer goes without headscarf in public) and modest forms of western clothing, such as t-shirts and loose jeans. Her skin coloring is lighter than that of some of her sisters and when she wears Emirati style abaya she is often taken to be an Emirati of Ajami origin (The term ‘Ajami’ is used by Emiratis to refer to Emirati citizens whose ancestors migrated from Iran, who speak Ajami, a Farsi dialect). Shaikha presents herself as being the most heteroglossic of all of her siblings. As we have seen, she is comfortable in a wide range of Arabic varieties as well as English and actively uses these languages in her daily life. She differs from some of her sisters in that she does not believe in mixing languages at the sentence level. She reports that she does not use ‘Arabizi’ in daily speech (i.e. mixing English with Arabic within a sentence), saying ‘I kept English as English’. She also does not like to use ‘MSN language’ for Arabic in texting or other social networking contexts - i.e. using Roman script to write Arabic words with numbers to represent Arabic phonemes not covered by Roman script, such as the use of the number 6 to represent the alveolar stop consonant (t<sup>ʕ</sup>) in e.g. *fa6ma* (Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003). She feels that she should use the different languages and scripts to the best of her ability and that mixing would be a sign of a lack of proficiency, or even of laziness (‘If I’m learning another language, why not learn it really well?’).

Khadija (30), the third in the family, after Shaikha, has the appearance of an Emirati, always wears black abaya and shaila in public and works in the HR department of a highly emiratized semi-government company in Abu Dhabi. Khadija generally uses EA and MA within the birth family but also speaks EgA in her married family because she is married to an Egyptian and they have four children who speak EgA and English. At work, she tends to speak EA and English but in her social life she is not strongly oriented towards English and Shaikha comments that she has a practical approach, more concerned with communicating her point fluently than speaking correctly. Thus, she tends to have what Shaikha calls ‘typical Arab’ pronunciation of certain words (e.g. replacing /p/ with /b/ in words like ‘pizza’). She will also speak Arabizi at times.

Fourth sibling Taibah (29) studied journalism for a time in Egypt. Consequently, although she mostly uses EA in daily speech, and her social circle is largely Emirati, she often chooses to use EgA. Shaikha claims that she

has adopted a more cynical, humorous persona as a result of living in Egypt. She generally chooses to dress 'western style', and does not wear Emirati abaya and shaila, nor any other form of headscarf. Taibah is married to a Syrian, so also speaks SyA and enjoys watching Syrian TV dramas. She is fairly proficient in English and often speaks Arabizi with friends and family.

Shaikha describes the fifth sibling, Ayesha (28), as 'so fashionista' as she spends a large amount of time and money on clothes, makeup, gym membership, tanning and so on, and does not normally wear Emirati abaya and shaila. She works for a major hotel group based in Dubai and so speaks English for work purposes but at home mostly speaks EA or a mix of EA and MA with her siblings. She is also comfortable using Arabizi.

The sixth sibling, Jameela (26) often chooses not to wear abaya and shaila or other headscarf in public, except for work purposes where it is 'de rigeur' to dress as an Emirati, particularly as she works in a government department. Shaikha describes her as 'the new hybrid of Emirati – sporty', with short hair, a style that is relatively unusual among Emirati women, and more oriented to EA than Shaikha. Shaikha comments that she feels that she is a social embarrassment to Jameela and some of her other sisters, because of her Arabic heteroglossia, 'bringing dialects in' to their conversations and Jameela will sometimes exclaim 'Have mercy on us', believing that the proper variety they should be speaking is EA. She is reasonably proficient in English and can often be heard speaking Arabizi.

Zainab (25) also chooses not to wear an abaya and shaila (or headscarf) in public and is perhaps the most 'European' looking of the siblings. She is oriented to both Arabic (EA and some MA) and English in terms of language and literacy practices. A graduate of the same university and department as Shaikha, Zainab often converses with her older sister in English, particularly when discussing academic and social issues. When Zainab was participating in an exchange program in the US, she and Shaikha would keep in touch through Skype and these conversations would also tend to be in English, though Zainab would often begin in EA and Shaikha would reply in English, setting the parameters for the conversation. Like Shaikha, Zainab prefers not to use Arabizi in daily speech, but regularly switches between Arabic and English.

Jadida (24) has tended to be oriented mostly to EA, though her social circle for a time consisted largely of Emiratis of Balochi background and Shaikha claims that this is observable in her body language, for example in her more 'laid back' way of walking than is the norm among Emirati females. Due to health issues, Jadida has spent considerable amounts of time in hospitals and through conversations with hospital staff has developed an interest in other cultures and has learned words and phrases from languages such as Tagalog and Hindi/Urdu. Like several of her siblings, Jadida speaks Arabizi. She also sometimes mixes EA and MA at the sentence level.

The only boy, Marwan (24), Jadida's twin, has been influenced, Shaikha believes, by his friendship with a Yemeni whose mother is Palestinian. Consequently, his Arabic is influenced by these two varieties and he enjoys 'making fun in' them. Marwan does not dress in the white gutra (head-dress) and kandoora that are typically worn by Emirati men, preferring to wear western-style clothing. He is fairly proficient in English and uses Arabizi in social networking and daily speech contexts.

Among Shaikha's birth family, there is clearly considerable diversity and keeping this large group of people together as a family since their father's departure has been a challenging task that in recent years has fallen largely on Shaikha's shoulders. In 2010, the family were devastated by the sudden passing of their beloved mother. Normally in Emirati families, the eldest male child would automatically become the head of the family in situations like this but because Shaikha had increasingly been her mother's main source of emotional, organizational and financial support in the 16 years since their father left, she assumed that role instead of Marwan.

As de facto head of the family, Shaikha works hard to keep communication flowing between all nine of them. One way in which she has facilitated communication is by creating a group on the WhatsApp social networking application. They use this to keep in touch with what is going on among them, and the communication is mostly in Arabic. They will flit between EA, WA and MA and play with other dialects, such as EgA as they do when socializing at a restaurant. However, when it comes to organizational matters, such as paying the monthly rent on their shared accommodation, Shaikha chooses not to use Arabic and switches to

her professional language – i.e. English. She will send a WhatsApp reminder to her siblings that the rent is due, or overdue. Using English is a conscious choice here, and involves switching the phone keyboard from Arabic script to Roman script. She carefully composes the message in a note-making app and then when she is satisfied with the tone and language, copy-pastes it into WhatsApp and sends it. Why does she write these family communications in English and not in EA, White Arabic, MA or MSA? Shaikha generally subscribes to an ideology of language that sees languages as bounded, separate entities and she has some sense of functional differentiation in the use of the various languages and dialects in her repertoire. Very broadly, she reports that English has become associated, for her, with academia, workplace and intellectual pursuits, ‘the language of the professional side of my mind’, while MSA is associated with religion, spirituality and leisure time fiction reading, whereas various colloquial Arabic dialects are associated with aspects of family and emotional life. She feels that if she used Colloquial Arabic for these organizational matters with her siblings, she would not be able to control herself to the same extent:

If I wrote it in Arabic, I would be more emotional, I'll be more angry. I may shout more. I may need to call them and say it in person, you know, and just express myself more emotionally.

Whereas if the message is in English:

It's gonna be very formal...It's not gonna make me involve myself emotionally. I'll avoid being angry for them being irresponsible or ignoring. You know, it's like a boss just sent them an announcement. Everybody was active on WhatsApp and suddenly there's a silence. And you see the last time they saw it [was] when they checked my message and then no one [is] there until the evening and like if I send it through the day, you won't see anyone.

Though acknowledging that it is no less possible to express strong emotions through English, nor to be professional and business-like in Arabic, Shaikha feels that she is better able to achieve ‘balanced emotions’ in English, get straight to the point and get the job done more efficiently. English allows her to use a more formal

register with her siblings and construct herself as ‘the boss’ (in fact some of them joke that she sounds like a CEO in such communications).

#### **4.8 Married Family**

Towards the end of her pre-university working period, when she was working in a private company, Shaikha received a business call at work from a man named Salem. Though his EA was ‘perfect’, there was something about his intonation that aroused her curiosity. After speaking to him for a little while, she plucked up the courage to ask him what he looked like, since she strongly suspected that he was not a native Emirati. He said he had blue eyes and blond hair. This was enough for Shaikha to conclude that he was probably not Emirati, or not ‘pure Emirati’. Salem was equally intrigued by the fact that an Emirati female was working for a private company, particularly when she started mirroring his PA. They began talking more regularly on the phone, got to know each other better, became engaged, and two years later married.

By passport, Salem is Jordanian but was born in Palestine, to Palestinian parents, and grew up in Sharjah, UAE. Thus, he is able to speak EA but his home language is Palestinian Arabic (PA). Unlike some Arab expatriates in the early days of the UAE, Salem’s father did not seek Emirati citizenship. Salem’s social network growing up was largely expatriate, with friends from Pakistan, UK and other Arab countries. He identifies himself culturally as Palestinian, officially as Jordanian and also as an Arab expatriate despite the fact that he has lived his whole life in the UAE.

From the beginning of their relationship, Shaikha and Salem have spoken PA much of the time. Since the birth of their two children, Adnan (4) and Jassim (16 months), PA has become the language of the household. However, there are times in their interactions when Shaikha feels that she needs to draw on other linguistic resources. In the first interview she mentioned that a couple of days previously she had been on her way out of the house in the morning and wanted to leave Salem a message. She had written, in English:

Once you're free, I need an appointment with you so we can discuss a few things.

She also mentioned that she had written him a birthday card the previous week, as follows:

Happy Birthday darling. Shaikha.

The use of English in these written communications, rather than Arabic, Shaikha explains, is partly to avoid problems choosing which Arabic dialect to use – as she is unused to writing in PA, MSA would seem ‘too poetic,’ or too ‘lovey-dovey’, and Salem prefers her not to use MA (and, anyway, MA ‘doesn’t make sense’ to Shaikha in written form). In the first message, she employs her semi-formal English professional organizational register in much the same way as she does with her siblings, but what of the second? Shaikha’s explanation for this is somewhat more complex. She explains that her husband is not very emotionally expressive and that he comes from a family that tends to be quite restrained in displays of affection and emotion. Shaikha, on the other hand, was raised, she says, ‘without boundaries’, and the family disposition was to ‘speak your mind, what’s the worst that can happen?’. She sees these differences not as cultural differences but as family differences. Her in-laws have commented that Shaikha is ‘too much of a person’ – that she expresses herself too effusively. They tell her, ‘not to use too many words to explain one thing, one feeling’ and her mother-in-law had recently responded (in PA) to one of her emotional expressions, ‘Oh my God, all this at once? You should have a grip on it!’. They have some difficulty with her switching between languages, dialects and cultures, and her mother-in-law has gone as far as to say that Shaikha should decide on either a Moroccan or an Emirati identity, but strongly prefers the latter, given that this is the most prestigious socio-cultural grouping in the UAE, and also that the image of Moroccan women in the UAE may be subject to certain stereotypical, even orientalist notions (e.g. Moroccan woman as a temptress or seductress, or ‘player’). At the same time, Shaikha points out that Salem does not really see her as being Emirati; he sees her as Moroccan, yet Shaikha is expected to speak PA in the home and bring up their children with this dialect, and she does not feel entirely comfortable using MA even during private moments with Salem.

These family reactions have had some effect on Shaikha’s language choices; she has tended to become more circumspect in displaying emotion, at least with her in-laws, and tries not to switch too much between Arabic

varieties. She reports that her husband has become influenced by these family dispositions. Hence, she wrote the birthday greeting to Salem in English to achieve more neutral 'balanced emotions,' whereas, she points out, 'If I'm gonna talk in Arabic I will have a wealth of expression' and it will be 'more involved, with a story'.

Shaikha contrasts conscious language choices such as these with her unconscious language use in more heated or intimate moments. In the first interview, Shaikha reported that in their routine everyday family life, Salem would speak PA and she would speak 'whatever comes out' – elements of PA, MA, EA and some English. Two years later, in the second interview, now a mother of two children, she reported being more able to converse in PA. Earlier in their relationship, when they had first declared their love for each other, Salem expressed his feelings in PA. Shaikha recalls that it had been a struggle for her deciding which language to express herself in. She felt uncomfortable using MA with Salem, though this would have been her preference as she feels there is a wealth of words and expressions in MA that would better communicate how she felt. She would consciously try to use PA but at times would resort to English, rather than MA, to express how she felt. In less conscious loving moments, however, she knows that she gives full vent to her feelings in MA. Similarly, in moments of marital conflict, she will try to express herself in PA initially, but then will be forced to resort to some words of English to get her point across, and once the argument becomes very heated, at the height of her anger:

If we're fighting and it's intense, I will just go to Moroccan or white language. I will be too emotional, too frustrated, too charged emotionally to try and filter myself.

However, once anger has subsided to some extent and they are at the point of wanting to discuss whatever issue caused the conflict, they tend to use English – or at least, Shaikha will initiate a conversation in English and Salem will respond in like manner. English affords them a relatively neutral space in which they can express themselves without the issues of language choice that using their first languages would raise. Much of this discussion now takes place via WhatsApp and Salem recently wrote a long message to Shaikha, 'like an essay', entirely in English, explaining his perspective on a marital issue they had had.

As a mother of two young boys, Shaikha follows her husband's wishes in keeping to a family language policy of using PA. Despite the fact that EA is the prestige colloquial Arabic variety in the UAE, Salem wants his children to follow his own 'lineage and culture'. He recognizes Shaikha's Emirati side but mostly in terms of her officially assigned identity. He tends to see her more as Moroccan and emphasizes this part of her identity, Shaikha believes, as a form of expatriate solidarity. Yet he prefers her not to speak MA in the home. Shaikha is generally happy to go along with the PA family language policy and feels that this is particularly important because the boys are officially Jordanian, not Emirati like her. However, when she is alone with them 'being a mother', she also uses MA, 'the way I've been told off, the way I've been cuddled'. She has also found herself unconsciously using English with her boys, for example when she is explaining something to them about how to behave (e.g. 'You should look after your brother, you should protect him'). Since the boys are also Canadian passport holders, having been born in Canada, Shaikha feels that developing their English is important, too, though perhaps slightly less important than Arabic. As a result, heteroglossia is becoming evident in the speech of Adnan, who will produce instances of Arabizi, such as the following, which she overheard him using with his cousin Badr, a mix of MA and English:

Mama gallat 'don't touch'.

Mum said 'don't touch'.

Despite agreeing with and implementing the family PA language policy, there are times when she feels that Salem's dialect is 'taking over' since he insists on her speaking his dialect and will even correct her if she makes an error in PA or uses another dialect:

As if I made this transition by marrying him, I have to make all transitions and [in] all factors in my life - the language, the looks, the dress, the food taste.

She sometimes feels that English is having a similar effect. The fact that she generally finds it easier and more comfortable to use English when she wants to explain something to her oldest boy gives her an uneasy feeling

at times, because she feels that she should be more disposed to explaining things in Arabic. She also fears that her languages are competing for mental space:

We're so filled with English, there's no place for Arabic any more, and if I started learning the words or expressions in Arabic, maybe I'll lose [my English].

Reflections such as these point to the fact that the performance of multilingualism in superdiverse contexts is not always comfortable or enjoyable. Shaikha generally presented herself to me as being proud of her linguistic proficiency and flexibility, proud of her own superdiversity, yet at times she commented on how difficult it could be to match language choices with her personal identities and avoid social scrutiny. Nowhere was this social scrutiny more in evidence than in the university at which she studied.

#### **4.9 Higher Education**

Shaikha's children were both born in Canada. When Adnan was born, there were some medical complications and she and Salem were very worried about their baby. Feeling extremely upset and concerned, just hours after having given birth, Shaikha told herself that she needed to equip herself with knowledge about Adnan's condition. She went online and immediately began an extensive search for information, which she did entirely in English. Had she wanted to, she could have used the hospital's Arabic-English interpreter and spoken to doctors in Arabic about Adnan. She chose not to do this, partly because she felt that in her native language, she would be more likely to become emotional and break down. English allowed her to switch her 'mental keyboard', as she put it, and become the professional for a while. Another reason was that for Shaikha, searching for information in English had become second nature. She reports that she rarely searches the internet in Arabic for academic or family-related information as she finds that much of the Arabic-language material is likely to be related to religion, or might be too informal or buried in chatrooms and forums that are difficult to navigate ('They don't cut to the chase'). After several hours of searching in English, she had prepared herself so well on Adnan's condition, she recalls, that the medical staff in the hospital thought that she was a health care professional herself.

Shaikha's strong disposition towards English in academic matters developed rapidly in the four years that she spent as an undergraduate at a mainly English-medium university. As a mature student, Shaikha threw herself into education with great enthusiasm and appreciation ('it was a privilege for me'). A pivotal moment, she remembers, was when she first started learning about globalization in her first year. She had been aware of this concept prior to university days through the Arabic term *al 'awlama* but when she started reading about the meaning of the English term, it had made her realize that there may be different connotations in the Arabic and English terms, with the Arabic having more of a connotation of 'secularization', which was not necessarily the case in English accounts of the concept. From this point onwards, Shaikha developed a love of academic reading in English because 'it says what I want to say. I found the words for my ideas' and to the present day she is strongly oriented to acquiring knowledge through the medium of English:

I shouldn't say that but I think I was, and I still am, very fond of English because if I'm in my best mood I will choose something in English, like a documentary etc

Shaikha's strong multilingual habitus, developed since childhood, has made a difference to how she interacts with English and varieties of Arabic. She feels that they are all important in her mental processes, even though difficult to manage sometimes, as she mentioned in the first interview:

I think in both, English and Arabic. I'm not sure how to balance it and which goes more but if I'm just thinking between me and myself, if I'm emotional I would think in Arabic. If I would, you know, theoretically and thinking critically about things, I would think in English.

Being so strongly oriented towards English in academic matters is not always easy, however. She has mixed feelings about the relative value she gives to the languages in this context:

I feel sorry for Arabic. It's our language. I need to be, like I need to speak to explain myself to Arab people in Arabic. I need, because I'm an Arab person, I need to utilize the language perfectly, which I'm not now.

Shaikha was successful on the academic side of university life and rarely found it too challenging. However, her experience of the social aspects of university life was somewhat mixed. On the one hand, she was able to find a group of like-minded women with whom she could socialize, as will be discussed below, but on the other, sartorial and linguistic choices that she made in this relatively mono-cultural space led to many uncomfortable situations.

As explained above, Shaikha's assigned identity according to her passport is 'Emirati,' she identifies as Emirati in terms of nationality, was able to keep her Emirati nationality on marriage to Salem, and she regards herself as being fully committed to playing her part in developing the country. There are times when she will consciously perform her Emirati identity by aligning with key indexicalities, particularly in dress and speech. In contrast with her early days in the workplace, if she applies for a job now, particularly in the public sector, she will dress in an Emirati way and perform conversations in EA, in order to be perceived as a local. In educational contexts, however, Shaikha has generally chosen not to construct herself as being typically Emirati, and this has led to some difficult moments. She reports that she would often feel scrutinized by her fellow students, who would question her sartorial and linguistic choices. She wrote the following in one of her in-class assignments for a course on the Politics of Identity:

...there was one time when two of my classmates had approached me with a question about my nationality and dialect saying that if I identify myself as an Emirati and if I want to be accepted and perceived by others as an Emirati, I have to start wearing an Abaya and speak in Emirati dialect.

This scrutiny can become quite uncomfortable:

I sometimes become the target of verbal harassment by my peers for not wearing an Abaya at the university campus, for my opinions, regarding social and national issues and most of all for talking in a different dialect.

Her 'refusal' to speak and dress in a more 'Emirati way' and even her marriage to a non-Emirati are seen as acts of rebellion by some of her peers, yet Shaikha does not see it this way:

the most important thing is that I am happy with the way I live my life as I believe that I am a distinctive 'whole person', whose choices are rich and diverse as I perceive myself as part of both cultures, the Emirati and the Moroccan, which means that I am not either or, but both an Emirati and a Moroccan. I also think that what matters the most is how I perceive myself and to what extent I am confident in my opinions and myself.

Shaikha's choices of particular Arabic dialects and dress are acts of identity construction and management through which she attempts to position herself in both her public and her private lives in Dubai. However, this can be something of a juggling act. She sees herself as having multiple identities – Arab, Emirati, Moroccan, woman, Muslim etc but rarely feels that she can 'be herself', and comments 'It's not comfortable being who I am'. As we have seen, aspects of Shaikha's linguistic and emotional identity have been scrutinized and contested, even within the family situation.

What role has English played in terms of identity construction and management in public contexts? A clear benefit for Shaikha of using English is that she is able to navigate away from some of the indexical difficulties that use of a particular Arabic dialect might present. As she and her siblings grew up in a largely MA home environment, in public there was often the perception of a slight lack of linguistic capital in EA, and they were frequently regarded as being different or 'not Emirati'. At times, Shaikha reflects, Arabic seemed 'chaotic'. Thus, their use of English in some public contexts was a preventative measure:

Talking in English was a haven for us. You know something that we could just protect ourselves...from being antagonized...you know, just labelled or being under question or being under interrogation it goes that far. Or sometimes people just say 'Why do you look that way? Why do you talk like this? Why can't you just speak in Arabic' [i.e. EA]?

Though she faced difficulties on the social side of university life, she was fortunate in being able to find a group of friends that is more disposed to value linguistic diversity. Shaikha's social circle consisted mostly of young women of mixed nationality parentage – 'halfies' as they referred to themselves (i.e. 'half Emirati'), most of whom were AMPuS background. Table 5, which lists all of Shaikha's core university friends, along with their nationalities and language repertoires, shows the considerable diversity among them in terms of their language practices.

Shaikha was able to relax among these friends because they were relatively tolerant of difference and actually enjoyed each other's multilingual dispositions. Their ideas about what constituted 'being Emirati' were not tied so much to the strict indexicalities of dress, speech and acceptable opinion. In contrast, in more mono-cultural contexts, for example in class, where classmates tended to present themselves, implicitly or explicitly, as 'pure local', she was more likely to feel uncomfortable and less able to be herself. Interestingly, though somewhere between 20-40% of students in these classes are likely to be children of mixed marriages, this fact is rarely mentioned in class and students are often uncomfortable discussing it except in small group or one-to-one situations outside of class. Thus, there is a kind of 'occluded diversity' in operation in the classroom setting.

**Table 5 Shaikha's friendship network**

| <b>Name</b>   | <b>Nationality, Parentage, Language Repertoires</b>  |
|---|--|
| <b>Najwa</b><br>(All of Shaikha's university friends are now in their mid-20's) | Emirati<br>Emirati father & Indian mother<br>Urdu, EA, Arabizi, English  |
| <b>Shamma</b>   | Emirati<br>Pakistani / Balochi parents<br>Urdu, 'Broken EA,' English   |
| <b>Arwa</b>   | Emirati<br>Emirati father of African descent & Bahraini mother<br>EA, English  |
| <b>Reem</b>   | Emirati<br>Emirati Bedouin parents (cousin marriage)<br>Bedouin EA, English (incl. African-American phrases) + EgA and LA 'for fun'  |
| <b>Marwa</b>  | Emirati<br>Emirati parents from Abu Dhabi<br>EA, English   |
| <b>Shaima</b>   | Emirati<br>Ajami Emirati parents<br>EA, Arabizi, English   |
| <b>Hind</b>   | Emirati<br>Emirati father & Indian mother<br>EA, Arabizi, English  |
| <b>Shamsa</b>   | Emirati<br>Emirati father & Philippine mother<br>EA, English, Arabizi  |
| <b>Sana</b>   | Emirati<br>Ajami father & Iranian mother, Kumzari ancestry (the Kumzari people originate in the Musandam Peninsula of Oman and speak Kumzari, a South Western Iranian language).<br>Ajami, Farsi, EA, English, Japanese, Chinese |

#### **4.10 Discussion and Conclusion**

Shaikha's language ideology and linguistic habitus shape her language and literacy practices in the various languages in which she has developed linguistic capital. She sees languages as bounded, separate entities that should not be mixed at the sentence level – hence her distaste for Arabizi. In fact, she sees language mixing as a sign of weakness, or of a lack of proficiency. However, she is very willing to switch backwards and forwards between languages and to accommodate by 'mirroring' or the use of WA, and she reluctantly admits that she

does in fact engage in mixed forms like Arabizi on occasion, albeit unintentionally. Her language ideology assigns particular functions to the various languages in her repertoire. English tends to be constructed as a relatively dispassionate language of academic knowledge, logical thought, measured words, balanced emotions and professionalism. She reports that she uses English for research purposes, for thinking about and discussing intellectual issues, and also in her daily business, 'getting the job done', even when this daily business involves her siblings or husband, with whom she would not normally speak English. In contrast, MA is constructed as the language of her internal emotional world, the language that she will use when she wishes to express love, joy, anger and pain. Though this is the language that she regards as being her 'mother tongue', the contexts in which she can use it are somewhat limited, but it is clearly an important part of her sense of self. On marriage, moving from the family home, where MA, EA and WA were used, she was required to switch to a more monolingual situation in which PA became the lingua franca. Much of Shaikha's relationship with Salem is conducted in PA, though she does not feel able to negotiate all aspects of their relationship in this variety and switches to English in order to resolve marital issues and to MA in less conscious moments. Although she describes MA as her mother tongue, Shaikha reports that in terms of Arabic varieties she feels most comfortable overall using WA because this variety enables her to communicate easily in diverse Arabic-speaking contexts in Dubai and she is able to avoid some of the scrutiny that she receives speaking MA or EA.

Shaikha's linguistic habitus was laid down in her early years at home, in her interactions with EA and MA with her parents and her attempts to communicate in English with her wider family while on holiday in Morocco. The relatively multilingual environment of the home contrasted with her relatively monolingual experiences at school (and later at university and in her marital home) where she was subjected to considerable pressure to conform. Shaikha's sense of her own identity would not allow her to construct herself as a 'pure local' among her peers, or in her marital family. She remains proud of her Moroccan heritage while still acknowledging her Emirati identity and this is evident in her language choices and refusal, in some contexts, to be part of the occluded diversity that she has encountered. At the same time, for instrumental

purposes, she is now willing to go along with this imagined homogeneity and perform the key indexicalities of being Emirati, for example while applying for jobs in the public sector.

\*

This case study sheds light on the complexity of language and literacy practices in a superdiverse context in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The development of a multilinguistic habitus, linguistic capital in several language varieties and exposure to a superdiverse ‘field’, not only in educational and professional contexts but also in home and family situations, is creating new language practices through which individuals construct, manage and negotiate identities and navigate their intellectual, emotional and spiritual worlds. These language practices may conflict with prevailing language ideologies and notions of national and ethnic identity. Clearly, in the UAE, where Emirati citizens represent only 11% of the population, issues of identity and language are very salient and complex. For those Emiratis who have links to other communities and languages through birth or marriage, the complexity is even greater. Rather than viewing Shaikha’s language practices *against a backdrop of superdiversity*, it is perhaps more accurate to state that her language practices are *iconic of superdiversity*. For Shaikha, convergent accommodation and white language are natural; she feels comfortable being able to draw heteroglossically from a number of languages to suit the specific context, and she is comfortable using English in a number of domains, including the home. Linguistic superdiversity affords her a way of establishing ‘conviviality’ in multilingual contexts (Blommaert, 2014); she is able to make people feel comfortable and at ease and build good working or other social relationships through her multilingual dispositions and capital. Convivial exchanges occur routinely in a superdiverse city such as Dubai and oil the wheels of daily discourse. However, Makoni (2012) has pointed out that diversity does not always lend itself to comfortable and positive experiences, that the notion of superdiversity contains ‘a powerful sense of social romanticism, creating an illusion of equality in a highly asymmetrical world, particularly in contexts characterized by a search for homogenization’ (Makoni, 2012, p. 193). What this case study shows very clearly is that experiences around superdiversity can indeed be difficult and uncomfortable, and not at all convivial in some situations. Shaikha has encountered conflict when her multilingual habitus becomes too obvious in

relatively mono-cultural spaces (e.g. in the classroom), where language and other ideologies assign national and cultural meaning to particular indices of dress, speech and lifestyle and there is a clear drive towards homogenization among the powerful minority. For Shaikha, language is at the center of a daily contest against deeply held stereotypes – that Emiratis must speak EA, that MA speakers are not Emirati, that Moroccan women threaten family stability, that an Arab woman should conform to the culture and language of the family that she marries into, and so on. In her attempts to construct and manage what she sees as her central identities, Shaikha's language use has often led her into situations in which she is found to be 'different' or even 'incomplete'. In a way, she is subject to her own particular form of cleft habitus since the multilingual dispositions that she developed in the home as she grew up are at odds with more monolingual dispositions and ideology that she encounters in certain public and private contexts. This is particularly true of her use of WA, 'mirroring' or even MA when EA is the expected variety and she is expected to perform her Emirati nationality.

A dominant language ideology in the UAE assigns Arabic - which is seen as one single language including the normalized standards of EA and MSA - as the proper language of home, nation, religion, public sector business and public sector education. This conflation of standard and local Arabics is in line with the 'ideology of linguistic sameness' that is widespread in the Arab world (Schulthies, 2015). Yet, at the same time there are ideological positions that assign indexical value to specific varieties of Arabic. In some ways, the reaction to Shaikha's use of WA and her mirroring of non-EA varieties of Arabic appear to cause more of a reaction amongst her Emirati acquaintances than her use of English. This is because English has become a prestige language in the UAE, even though it is proscribed in some contexts (e.g. in many local homes). Also, for Emiratis, English is now less indexically-linked to a particular nationality or culture, and the use of English repertoires is becoming more commonplace, appearing in mixed forms like Arabizi, or unmixed in conversations between Emiratis. In contrast, among colloquial Arabic varieties, EA is the prestige variety (or 'accent' as Emiratis generally describe it in English) and other varieties are seen as 'expat' or 'non-Emirati.' Because Shaikha is officially Emirati, there is pressure on her in some public domains to conform to

conventions of dress and speech, but at home there is a different pressure. Her decision to marry a non-Emirati has meant that there is pressure on her to be an expat, though there are certain linguistic constraints on this in that she is expected to use PA more than her preferred MA or WA.

National dress and the local Arabic dialect are highly indexical of being Emirati, imagined as a homogeneous rather than a diverse identity, yet there are clearly many individuals who are officially Emirati and consider themselves to be Emirati, but who do not choose to dress in this way and may even choose to speak in different Arabic dialects, or in another language entirely. There are also those who consider themselves to be culturally and historically 'local' yet who do not hold a national passport due to the fact that their male parent is not local - though recently there have been some changes to this situation, with citizenship being conferred by presidential decree on children of foreign husbands of Emirati women (The National, 2016). People like these, who have allegiances to more than one national or social grouping, may have certain advantages in superdiverse contexts such as Dubai, particularly if they have a strong multilingual habitus. Like Shaikha, they can pass relatively comfortably between diverse sociocultural contexts, drawing on their 'ethnolinguistic repertoires' (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015), but at the same time, their non-Emirati identities may be ideologically constructed as peripheral, non-normative and may be subject to sanctions. For each individual, decisions with regard to the choice of language used to construct and manage identities are complex and may be fraught with difficulty. Among Shaikha's birth family these issues are very clearly apparent. Whereas Shaikha has made the decision that she will perform and display all of her identities, regardless of how difficult this can be at times, some of her sisters have chosen to conform more to the linguistic conventions of the Emirati community and aim to avoid criticism by 'hiding in plain sight', blending in and playing down their Moroccan identities somewhat, at least for education, work and other official purposes. Others have chosen to present themselves as expats or as a 'new breed' of Emirati, wearing western style clothing in private and public yet using EA and English/Arabizi in daily life like other young Emiratis. Whether or not they present themselves as traditionally Emirati for work/official purposes, Shaikha and her siblings are able to adopt other conventions as they wish, and access expatriate social circles and experiences that would not typically be

available to local females. The prevalence of exogamy in Shaikha's birth family demonstrates very clearly that they are choosing to build lives across local and expatriate communities. Language practices are, of course, central to this process, though each of the siblings negotiates super-diversity in slightly different ways in line with her/his unique identity positions, linguistic habitus, linguistic capital and language ideology.

### **Addendum - Religious Practice**

*This is the material that I was unable to include in the final version of the Multilingua article due to space considerations. In the original manuscript it followed the section on 'Higher Education' and preceded the 'Discussion and Conclusion' section.*

As a Muslim, Shaikha believes that Arabic in its classical form is a sacred language, that Arabic is the language spoken in paradise, and that an essential part of the sacred nature of the miracle of Quranic revelation is the fact that it was revealed in Arabic. Consequently, the language is regarded as a highly precious and valuable resource. From childhood, Shaikha has read, studied and listened to recitations of her holy book, along with stories about the prophets, the hadeeth and so on. Being a Muslim is, in some senses, the most important part of her identity and as a mother she has already begun to introduce Islamic stories and ideas to her eldest child.

Shaikha also aspires to be 'the best representative of my religion to non-Muslims' and she has read parts of various English translations of the Qur'an because she 'wanted to know how nice, or how good it feels reading [it] in English'. Nevertheless, she feels that Arabic is by far the most suitable language for appreciating her religion. Just as MA is a language that is very close to her heart, linked to powerful emotions and memories, Shaikha perceives CA as occupying a very central position in her inner being, the language of the soul perhaps. When discussing spiritual matters, she will automatically use CA/MSA, but during low emotional moments, when she is in need of spiritual relief, she will find herself switching between MA and CA (She used the blanket term 'Arabic' in this excerpt, but I later asked her to clarify which variety of Arabic she was referring to – included in parentheses):

I would weep in Arabic [MA]. I wouldn't weep in English...it's gonna start as talking to myself in Arabic [MA] and then it's gonna start tears, waterworks, and then I'm gonna start talking to myself. I'm kind of expressive, loudly expressive...I'm gonna go to the kitchen window, look out the window. University in front of me from the window. And it's gonna be, I'm gonna close the lights and even if I'm gonna pray and start asking things, unconsciously I'm gonna talk in Arabic [CA]...aloud. It's just, I'm gonna start hearing, you know, something like energy would start flowing out here and then it's gonna start, just go to my head and then it's gonna be, you know, like you're very very sad, very very sad and you'll feel something hurts here and then you want to take this hurt out from your chest. It's just gonna be like I'm trying to reach up to the sky...elevate this weight and trust me, when I'm sad I feel really heavy sad...like I'm eighty years old...I feel the world's weight on my shoulders. And that's how I felt when I was 17, like I was 70 years old...

but she also gives evidence of English use, even in the midst of these most internal emotional spiritual thoughts and worries:

...my religion and my fears as a person from the day, the judgement day, the worries of your life, is your life meaningful? - in Arabic and English. I try to be realistic. 'Inshallah khair [lit. God willing, good], inshallah khair, everything will be OK'. It's like you play a movie and this movie is playing sub-titles. You know, it's in Arabic and it's playing subtitles in English. And you're hearing it and then you're reading [and thinking] 'Oh she said, "Oh thank God nothing happene

## Chapter 5 Conclusion

---

In this chapter, I will firstly summarize, synthesize and discuss the main quantitative and qualitative findings of the three publications, along with a discussion of how Latour's work might be relevant to the study (not mentioned in the three publications), before answering my central research question: *What are the factors that lead to language choices in literacy and daily speech among young Emirati graduates and undergraduates?* I will then go on to discuss the findings in the light of government policies, which were not discussed in great detail in the publications themselves, before turning to limitations of the study, possibilities for future research and potential applications.

### 5.1 Summary and Discussion of Findings

The aim of this study is to contribute to the development of sociolinguistic research in superdiverse middle-eastern globalized cities in the 21st century. As we have seen, the UAE is a country whose citizens are in the unique position of being very much a minority, albeit a powerful and prestigious minority, in their own land. Because of this minority status, there are widespread concerns with regard to local culture and local language – that they are under threat, in danger of disappearing or becoming ‘impure’, and so on. Hence, the drive towards homogeneity is an understandable reaction, and it can be seen clearly in the clothes that Emiratis wear to mark themselves as a distinct social group, in their lifestyle choices, for example with regard to marriage (the strong encouragement to marry within the Emirati community) and in their language choices.

However, as we have also seen, despite this drive towards homogeneity, there is significant diversity within the Emirati community. This is, of course, not a new phenomenon. Given its position in the Arabian/Persian Gulf and with relatively easy access to India and Africa, Dubai has long been a trading hub, used to the comings and goings of maritime traffic, languages in contact, differing customs and beliefs. However, given the super-diversified context in which Emiratis now live, the influences on locals' lives are far greater and more complex than ever before. This study has attempted to describe some aspects of the diversity among Emiratis, particularly with regard to language and literacy practices and the factors that contribute to language choices.

With regard to the factors that contribute to language choices, it is clear that there are many potential factors and that these may be highly individualized. I have shown in the three publications resulting from my research that Bourdieu's theory of practice is a valuable lens for the building of an understanding of language and literacy practices. A key aspect of his theory, is the concept of habitus, which is an important factor in language choices. Individual embodied histories, the socio-cultural contexts in which we grow up, predispose us to certain behaviours, including linguistic behaviours. These of course also depend on our linguistic proficiencies, our language repertoires, and language is, for Bourdieu, a form of social capital, prone to all the inequities and asymmetries to which the conceptual basis of his metaphor, financial capital, is prone. Habitus and capital combine in certain socio-cultural contexts, or fields as Bourdieu calls them, and, to employ two idiomatic phrases, give us 'a feel for the game' or, less happily, make us feel like 'a fish out of water'.

The quantitative data in Chapter Three revealed the backdrop against which current linguistic predispositions are set. The data on first and second languages and literacy (Tables 1-3) showed the significant changes that have occurred over three generations, with the growing predominance of English as a second language and increased levels of literacy and biliteracy. It also showed the diversity in the local population, given that approximately a quarter of participants' grandmothers, and 15% of mothers, are L1 speakers of languages other than EA, such as Farsi, Ajami, Tagalog and Urdu.

Quantitative data in Chapter Two showed how predispositions with regard to literacy in Arabic and English among the current generation of young people differ depending on educational background. EMPrS background participants were more likely to express enjoyment of reading in English at all stages of their lives, while reporting low levels of interest in reading in Arabic, while AMPuS background respondents reported stronger interest in Arabic reading at all stages of their lives, while enjoyment of reading in English was generally reported as being something that had mostly developed in late teenage years.

The qualitative data relating to individuals cited in the study clearly exemplifies the range of language and literacy practices that are to be found among the Emirati community in Dubai. In terms of habitus, individuals

may exhibit, to a greater or lesser extent, multilingual or monolingual predispositions. As we saw in Chapter Two, Afra can be described as having a multilingual habitus, in that it feels natural to her to use both EA and English in her daily life, and she often uses 'Arabizi'. However, she is clearly more predisposed towards English, in terms of both her language and her literacy practices, and she is least predisposed towards reading and writing in MSA, and has far less capital in that variety of Arabic. She might even be described as having monolingual literacy predispositions, given that she has only read two books in Arabic in her lifetime and that it does not feel natural to her to read in MSA. It is almost as if MSA is a foreign language, and, interestingly, I noticed among several EMPrS participants that they were more likely to view MSA as rather distant, and distinct from EA. Other participants mentioned above with backgrounds in private schools, who demonstrate multilingual predispositions, but who strongly favour English, were Safeeya, Latifa and Muntaha, cited in Chapter Three.

Amna, the subject of the other case study in Chapter Two above shares Afra's multilingual habitus, but configured somewhat differently. Her AMPuS background and the infrequent use of English in the home might well have yielded a more monolingual habitus, but through her own efforts in her leisure time as a teenager, watching films in English, and the hard work that she did in the foundation program and the early months of her degree studies, she developed multilingual dispositions, such that she is able to function in both EA, English and MSA in her daily life, including work situations. She is also different from Afra in that she is biliterate to a greater extent. Although she strongly prefers reading fiction in MSA, and has read very few novels in English, her academic and professional reading is exclusively in English, along with non-fiction reading related to her leisure time interests. In many ways, Amna's dispositions are similar to those of Shaikha in Chapter Four above. Other Arabic-medium public school background participants with multilingual dispositions, cited in Chapter Three, were Mona (due to home language experiences in Ajami and Farsi, school EA and MSA, and teenage leisure time interests in English) and Sara'a (also due to home language experiences, in Ajami and Kumzari, school EA and MSA, and childhood and teenage leisure time pursuits in English).

An example of a participant with a more monolingual habitus is Fetoan, cited in Chapter Three (O'Neill, 2016). Monolingual dispositions developed in the home and in government schools, and her preference for Arabic-language popular culture, were associated with her predispositions towards Arabic in a mutually reinforcing manner. Thus, the transition to an educational institution in which English was the main medium of instruction, was difficult. Though she is aware of the importance of English, and is making efforts to increase her linguistic capital in the language, she does not yet feel entirely comfortable using English and feels that she is performing less well academically in English than she would if her degree were taught through EA and MSA. Thus, she indicates that on occasion she feels a strongly negative disposition towards English. However, she too is developing a more multilingual habitus as a result of her experiences at the University.

I have argued that among the participants in my study there are several cases of 'cleft habitus', by which I meant that some participants were not comfortable with their multilingualism, that some felt an internal conflict or turmoil due to differing dispositions developed in different contexts – particularly at home and school. This phenomenon might equally be viewed as tensions arising from heteroglossia. As we have seen, Fetoan is an example of cleft habitus, since her long-established mono-lingual habitus favoring Arabic (viewed ideologically as one language) does not sit easily with her newly-developing multilingualism involving EA, MSA and English. Twins Hind and Hessa (also cited in Chapter Three) are further examples of cleft habitus since their experiences at a prestigious largely English-medium private school, along with leisure time interests involving English, have led them to be far more strongly disposed towards English than towards EA, the language of their home, to the extent that they are unable to talk in any depth about issues concerning them in their native language, and they are clearly very uncomfortable with this situation. Similarly, as a result of school and leisure time interests, Latifa (Chapter Three), struggles to maintain a conversation in EA without sounding non-Emirati, is weak in MSA and strongly disposed towards English. Finally, Shaikha's cleft habitus is characterized by a clash between her normal multilingual dispositions developed at home, in the workplace, in her married life and in leisure time interests and the language and behavior that are expected of her in mono-cultural situations with her Palestinian family or with her fellow Emiratis.

Although cleft habitus was noticeable among some of the participants in this study, there were others who seemed at peace with their diverse linguistic dispositions. Mona (Chapter Three), for example, is sometimes frustrated by her inability to draw from her entire lexicon when communicating with those who do not share her multilingual repertoires, but she is nevertheless content with her multilingualism, able to express herself satisfactorily in the majority of situations in which she finds herself. Similarly, Amna's multilingual dispositions sit comfortably side by side (Chapter Two) and she is able to use EA, MSA and English in specific domains. Then there are those like Muntaha (Chapter Three), who have multilingual language practices and dispositions but who report truncated repertoires in their own native language, EA. Yet unlike Latifa, Hind and Hessa, Muntaha appears to be very comfortable with her strong predispositions towards English. Similarly, Muntaha's university classmate and friend, Safeeya, is strongly oriented towards English (and Besaya) but she reports that her EA is very weak and her MSA almost non-existent. Yet she is comfortable with this, partly because EA was never the language of home, the schools she attended were English-medium and the people in her social networks mostly used English to communicate. Therefore, though she is technically Emirati, she does not regard EA as her native language.

Another factor in language choices that was of particular importance in this study was language ideology. Clearly, language ideologies contribute to habitus, perhaps at an unconscious level – our parents' beliefs about the right ways to speak, for instance, can have a formative influence on our dispositions growing up and later in life, but my focus here was on the conscious beliefs that the participants and their families have about the appropriate language to use in a given situation.

As I reported in Chapter Three, language ideologies are an important factor in language choices in Dubai, as, indeed, they are in all human communication. In most Emirati homes, there is a belief that the home is the proper place for the use of EA and, for religious literacy purposes, CA. This leads to the explicit or implicit language policy of 'Arabic only' in the home. This can lead to inter-generational issues since young people may be more multilingually predisposed and find it difficult not to mix languages (Arabizi) or switch between them, even though they may share their parents' and grandparents' language ideology. Their use of English at

family gatherings, or their inability to recall a particular word in Arabic (and resorting to English instead), may attract criticism or derision from their parents, aunts, uncles or grandparents. As we have seen, Arabic has a powerful indexicality in the Emirati community. EA indexes Emirati culture and identity; MSA indexes Islam and being Arab; other varieties of Arabic (e.g. EgA) index expat Arab status and not being 'pure Emirati'. English, on the other hand, which is accepted as an indispensable part of life in Dubai, indexes modernity, the world outside the home and so on. While accepted as an indispensable part of life in the UAE, English may also be seen as an invasive force, as a threat to tradition.

Along with dress, EA is a powerful index of Emirati identity, almost to the extent that for some it is not possible to be Emirati without being able to use EA and, to a lesser extent, MSA. However, as we have seen, there are families in which a more heteroglossic ideology is in evidence, where parents draw from language repertoires in a number of languages. There are even those families in which English is the language of daily communication – not only as in the case of Safeeya's family (Chapter Three), where English is the lingua franca in a mixed marriage context, but also as a conscious choice where both parents are Emirates-born EA speakers. This latter group still appears to be relatively small, and none of the interviewees in my sample, nor the discussion board respondents, came from such households, but a surprising number mentioned family members who had adopted an English only policy at home, despite strong criticisms from their families. The family of Muntaha (Chapter Three) have made a conscious effort to develop English in the home, though not exclusively, as they also use EA. Interestingly, despite her parents' belief in the importance of English, Muntaha was enrolled in an Arabic-medium private school, which was uncommon among the participants in my study. Yet, she feels that both her EA and MSA are weak, and English has become an important part of her identity and the language that she is most comfortable using, though she does not consider herself any less Emirati because of that. Latifa (Chapter Three), on the other hand, claims not to identify with any particular culture and states that although she is technically Emirati, she does not feel that she is doing a good job of constructing herself as an Emirati, but does not appear to be concerned about this.

Hind and Hessa (Chapter Three), however, are unlike both Muntaha and Latifa in subscribing to a language ideology that sees EA as an indispensable part of being Emirati – hence their frustration, almost anguish, at their lack of proficiency in EA. Their language ideology clashes with the reality of their daily language use and it is interesting that they feel that this affects family life – their relationship with their mother and other family members.

Language ideology clearly plays a major role in Shaikha's language choices (Chapter Four) in that she assigns languages to specific domains and feels that is not appropriate to mix languages at the sentence level. Her multilingual habitus, however, means that she is very comfortable flitting between languages, and even enjoys this – evident in her ludic language use with siblings during family gatherings at restaurants and online on *WhatsApp*, along with her habit of mirroring the language of the person with whom she is communicating. Shaikha is very aware of the indexicalities of language use in her life and attempts to navigate their complexities in constructing her various identities. As we saw, this is a difficult task because rather than making her life easier and constructing herself as an Emirati, by using EA and dressing in a typically Emirati way, she chooses to present herself as she feels she is – as both Emirati and Moroccan, but also as a global citizen. An update on Shaikha's story in early 2017 is that she has now secured a job in one of the administrative offices of the university from which she graduated. In her first week on campus, she chose to present herself as an Emirati, wearing black abaya and shaila. Several weeks on, she was wearing the Moroccan-influenced clothes in which she feels most comfortable, working in an office in which there are both Emiratis and expat Arabs, along with colleagues from India and Pakistan. She reported that she was very happy because she felt that she could be herself to a far greater extent than when she is in a more mono-cultural Emirati context. However, when I met her early in 2017, she told me that she had been advised by her manager to return to wearing Emirati clothing. This is probably because Emiratization (the policy of aiming to increase the number of Emiratis in the workforce) is a priority for federal institutions in the UAE, and it is important that institutions be seen to be following the policy. Nevertheless, she seems to be very comfortable and happy in her work – ever the flexible citizen (see 5.2 below).

The positioning of women in UAE society, as elsewhere, is another factor that affects language choice. In the analysis, this emerged most clearly from the case-study of Shaikha, whose language has clearly been affected by her position as a woman in UAE society. As we saw in Chapter Four, though her parents were Emirati and Moroccan, it was her father's language and culture that were prioritized – partly because EA is the language of their country of residence, but also because it is normal in patriarchal Arab societies for the father's language, culture and religion to be given precedence. When Shaikha's father left the family, the household became matriarchal, and MA became the linguistic norm. Later in life, her gender positioning continues to influence Shaikha's language choices. Her husband's strong sense of Palestinian expat identity means that he prefers to bring their children up in his own language and culture, and he expects his wife to support him in this. As we have seen, Shaikha generally accepts her gender positioning and will speak PA with her husband, his family and their children, though this is not always a straightforward matter and there are situations in which she finds herself unable to conform, switching to English, MA, or WA.

Although males tend to set the parameters for household language choice, we have seen at least two cases in which this is not so. In Mona's household (Chapter Three), the main language of daily life is Farsi, which is the mother's language (as she does not speak EA). Another example is Safeeya's home (Chapter Three), where English has, until recently, been the lingua franca. In this case, the father chose not to impose his EA on the family because of his wife's lack of proficiency in Arabic. Though he speaks Tagalog himself, he chose English as the lingua franca due to its utility outside the home. Additionally, although Tagalog is widely spoken by the substantial Philippine community in Dubai, English has greater currency, and perhaps greater prestige among the Emirati community, since Tagalog may be seen ideologically as a language of maids, drivers and shop assistants – those 'lower down' in the social hierarchy. His decision to change the home language policy and use EA more with the younger children is a reaction to the fact that his older children have limited proficiency in Arabic, having had very little exposure to Arabic either at home or at school.

Cases like these appear to be relatively uncommon, however, and in most households, the Emirati father's native language is the norm, even where the mother does not speak EA (i.e. she is expected to learn it).

Emotion and instrumentality are also bound up with language choice. For most participants, the language of their emotional world tends to be their native language, EA. However, as we saw in the case of Hind and Hessa (Chapter Three), when they are upset or troubled, they find that the language through which they can best express their emotions is English, which is a practice that they find upsetting in itself. My interpretation of this is that the doxic environments of home and school contributed to their cleft habitus in early adult life, and private school developed their capital in English but left them feeling impoverished in terms of Arabic language capital (both EA and MSA). Thus, they feel ‘in their bones’ that they should be able to express their emotions in EA, but their language practices strongly favour English. For Shaikha (Chapter Four), it is an explicitly-stated belief that Arabic is a more emotional language than English. She has observed that she reacts differently in Arabic, less rationally, and MA in particular is her unconscious language choice in times of great joy and great pain. As she also observed, English has great instrumental value for Shaikha as she feels that in English she is able to hold her emotions at bay and operate in a relatively cold, clinical and analytical way. It is particularly interesting that she has used English as a lingua franca with her husband to resolve marital issues, and with her siblings in order to complete daily chores ‘with balanced emotions’. Shaikha’s predispositions with regard to Arabic and English may hark back to her childhood days when Arabic in all its varieties and indexicalities seemed ‘chaotic’, and English was a ‘refuge’. Her linguistic predispositions with regard to emotion and instrumentality may have influenced her ideological beliefs regarding domain-specific language use (a possible example of habitus as a ‘structuring structure’ - discussed in 1.2.6 above).

One additional factor affecting language choice that I did not discuss in the three publications, was the role played by technologies, as ‘actants’ (Brandt & Clinton, 2002; Latour, 1996). In the last fifteen years in the UAE, computer technology and smartphone technology have ‘acted’ to mediate changes in language and literacy practices in the country, as they have all over the world. Social networking is one area in which technologies have precipitated changes in language choice. In the early days of online social networking, desktop and laptop computers were the main hardware used to access online ‘chatroom’ services such as MSN Messenger. Emiratis responded enthusiastically to this innovation. Alongside the affordances of MSN Messenger (e.g. easy ways to

connect with existing friends and also to make new friends) there were also constraints. For example, it was considered very difficult to type in Arabic script in MSN Messenger; hence, the development of 'MSN Language' (Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003), a modified Roman script, as mentioned in Chapter Two, which was a means by which to 'chat' in Arabic in Roman script while still retaining orthographic representation of specific Arabic (MSA & EA) phonemes. The difficulty of using Arabic script in early online social networking was also a factor in the increased use of English online, even between Emiratis, as many respondents of the literacy survey reported. Present day social networking employs a number of different apps, such as Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, WhatsApp and so on. Young Emiratis are now more likely to use their smart phones for social networking purposes, and improved keyboard support for Arabic means that they can write effectively in Arabic script if they wish to, and this appears to be becoming more common. However, many Emiratis still choose to chat with their Emirati friends in English, in Roman script. There are a number of reasons for this, but the initial effect of these technologies on language and literacy practices cannot be ignored. Nor can the globalizing effect these technologies have had on Emiratis, giving them access to language and cultures well beyond the borders of the UAE. Given that these technologies had broadly similar effects on language and literacy practices all over the world, this might be regarded as restoring some degree of 'autonomy' to technologies – including literacy, as Brandt and Clinton suggested, following Latour.

Answering the central research question of this study, then, I conclude that some of the factors that affect language choice among these young women in Dubai in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century are: linguistic predispositions and proficiencies (*habitus* and *capital*) operating in superdiverse socio-cultural contexts (*fields*), language ideologies, indexicalities, gender, identity construction, emotions and instrumentalities, and technologies. It is clear that there is great diversity among these women in terms of their language choices due to their differing personal, family and educational histories. Emiratis may appear to be a homogenous social grouping; due to their sartorial choices, they are easily-identifiable in Dubai despite the fact that they form only a small percentage of the population. Yet as we have seen, there are significant differences among them. In classroom contexts, diversity is apparent in the students' language and literacy practices, but the underlying reasons for it

are rarely discussed or mentioned in class; indeed, they are almost a taboo subject. The fact that 20-40% of Emirati marriages in Dubai are mixed marriages suggests that in each class there are likely to be students from multilingual homes. In addition to this, there are those whose families migrated to the region relatively recently, but who acquired UAE nationality. Some of these families still maintain their languages or dialects in the home (Ajami, Baluchi, Farsi, Palestinian Arabic etc). These students are often happy to talk about their multilingualism, during office hours meetings, on a one-to-one basis, or in small groups, and they often express pride in their linguistic backgrounds, but it is rare for these matters to be talked about in class as there is a certain prestige in being a 'pure Emirati'. As we saw in Chapter Four, Shaikha is unusual in that she openly asserts her mixed parentage and constructs herself as both an Emirati and a Moroccan and is consequently criticized by her peers or pressured to conform. In contrast, her social network is something of a refuge, a safe place where she can be herself, since most of her friends are 'halfies', as they put it, and celebrate their own diversities. It is my hope that this study has contributed to a better understanding of the sociolinguistic complexities underlying the surface level homogeneity among these young women.

## **5.2 Language Policy**

An anthropologist friend and colleague of mine read my book chapter (Chapter Three) in late 2016 and commented that he found it very interesting but suggested that there was 'an elephant in the room' in that my article did not make any explicit mention of the effect of national or local government policies on the position of EA, MSA and English in Dubai and the rest of the UAE. This is a valid point and I would therefore like to address it here.

According to the Arabic Language Charter (ALC), the official language of the UAE is stated as 'Arabic':

Since the Arabic language constitutes one of the fundamental elements of the Islamic and Arab identity of the United Arab Emirates, the essence of our national identity, and an expression of our rich culture, history, and of our authentic traditions; And since the United Arab Emirates is firmly committed to a policy that supports, fosters, and nurtures Arabic as a language of culture

and communication, and encourages its constant enrichment to ensure it becomes a language of innovation in science and technology; enhancing pride in our language, the language of the Holy Qur'an, and strengthening its position and expansion, And since the United Arab Emirates strives to provide its citizens with the best Arabic education in order to enable them to explore their rich cultural tradition and innovate in the language of their forefathers to build a safe and prosperous nation living in harmony with other cultures... (UAE Government, 2012, p. 1)

The charter goes on to lay out 13 articles (UAE Government, 2012, p. 2) which affirm that Arabic is the official language of the country, the language of government, official communication and government services, 'a fundamental component of education' and 'an essential element of education in public universities'. The charter ambitiously states that higher education institutions and research centers will contribute to 'the enrichment of the Arabic language through the development of novel scientific and technical terminology' with the ultimate aim of Arabic regaining its 'historical role as a language of innovation and creativity' in 'a truly sustainable cultural renaissance'.

The language ideologies that underlie this government charter clearly reflect some of the ideologies that emerged from my data samples, yet in other ways they do not. Firstly, Arabic is viewed for the most part as one language, as it was by some of the participants in this study (as we saw, participants from Arabic-medium public school backgrounds were more likely to hold this position than those from English-medium private schools). There is no mention in the ALC of the local colloquial form (EA), but 'standard Arabic' is explicitly mentioned in Article 12, which states, 'Broadcast media institutions shall, in so far as it is possible, endeavour to present programs in standard Arabic, with a special focus on producing children's programs in standard Arabic to promote the proper use of the language' (UAE Government, 2012, p. 2). As we saw in Chapter Three, several participants commented that their younger siblings had begun using MSA as a result of watching children's programming in MSA. However, they were ambivalent about this development. While they appeared to find it amusing and endearing, I inferred that they did not regard it as 'proper use' because it was not their local colloquial form, though I believe that few would want to explicitly state this.

This leads to the second point, which is that the ALC explicitly presents the Arabic language as an emblem of national identity - 'the essence of national identity' (UAE Government, 2012, p. 1). This was a very common belief among the participants and in its strongest form it underlies a home language policy of 'Arabic only' (Chapter Three). However, while the ALC does not differentiate between EA and MSA, participants in my study did make a distinction, holding that EA was the 'accent' that they linked most closely with their national identity, while MSA indexed broader Arab and Muslim identities. As we saw, however, a more heteroglossic language ideology is emerging in some households, which does not necessarily equate being Emirati with exclusive use of Arabic in the home or in social networks. In addition, we observed that there are individuals who are officially Emirati, and who consider themselves to be wholly or partly Emirati, but who do not speak EA and may not read/write MSA.

Thirdly, the ALC explicitly states pride in Arabic's 'rich cultural tradition' and its being 'the language of the Holy Qur'an'. It also implicitly references Arabic's historic role as a language of innovation, and explicitly calls for the rebirth of the language in this regard. The vast majority of the participants in this study expressed similar language ideologies with regard to Arabic and Islamic culture and history, and they felt strongly linked to 'the Arab world', stretching from UAE in the east, to the Maghreb in the west and back through the 'golden age' to the time of the Prophet. There is a very real sense in which Arabic is considered to be a very precious resource - a sacred language. Yet, there was also a belief that Arabic had lost its status in other ways, such as its role as a language of innovation in science and technology. Several participants expressed the hope that Arabic would reassert itself in this regard in the future. Nonetheless, the 'misrecognition' suggested by the language ideology associating English with modernity and development and Arabic with culture, tradition and religion, was very prevalent among the participants in my study. Interestingly, the ALC mentions Arabic as being the language of 'authentic tradition', which recalls Fatoon's remark (Chapter Three), 'I prefer Arabic because I can explain all my feelings, ideas and thoughts easily without adding any emotions or unreal description' and Muna's view that 'local Arabic will summarize the complicated thoughts people want to deliver, in simple yet meaningful words that possess the past civilization of one's country and truthful, pure

words' (Chapter Three). Yet as we saw, due to the hegemony of English in some local lives (e.g. twins Hind and Hessa in Chapter Three), this level of authenticity may be desired but unattainable.

While the ALC is a document that clearly supports the UAE government's belief in the importance of the Arabic language, at the same time, the UAE is faced with a number of practical realities that render its implementation somewhat problematic. When it was founded, in 1971, the UAE was a newly-wealthy country that had great plans for development. Given the small population at the time, such development required the importation of labour and expertise on an unprecedented scale. Although much of this labour force was drawn from Arabic-speaking countries in the early days, such as Oman and Yemen, the majority of the labour force is now sourced from non-Arabic speaking countries, predominantly from the Indian sub-continent. 45 years later, the remarkable development of the country has led to an inversion of the population demographics, as we have seen, so that local citizens are a small minority, and temporary migrants/expats the majority. The ambitious agenda set out in the ALC is compromised by the fact that English has, of necessity, become the lingua franca, particularly in the business private sector (Randall & Samimi, 2010). In the education sector, Arabic-medium public schools mainly cater for Emiratis, yet as many as 58% of locals in Dubai now attend private schools, according to the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA, 2016b). Though there are 16 international curricula operating in Dubai currently (KHDA, 2016a, p. 16), the highest number of private schools in Dubai follow a UK curriculum (65 of the 173 schools), closely followed by Indian curriculum schools (32 schools), and then, those which follow a US curriculum (31 schools). My research suggests that Emiratis enrolled in private schools, for the most part attend UK or US curriculum schools. The UAE Ministry of Education requires that these private schools provide certain courses in Arabic. They divide Arabic into 'Arabic A', which is mandatory for students with 'an Arab nationality' and 'Arabic B', which is mandatory for other nationalities from grades 1-10. Islamic Studies is mandatory for all Muslim students, and it is divided as follows: Islamic Studies A, which is taught wholly in Arabic, and Islamic Studies B, which is for non-native Arabic speakers and is taught in Arabic with some language support in English. The Dubai KHDA's guidelines on *How to open a private school in Dubai* reflect many of the ideas expressed in the ALC:

It is...crucial that Emirati and Arab students receive a good quality of provision in Arabic as a first language, not only to preserve their identity, self-esteem, heritage and culture but also to allow them to develop intellectually and academically. It is also highly beneficial for non-Arab students to learn Arabic, as it enhances their understanding of the local culture, and gives them significant opportunities and advantages in later life. (KHDA, 2016a, p. 17)

Nevertheless, the reality remains that despite the mandatory provision of Arabic (MSA) in private schools, the lingua franca of the majority of these UK and US curriculum schools (and several other schools, such as those listed by KHDA as 'International Baccalaureate' – IB) is English. In fact, some students pointed out that aside from Arabic and Islamic Studies classes, and French classes in some cases, there was an English-only policy around their schools and students would be reprimanded for speaking other languages, including Arabic. As mentioned previously, private school students typically enter tertiary studies with stronger English language and literacy than MSA language and literacy, and some may even be stronger in English than they are in both MSA and EA. Thus, although the ALC espouses an ambition to protect Arabic and promote it as a comprehensive language of religion, Arab and national culture and identity, government and intellectual innovation, the reality is that the effect of migration and education policies has been to very rapidly promote the English language as the lingua franca of socio-economic development.

Piller (2017, p. 2) describes Dubai as 'a non-liberal modern city-state with a neoliberal free-market economy', yet one with 'a highly-planned top-down economic model' (2017, p. 4). Bringing about the major changes in the Emirate has not been without criticism from those who would like to see a slowing down of progress and a return to traditional linguistic, cultural and family values. Kanna (2010, p. 105) comments that Dubai's leaders 'seem to be responding to implicit attacks on cultural "inauthenticity" by equating a non-purist (even arguably a post-Arab) identity with neoliberalism and therefore (in their view) both with progress and modernity'. Kanna's research participants at TECOM are 'flexible citizens', who, like others in Dubai's holding companies and subsidiaries, are the ones who have been recruited to spearhead 'post-purist' neo-liberalized development:

Regardless of their background [...] the employees of such companies repeatedly emphasized their own uniqueness among Emiratis, citing as a main example their recognition that for Dubai to be truly global and modern, Dubayyans should reduce their evaluation of family background, how they fit within the system of pedigree, and begin to frame value in terms of individual merit, entrepreneurialism, work ethic, and willingness to self-improve. In short, to be a 'valuable citizen is to be an active, locally situated, subject of neoliberal governmentality'. (Kanna, 2010, p. 106)

In my own research, Shaikha (Chapter Four) could be described as a flexible citizen like Kanna's participants. As we saw, she presents herself as an international woman who is able to work with people from all backgrounds, and she does not prioritize notions of 'purity' in ethnic and family background, due to the fact that she is of mixed parentage herself and suffered considerably from purist prejudices, both in school and at university. For her, this flexibility is a natural disposition, an aspect of her habitus, but it is often in conflict with the dispositions of her Emirati peers, who would have her merge into the occluded diversity by conforming to the more stereotypically Emirati ways of being and behaving.

In connection with the above, it is appropriate to add government policy, particularly language policy, to the list of factors in language choice for Emirati women. These policies may be explicitly stated, as in the ALC's promotion of Arabic as the language of the public sector, which it unquestionably is, or the stipulations regarding the teaching of Arabic in private schools put in place by organizations such as KHDA. They may also be indirect or tacit, such as migration policies that lead to the in-flow of labour and expertise from non-Arabic speaking areas of the world, which have led to the emergence of pidgin varieties, Lingua Franca English and Lingua Franca Hindi/Urdu. Educational policies, too, clearly have a significant impact on language choices. The Ministry of Education, and local education authorities, allow private schools some flexibility in nominating their main language of study, provided that regulations for Arabic and Islamic Studies are in place (KHDA, 2016a) – hence the existence, for example, of Japanese schools teaching largely in Japanese, and Russian schools teaching largely through Russian. Nevertheless, as we have seen, most private schools opt for

English-medium curricula (UK and US). Thus, for Emirati children attending these private schools, English becomes a very significant language, but it is much less significant for Emirati children in the public sector, where Arabic-medium teaching predominates. The situation at tertiary level is very different in that most public institutions offer the majority of their courses in English, as we have seen.

Given that government policies in such areas as migration and education directly or indirectly support an increase in the prevalence of English in Dubai, the frequently-expressed views among the research participants in my study that Arabic, and EA in particular, is under threat, are understandable. Interestingly, though, the implication is that English is an ‘actant’ as an invading force. There is little mention of the factors behind this invasion, though some vaguely reference ‘tourism’, ‘foreigners’, ‘development’ and ‘globalization’, and a very few construct globalization as a culturally imperialistic force emanating mostly from the US. None, however, commented directly on the role of national and local policies and initiatives on the rise of English. As Ingrid Piller pointed out recently (personal communication, March 1, 2017), it could be argued that the ‘discursive elevation’ of Arabic expressed in the ALC is actually at odds with other state policies, particularly with regard to educational development, labour, migration and residency, which lead, directly or indirectly, to the ‘de facto valorization of English’ (and, I would add, to the de facto valorization of other languages, including other varieties of Arabic). Against the backdrop of these sociolinguistic developments, there is no mystery in the existence of ‘EA and MSA only’ language policies in many local homes (Chapter Three), nor in the kinds of tensions inherent in cases of ‘cleft habitus’ such as those discussed in all three of my publications.

### **5.3 Limitations and Future Research**

Overall, the methodology used in the study achieved the desired result of gaining an overview of language and literacy in the lives of young Emirati females (via the survey) whilst also gaining an in-depth understanding of the complexity of language and literacy practices in this sociocultural context (via more typically ethnographic methods). As far as limitations are concerned, the most obvious is that much of the data in the study was based on female perspectives and did not seek the perspectives of Emirati males on their language and literacy. In

many ways, males and females in the UAE have their own cultures. Men and women spend much of their time apart. Even in the home, during the weekly family gatherings, women will gather in one part of the home, while men gather in the majlis, or reception room. Weddings are celebrated separately, with the men's and women's celebrations often taking place at different locations on different days. Young Emirati men tend to have more freedom to go out of the home, often without curfew, and with far fewer restrictions as to where they may go. They are more likely to have their own transport and will often go out of town to the desert with friends, particularly during winter. They are also more likely to study or travel overseas alone (or with friends) than their female peers. They are more likely to have international male and female friends, including girlfriends, with whom they socialize (Emirati women may also have international friends, though these are more likely to be online friendships, even if this too is changing). In general, men have far greater access to what Dubai offers than their female peers, though I have noticed great changes since 2002 when I arrived here. Women are now more able to go out without a male chaperone, with their friends or female family members, to the mall or the cinema, and they are more likely than they were fourteen years ago to have their own car. Yet there is still a significant difference in male and female lifestyles. While it is likely that many of the factors that affect language choices among Emirati men are similar to those that affect women, due to these differing lifestyles, there are likely to be important differences. I have shown some of the tensions between men and women in this society that result from patriarchal arrangements (particularly in Chapter Four), but gaining a deeper understanding of how local males view these issues would be a very interesting and fruitful area for future research.

Another limitation of the study was that it was conducted entirely in English. As I explained in Chapter One, I came to this research from a specific positionality as an educated middle-aged English man, and my identity no doubt influenced participants' responses. It is possible that the participants might have responded differently if the survey and interview questions and so on had been in Arabic and the researcher had been an Arab. To some extent this problem was mitigated by the choice of replying anonymously. Thus, if participants wished to say something that might be perceived as 'anti-English', or 'anti-Arabic', they were able to do so, and there

were in fact a fair number of comments that demonstrated that respondents were answering reasonably frankly. Also, when it came to writing up the ethnographic findings, I fed back my interpretations to the respondents themselves, and to other Emiratis. This triangulation enabled me to feel more confident that I had captured emic perspectives. While PhD research, by definition, needs to be conducted by an individual researcher, in future research projects, it will be desirable to collaborate with an Arabic-speaking co-researcher. This will enable me to access salient Arabic discourses on the issues I have examined in this research.

## **5.4 Applications**

As I see it, there are potential applications of this research with regard to undergraduate curriculum development, some of which I have already begun to explore, as well as to language policy in the home, in education, and at government level.

In terms of curriculum applications of my research, there is one project that I initiated as a direct response to some of my findings. As I have mentioned, AMPuS background participants tend to have a lower level of English language proficiency and literacy than their EMPrS peers. However, there are AMPuS background students who have developed their own language and literacy, either through deliberate study or as a bi-product of following an interest, particularly in teenage years. Skills developed in 'affinity spaces' (Gee, 2007) are often a result of social interaction in English or Arabic with local or international friends, mostly online. I therefore surmised that setting up some form of online social interaction might be a way in to developing English language and literacy among those AMPuS background students who have not had this experience, or who have tended to follow their interests via Arabic and not English (e.g. Fetoona in Chapter Three).

The result of my thoughts in this area was the setting up of what I called the 'Extensive Reading Project' (ERP) in all of my Composition classes. I began this project in 2012 and ran it for three years. In a given semester, students were required to read three English-language books of at least 150 pages, which they had not read before. The choice of book was entirely up to the student but in order to help them make suitable choices (in

terms of their personal interests and language level), the students were asked to sign up to Goodreads ([www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com)), a social networking site that focuses on fiction and non-fiction reading in English and other languages (including Arabic). When new members sign up to this site, they are prompted to select genres that they are particularly interested in (e.g. Horror, Romance, Self-help etc). Once the sign-up process is complete, they are given recommendations of books they might enjoy. I recommended that students read reviews of these books on Goodreads and then note down some of the recommendations before visiting a local bookshop to look at the books, read the back covers, try reading the first page and so on. I suggested that the selection process should take at least half an hour as I believe that making the right choice is essential to the probability of the reading experience being a positive one. Two genres were particularly popular among the students: Young Adult Fiction (YAF), such as the *Divergent* series (Roth, 2011), *The Fault in our Stars* (Green, 2012), and *The Notebook* (Sparks, 1996), as well as Self-help books such as *Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus* (Gray, 1992).

With regard to Goodreads, I also requested that the students add myself and classmates as 'friends', so that we could read each other's postings. My thinking here was that students who were previously inexperienced in reading, or regarded reading as strange or 'uncool', might begin to see that reading is in fact a normal every day activity for many people, and that it might be possible to enjoy it. I asked students to write short online reviews of their books after each of the three deadlines. Another important activity was a one hour speaking session that was run shortly after each deadline. Instead of meeting in the classroom, the class met in the University's food court (in order to create a more relaxed atmosphere). They were put into groups of four or five and were asked to audio record a one-hour conversation about the books they had chosen. This involved a discussion about each book in turn. I emphasized that the conversation could go in any direction that the group wished, that the book was a springboard only and that the main point was to develop fluency in English and to enjoy the conversation. A set of suggested questions was provided to the groups who were less fluent, or less able to keep the conversation going.

To evaluate the ERP from the point of view of the students, I devised and administered a short, anonymous, online survey (see Appendix C), which I sent out to my former students in the semester after the ERP. I aimed to establish the students' backgrounds (e.g. AMPuS, EMPrS), how they felt about reading in Arabic and English before the course, how many books they had read in both languages, and how they felt about reading several months after the course. 59 students answered the survey, which represented 77% of my 76 students from that semester. 61.82% responded that they loved or liked reading in English before the course, compared with 51.86% who loved or liked reading in Arabic. 30.91% were neutral about reading in English before the course, and 27.78% were neutral about reading in Arabic. 7.28% claimed they disliked or hated reading in English prior to the course, while 20.37% responded that they hated or disliked reading in Arabic. After the course, the data for English reading were quite different. 87.03% responded that they like or love reading in English, 0% said that they hate or dislike it and 12.96% claimed to be neutral. With regard to Arabic reading, 61.4% said that they like or love reading in Arabic, 31.58% were neutral and 7.02% still claim to dislike or hate it.

The data suggest that there was a positive movement in students' perceptions of reading in English, which may be a result of the ERP. 75% of respondents claimed that they had read at least one other book in English since the course ended. Another pleasing result was that reported enthusiasm for reading in Arabic rose also, though by a smaller percentage than for English. There were, however, still a number of students who responded that they hate or dislike reading in Arabic.

The survey suggests that interventions such as the ERP can have a positive effect on students' perceptions and may lead to a change in their practices. However, some caution is needed in interpreting the results as not all of my students responded to the survey and it might well be that the ones that did reply were more enthusiastic about the ERP than the ones that did not. Also, the positive trends in the data could be attributable to other factors – such as having a generally positive view of the course or the teacher.

Another possible application of my research in the area of curriculum development relates to my findings in Chapter Four. As we saw, Shaikha reported a certain amount of harassment and disapproval that she has experienced throughout her life when she finds herself in relatively mono-cultural Emirati spaces. She was subject to taunting and abuse during primary and secondary school (by students and teachers), and even at tertiary level, due to her different way of dressing and talking. Although these kinds of attitudes may be difficult to change, educational institutions here could take steps to introduce curriculum elements that aim to raise awareness of diversity and build tolerance. Through curricular activities, students might be encouraged to talk more openly about diversity and to begin to see it as a strength and a societal resource. Interestingly, the UAE government has recently established a new ministry that might have a bearing on this issue: The Ministry of Happiness, Tolerance and the Future. As a recent Cabinet news item stated:

There can be no bright future for the Middle East without an intellectual reconstruction that re-establishes the values of ideological openness, diversity, and acceptance of others' viewpoints, whether intellectual, cultural, or religious. (Al Maktoum, 2016)

This extract is interesting as a post-Arab Spring / post-ISIS statement that constructs tolerance both as a necessity for the future and as a return to something that previously existed, thereby uniting modernity and tradition. The current Minister of Tolerance, Sheikha Lubna al Qassimi, is also the President of Zayed University, one of the leading national universities. Recently, the University established an 'Executive Council for Happiness, Positivity and Tolerance'. It would, consequently, be very fitting for there to be curricular initiatives around diversity and tolerance in this and other tertiary educational institutions. However, this work could also begin at kindergarten and primary school level. Many of the issues, principles and practices that are currently evident in other parts of the world where issues of superdiversity are salient, such as the EU, might be equally applicable in a superdiverse country such as the UAE. Among fourteen key findings, the authors of a recent report (Van Driel, Darmody, & Kerzil, 2016) conclude: 'Respect for others can be taught' (2016, p. 9); 'Approaches that foster social and emotional learning matter' (p.10); and 'School curricula need to better incorporate diversity' (2016, p. 10). They stress the importance of establishing an ethos of tolerance in

schools, the training of teachers in diversity issues and the development of intercultural competence among teaching staff. They also recommend mother tongue education, arguing that it ‘has a profound impact on a person’s sense of identity and well-being’ (2016, p. 10).

Another application of my research is in the area of language policy. At the government level, for the foreseeable future it is likely that policies connected with the bringing in of temporary migrant labour and expertise will continue. Consequently, the continued existence of contact languages is inevitable and English is likely to remain the main lingua franca of business, private education and many other aspects of daily life for many years to come. Arabic (MSA and various forms of colloquial Arabic) will no doubt continue to be the language of government offices, law courts and so on. In Emirati homes, over the next few generations, as all generations of Emiratis develop linguistic repertoires that include English, it is likely that a more heteroglossic situation will develop, with both EA and English being used in the home as is the situation currently among young people. So what can be done to assuage local concerns that Arabic is under threat? I believe that language policies and practices in the home and in education are the key.

In public sector higher education, learning objectives that promote bilingualism would be beneficial. In one national institution, Zayed University, the Zayed University Learning Outcomes (ZULOs) include graduate outcomes in six key areas: Critical Thinking and Quantitative Reasoning, Global Awareness, Information Literacy, Language, Leadership, and Technology Literacy. The ZULO for Language states that ‘ZU graduates will be able to communicate effectively in English and Modern Standard Arabic, using the academic and professional conventions of these languages appropriately’ (Zayed University, 2016, “Language”). This is an excellent objective, but clearly, for it to be effective, it requires that there be significant course offerings in both English and Arabic. Increasing numbers of ZU students have backgrounds in private schools, and as we have seen, such students may be weak in MSA, particularly in terms of academic literacy. Even those students who come from public schools, where the majority of course offerings were in Arabic, are likely to need courses which develop their academic literacy in Arabic in order to meet the bilingual ZULO. Currently, the vast majority of courses are taught in English. For example, in the General Education program, which is

mandatory for all students, of the 48 credit hours required, 12 of those hours are taught in Arabic (Arabic Concepts, Islamic Civilization I & II and Emirates Studies). A glance at the curriculum plan for a student who decides to go on to major in Business with a focus on Finance suggests that of the 132 credit hours that are required before a student is eligible to graduate, approximately 21 hours (16%) are taught in Arabic (Zayed University, 2015), including those taken in General Education. In order for the Language ZULO to be meaningful, more courses should be taught in Arabic, and as we saw in Chapter Two, most students (and no doubt many parents) would be in favour of this. Providing more courses in Arabic would be a fairer policy overall since it would give AMPuS background students a chance to draw on their capital in Arabic. Of course, it would be a less popular move among the EMPrS background students (and their parents?) as it might very well translate into lower GPAs for them. However, if more Arabic courses were required, there would likely be a 'washback effect' in that private schools might reinforce and develop their Arabic course offerings.

In terms of English language course offerings, it would be beneficial if entry requirements could be revised so that students were required to enter with a minimum of 6.0 in IELTS. Currently, the requirement of IELTS 5.0 average is inadequate for successful university study as the typical scenario is that students are stronger in the Speaking component of the exam, typically scoring 5.5-6.0 in this component, while not infrequently scoring 4.0 or 4.5 in the Reading component. Consequently, AMPuS background students often struggle to develop their English language and literacy alongside their academic skills and knowledge as they go through their degree program. It is unlikely that this change to entry criteria will change in the foreseeable future. At ZU, there are already plans in place to close the University's Academic Bridge Program, which prepares students in IELTS and academic skills for entry into undergraduate studies. This will put pressure on primary and secondary schools to develop the students' English to university entry level, alongside Arabic. Initiatives such as Abu Dhabi's New School Model (NSM) are an interesting attempt to provide bilingual education in the public sector, developing students' Arabic and English skills through the joint planning and teaching of classes by Arabic and English-speaking teachers (Abu Dhabi Education Council, 2014). It is too early to say how

successful the NSM will be, and how it will affect students' language proficiency when it comes to university entry, though it appears to be a step in the right direction.

As far as home language policy is concerned, it appears from this study that Emirati parents can play a major role in the development of a multilingual habitus and repertoires in their children. Private school students whose parents made a point of reading to them in MSA and providing books in MSA, as well as English, and having meaningful conversations in EA and English, were more likely to enable their children to be proficient in English and Arabic in later life. Hessa M (Chapter Three) comes from such a family, and although she feels that she is stronger in English than she is in MSA, she is nevertheless a confident reader and writer in MSA, and able to communicate successfully in EA. That being said, such is the complexity of language choice issues that individuals may react in different ways and develop different dispositions within similar environments. Hessa's sister, as we saw, is either not willing or not able, or both, to communicate in EA in the home, nor to read and write in MSA. Nevertheless, for many, such parental interventions are potentially beneficial.

Parents of public school students face, perhaps, a greater challenge in raising multilingual, multiliterate children. This is particularly true if the parents are non-literate, or have had only a basic education, or have little proficiency in English, or in Arabic. Where possible, however, parents could encourage bilingual, or multilingual, literacy by providing books and other reading matter in Arabic (and/or other native language) and English in the home and by reading to their children in these languages, and encouraging their children, for example, to watch English language TV programs, initially with Arabic sub-titles and later with English sub-titles, or even Arabic programs with English sub-titles. Of course, given the strong 'Arabic only' language policy in some homes, parents might be unwilling to admit English. However, I believe that as time goes on, and English proficiency becomes more evident in each generation, these language ideologies and policies are likely to change. As long as parents can partner with schools to strengthen EA and MSA alongside English, there is hope that Emirati students of the future will become truly multilingual and multiliterate, and that Emirati identities will not be any the poorer for it.

I began this project in 2010 having enrolled as a part-time PhD student at Macquarie University in addition to working full time as a faculty member at a national university in Dubai. The experience of researching student language and literacy alongside working to develop the students' proficiencies in these areas has been immensely rewarding. I feel that I now have a much more nuanced understanding of multilingualism in the lives of these young people in the context of a superdiverse and dynamic globalized city, which has informed my professional practice. Working on a doctoral 'Thesis by Publication' was a very manageable way to combine higher degree studies with my professional work, and although TBP is something of an 'occluded genre', I have found it satisfying to construct my work in this way. I look forward to carrying out further ethnographic sociolinguistic research based on the data gathered during this project and data to be gathered in future projects.

## References

---

- Abu Dhabi Education Council. (2014). New School Model. Retrieved November 1, 2014, from <http://www.adec.ac.ae/en/Students/PS/Pages/New-School-Model.aspx>
- Ahmed, A. (2013, April 15). Abu Dhabi's push for schools to focus on Arabic. *The National*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/education/abu-dhabis-push-for-schools-to-focus-on-arabic>
- Al Fahim, M. (1995). *From rags to riches : A story of Abu Dhabi*. London: London Centre of Arab Studies.
- Al Fardan, H., & Al Kaabi, A. (2016). *Spoken Emirati Phrasebook*. Dubai: Al Ramsa Institute.
- Al Maktoum, M. B. R. (2016). Why ministers for happiness, tolerance, youth and the future? Retrieved September 12, 2016, from <https://sheikhmohammed.ae/en-us/Pages/ArticleDetail.aspx?ArticleID=711>
- Al Wer, E. (2006). Variation in Arabic Languages. In *Encyclopedia of language and linguistics* (pp. 341–344). Boston: Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/b0-08-044854-2/01527-3>
- AlMazroui, A. (2014, June 1). The debate over Emirati identity is clearly mistaken. *The National*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/comment/the-debate-over-emirati-identity-is-clearly-mistaken>
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (1998). *Local literacies: Reading and writing in one community*. London: Routledge.
- Barton, D., Hamilton, M., & Ivanic, R. (1999). *Situated literacies: Theorising reading and writing in context*. London: Routledge.

- Baynham, M. (1995). *Literacy practices: investigating literacy in social contexts*. London: Longman.
- Baynham, M. (2004). Ethnographies of literacy: Introduction. *Language and Education*, 18(4), 285–290.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09500780408666881>
- Besnier, N. (1995). *Literacy, emotion and authority: reading and writing on a Polynesian atoll*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bevan, A. (2005). *Totally stylin' Lizzy McGuire*. New York: Disney Press.
- Bianchi, R. M. (2012). Glocal Arabic online: The case of 3arabizi. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, (4), 483–503. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2012.2.4.3>
- Blackledge, A., & Creese, A. (2010). *Multilingualism: A critical perspective*. London: Continuum.
- Blackledge, A., & Creese, A. (2014). Heteroglossia as practice and pedagogy. In A. Blackledge & A. Creese (Eds.), *Heteroglossia as Practice and Pedagogy*. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer Netherlands.
- Blommaert, J. (2010). *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*. (N. Coupland & A. Jaworski, Eds.), *Philosophy & Social Criticism* (Vol. 36). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Blommaert, J. (2014). Infrastructures of superdiversity: Conviviality and language in an Antwerp neighborhood. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 17(4), 431–451.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549413510421>
- Blommaert, J., & Van de Vijver, F. (2013). *Combining surveys and ethnographies in the study of rapid social change* (Working Papers in Language & Literacies No. 108). Retrieved from  
[https://www.academia.edu/6341199/WP108\\_Blommaert\\_and\\_van\\_de\\_Vijver\\_2013\\_Combining\\_surveys\\_and\\_ethnographies\\_in\\_the\\_study\\_of\\_rapid\\_social\\_change](https://www.academia.edu/6341199/WP108_Blommaert_and_van_de_Vijver_2013_Combining_surveys_and_ethnographies_in_the_study_of_rapid_social_change)

- Bourdieu, P. (1977a). *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511812507>
- Bourdieu, P. (1977b). The economics of linguistic exchanges. *Social Science Information*, 16(6), 645–668.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/053901847701600601>
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. London: Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10286630902952413>
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (2007). *Sketch for a self-analysis*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Brandt, D., & Clinton, K. (2002). Limits of the local: Expanding perspectives on literacy as a social practice. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 34(3), 337–356. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15548430jlr3403\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15548430jlr3403_4)
- Campbell, S. (1996). The Arabic element in Indonesian - What do students need to know about it? Retrieved October 7, 2014, from <http://wacana.usc.edu.au/4/campbell.html>
- Canagarajah, A. S. (2013). *Translingual practice : Global Englishes and cosmopolitan relations*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge.
- Copland, F., & Creese, A. (2015). *Linguistic Ethnography*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications Ltd. Retrieved from <https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/mst/linguistic-ethnography/book239462>
- Cruickshank, K. (2008). Arabic-English bilingualism in Australia. In J. Cummins & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education Volume 5: Bilingual Education* (pp. 281–294). New York, NY:

Springer.

Cruickshank, K. (2012). *Teenagers, literacy and school : researching in multilingual contexts*. London: Routledge.

Davidson, C. M. (2008). From traditional to formal education in the lower Arabian Gulf, 1820–1971. *History of Education*, 37(5), 633–643. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00467600701430020>

Davies, B., & Harre, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 20(1), 43–63. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5914.1990.tb00174.x>

De Bock, J. (2015). Not all the same after all? Superdiversity as a lens for the study of past migrations. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 38(4), 583–595. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2015.980290>

de Swaan, A. (2001). *The words of the world: The global language system*. Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA: Polity Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404504244050>

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics* (Vol. 19). Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2009.00223.x>

Dubai Statistics Center. (2016a). *Marriage contracts and divorce certificates by nationality - Emirate of Dubai 2013-2015*. Retrieved from [https://www.dsc.gov.ae/Report/DSC\\_SYB\\_2015\\_01\\_14.pdf](https://www.dsc.gov.ae/Report/DSC_SYB_2015_01_14.pdf)

Dubai Statistics Center. (2016b). *Population bulletin - Emirate of Dubai 2015*. Retrieved from <https://www.dsc.gov.ae/Publication/Population Bulletin Emirate of Dubai 2015.pdf>

Dubai Statistics Center. (2016c). Population by sex - Emirate of Dubai. Retrieved November 20, 2016, from [https://www.dsc.gov.ae/Report/DSC\\_SYB\\_2015\\_01\\_01.pdf](https://www.dsc.gov.ae/Report/DSC_SYB_2015_01_01.pdf)

- Dudley-Evans, T. (1999). The dissertation: A case of neglect? In *Issues in EAP writing research and instruction* (pp. 28–36). Reading: Center for Applied Language Studies, The University of Reading.
- Duranti, A., Ochs, E., & Schieffelin, B. B. (2012). *The handbook of language socialization*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Emirates News Agency. (2014, August 25). Ministry of Interior grants citizenship to 106 children of Emirati mothers. Retrieved from <http://wam.ae/en/details/1395268912470>
- Ferguson, C. (1964). Diglossia. In D. Hymes (Ed.), *Language in Culture and Society*. (pp. 429–439). New York, NY: Harper and Row.
- Findlow, S. (2006). Higher education and linguistic dualism in the Arab Gulf. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 27(1), 19–36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425690500376754>
- Firth, A. (1996). The discursive accomplishment of normality: On “lingua franca” English and conversation analysis. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 26(2), 237–259. [https://doi.org/DOI: 10.1016/0378-2166\(96\)00014-8](https://doi.org/DOI: 10.1016/0378-2166(96)00014-8)
- Garcia, O., Bartlett, L., & Kleifgen, J. (2007). From biliteracy to pluriliteracies. In P. Auer & W. Li (Eds.), *Handbook of multilingualism and multilingual communication*. Berlin: Mouton.
- García, O., & Li, W. (2014). *Translanguaging : language, bilingualism and education*. New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2015.1046883>
- Garrett, P. B. (2007). Language Socialization and the (re)production of bilingual subjectivities. In M. Heller (Ed.), *Bilingualism: A Social Approach* (pp. 233–256). Basingstoke, England; New York.
- Gee, J. P. (2000). The New Literacy Studies: From “socially situated” to the work of the social. In D. Barton, M. Hamilton, & R. Ivanic (Eds.), *Situated literacies: Reading and writing in context* (pp. 180–196). London:

Routledge.

- Gee, J. P. (2007). Affinity spaces: From age of mythology to today's schools. In *Good video games + good learning : collected essays on video games, learning, and literacy* (pp. 87–103). New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc.
- Geertz, C. (2007). Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture. In L. F. Monaghan & J. E. Goodman (Eds.), *A cultural approach to interpersonal communication: Essential readings* (pp. 27–28). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Gogolin, I. (1994). *Der monolinguale Habitus der multilingualen Schule*. Münster: Waxmann.
- Goody, J. (1975). *Literacy in traditional societies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Goody, J. (1977). *The domestication of the savage mind*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Goody, J. (1986). *The logic of writing and the organization of society*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Goody, J., & Watt, I. (1963). The consequences of literacy. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 5(3), 304–345. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417500001730>
- Gray, J. (1992). *Men are from Mars, women are from Venus : a practical guide for improving communication and getting what you want in your relationships*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Green, J. (2012). *The fault in our stars*. New York: Dutton Books.
- Grenfell, M. (2011). *Bourdieu, language and linguistics*. New York: Continuum International Pub. Group.

- Grenfell, M. (2012). *Language, ethnography, and education : Bridging new literacy studies and Bourdieu*. New York: Routledge.
- Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (1983). *Ethnography*. New York: Routledge.
- Hardy, C. (2011). Language and education. In *Bourdieu, language and linguistics* (pp. 170–196). New York: Continuum.
- Hardy, C. (2013). Classroom Reading. In M. Grenfell, D. Bloome, C. Hardy, K. Pahl, J. Rowsell, & B. V Street (Eds.), *Language, Ethnography, and Education : Bridging New Literacy Studies and Bourdieu*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.
- Heath, S. B. (1982). What no bedtime story means: Narrative skills at home and school. *Language in Society*, 11, 49. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500009039>
- Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heath, S. B., & Street, B. V. (2008). *On ethnography : Approaches to language and literacy research*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hodges, A., & Kent, B. (2017). Hybrid writing positions within WAC/WID initiatives: Connecting faculty writing expectations and MENA cultures. *Emerging Writing Research from the Middle East-North Africa Region*, 201–215.
- Holes, C. D. (2011). Language and Identity in the Arabian Gulf. *Journal of Arabian Studies*, 1(2), 129–145. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21534764.2011.628492>
- Hopkyns, S. (2016). Emirati Cultural Identity in the Age of “Englishisation”: Voices from an Abu Dhabi

University. In L. Buckingham (Ed.), *Language, identity and education on the Arabian Peninsula : bilingual policies in a multilingual context* (pp. 87–115). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Hymes, D. (1974). *Foundations in sociolinguistics: An ethnographic approach*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Ivanov, V. (1999). Heteroglossia. *JOLA Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 9(1–2), 100–102.  
<https://doi.org/10.1525/jlin.1999.9.1-2.100>

Jackson, D. (2013). Completing a PhD by publication: a review of Australian policy and implications for practice. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 32(3), 355–368.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2012.692666>

Jeffrey, B., & Troman, G. (2004). Time for ethnography. *British Educational Research Journal*, 30(4), 535–548.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0141192042000237220>

Jørgensen, J. N., Karrebæk, M. S., Madsen, L. M., & Møller, J. S. (2011). Polylinguaging in Superdiversity. *Diversities*, 13(2), 23–37. Retrieved from  
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=91526036&site=ehost-live>

Kamhieh, C., Hameli, S. Al, Hammadi, A. Al, Hammadi, N. Al, Nawfal, I., Zaabi, A. Al, & Khalfan, K. (2011). Becoming readers: our stories. *Education, Business and Society: Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues*, 4(2), 114–119. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17537981111143846>

Kanna, A. (2010). Flexible citizenship in Dubai: Neoliberal subjectivity in the emerging “City-Corporation.” *Cultural Anthropology*, 25(1), 100–129. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1360.2009.01053.x>

KHDA. (2016a). Educating Hearts & Minds - How to open a private school in Dubai. Retrieved November 22,

2016, from

[http://www.khda.gov.ae/CMS/WebParts/TextEditor/Documents/Educating\\_Heart\\_and\\_Minds.pdf](http://www.khda.gov.ae/CMS/WebParts/TextEditor/Documents/Educating_Heart_and_Minds.pdf)

KHDA. (2016b). *The story unfolds... Private education in Dubai 2015/16*. Dubai UAE. Retrieved from

<https://www.khda.gov.ae/en/publications/article?id=10213>

Kral, I. (2007). *Writing words-right way!: Literacy and social practice in the Ngaanyatjarra world*. Australian National University.

Kulick, D., & Schieffelin, B. B. (2005). Language Socialization. In A. Duranti (Ed.), *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*. Blackwell Reference Online.

Latour, B. (1996). On interobjectivity. *Mind, Culture and Activity*, 3(4), 228–245.

[https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327884mca0304\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327884mca0304_2)

Leech, N. (2013, October 31). A “chat” language derived from Arabic and English – progress or problem? *The National*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenational.ae/arts-culture/a-chat-language-derived-from-arabic-and-english-progress-or-problem>

Luke, A. (2004). On the Material Consequences of Literacy. *Language and Education*, 18(4), 331–335.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09500780408666886>

Makoni, S. (2012). A critique of language, languaging and supervenacular. *Muitas Vozes*, 1(2), 189–199.

<https://doi.org/DOI: 10.5212/MuitasVozes.v.1i2.0003>

Martin-Jones, M. (2016). Researching language-in-education in diverse, twenty-first century settings.

*Language and Education*, 30(2), 186–195. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2015.1103262>

Maton, K. (2008). Habitus. In M. Grenfell (Ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu: key concepts* (pp. 49–64). London; New

York: Routledge.

Midraj, S., Midraj, J., O'Neill, G., & Sellami, A. (2006). The affective factors and English language attainment of Arab EFL learners.

Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research. (2014). Higher education institutions. Retrieved from [http://dalel.mohesr.gov.ae/about\\_ministry\\_en.aspx](http://dalel.mohesr.gov.ae/about_ministry_en.aspx)

Mouhanna, M. (2016). *English as a Medium of Instruction in the Tertiary Education Setting of the UAE: The Perspectives of Content Teachers*.

Naylor, H. (2008, October 9). The word on the street - same-same but different. *The National*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/the-word-on-the-street-same-same-but-different>

Niven, P. (Penny), & Grant, C. (Callie). (2012). PhDs by publications: an “easy way out”? *Teaching in Higher Education*, 17(1), 105–111. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2012.640086>

O'Neill, G. T. (2014a). “Just a natural move towards English”: Gulf youth attitudes towards Arabic and English literacy. *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: Gulf Perspectives*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.18538/lthe.v11.n1.160>

O'Neill, G. T. (2014b). Mobile technology in the higher education classroom: Multimodal practices, attitudes and affordances. In M. Dodigovic (Ed.), *Attitudes to technology in ESL/EFL pedagogy*. Dubai, UAE: TESOL Arabia.

O'Neill, G. T. (2016). Heritage, heteroglossia and home: Multilingualism in Emirati families. In L. Buckingham (Ed.), *Language, Identity and Education on the Arabian Peninsula - Bilingual Policies in a Multilingual Context*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

- O'Neill, G. T. (2017). It's not comfortable being who I am - Multilingual identity in super-diverse Dubai. *Multilingua*, 36(3).
- Padilla, B., Azevedo, J., & Olmos-Alcaraz, A. (2014). Superdiversity and conviviality: exploring frameworks for doing ethnography in Southern European intercultural cities. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 38(4), 621–635. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2015.980294>
- Pahl, K. (2008). Habitus in children's multimodal text-making: a discussion. In M. Prinsloo & J. Rowsell (Eds.), *Literacies, local and global* (pp. 51–72). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Palfreyman, D., & Al Khalil, M. (2003). "A Funky Language for teenzz to use:" Representing Gulf Arabic in instant messaging. *JCMC*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2003.tb00355.x>
- Paltridge, B., & Starfield, S. (2007). *Thesis and dissertation writing in a second language : a handbook for supervisors*. New York, NY: Routledge. Retrieved from <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip076/2006038301.html>
- Pavlenko, A. (2007). *Emotions and multilingualism*. Cambridge University Press.
- Pavlenko, A., & Blackledge, A. (2004). *Negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts*. Clevedon; Buffalo: Multilingual Matters.
- Pennington, R. (2014, December 8). English language "seducing" UAE pupils. *The National*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/english-language-seducing-uae-pupils>
- Pennington, R. (2015, March 1). Special report: Arabic "at risk of becoming foreign language in UAE." *The National*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/education/20150301/special-report-arabic-at-risk-of-becoming-foreign-language-in-uae>

- Pennycook, A., & Otsuji, E. (2015). *Metrolingualism : Language in the city*. London ; New York: Routledge.
- Piller, I. (2002). *Bilingual couples talk: The discursive construction of hybridity* (Vol. 25). Amsterdam ; Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1075/sibil.25>
- Piller, I. (2011). *Intercultural communication: A critical introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Piller, I. (2016). *Linguistic diversity and social justice : an introduction to applied sociolinguistics* (First). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Piller, I. (2017). Dubai: Language in the ethnocratic, corporate and mobile city. In D. Smakman & P. Heinrich (Eds.), *Metrolinguistics: Urban language ecologies around the world*. London: Routledge.
- Prinsloo, M., & Baynham, M. (2008). *Literacies, global and local* (Vol. 2). Amsterdam ; Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Rampton, B. (2007). Neo-Hymesian linguistic ethnography in the United Kingdom. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 11(5), 584–607. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2007.00341.x>
- Rampton, B., Maybin, J., & Roberts, C. (2014). Methodological foundations in linguistic ethnography. In *Working papers in urban languages and literacies*. Retrieved from <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/education/research/Research-Centres/ldc/publications/workingpapers/the-papers/WP125-Rampton-Maybin-Roberts-2014-Methodological-foundations-in-linguistic-ethnography.pdf>
- Rampton, B., Tusting, K., Maybin, J., Barwell, R., Creese, A., & Lytra, V. (2004). *UK linguistic ethnography: A discussion paper*. Retrieved from <http://www.lingethnog.org/docs/rampton-et-al-2004-uk-linguistic-ethnography-a-discussion-paper/>

Randall, M., & Samimi, M. A. (2010). The status of English in Dubai. *English Today*, 26(1), 43–50.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078409990617>

Roth, V. (2011). *Divergent*. New York: Katherine Tegen Books.

Sapir, E. (1921). *Language : an introduction to the study of speech*. New York: Harcourt, Brace.

Schulthies, B. (2015). Do you speak Arabic? Managing axes of adequation and difference in pan-Arab talent programs. *Language & Communication*, 44, 59–71. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2014.10.010>

Shaaban, A. (2012). The marriage puzzle. *Khaleej Times*. Retrieved from [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=data/nationgeneral/2012/July/nationgeneral\\_July185.xml&section=nationgeneral](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=data/nationgeneral/2012/July/nationgeneral_July185.xml&section=nationgeneral)

Silverstein, M. (1976). Shifters, linguistic categories, and cultural description. In K. H. Basso & H. Selby (Eds.), *Meaning and cultural anthropology* (pp. 11–55). Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Silverstein, M. (1998). The uses and utility of language Ideology. In B. B. Schieffelin, K. A. Woolard, & P. V. Kroskrity (Eds.), *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press.

Silverstein, M. (2003). Indexical order and the dialectics of sociolinguistic life. *Language & Communication*, 23(3), 193–229.

Snoj, J. (2015, April). UAE's population - by nationality. Retrieved July 27, 2016, from <http://www.bq-magazine.com/economy/socioeconomics/2015/04/uae-population-by-nationality>

Sparks, N. (1996). *The notebook*. New York: Warner Books.

Stangroom, J. (2013). Statistics calculators - Z-test, t-test, chi-square test. Retrieved March 16, 2013, from

<http://www.philosophyexperiments.com/statistics/>

Stevens, G. (1998). *The favored circle : the social foundations of architectural distinction*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Street, B. V. (1984). *Literacy in theory and practice. Cambridge studies in oral and literate culture 9*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Street, B. V. (1993). Culture is a Verb. In D. Graddol, L. Thompson, & M. Byram (Eds.), *Language and Culture: Papers from the Annual Meeting of the British Association of Applied Linguistics Held at Trevelyan College, University of Durham, September 1991* (pp. 23–43). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (1994). *Academic writing for graduate students : essential tasks and skills : a course for nonnative speakers of English. English for Specific Purposes*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Swan, M. (2014, April 17). Emirati dialect faces threat of decline. *The National*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/heritage/emirati-dialect-faces-threat-of-decline>

The National. (2016, May 18). UAE welcomes 152 new citizens. *The National*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/uae-welcomes-152-new-citizens>

UAE Government. (2012). Arabic language charter. Retrieved from <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/4650370/governmentae/2>

UAE National Bureau of Statistics. (2011). *Population estimates 2006 - 2010*. Retrieved from [http://www.uaestatistics.gov.ae/ReportPDF/Population Estimates 2006 - 2010.pdf](http://www.uaestatistics.gov.ae/ReportPDF/Population%20Estimates%202006%20-%202010.pdf)

Van Driel, B., Darmody, M., & Kerzil, J. (2016). *Education policies to foster tolerance in children and young*

*people in the EU*. Luxembourg. <https://doi.org/10.2766/46172>

Vertovec, S. (2007). Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(6), 1024–1054.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870701599465>

Willard, E. (2002). *Mary Kate and Ashley in action : makeup shake-up*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Woolard, K. A., & Schieffelin, B. B. (1994). Language Ideology. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 23(1), 55–82.

<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.an.23.100194.000415>

Zayed, P. (2013, October 30). Foreign workforce poses challenge to Arabic language. *The National*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/comment/foreign-workforce-poses-challenge-to-arabic-language>

Zayed University. (2015). Course Catalog 2015-2016. Retrieved November 25, 2016, from

[http://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/colleges/course\\_catalog.aspx](http://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/colleges/course_catalog.aspx)

Zayed University. (2016). Zayed University Learning Outcomes. Retrieved from

[http://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/\\_assessment\\_resource/learning\\_outcomes.aspx](http://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/_assessment_resource/learning_outcomes.aspx)

Zizek, S. (1994). *Mapping ideology*. London; New York: Verso.



## Appendix A – Literacy Survey (Transcript of Online Survey)

---

### Literacy Survey - Female Students

#### Background Information

1. How old are you?
2. What is your nationality (according to your passport)?
3. Which Emirate do you live in?
4. What is/was your family member's main job?
  - a. Father
  - b. Mother
  - c. Grandfather (Father's side)
  - d. Grandmother (Father's side)
  - e. Grandfather (Mother's side)
  - f. Grandmother (Mother's side)
5. If you have taken the IELTS examination, what scores did you get (don't worry if you can't remember all of them)? If you didn't take IELTS, go to the next question.
  - a. Listening
  - b. Speaking
  - c. Reading
  - d. Writing
  - e. Overall

6. If you took another English exam instead of IELTS (e.g. TOEFL), and you can remember your scores, please write them here.
7. Which year of study are you in?
8. What is /was your major (or what major do you think you will choose)?
- a. Business
  - b. Information Technology
  - c. Art & Design
  - d. Education
  - e. Health Science
  - f. International Studies
  - g. Haven't decided yet
  - h. Other (please specify)
9. What is/was your Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA)(for example, 3.4)? (if not sure, please go to the next question).

## Language & Literacy in your Family

10. What is your first language, and what about other members of your family?

|                                   | Emirati<br>Arabic | Urdu | Ajami<br>(Farsi<br>dialect) | Farsi | English | Another<br>language | I don't<br>know |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|------|-----------------------------|-------|---------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Self                              |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Father                            |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Mother                            |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Grandfather<br>(father's side)    |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Grandmother<br>(father's side)    |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Grandfather<br>(mother's<br>side) |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Grandmother<br>(mother's<br>side) |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |

11. What is your second language, and what about other members of your family?

|                                   | Emirati<br>Arabic | Urdu | Ajami<br>(Farsi<br>dialect) | Farsi | English | Another<br>language | I don't<br>know |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|------|-----------------------------|-------|---------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Self                              |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Father                            |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Mother                            |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Grandfather<br>(father's side)    |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Grandmother<br>(father's side)    |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Grandfather<br>(mother's<br>side) |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |
| Grandmother<br>(mother's<br>side) |                   |      |                             |       |         |                     |                 |

12. What languages can you / they read and write in? (Choose one or more in each row)

|                                   | Can read<br>in first<br>language | Can<br>write in<br>first<br>language | Can write<br>in second<br>language | Can read<br>in<br>second<br>language | Not able<br>to read | Not<br>able to<br>write | Not<br>sure<br>about<br>this |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Self                              |                                  |                                      |                                    |                                      |                     |                         |                              |
| Father                            |                                  |                                      |                                    |                                      |                     |                         |                              |
| Mother                            |                                  |                                      |                                    |                                      |                     |                         |                              |
| Grandfather<br>(father's side)    |                                  |                                      |                                    |                                      |                     |                         |                              |
| Grandmother<br>(father's side)    |                                  |                                      |                                    |                                      |                     |                         |                              |
| Grandfather<br>(mother's<br>side) |                                  |                                      |                                    |                                      |                     |                         |                              |
| Grandmother<br>(mother's<br>side) |                                  |                                      |                                    |                                      |                     |                         |                              |

13. Think about reading in English in your free time at different stages of your life. Do you agree that reading in English is/was enjoyable?

|                                    | Strongly<br>agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly<br>disagree | I don't /<br>didn't<br>read in<br>English<br>in my<br>free time |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|---------|----------|----------------------|---|
| Child (before<br>high school)      |                   |       |         |          |                      |   |
| Teenager<br>(before<br>University) |                   |       |         |          |                      |   |
| Now                                |                   |       |         |          |                      |   |

14. Think about writing in English in your free time at different stages of your life. Do you agree that writing in English is/was enjoyable?

|                                    | Strongly<br>agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly<br>disagree | I don't<br>/ didn't<br>read in<br>English<br>in my<br>free<br>time |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|---------|----------|----------------------|--|
| Child (before<br>high school)      |                   |       |         |          |                      |  |
| Teenager<br>(before<br>University) |                   |       |         |          |                      |  |
| Now                                |                   |       |         |          |                      |  |

15. Think about reading in Arabic in your free time at different stages of your life. Do you agree that reading in Arabic is/was enjoyable?

|                                    | Strongly<br>agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly<br>disagree | I don't<br>/ didn't<br>read in<br>English<br>in my<br>free<br>time |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|---------|----------|----------------------|--|
| Child (before<br>high school)      |                   |       |         |          |                      |  |
| Teenager<br>(before<br>University) |                   |       |         |          |                      |  |
| Now                                |                   |       |         |          |                      |  |

16. Think about writing in Arabic in your free time at different stages of your life. Do you agree that writing in Arabic is/was enjoyable?

|                                    | Strongly<br>agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly<br>disagree | I don't<br>/ didn't<br>read in<br>English<br>in my<br>free<br>time |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|---------|----------|----------------------|--|
| Child (before<br>high school)      |                   |       |         |          |                      |  |
| Teenager<br>(before<br>University) |                   |       |         |          |                      |  |
| Now                                |                   |       |         |          |                      |  |

17. When communicating with staff at home (maid, driver etc), what language do you use?

18. Do/Did your family members enjoy reading in their free time?

|                                | Yes | No | I don't know / Not applicable |
|--------------------------------|-----|----|-------------------------------|
| Self                           |     |    |                               |
| Father                         |     |    |                               |
| Mother                         |     |    |                               |
| Grandfather<br>(father's side) |     |    |                               |
| Grandmother<br>(father's side) |     |    |                               |
| Grandfather<br>(mother's side) |     |    |                               |
| Grandmother<br>(mother's side) |     |    |                               |

19. Do/Did your family members enjoy writing in their free time?

|                                | Yes | No | I don't know / Not applicable |
|--------------------------------|-----|----|-------------------------------|
| Self                           |     |    |                               |
| Father                         |     |    |                               |
| Mother                         |     |    |                               |
| Grandfather<br>(father's side) |     |    |                               |
| Grandmother<br>(father's side) |     |    |                               |
| Grandfather<br>(mother's side) |     |    |                               |
| Grandmother<br>(mother's side) |     |    |                               |

20. Approximately how many books are there in your house (a guess is fine)?
21. Think about the printed reading materials in your house (books, magazines, comics etc). Which do you think is true?
- a. They are mostly in Arabic
  - b. They are mostly in English
  - c. They are in both English and Arabic equally
  - d. They are mostly in another language
  - e. I'm not sure

22. When you were a child, did anyone read stories to you (e.g. at bedtime)? If so, who? If not, go to the next question

|                | English | Arabic | Another language |
|----------------|---------|--------|------------------|
| Father         |         |        |                  |
| Mother         |         |        |                  |
| Grandfather    |         |        |                  |
| Grandmother    |         |        |                  |
| Brother        |         |        |                  |
| Sister         |         |        |                  |
| Uncle          |         |        |                  |
| Aunt           |         |        |                  |
| Maid           |         |        |                  |
| Another Person |         |        |                  |

## Your Academic Literacy

23. Where did you start to learn to read and write in Arabic & English?

|                    | At home,<br>before<br>starting<br>school | At pre-<br>school | At primary<br>school | At high school |
|--------------------|--|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Arabic<br>reading  |  |                   |                      |                |
| Arabic<br>writing  |  |                   |                      |                |
| English<br>reading |  |                   |                      |                |
| English<br>writing |  |                   |                      |                |

24. Who helped you to learn to read and write (you may choose more than one in each row)?

|                    | Brother(s)<br>/ Sister(s) | Father | Mother | Grandparents | Maid | Teacher(s) | Other(s) |
|--------------------|---------------------------|--------|--------|--------------|------|------------|----------|
| Arabic<br>reading  |                           |        |        |              |      |            |          |
| Arabic<br>writing  |                           |        |        |              |      |            |          |
| English<br>reading |                           |        |        |              |      |            |          |
| English<br>writing |                           |        |        |              |      |            |          |

25. What kind of school did you go to, and what languages did you study in?

|                              | Most<br>subjects<br>in Arabic | Most<br>subjects in<br>English | Half in<br>English and<br>half in<br>Arabic | Other |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|-------|
| Pre-<br>school               |                               |                                |   |       |
| Private<br>primary<br>school |                               |                                |   |       |
| Public<br>primary<br>school  |                               |                                |   |       |
| Private<br>high<br>school    |                               |                                |   |       |
| Public<br>high<br>school     |                               |                                |   |       |

26. Think about your studies at ZU in English and Arabic. Please complete this sentence: 'In my opinion, we should study...

- a. only in Arabic.'
- b. mostly in Arabic.'
- c. in Arabic & English equally.'
- d. mostly in English.'
- e. only in English.'

27. Think about your reading skills. Which one do you think is true?

- a. my English reading is better than my Arabic reading
- b. my Arabic reading is better than my English reading
- c. my English & Arabic reading are about the same level
- d. Other (please specify)

28. Think about your writing skills. Which one is true?:

- a. my English writing is better than my Arabic writing
- b. my Arabic writing is better than my English writing
- c. my English & Arabic writing are about the same level

29. Think about the reading materials (textbooks, course readers) that your University teachers provide(d) for you. Which is true:

|                           | English | Arabic |
|---------------------------|---------|--------|
| I always read them        |         |        |
| I usually read them       |         |        |
| I read about half of them |         |        |
| I don't usually read them |         |        |
| I never read them         |         |        |

30. Think about the written assignments that you do/did for all your University courses in English and Arabic. How easy/difficult are/were they?

|                                    | English | Arabic |
|------------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Very easy                          |         |        |
| Quite easy                         |         |        |
| Neither too easy nor too difficult |         |        |
| Quite difficult                    |         |        |
| Very difficult                     |         |        |

31. Think about the instructions that your teachers give/gave you for the University assignments. How clear are/were they?

|                              | English | Arabic |
|------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Always clear                 |         |        |
| Usually clear                |         |        |
| Clear about half of the time |         |        |
| Not usually clear            |         |        |
| Never clear                  |         |        |

32. Think about the feedback that your teachers give/gave you for the assignments. How clear is/was it?

|                              | English | Arabic |
|------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Always clear                 |         |        |
| Usually clear                |         |        |
| Clear about half of the time |         |        |
| Not usually clear            |         |        |
| Never clear                  |         |        |

33. When you are working on an assignment, which of these strategies do you use (you may choose one or more)

- a. read the course textbook
- b. ask your course teacher for help
- c. ask another teacher for help
- d. go to the Writing Center
- e. ask a friend to help you
- f. ask a tutor (outside Uni) to help you
- g. find help online (e.g. advice on how to write an essay)
- h. use an online assignment writing service
- i. find help in the University library
- j. work completely by yourself
- k. read the teacher's Powerpoint slides
- l. ask a family member to help you (please specify)
- m. Other

34. Do you think literacy (reading and writing) in English and Arabic will be important in your future life? If so, how? If not, why not?

## Non-academic Literacy

35. Which of these do you read, and in what language(s)?

|  | Arabic | English | Another language |
|--|--------|---------|------------------|
| Printed fiction<br>(novels, poems,<br>plays etc)                                 |        |         |                  |
| Printed non-fiction<br>(biographies, self-<br>help books, 'how to'<br>books etc) |        |         |                  |
| Printed newspapers   |        |         |                  |
| Printed magazines<br>&/or comics   |        |         |                  |
| Articles on internet<br>web sites or in e-<br>books (non-fiction)                |        |         |                  |
| Fiction on the<br>internet or in e-<br>books (novels,<br>poems, plays etc)       |        |         |                  |
| Online newspapers  |        |         |                  |

|             |  |  |  |
|-------------|--|--|--|
| Song lyrics |  |  |  |
|-------------|--|--|--|

36. Which of these do you write, and in what language(s)?

|                                  | Arabic | English | Another language |
|----------------------------------|--------|---------|------------------|
| Fiction (e.g. poems, stories)    |        |         |                  |
| A blog                           |        |         |                  |
| A journal                        |        |         |                  |
| Emails                           |        |         |                  |
| Letters (on paper, sent by mail) |        |         |                  |
| An appointments diary            |        |         |                  |
| To-do lists                      |        |         |                  |

37. Do you use social networking services? If so, which ones do you use, and when you are chatting with your Emirati friends, what languages do you use? If not, go to question 41.

|  | Facebook | Twitter | MSN | Blackberry | Other |
|--|----------|---------|-----|------------|-------|
| Emirati<br>Arabic only                     |          |         |     |            |       |
| Standard<br>Arabic only                    |          |         |     |            |       |
| English only                               |          |         |     |            |       |
| A<br>combination<br>of Arabic &<br>English |          |         |     |            |       |
| Other<br>language(s)                       |          |         |     |            |       |

38. Why do you think Emiratis sometimes chat (online) in English with other Emiratis?

39. When you chat online with Arab friends, what kind of writing (script) do you use?

- a. Roman script for both English and Arabic
- b. Roman script for English, and Arabic script for Arabic
- c. Roman script for English, and either Roman or Arabic script for Arabic
- d. Other (please specify)

40. Why do you think some Emiratis don't use Arabic script when chatting in Arabic?

## Appendix B – NVIVO Nodes

---

The following nodes were used to code project data relevant to the PhD thesis:

- Capital
  - Language & Literacy
    - Development
    - Strengths/Weaknesses
  - Social / Cultural
- Change
  - Generational
  - Life trajectories
- Emotion
- Family
- Field
  - Superdiversity
    - Opportunities
    - Threats
  - Demographics
  - Linguistic domains
- Habitus
  - Monolingual
  - Multilingual
  - English
  - Arabic
    - MSA
    - Dialect
  - Literacy
  - Cleft
  - Dress
- Heteroglossia
- Identity
- Indexicality
  - Dress
  - Speech
  - Opinion
  - Endogamy & Exogamy
- Language Ideology
  - Domain-specific
  - Heteroglossic
- Leisure
- Practices
  - Language
  - Literacy
- School
  - AMPuS
  - EMPrS
  - AMPrS



## Appendix C – ERP Evaluation

---

### Reading & Goodreads

- 1) What kind of school did you go to and what language did you mainly study in (choose the one where you spent most time)?
  - Public School - mostly Arabic
  - Public School - mostly English
  - Private School - mostly Arabic
  - Private School - mostly English
  - Other, please specify
- 2) Which of Gary's classes were you in, and in which semester?

- 3) Before this course, how did you feel about reading in Arabic and English?

| Arabic | English |
|--------|---------|
|--------|---------|

- I loved it
  - I liked it
  - I neither liked nor disliked it
  - I didn't like it
  - I hated it
- 4) Before this course, approximately how many books had you read from cover to cover (the whole book)?

| Arabic | English | Another Language |
|--------|---------|------------------|
|--------|---------|------------------|

- 0
  - 1-10
  - 11-20
  - 21-30
  - 31-40
  - 41-50
  - 51+
- 5) 5. During this course, what kinds of books did you read?

Book 1                      Book 2                      Book 3

- Novel
- Self-help Book
- Biography
- Other

6) How easy/difficult were the books you read?

Book 1                      Book 2                      Book 3

- Very Easy
- Easy
- Neither too Easy nor too Difficult
- Difficult
- Very Difficult

7) How useful was it to read these three books?

Book 1                      Book 2                      Book 3

- Very Useful
- Useful
- Not that
- Useful
- Not at all Useful

8) Have you read any other books since the course ended?

Yes                      No

- Arabic
- English
- Other language

9) Do you plan to read books again in the future?

Yes                      No                      Maybe

- Arabic
- English

- Other language

10) What did you think of 'Goodreads'?

- Useful and Enjoyable
- Useful but not Enjoyable
- Neutral
- Not Useful, but Enjoyable
- Neither Useful nor Enjoyable
- Other, please specify

11) 12. How do you feel about reading in Arabic and English now?

Arabic

English

- I love it
- I like it
- I neither like nor dislike it
- I don't like it
- I hate it

12) If you have anything else to add about reading or Goodreads, please write it here.

13) If Gary has any other questions, is it OK if he contacts you (if 'yes', please give your email address)?

- Yes
- No

## Appendix D – Ethics Clearance

---

### Macquarie University

Dear Prof Piller,

Re: "English L2 Literacy in UAE University"

The above application was reviewed by The Faculty of Human Sciences Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee wishes to thank you for a thorough and well prepared application. Approval of the above application is granted and you may now proceed with your research.

The following personnel are authorised to conduct this research:

Prof Ingrid Piller - Chief Investigator  
Mr Gary Thomas O'Neill - Co-Investigator

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1. The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).
2. Approval will be for a period of five (5) years subject to the provision of annual reports. Your first progress report is due on 1st August 2012.

If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. If the project has been discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are also required to submit a Final Report for the project.

Progress reports and Final Reports are available at the following website:

[http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how\\_to\\_obtain\\_ethics\\_approval/human\\_research\\_ethics/forms](http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/forms)

3. If the project has run for more than five (5) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report and submit a new application for the project. (The five year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Sub-Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).

4. All amendments to the project must be reviewed and approved by the Sub-Committee before implementation. Please complete and submit a Request for Amendment Form available at the following website:

[http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how\\_to\\_obtain\\_ethics\\_approval/human\\_research\\_ethics/forms](http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/forms)

5. Please notify the Sub-Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

6. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University. This information is available at the following websites:

<http://www.mq.edu.au/policy>

[http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how\\_to\\_obtain\\_ethics\\_approval/human\\_research\\_ethics/policy](http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/policy)

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project it is your responsibility to provide the Macquarie University's Research Grants Management Assistant with a copy of this email as soon as possible. Internal and External funding agencies will not be informed that you have final approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Management Assistant has received a copy of this email.

If you need to provide a hard copy letter of Final Approval to an external organisation as evidence that you have Final Approval, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Secretariat at the address below.

Please retain a copy of this email as this is your official notification of final ethics approval.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Peter Roger

Chair  
Faculty of Human Sciences  
Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee

-----  
----

Faculty of Human Sciences - Ethics  
Research Office  
Level 3, Research HUB, Building C5C  
Macquarie University  
NSW 2109

Ph: +61 2 9850 4197  
Fax: +61 2 9850 4465

Email: [fhs.ethics@mq.edu.au](mailto:fhs.ethics@mq.edu.au)  
<http://www.research.mq.edu.au/>

Please note that Ethics Clearance was also received from the University in which the research took place, and this was a condition of Macquarie University's approval. As the University is anonymous in this study, the Ethics Clearance Approval letter is not included.