

Investigating Language Attitudes among Bilingual Egyptian University Students

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Abstract

This study is an investigation of language attitudes of bilingual Egyptian university students enrolled in two universities in Cairo: Ain Shams University, a national university, and the German University in Cairo, a private one. The aim of the study was to investigate and compare the students' attitudes towards Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA), English and codeswitching. The study also sought to find out whether or not a correlation existed among severable variables in the study, the most important of which are the relationship between type of high school certificate (national vs. international) and attitudes to MSA, ECA, English, codeswitching, and towards pride in Egyptian and Arab identity. Data was collected from 223 students using three instruments: a writing task, a questionnaire, and focus group interviews. Results of the study suggest that while there are differences between the two groups of students in their attitudes to the codes under investigation, and also in their self-reported linguistic behavior, none of these differences were statistically significant except regarding attitude to codeswitching. GUC students had a much more positive attitude towards codeswitching, readily acknowledged practicing it and were more tolerant of it in the linguistic behavior of others. Results of the correlation tests suggest that there is a strong correlation between the type of high school education and a positive attitude to Arabic, but there was no correlation between the type of high school education and a positive attitude to English. Furthermore, there was no correlation between type of high school education and pride in Egyptian/Arab identity.

Key words

Language attitudes, FusHa Arabic, MSA, Egyptian Colloquial Arabic, Franco-Arab, codeswitching.

1.0 Introduction

The linguistic situation in Egypt is indeed quite an interesting one, with several coexisting varieties of Arabic, along with an ever increasing presence of English. To color the picture further, Arabic is sometimes written in Roman letters (Franco-Arab), and, conversely, English words and phrases are occasionally written in Arabic script. This is often the case with written messages on various social media platforms, billboard signs and advertisements in public space as well as shop signs.¹ Furthermore, codeswitching between English and Arabic is quite widespread in both written and spoken discourse.

The aim of this study is to investigate the attitudes of bilingual Egyptian university students towards two varieties of Arabic: Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Egyptian Colloquial Arabic, (ECA), English, and codeswitching between Arabic and English. It also aims to investigate the effect of demographic variables such as type of high school and college education on students' attitudes. More specifically, this research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What attitudes do bilingual university students in Cairo have towards MSA, (ECA), English, and code switching between Arabic and English?
2. What, if any, are the differences in language attitudes between bilingual students studying at Ain Shams University, a national university, and those studying at the German University in Cairo, a private university?
3. To what extent does the students' linguistic behavior reflect their attitudes?
4. What is the correlation between: the type of high school certificate (national vs. international) obtained by the students and (a) a positive attitude towards MSA Arabic, (b) a positive attitude towards English, (c) pride in Egyptian and Arab identity?

Participants in this study are a representative sample of 223 bilingual students enrolled in two universities in Cairo, Egypt: one state owned, Ain Shams University (ASU), and the other private, the German University in Cairo (GUC). The former group obtained a national end of high school certificate, while the majority of the latter obtained an international high school certificate, as will be discussed in detail below in section 4.2. Of the 223 participants, only the completed questionnaires of 202 students were included to study the language attitudes of the two groups of students and the differences between them (answers to questions 1-4). This is due to the fact that 21 students (all of whom

responded online) did not indicate the university in which they studied, or indicated that they were enrolled at ASU but did not use English as the medium of instruction like those in the English Department, or studied at universities other than ASU or GUC. The students' data was excluded in an attempt to arrive at two homogeneous groups of students, each belonging to an identified speech community, and sharing the same academic environment. However, all the questionnaires (223) were included in the correlation test to answer question 5, as the variable of interest in this case was the type of high school education (which they all indicated), and not to studying in a particular university.

The paper begins with a brief outline of Ferguson's (1959) notion of diglossia and how it applies to Arabic today. Following this is a review of previous studies on attitudes to Arabic in the Arab world and Egypt. This is followed by a detailed discussion of the methodology adopted for this study, a presentation and discussion of the findings of the study and how they relate to previous research on attitudes, and finally a conclusion with suggestions for further research.

2.0 Diglossia and Arabic

In his classic article "Diglossia," Ferguson (1959) refers to an exceptional limited number of languages, one of which is Arabic, where two varieties of the language exist side by side. One is the High (H) variety, which is highly valued and respected by its speakers, and is the vehicle of a large body of literature. It is used for formal and official purposes and all modes of writing. The other is the vernacular Low (L) variety which is used for everyday purposes. One important criteria of diglossia is that the two varieties of the language exist in complementary distribution. Ferguson (1959, p. 328) writes: "one of the most important features of diglossia is the specialization of function for H and L. In one set of situations only H is appropriate and in another only L, with the two sets overlapping only very slightly."

Ferguson's (1959) division of Arabic into two varieties H and L, however, has been contested by many. Even Ferguson himself (1996 [1991]) later acknowledged that much of what he stated in his 1959 article needed to be revised. A detailed discussion of the criticism levelled at Ferguson's concept of diglossia is beyond the scope of this study, but see for example Badawi (1973), Kaye (1972), Hary (1996), and Hudson (2002) among others.² Furthermore, the linguistic situation in the Arab World has changed greatly since the late fifties when Ferguson first introduced the concept of diglossia. This is particularly true of Egypt, a country which is, in many ways, open to global influence, and whose society has changed drastically in the past few decades.

In Egypt today, the division of labor between the H and L varieties of Arabic suggested by Ferguson (1959) no longer holds true. In fact, ECA, the vernacular L variety, is increasingly leaking into domains formally occupied by the H varieties. (It is generally accepted by scholars of Arabic sociolinguistics that there are the two H varieties of Arabic: the first is FusHa, Classical Arabic of the Holy Qur'an, Hadith, pre-Islamic and early Islamic literature, and MSA used for writing and official purposes. The non-specialized, average speaker of Arabic, however, would not distinguish between these two varieties, and would refer to both as "FusHa".) For example, it is now common in Egypt to find religious sermons (in both mosques and churches) to be delivered in the vernacular, a domain formerly reserved for FusHa. Likewise, political and official speeches are often delivered in the vernacular rather than the MSA. (More specifically, a political speech would be read out in MSA while any impromptu diversion from the written text would be in the vernacular.) Also in written media, we find occasional codeswitching from MSA to the colloquial in op-eds, especially in non-government papers (see Bassiouney, 2014). Moreover, a new generation of writers, particularly those targeting young adults, comfortably use ECA in their published literary works either to replace MSA, or to produce work written in a mixture of both varieties.³

Likewise, personal letters, which Ferguson also mentions as an example of a domain where the H variety of Arabic is used, are now rarely written, if at all, in MSA. In fact, letter-writing in Egypt, as it is world-wide, is steadily giving way to electronic mail, and other types of electronic communication and social media in general. In these new modes of written communication, particularly among youth, MSA is increasingly being replaced by ECA, English or both together.

Furthermore, in public spaces, particularly in Cairo and Alexandria, the streets and highways abound in bill-boards written totally in English, a mixture of Arabic and English or Franco-Arab.⁴ (See Plumlee (2017) for a study of signage in Egypt). Often, the variety of Arabic used is ECA. Yet, to what extent does this change in the Egyptian people's linguistic behavior reflect the users' attitudes towards the linguistic varieties used in Egypt today? This study is an attempt to partially answer this question by investigating bilingual Egyptian university students' attitudes towards the language varieties in Egypt today. In the following section, I first provide a definition of language attitude, followed by an overview of representative research on language attitudes in the Arab world.

3.0 The Study of Language Attitudes

3.1 Definition of language attitudes

In his book *Attitudes to Language* (2010) Garrett cites the definition given by the social psychologist, Allport (1954: np). He defines attitude as “a learned disposition to think, feel and behave towards a person (or object) in a certain way.” Attitudes thus comprise three aspects: cognition, behavior and affect. Like Allport, Oppenheim (1982) also acknowledges this tripartite division of attitudes, but draws attention to another important element which is the psychological nature of attitudes. He states that attitude is “an abstraction which cannot be apprehended. It is an inner component of mental life which expresses itself directly or indirectly through more obvious processes such as stereotypes, beliefs, verbal statements or reactions, ideas and opinions” (p. 9 qtd. in Garrett, 2010, p.19). While Oppenheim believes that attitudes are difficult to capture, and therefore have to be inferred by the researcher, Garrett (2010), sees that attitudes can be identified. Building upon Allport’s (1954) and Sarnoff’s (1970, p.279, qtd. in Garrett, 2010, p.19) reference to attitude as a “disposition,” Garrett (2010, p. 20) defines attitude as:

[an] evaluative orientation to a social object of some sort, whether it is a language, or a new government policy, etc. And as a ‘disposition,’ an attitude can be seen as having a degree of stability that allows it to be identified.

Because attitudes can be “identified,” they are measurable. It is this definition of attitude that is adopted for the purpose of this study. Yet, while language attitudes are measurable, research on language attitudes has shown that measuring attitudes is by no means an easy endeavor. For this reason, triangulation (or the combination of different methods of data collection) is adopted in this study, as discussed below in the methodology section. (For a detailed discussion of the different methods of collecting data for the study of language attitudes, see Garrett (2010)). The following section is a discussion of representative studies of language attitudes in the Arab world.

3.2 Research on language attitudes in the Arab world

As an exhaustive research of all studies conducted on language attitudes in the Arab world is not possible given the limitations of space, I will present a brief review of some studies, and then focus on the Egyptian context. Research on language attitudes in the Arab world started around the mid-seventies, and has continued to generate interest since then. Nevertheless, it can still be said that research in this area remains limited.

Among the earliest studies of bilingual Arabs is that conducted by Bentahila (1983) in which he investigated (among other issues) the language attitudes of bilingual Moroccans, using the matched-guise technique and a questionnaire. Bentahila found that bilingual Moroccans rated Classical Arabic higher than either French or colloquial Moroccan Arabic for intrinsic beauty and richness. Classical Arabic was valued as the language of religion and Arab nationalism. Thus, it was rated highly for its integrative value and associated with solidarity with other Arabs. French was valued for its instrumental value and associated with modernity, wealth and general practicality. The same individuals, speaking French and Moroccan Arabic, were rated more positively on the matched-guise test when speaking French on variables such as richness, modernity, level of education, intelligence and open mindedness. As for attitudes towards codeswitching, participants in the study generally had a very negative attitude towards this linguistic behavior, and only a few acknowledged that they themselves code-switched.

Other more recent studies in the Moroccan context support Bentahila's (1983) findings. For example, Ennaji (2007) found that participants in his study had positive attitudes towards Classical Arabic. They were not in favor of replacing it with Colloquial Moroccan Arabic in school, as they regarded Moroccan Arabic as a degenerate form of Classical Arabic. Like the participants in Bentahila's study, their attitudes to French were positive as they associated it with prestige and modernity.

Chakrani (2011), however, challenged the polarization of Standard Arabic and French in Morocco, with the former associated with solidarity and iconic of cultural ethnicity, and the latter iconic of modernity and upward mobility as reported by Bentahila (1983), Ennaji (2005, 2007), discussed above. Chakrani argues that his research findings suggest that there is no polarization of Arabic and French with regard to what they represent for Moroccans. The results of a Matched Guise Test used to probe the covert attitudes of 57 middle class high school bilinguals revealed that there was "no statistically significant difference between MA [Moroccan Arabic] and SA [Standard Arabic]" with regards to "modernity and open-mindedness" (p.172). He found that this was rather surprising as SA has traditionally been associated with tradition and the past while MA has been associated with everyday interaction. Furthermore, he found that "among middle-class respondents, there is no significant difference between French and MA for open-mindedness. There is, however, a difference with regard to association with modernity, where French ranks significantly higher than both SA and MA. French also ranks higher than SA with regards to open-mindedness. With regard

to sociability, Chakrani (2011) found that while French is essentially associated with modernity, it is also making its way in being associated with solidarity traits. He argues that:

French, when spoken by Moroccans, still maintains a communicative edge by acquiring two types of prestige: overt prestige through the exclusive appropriation of status, through the ideological projection of modernity, and covert prestige by maintaining sociability traits through codeswitching with MA. These middle class students seem to be projecting on French the social, in-group attributes and traits through which they see themselves. (p. 174)

He thus concludes that for middle-class Moroccans, French is slowly making its way as a solidarity marker alongside MA and Berber.

In the Jordanian context, Hussein and El-Ali (1989) investigated the reactions of 303 rural university students of both genders towards Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and three colloquial varieties of Arabic: Bedouin, Fallahi and Madani. The aim of the study was to find out how the students “arranged the four language varieties in terms of social status ... [the] extent to which the respective speakers of non-standard Arabic [were] loyal to the varieties they spoke, [and whether] respondents associated language varieties with certain professions” (Hussein & El-Ali, 1989, p. 37). They also wanted to find out whether there were gender differences in the students’ attitudes. Their results were consistent with previous research in that they found MSA to be rated highest in social status. In addition, concerning the colloquial varieties, they found that Bedouin was rated highest, followed by Fallahi Arabic, while the least preferred was the Madani variety. They also found that the Bedouin and Madani students expressed loyalty to their own varieties while the Fallahi students did not.

Along the same lines, Sawaie’s (1994) study of linguistic variation and attitudes in Jordan revealed that language attitudes were closely tied to ethnicity, place of domicile and gender. For example, participants of Jordanian origin favored the Bedouin dialect, and those of Palestinian origin favored the Fallahi and Madani dialects. Likewise, gender differences surfaced in attitudes towards the linguistic variable /q/, with females reporting higher use of the glottal stop [ʔ] as a variant of /q/, whereas Jordanian males preferred the variant [g], associated with Bedouins. On the other hand, Palestinian Jordanian males preferred [k], the variable associated with Palestinian villagers.

In another more recent and related study, Al-Raba’a (2016) found that language attitudes in Jordan differed according to age group, with the older generation of rural respondents showing loyalty for their own rural

variety. They generally have “more positive attitudes toward their variety and appear to be more invested in its correctness and pleasantness” (Al-Raba’a, 2016, p. 82). These attitudes, however, were not shared by the younger generation of rural respondents. They did not express loyalty to the rural variety, but instead, they “seem[ed] to hold negative attitudes toward their local variety in terms of correctness, pleasantness and social status” (p.83). Al-Raba’a suggested that this might lead to a change in the linguistic behavior of these rural youth, particularly university students, “contribut[ing] to a decline in using the RV [rural variety] ... in favor of its urban counterpart” (p. 83).

In the Iraqi context, Murad (2007) compared the language attitudes of two groups which differed demographically in the level of education: one group comprised 107 Iraqis college level students, while the other comprised 89 college students who did not have a post-secondary school degree. Using a 44 item questionnaire to collect data, he found that college students showed more positive attitudes towards SA than Iraqi Arabic. The reverse was true of those who did not have post-secondary school education.

Research on language attitude in the Egyptian Context is scarce. Nevertheless, one of the earliest studies of language attitude in the Arab world is that of El-Dash and Tucker (1975) who used a matched guise test to investigate reactions to speech styles in Egypt. Participants in this study were college and high school students who were required to rate Standard Arabic, Cairene Colloquial Arabic, along with three varieties of English: American English, British English and Egyptian English. El-Dash and Tucker found that speakers of Standard Arabic received the highest rating in general. Cairene Colloquial Arabic received the highest rating in the home domain, but was rated lower than all the other varieties in terms of intelligence.

Focusing on attitudes towards an urban social variety, Youth Language (YL) in Cairo, Rizk (2007) investigated university students’ use of this variety of Egyptian Arabic and their attitudes toward it. She contends that the media, the film industry, and performing arts have played a role in promoting this social variety and cites, as examples, the films *Isma’ileya rayeh gay* (Isamilia Back and Forth, 1997) and *Se’i:di fel game’a el-amrikeya* (An Upper Egyptian at AUC, 1998) and the rap song *Omni msafra* (My Mother is Going on a Trip, 2002), all of which present YL in a positive light, as an attractive and humorous way of speaking.

Rizk (2007) describes in detail the linguistic features of YL on the phonological, syntactic and semantic levels. She then reports on youth’s

attitudes to this variety, which she investigated by holding "semi-directive interviews" with 40 students studying in four different faculties in Cairo. She found that students who were studying in "high prestige" faculties such as Engineering and Medicine, acknowledged using YL, felt positive about it, and were even proud of using it, whereas those who were enrolled in less prestigious colleges such as faculties of Arts and Commerce acknowledged that they did use YL, but had negative feelings about doing so. Rizk contends that this disparity in the attitudes of the students in different faculties was due to the fact that students who studied in less prestigious faculties (by Egyptian standards) were linguistically insecure, and, therefore, not proud of the way they spoke.

Other more recent studies investigating the language attitudes of students in Egypt are those of Reigh, (2014), Ayad (2014) Abu Ras (2012) and Albirini (2016). As for Ayad (2014), she investigated the use and attitudes of Egyptian university students towards foreign loan words, focusing on gender differences. Her sample consisted of a total of 120 students studying at the Sadat Academy for Management Sciences in Cairo, where the medium of instruction is primarily English. Sixty students, 30 male and 30 female, filled out a questionnaire regarding use of loan words, while 60 others (30 male and 30 female) responded to a match guise test, the purpose of which was to investigate their covert attitudes to loan words. Results showed that attitudes towards loan words were favorable regardless of gender, with female students using loan words more frequently than males. Furthermore, she found gender differences in the domains in which loan words were used. Male students generally tended to use loan words when discussing sports or cars, while female students used loan words to refer to attire, and cosmetics. Students of both genders, however, used loan words to discuss academic issues.

Also set in the context of a private university, Reigh's (2014) study investigated the language attitudes of 55 undergraduate students studying at the American University in Cairo (AUC). Reigh argues that students at the AUC are a distinct speech community, not typical of average Egyptian speech communities, as they are members of the financially privileged few in the society. She found that the students valued Standard Arabic (SA) for status and solidarity, but not so highly for maintaining an Egyptian Arab identity. On the other hand, ECA was valued for solidarity and identity as Egyptians. The students acknowledged codeswitching between Arabic and English, but did not all have positive feelings towards it.

Moving away from student populations, Bassiouney (2014) investigated attitudes towards language varieties in Egypt by focusing on media discourse, songs, and films. She found that the content of media

discourse and performing arts reflected a generally positive attitude towards ECA. Using indexicality theory as a framework of analysis, she found ECA to be indexical of “authenticity” as Egyptians. Attitudes towards SA, however, were contradictory: on the one hand it was associated with the past and rigidity, and on the other it was associated with authority and status.

Focusing on attitudes towards two Nubian languages (NLs) and Arabic, Abu Ras (2012) investigated the use and attitudes of 40 Egyptian Nubian university students towards the two Nubian languages: Nobiin and Kenuzi-Dongola (ethnic varieties) , and also Arabic. She collected her data by general observation of the language behavior of the students and by means of a questionnaire and interviews.

Based on her study, Abu Ras (2012) concluded that many Nubians had some degree of competence in NLs, and the overwhelming majority had positive attitudes towards it. She noted that “60 per cent of participants living outside the Nubian region could at least understand NL and some of them even speak some words of it” (p.44). As for those living in the Nubian region, the overwhelming majority could speak NL, and only 5% said that they only knew a few words. Furthermore, 65% of those living in the Nubia region, compared to 75% living outside the Nubia region, said they would like to pass it on to their children. With regard to Arabic, participants generally had a positive attitude towards it, and preferred to use it in all domains except the home domain, or when talking with another Nubian friend.

This review of representative studies shows that researchers have addressed the effect of certain demographic variables such as age, gender, ethnic origin, and level of education on participants’ attitudes towards the varieties of Arabic used in the Arab world and English. However, the effect of the type of school education (namely, national vs international) as a factor influencing the language attitudes and behavior of bilingual individuals has generally been neglected. Similarly, as far as the researcher knows, the correlation between the type of school education and pride in being Egyptian/Arab, and attitudes toward the Arabic language and English has also not been investigated. The aim of this research is to fill in this gap by investigating the extent to which an international school education, following an international curriculum, and a learning environment, where English is the medium of instruction, and also the medium of official communication with students, impacts language attitudes. Furthermore, as few attitude studies in the Egyptian context have dealt with codeswitching, this study also investigates the attitude of bilingual youth to this phenomenon.

4.0 Method

The study is a mixed-method approach. The data, collected by multiple methods, triangulation, were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The software SPSS (20) was used to analyze the questionnaire data, while Sketch Engine was used to obtain a corpus analysis of the written task. The written responses were also analyzed qualitatively, as were the recorded interviews.

4.1 Participants in the study

A total of 223 subjects responded to the questionnaire. However, only 202 were included in the study of the three facets of language attitude measured by the questionnaire. (See reasons for exclusion clarified in the introduction.) Of the 202 students, 109 students were studying in the English Department at ASU (106 seniors 3 post-graduates). The 93 GUC students were 91 undergraduates and two post-graduate students of different majors. All participants were Egyptian and between the ages of 17-27. The ASU students were predominantly female, reflecting the nature of the student population in the English Department. Due to this, gender was not a variable in this study. The writing task was completed by 201 of the same students, and interviews were conducted with focus groups consisting of 31 students, who volunteered to participate in the interviews. The correlation coefficient test, however, was conducted on the entire participating sample of 223 students, as explained above.

The two groups of students differed demographically in terms of educational background, educational environment, and also in terms of cultural and socio-economic background, with the GUC students being generally more economically privileged. Previous studies which had attempted to find out the socio-economic status of the participants by asking them to indicate family income on the questionnaire, reported that students often left this item unanswered. (See Albirini, 2016, p. 88, for example) Therefore, an alternative question was included regarding whether or not they had travelled abroad to give a rough idea about the general cultural and socio-economic status of the groups. Responses to this question revealed that only 21% ASU indicated they had travelled abroad compared to 79.6% GUC students. Furthermore, more than half of the ASU students who had travelled or lived abroad had travelled to Gulf countries, whereas GUC students showed greater much diversity in the places to which they had travelled; they indicated having been to the Gulf, to Europe, and to United States and Australia. Furthermore, as the GUC facilitates for the students an optional semester of study abroad in Germany, many of the students indicated that they had travelled to

Germany. Travel experience is taken as an indicator of a cultural and socioeconomic difference between the two groups, with the latter group being more advantaged.

4.2 Type of high school education as a variable under study.

One of the most important variables under study, and which (as far as the researcher knows) has not previously been an object of study in similar research on language attitude in the Arab world is the type of education the students had received prior to entering the university. One of the aims of the study was to determine the extent to which it affected the students' language attitudes. Thus, as part of the demographic data to be completed in the initial section of the questionnaire, the participants were required to indicate the type of end of high school certificate they had obtained. The majority of ASU students (99%) had obtained the national Thanawiya 'Amma end of high school certificate, while only one student (1%) had obtained the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE, generally referred to as the IG certificate). The GUC students, on the other hand, reflected much greater diversity in the type of high school certificates they had obtained: 42% had obtained the IG certificate, 29% the Thanawiya 'Amma, 23% the American Diploma and 6% the Abitur, German end of High school certificate. Thus, the majority of GUC students (71%) had studied for an international end of high school certificate, as opposed to only 1% of the ASU students. The two groups thus differed greatly in their pre-college type of education. Figures 1 and 2 below show the differences in the type of high school education obtained by the two groups of students.

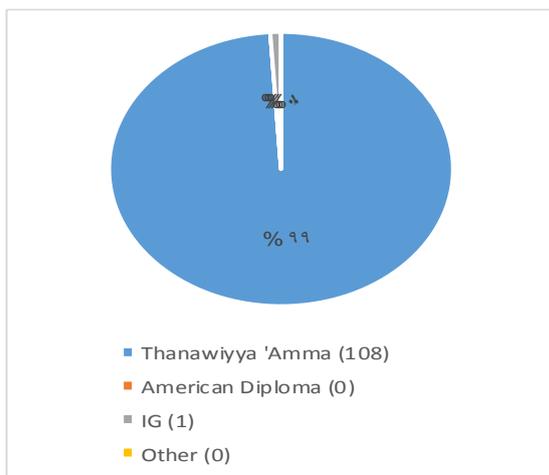


Figure 1: Type of end of High-School certificate obtained by ASU students

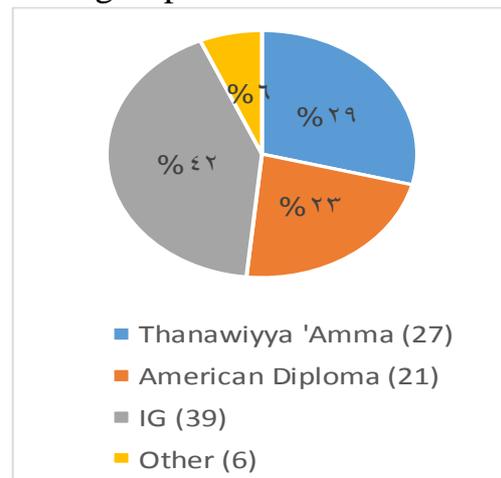


Figure 2: Type of end of High-School certificate obtained by GUC students

4.3 Instruments and data collection

Data for this study were collected by means of three instruments: an open-ended writing task, a questionnaire, and focus group interviews. (See Appendices A and B).

4.3.1 Open-ended writing task

The first instrument used to collect data for this study was an open-ended writing task. One hundred and five ASU students, and 102 GUC responded to the writing task. Of these four were excluded from the former group, and two from the latter as their responses were incomplete. Thus, the total number of ASU students responding to the writing task was 101, and the GUC students were 100. The students were requested to respond to prompts asking them to reflect on what MSA, ECA and English meant to them. The instructions were written in both Arabic and English, and students were informed that they could respond in either Arabic or English. (See Appendix A.) The open-ended writing task was administered a week prior to the questionnaire, towards the end of class time at both ASU and the GUC. The students spent 10-20 minutes on the task, with ASU students spending more time on the task, and also writing longer responses. The writing task was administered prior to the questionnaire so that the respondents would not be influenced by the content of the items on the questionnaire.

4.3.1.1 Method of analyzing the writing task

A corpus analysis of the content of the students' writing task was conducted using Sketch Engine (<https://www.sketchengine.co.uk/>). Responses for each of the three prompts given to the students: Classical Arabic to me is ..., Colloquial Arabic to me is ..., and English to me is ... were sorted according to the language chosen by the students, coded, counted, and then entered separately for each language and variety of language. The data were analyzed using Sketch Engine software which was used to generate a frequency list of all the words and lemmas (base word forms and all their derivatives), in addition to a concordance of the most frequently occurring words. The concordance allowed me to see the immediate context in which the word occurred, and another option in the software allowed me to see the entire paragraph. Because each entry was coded, I could go back and retrieve all the responses given by a particular student regarding the codes under study.

4.3.2 The questionnaire

The second instrument, the questionnaire, consisted of 84 questions addressing the three facets of attitude: beliefs, affect, and behavior. The first section of the questionnaire included eleven items addressing the demographic data of the respondents, such as age, number of years they had been studying English, type of end of high school certificate, and whether or not they had travelled abroad. The aim of the last question was to help determine the socio-economic status of the group as a whole, as students who had the opportunity to travel abroad are more likely to be more socio-economically privileged than those who had not. The second section included three questions requiring the students to rate their ability to understand, speak and write MSA, ECA, English and other languages in their repertoire. The term “FusHa” was used in the questionnaire to refer to MSA as this is the term the students are familiar with. Furthermore, most of them are not aware of the distinction between FusHa and MSA varieties, and would use the term “FusHa” to refer to both. (In discussing the results, however, I use the term MSA, as it is actually attitudes towards this variety which are investigated in the study.) The third section included 35 questions on attitudes towards MSA, ECA, English and code switching between English and Arabic. The questions in this section addressed beliefs and feelings towards the varieties and languages under study. Students had to indicate on a five-point scale the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with statements that covered two of the three aspects of attitude: cognition and affect, such as: (1) *Political and formal speeches in the Arab world should be in FusHa Arabic;* (4) *FusHa Arabic is important for preserving our cultural heritage;* (7) *More books should be published in ‘ammiyya Arabic;* (8) *A good knowledge of FusHa is important for getting a good job;* (9) *A good knowledge of English is important for getting a good job;* (19) *People who speak Arabic only are generally narrow minded;* (24) *I would like my children to have an English based education;* and (25) *people who speak in English in public do so to show off.* (Numbers refer to the number of the item on the questionnaire.)

The third section on the questionnaire included 15 items related to the third aspect of attitude, behavior. Students had to indicate the language(s) they used for specific tasks by choosing one or more of the following 6 options: *FusHa Arabic*, *‘ammiyya Arabic (ECA)*, *English*, *Franco-Arab (the writing of Arabic using English letters)*, *mixed Arabic and English*, and/or *another language*. This section included items such as: *The language(s) I express myself best in are ...*, *I text my friends in ...*, *I post /comment on Facebook in ...*, *I usually read books in ...*, *I listen*

to songs in ... , I would tell a joke in The questions were compiled based on previous studies, and the researcher's general observations of attitudes to language varieties in Egypt. (See appendix B for the questionnaire.)

Following the 84 items, space was provided for the students to add any comments regarding the questionnaire, or their feelings towards the varieties in their repertoire. The questionnaire was made available in two forms, a hard copy and an online Google form. The online version of the questionnaire was made available on a closed Facebook page of which the ASU students were members, and also on several closed Facebook pages visited by GUC students, and was posted by individuals known to me at the GUC (four students and two teaching assistants). The hard copy of the questionnaire took approximately 20 minutes to complete, while the online form took approximately 13 minutes to complete.

4.3.2.1 Method of analyzing the questionnaire data

The data of the questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS software version 2.0. In order to prepare the data for analysis by making it readable for the software, the responses of the participants were recorded on an excel sheet. Demographic variables were identified by numerical values. For example, ASU students were recorded as 1, and GUC students as 2. The types of end of high-school certificates were also identified by numerical values as follows: Thanawiyya 'Amma- 1, International General Certificate of Secondary Education- 2, American Diploma- and 3 other. Values on the scales ranging from 0 to 5 for language proficiency, and 0-4 for affect and behavior were recorded with the numerical values (0-5) on the questionnaire. The data were analyzed in order to obtain the mean, and standard deviation for each item on the questionnaire for each of the two groups, and then compared across groups. After that, the items on the questionnaire were grouped according to the specific attitude that they targeted. Thus, for example, the following items were grouped together as reflecting a positive attitude towards MSA: (numbers refer to the number of the item on the questionnaire provided in Appendix A) (1) *Political and formal speeches in the Arab world should be in FusHa Arabic*, (3) *It is important for all Arabs to learn FusHa Arabic*, (4) *FusHa Arabic is important for preserving our cultural heritage*, (17) *Schools need to pay more attention to teaching FusHa Arabic*, and (22) *I would like my children to be able to read FusHa Arabic books*. Then the mean, standard deviation, and statistical significance of the differences between the two groups of students was calculated.

In both versions of the questionnaire, students were informed of the nature of the study and were told that by participating, they would be

providing the researcher with valuable data. They were also informed that participation was voluntary, and that participating in the study or refraining from doing so would not in any way affect their grades. Students were also informed that providing their names was optional, and that if they wished to participate in a follow-up interview they could leave their contact information.

A Spearman correlation coefficient was conducted on all the participants (223 students) to see whether a correlation existed between, on the one hand, the type of high school education, and, on the other, positive attitude towards MSA, positive attitude towards English, and pride in Egyptian and Arab identity.

4.3.3. Focus group interviews

The third method of data collection was focus group interviews. After the students completed the questionnaire, and after I had examined their responses, I conducted interviews with volunteers in focus groups from each of the two universities to discuss some of the issues probed in the questionnaire and the general responses to them. I also wanted to find out if there was anything in the questionnaire on which the students wanted to comment. Interviews were conducted with three groups of ASU students on campus, and two groups of GUC students, off campus, a total of 31, and ranged in duration from 20-45 minutes. All the interviews were recorded with the students' consent. The interviews were analyzed quantitatively for content. The main topics were identified and the students' different attitudes were noted.

5.0 Data Analysis: Results and discussion

In this section, I discuss the results of the data collected from the writing task, the questionnaire and the interviews. I begin with a discussion of the outcome of the writing task in terms of the language/variety chosen by the students and the significance of the choices they made. This is followed by a presentation and discussion of the results regarding language attitudes in the three sources of data.

5.1 Students' choice of code in completing the writing task

The aim of the writing task was to allow the students to freely reflect on what the varieties of Arabic and English meant to them, and, since they were given the choice to respond in either English or Arabic, the writing task also reflected their actual linguistic behavior when writing. The choice of code made by the students when responding was taken to indicate the language/variety in which they felt most at ease in

expressing themselves in writing, or that which they deemed appropriate for the situation.

The writing task, completed by 201 students from both universities, yielded quite interesting results regarding the students' attitudes and their actual behavior. More than half of the students in both universities chose to respond in English, with more GUC students (69%) choosing English than ASU Students (56.44%). Responses in Arabic to all three prompts ranked second, but were close to mixed Arabic/English responses. On the other hand, more ASU than GUC students responded to the three prompts in Arabic: 23.76% compared to 17% respectively. The variety of Arabic chosen was predominantly MSA. Only two ASU students used ECA, and they did so when discussing what ECA meant to them, while only one GUC student used ECA, also when reflecting on the colloquial variety. Some students wrote in both Arabic and English, choosing Arabic to write about what the Arabic varieties meant to them, and English when reflecting on what English meant to them. The choice of codes in their response shows the overriding effect of topic in dictating language choice.

Responses in both Arabic and English ranked third for both groups: 19.80% (20) of ASU students provided Arabic and English responses compared to 14% (14) of GUC students. The four ASU students (out of a total of 20) who used ECA, did so when reflecting on the colloquial variety. On the other hand, the 14 GUC students who wrote in Arabic wrote in MSA to reflect on both ECA and MSA. This suggests that students are inclined to write in MSA when writing on paper in a university setting, regardless of the informality of the situation. Despite the fact that the students were explicitly told that the task was not related to any course work, they still deemed MSA appropriate for the situation despite the proclaimed difficulty of this variety for them. A different context or setting would probably result in different language choices. For example, had the writing task been administered online, it is quite likely that a greater number would have chosen the colloquial variety, Franco-Arab or codeswitching. For this reason the writing task was to be completed on paper.

As English is the medium of instruction for these bilingual students, it did not come as a surprise that more than half of them chose to respond in English. However, a far greater number of GUC students (69%) chose English compared to (56.44%) of the ASU students. This could be due to the impact of the international high-school education as 71% of GUC students held an international end of high-school certificate compared to only 1% of ASU students. Furthermore, English is the language of all written communication between GUC students, their

professors, and the administration. Conversely, the international school education is probably also the main reason that fewer GUC than ASU students (17% compared to 24%) chose to respond to the questions in Arabic, despite the fact that ASU students are English majors in their senior years, whereas none of the GUC students were English majors. Thus, it appears that the type of school education, international vs national, may be more influential than either the major or the medium of instruction in college in determining the language the students feel most comfortable using. By the time the students reach college level, their language habits in both speaking and writing are well established. Despite the fact that students who study for an international end of high-school certificate in Egypt are required to study Arabic and religious studies (in Arabic) as part of their school education, neither one of these subjects counts towards the GPA, and only a passing grade is required. Accordingly, students studying for an international certificate generally do not exert much effort in studying either Arabic or religious studies, and are therefore generally less proficient in MSA than students who study for a national certificate. Furthermore, Arabic is a required subject for ASU students in all four years of college but not for GUC students. Figure 3 below provides a comparison of the students' choice of language in responding to the writing task.

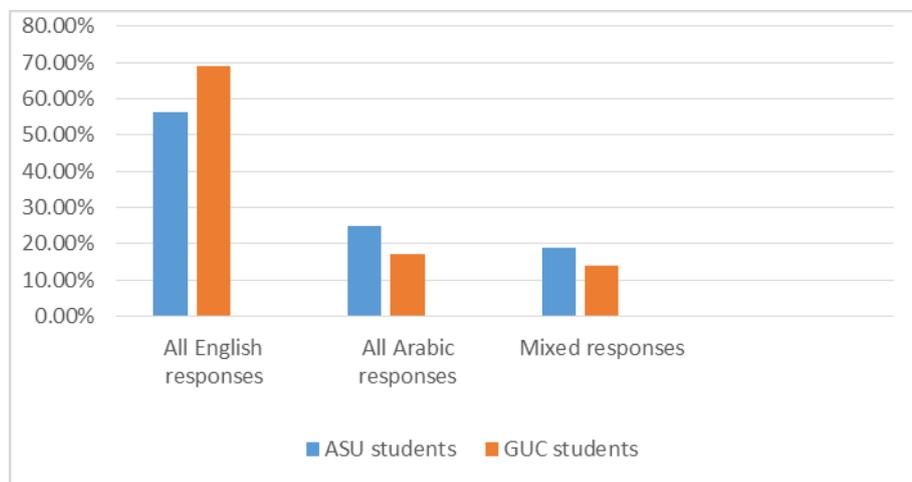


Figure 3. Comparison of students' choice of code in completing the writing task

5.2 Attitudes towards MSA

5.2.1 Attitudes towards MSA as reflected in the writing task

5.2.1.1 *Admiration for MSA*

To convey their admiration for MSA, ASU students described it as beautiful (10), sophisticated (4), important (5), rich (4) and impressive. Many also related it to the Holy Qur'an and religion (16). As mentioned above, the average university student would not generally distinguish between MSA and the classical variety of the Qur'an and would refer to both as "FusHa." (Numbers in parenthesis refer to the number of times the word was used in the data.) Likewise, GUC students described MSA using positive adjectives such as important (12), beautiful (7), expressive, (4) and amazing (2). Tables 1 and 2 below display the concordance generated by Sketch Engine for the words *BEAUTIFUL* and *SOPHISTICATED* as used by GUC and ASU students respectively.

Table 1

Concordance of the Word BEAUTIFUL in GUC Students' Reflections on MSA

| | | | |
|----|---|------------------|---|
| 1. | single most important language there is.) It is | beautiful | And complex. However, it is sometimes a |
| 2. | similar and confusing. Yet that's what makes it | beautiful | and special. Just another way of |
| 3. | language cannot be more stressed upon as it's a | beautiful | language, yet very hard to learn. (especially |
| 4. | works of art. Classical Arabic is a very | beautiful | expressive language. Unlike English, for |
| 5. | between Arabs with different accents. 1/248. A | beautiful | but a quite difficult language with a great |
| 6. | I can learn it very well and be fluent in it. It is | beautiful | . Sadly, it isn't used this era at all. My |

Table 2

A Sample of the Concordance of the Word BEAUTIFUL in ASU Students' Written Reflections on MSA

| | | | |
|----|--|-----------|--|
| 1 | to speak it correctly. In my opinion, it is a very | beautiful | language and the language I respect the most, |
| 2 | Classical Arabic is very fascinating and a | beautiful | language. Songs and poetry written in |
| 3 | conferences and TV programs. Such a | beautiful | and elegant language. It is so much difficult to |
| 4 | grammatically right. But I think it is the most | beautiful | language in the world. Classical Arabic to |
| 5 | words. Quite hard to spell, but it has really | beautiful | sounds. Easy to pronounce. A sacred |
| 6 | our civilization from being vanished. It is a | beautiful | language that's why a lot of people want to learn |
| 7 | about myself. I almost do not use it. A | beautiful | language that old books are written with. For |
| 8 | nothing about. This language is impressive and | beautiful | . I don't use classical Arabic at all as I |
| 9 | speak it correctly. In my opinion, it is a very | beautiful | language and the language I respect get fair |
| 10 | Classical Arabic is very fascinating and a | beautiful | language. In songs it is expressive language among all |

The concordance shows that both groups of students admired and respected MSA for its beauty and elegance both in its written and spoken forms. Moreover, they described it as a “sacred” language due to its association with the Holy Qur’an, and also associated it with the past, with tradition and with literature.

Students who responded to the writing task in Arabic in both universities, expressed the same positive attitudes regarding MSA. Their responses included statements such as the following by ASU students:

هي روح اللغة العربية بوجه عام بدونها سنتهدم حياتنا فلولا اللغة لضاعت الحضارة (العربية)

(It is the essence of the Arabic language in general. Without it our lives would collapse. Had it not been for the Arabic language our (Arab) civilization would be lost). Other students associated it with the Holy Qur'an and Arab identity saying:

هي لغة القرآن الكريم، لغة وطني العربي الذي أعتز به كما أعتز بهذه اللغة

(It is the language of the Holy Qur'an, the language of my Arab nation which I cherish just as I cherish this language.)

هي لغة القرآن الكريم، اللغة الأم لذلك أجد فيها روحاً وقوة تعبير أكثر من أي لغة أخرى.

(It is the language of the Holy Qur'an, [my] mother tongue. Due to this I find in it a spirit and power of expression more than any other language.)

اللغة العربية الفصحى تمثل التراث والهوية العربية.

(FusHa Arabic represents Arab heritage and identity.)

Whether they responded in English or Arabic, both groups of students expressed positive towards MSA. The findings of this research regarding students' positive attitudes towards MSA, describing it as beautiful and rich, and associating it with the Holy Qur'an are in line with the findings of previous research. (See for example Albirini, 2016; Ennaji, 2007; Sawaii, 1994; and Shaaban and Ghaith, 2002, among others.)

5.2.1.2 Ambivalent attitudes towards MSA

Both groups of students' expressed ambivalent attitudes towards MSA. On the one hand, they revered and admired this variety of Arabic; on the other hand, they acknowledged its difficulty for them and even its inaccessibility. Thus, in many of their responses, they express somewhat contradictory feelings regarding this variety. For examples ASU students described it as beautiful, but also as difficult (23), hard (21), complicated (4) complex (3) and neglected (3). One student wrote: *I don't use classical Arabic at all as I find it **very difficult**. However, **I like reading** Arabic books, making the distinction between productive and receptive competence in this variety. Furthermore, the dichotomy between "find[ing] it very difficult" and yet "lik[ing]" to read in it is apprent. Yet another student expressed the same ambivalence when she wrote: "It is also **hard** for me to understand every word but still it is **majestic** and I can't but have a **sense of belonging** when I hear it."* Also, examples 3, 5, 7 and 8 in table 2 reflect this ambivalence, where students refer to its beauty, but also difficulty, or admit to not using it, but still appreciating its beauty.

Like their ASU counterparts, GUC students also had mixed attitudes towards MSA. They described it as follows: *"It's a **hard yet fascinating** language, it's more meaningful than any other language. It's rich and deep."* Another student described it as *"one of **richest** and **most expressive** languages out there, but it is very **difficult** to learn."* The

students were well aware of this dichotomy and despite the beauty they saw in it, they saw it as difficult (12), hard (13), complicated (9) complex (5), and challenging (2). Others went to extremes in describing the Arabic language, whether in referring to its beauty or complexity as in the following statements: “it is the *single* most important language there is,” “one of the **most complicated** languages in the **world**.” Likewise, another wrote “To me it is the **toughest language** from [sic] the 3 languages that I speak.” The following student sums up his ambivalent attitude towards MSA as follows:

It is **beautiful** and **complex**. However, it is sometimes a **struggle** to read or write in classical Arabic as we are very used to speaking in colloquial Arabic. It is sometimes **very hard** to understand with several words being very similar and confusing. Yet that’s what makes it **beautiful and special**.

His words shed light on the reason behind most students’ preference for the use of English in written communication, and, more specifically on the reason behind the majority choosing English to respond to the writing task, because, as he says, writing in Arabic for them is “a struggle.” It also explains why some even prefer to speak in it.

Interestingly, the four GUC students who responded in Arabic in the writing task did not refer to the difficulty of Arabic, suggesting that they did not find it so, and hence their choice to use it. As for the ASU students who responded in Arabic, they did refer to the difficulty of the language, but, in most cases (75% of the time), this was mitigated by their simultaneous appreciation of the language. One student writes:

أعتبرها من أصعب اللغات وأفتخر أني أتكلم لغة من أصعب اللغات.

(It is one of the most difficult languages and I am proud to speak one of the most difficult languages.)

The difficulty of the MSA is not regarded negatively, but rather as a positive attribute of the language to be proud of. Another student also sees the difficulty of MSA in positive light when she says:

ولكنها صعبة لأنها لغة عظيمة وفريدة من نوعها

(but it is difficult because it is a great and unique language.)

Because she sees the MSA variety’s difficulty as a result of its greatness and uniqueness, it is not as a drawback. For these students there is no ambivalence, but a reconciliation of what might appear to be contradictory features of MSA Arabic. At times, however, the students’ contradicted themselves. For example one student wrote:

اللغة العربية بالنسبة لى هى لغة الشعر و الأدب فقط

(The Arabic language is to me the language of poetry and literature only).

Despite the fact that the student affirms that MSA is the language of poetry and literature only [emphasis added], he/she chooses to respond in MSA in a piece of writing which is neither poetry nor literature. Furthermore, it is clearly voluntary non-academic work, suggesting that writing on paper in a classroom setting triggers in the minds of the students the use of MSA.

5.2.1.3 Regret over inadequate competence in MSA

The students' ambivalence regarding MSA: on the one hand, their reverence and admiration for it, and on the other, its difficulty for them which leads to their avoidance of it, is accompanied by a sense of regret that they are not more competent in this variety. One ASU student justifies her inadequate competence in MSA saying:

A language **I should've perfected and excelled in a long time ago**, but due to many social and political aspects, like the environment I am being raised in, **the schools I was admitted into and the government's general disregard to proper education and meaningful methods and lessons**, I now resort to another **language that is not my own** to eloquently express myself on paper; a fact that **I am sorry to regret [sic] and saddens me deeply**. Many of my goals revolve around reading more Arabic novels, writing proper grammar to not be ridiculed (the older generation is harsh in that sense.) (My emphasis)

The students' sense of regret is apparent in the use of the present perfect tense of the modal "should" to express past unfulfilled obligation. However, she exonerates herself by providing the reasons behind her poor proficiency in Arabic. She blames it on many factors, such as the effect of "the environment" she was raised in, and the school she attended. She also reflects on the inadequacy of Arabic textbooks and methods of teaching Arabic. The same sense of regret at not being more proficient in MSA Arabic is echoed in the following statements made by GUC students "I wish I can [sic] learn it and be fluent in it," "I would very much love to use it on a daily basis," and "A language that has been dying recently and we should try to save it. It is also my mother tongue." The fear of losing the variety, which many of the students see in danger of being replaced by ECA, is echoed in the writings of those who wrote in Arabic. As one of them, writing in MSA says:

الفصحى هي الأساس ولا بد من تعلمها مهما تكلف الأمر.

(FusHa is the original (variety) and we have to learn it, whatever the cost.)

The students' responses here are consistent with those of Reigh (2012) who also reports finding that students at the American University in Cairo expressed regret at not being more competent in MSA.

5.2.2 Attitudes towards MSA in the questionnaire data

Results of a group of statements on the questionnaire gauging positive attitudes towards MSA corroborated the results of the writing task. Both groups of students expressed a positive attitude towards MSA, and wanted to maintain it as the language of writing and formal speeches. Statements probing the students' positive attitudes to MSA included the following: (numbers refer to the number of each item on the questionnaire in Appendix B) (1). *Political and formal speeches in the Arab world should be in FusHa Arabic* (3). *It is important for all Arabs to learn FusHa Arabic* 4. *FusHa Arabic is important for preserving our cultural heritage* (22). *I would like my children and grandchildren to be able to read FusHa Arabic* (35). *I prefer poetry in FusHa Arabic to poetry in 'ammiyya Arabic.* (As mentioned above, the term *FusHa* was used in the questionnaire as this is the term the students are familiar with, and would generally use when referring to MSA.) On a five-point scale ranging from 0- (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree), ASU students scored a mean of 3.06, while GUC students scored a close mean of 3.01 on these statements. Both groups of students, thus, showed that they valued MSA and wanted their own children to be proficient in it, and future generations to use it.

Despite their positive attitude towards MSA, all students were aware of the greater instrumental value of English in obtaining a job compared to MSA. Thus, in response to the two statements: (8). *A good knowledge of MSA is important for getting a good job*, and (9); *A good knowledge of English is important for getting a good job*, ASU students rated the two statements 2.36 and 3.48 respectively. GUC students, however, perceived the instrumental value of MSA even lower than their ASU counterparts, giving it a rating of 1.96 compared to 2.36, and, conversely, rated English slightly higher in its importance in the job market than their ASU counterparts, 3.59 compared to 3.48.

5.3 Attitudes towards ECA

5.3.1 Attitudes towards ECA as reflected in the writing task

The attitudes of both groups of students towards colloquial Arabic contrasted with their attitudes toward classical Arabic. Thus, while the most frequently used adjectives to describe MSA were *difficult* and *hard*, the most frequently occurring lemma with ECA, was *easy*, used 25 and

19 times by ASU and GUC students respectively. Other frequently occurring lemmas were: (numbers refer to ASU and GUC students respectively): speak: 20, 19; communicate: 19, 15, daily: 7, 13; and everyday: 17, 12. The intensifier *very* occurred with the adjectives accurate, practical, slang and also the expression “dear to my heart.”

While some ASU Students conceded that ECA does not have the inherent value of MSA, they still had positive feelings towards it. For example, one student wrote: “*Slang Arabic is not interesting as the classic one, words are not full of meaning like the classic one, but it is easier [sic] and faster.*” Another wrote: “*The language I use daily to communicate with nearly everyone. I feel way more comfortable in using it more than classical one.*” They also acknowledged using it in texting and chatting, describing it as not only the easiest, but also the most convenient variety to use for communication. Table 4 shows the concordance for the lemma *EASY*:

Table 4
*A Sample of the Concordance of the Lemma EASY in ASU Students’
Written Reflections on ECA*

| | | | |
|---|---|----------------|---|
| 1 | makes communication way easier. It is more | easier | than classic but new word entered it have led |
| 2 | lose its use in People's utterances. It is | easier | than the classical Arabic. It also sometimes |
| 3 | also sometimes expose funny utterances. It is | easier | to be understood for example there are many |
| 4 | of Classical Arabic, nonetheless, it is way | easier | . It is the greatest for me as I like hearing |
| 5 | or even classical Arabic at all. It is very | easy | to speak because I was brought up with everyone |
| 6 | some changes in the mother language to make it | easier | for them in communication. The classical |
| 7 | need illustration or clarification. The | easiest | and fastest musical way of speaking in my |
| 8 | is used by the majority of the Egyptians. It is | easier | than the classical Arabic. The language I |
| 9 | , street and everywhere actually. It is also | easier | to communicate in CA than in classical Arabic. |

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| | | | |
|-----------|--|----------------|--|
| 10 | colloquial Arabic, I feel it is different. | easy | , expressive, common, full of new expressions |
| 11 | , common, full of new expressions | easy | to express with, handy and the most used |
| 12 | language among people and all classes. | easy | to use, lively and modern. An easier |
| 13 | Easy to use, lively and modern. An | easier | language to use as compared to classical Arabic |
| 14 | in most of the online conversation as it is | easier | and commonly used in society. I find it more |
| 15 | use it for talking and texting. 57/2 It's the | easiest | way to speak or express what I feel or what I want |

On the other hand other students expressed negative sentiments regarding

ECA, and saw it as inferior to MSA. An investigation of the collocates of the particle **not** revealed that while students found it easy, they had reservations about its being used in formal writing and even in advertising. Three students described it as

“vulgar,” as in the following examples: “I think that it is somehow vulgar and it *is not suitable for formal or academic writing.*” Others described it as a degenerate form of MSA and a deviation from what they described as the elevated original variety of Arabic, MSA. This finding is consistent with most previous research on attitudes towards the colloquial varieties of Arabic. (See Bentahila, 1983; Ennaji, & Sawaii, 1994, among others).

The close relation between language and identity is apparent in the students’ written reflections. Interestingly, some students did not see ECA as a marker of identity the way they saw MSA, or as they refer to it, FusHa Arabic. One student wrote: “*It is the language we communicate with, but it reflects how we tend to forget about our language that represents our identity.*” What he refers to as “our language” is obviously FusHa (and MSA) as it is the one which is generally regarded as “forgotten” and the one which is seen as the “original” language. Another student, on the other hand, associated identity with Arabic, regardless of the variety, and placed it in opposition to English and Franco-Arab. She wrote: “*Sometimes I have a guilt feeling towards my identity so I try to write in colloquial Arabic in chatting and then I return to Franco because for me it’s a way easier.*” What is associated with Arab identity here is not a particular variety, but, rather, the use of Arabic alphabet in writing, as opposed to Roman letters, regardless of the variety chosen.

5.3.2 Attitudes towards ECA in the questionnaire data

The items on the questionnaire which probed attitudes to ECA, investigated both positive and negative attitudes. Positive attitudes to ECA were probed by statements such as (2) “*‘ammiyya Arabic should be used in newspaper articles and broadcast news,*” (6) “*Schoolbooks may be written in ‘ammiyya as well as FusHa Arabic,*” (7). “*more books should be published in ‘ammiyya Arabic.*” These three items were designed to gauge the students’ willingness to see MSA, which they described in the written task as *difficult, hard* and *complicated*, replaced by the variety they described as *easy*. The mean response for these items was 1.30 for ASU students and 1.34 for GUC students, showing that students in both universities did not want to see MSA replaced by ECA despite the fact that they found this variety difficult for them, and despite their proclaimed lack of proficiency in Arabic as expressed in the writing task. Thus, their attitude towards ECA in this respect is negative.

On the other hand, both groups rated the following statement regarding ECA (30) “*I enjoy listening to songs in Egyptian Arabic*” (designed to measure positive attitude to ECA) higher than the items 2, 6, and 7 above: the mean for this statement was 2.64 for ASU students and 2.46 for GUC students. Nevertheless, the score is below that of agreement; as the value for agreement is 3, and for strongly agree is 4. The responses then are between neutral (2.0) and agree (3.0). This relatively low rating is explained in the next section regarding behavior, where in response to the statement (46) *I usually listen to songs in ...*, for which the students were required to indicate a variety (see Appendix B), the variety they selected most was English. It was chosen by 86.23% ASU students, and 86.1% GUC students, this was followed by ECA, chosen 67.88% and 46.5% of By ASU and GUC students respectively. The variety chosen least for listening to songs was MSA, chosen by 33.94% ASU students, and only 25.7% GUC students. The results suggest that the students have a more positive attitude towards ECA when it is used for entertainment, but even ECA is being pushed aside by English in the students’ consumption of popular culture, and specifically films songs. Another finding is that while ASU students listen to songs in both English and ECA, GUC students clearly lean more towards popular culture in English as fewer than half listen to songs in ECA. While a large number of ASU students consume popular culture in English, a relatively large number still enjoy and consume popular culture in their vernacular too. Again in this case, the effect of an international education in shaping the cultural taste of the students in both universities is evident.

Negative attitudes to ECA were gauged by the students’ responses to the following two statements (11.) *‘ammiyya Arabic is not suitable for*

writing about serious matters,” (21) “Publishing books in ‘ammiyya Arabic leads to the decline of FusHa Arabic”. The mean rating for both these statements was as 2.59 by ASU students and 2.75 by GUC students, suggesting that GUC students leaned towards agreeing with these statements slightly more than ASU students. The difference, however, is very slight, but it reflects that, regardless of the type of education, students do not regard ECA in a particularly positive light and regard it only as a variety for everyday interaction and consumption of Egyptian popular culture. The students’ discussions in the focus group interviews (see section 5.8 below) indicate that they are not all in agreement regarding the increased use of the colloquial in published books. Some enjoy reading such books while others oppose the practice of publishing in colloquial Arabic altogether and see it as threatening to MSA and FusHa.

5.4 Attitudes towards English

5.4.1 Attitudes towards English as reflected in the writing task

Results of the corpus analysis of the students' writing task show that the students in both groups expressed a very positive attitude towards English and even a close affinity with it, such that they see it as a part of who they are. Furthermore, this was not only true of those who responded in English, but even those who chose to respond in Arabic. Students who responded in English justified this by pointing out that they did so mostly out of habit as their academic writing is mainly in English, and has been so throughout their school years. The words most frequently used by ASU students when discussing what English meant to them were: important, communicate, and express. Those responding in Arabic wrote similar statements, such as: *هذه اللغة أصبحت جزء من حياتنا بالنسبة لي هي اللغة الثانية* (*this language has become a part of our lives, to me it is a second language*); while another codeswitched between English and Arabic to say: *lifestyle أصبحت لي هي بالنسبة لي* (*to me it has become a lifestyle*). Another student, also writing in Arabic, described it as her “favorite language,” but interestingly did not choose it as a medium of expression when writing about it.

Likewise, the responses of ASU students who wrote in Arabic reflected a positive attitude towards English. One of the frequently occurring words was the function verb *أصبحت rasbaHat* (has become) generally followed by an adjective. An investigation of the adjectives following this word revealed the students’ awareness of the global, as well as local importance of the English language, and an acknowledgement of its widespread use both in their society and

internationally. Referring to its instrumental value in securing a job, one student wrote:

بل أصبحت شرط من شروط الحصول على وظيفة جيدة بل وأصبحت هي أهم من اللغة العربية الفصحى

(It has become quite an important pre-requisite for getting a good job; it has even become more important than the Arabic language [in this respect]).

Just as the students related Arabic to their identity, they also see English as part of who they are. The most powerful expression relating English to identity was one that came from an ASU student who wrote:

The English language to me is *the other half of my identity*. It is a step to reach my dreams and desires. Elevates [sic] me from others and make [sic] me feel distinguished. A fun to learn [sic] and give [sic] a sense of elegance to anything read or written. (Emphasis added)

Her words reflect her sentiments that the English language for her is more than a means of communication, or an important prerequisite to achieving her goals, rather it is part of her dual identity (despite her lack of proficiency as the errors in her written performance disclose). Furthermore, her affective ties to the language are apparent in her belief that the English language has intrinsic power to endow anything in which it is expressed with “elegance.”

As for the GUC students’ written responses, the most frequently occurring lemmas related to English were speak (32), communicate (24), easy (22) use (18) and the words express (10) and talk (5). These lemmas and words are identical to those the students used when reflecting on what ECA means to them; however, the collocations are different. When reflecting on what English means to them, the above words collocated with *world*, *worldwide*, *global*, *dominant*, *important* and *different countries*. For example, the lemmas *speak* and *communicate* appeared in the following contexts when the students reflected on English:

It is essential in order to *speak* and *understand* everyone around *the world*.

It is the world’s first language and *the most spoken* one *worldwide*. It helps people from *different countries to communicate* with each other.

It is the easiest language to learn and to *communicate* and we are in need of it in our *career jobs*.

Just as in the case of the ASU students, the GUC students’ responses reflected their awareness of the global importance of English, especially on the job market, and, like their ASU counterparts, they went beyond this to voice their preference for English in written communication and

also their emotional attachment to it. We can see this in the following statements:

It is my main tool for written and often times **spoken communication**

I find English more convenient to **communicate** with my friends specially while texting

One of the **easiest** ways to **communicate**

I prefer using it especially in writing as I can **express** my feelings and thoughts **easier**

It is an interesting language and I **love** to speak and **express** it

It is the easiest for me to understand things and **express** myself **better than in Egyptian or Fos7a Arabic.**”

Table 5 below provides a sample of the concordance generated by Sketch Engine for the word “express” in the writing of GUC students.

Table 5
*A Sample of the Concordance of the Word EXPRESS in GUC Students’
Written Reflections on English*

| | | | |
|----|--|------------------------|--|
| 1 | I prefer using it especially in writing as I can | <i>express</i> | my feelings and thoughts easier. I use English |
| 2 | interesting, language and I love to speak and | <i>express</i> | it. It is easy to learn and speak and also easy to |
| 3 | for a foreigner. To me, I find it much easier to | <i>express</i> | my thoughts and opinions using the English |
| 4 | learning their language but also fluently | <i>expressin g</i> | ourselves through oratory and written medium |
| 5 | Nabil). The language that makes me best | <i>express</i> | myself. I can voice my opinion and express my |
| 6 | best express myself. I can voice my opinion and | <i>express</i> | my feelings in English. Second language |
| 7 | tenses. But for me it is the best language I can | <i>express</i> | with. An easy language that I can express |
| 8 | express with. An easy language that I can | <i>express</i> | many things using it and a language of all our |
| 9 | | <i>express</i> | myself. It is easy and fun to use it. The English |
| 10 | A second language, a resort when I can't | <i>express</i> | something in Arabic. A simple language |

The GUC students' responses in Arabic reflected much the same attitudes. The words which most frequently collocated with the English language were: عالمية (international) and تطور (development).

5.4.2 Attitudes towards English as reflected in the questionnaire

The results of the questionnaire data revealed that the two groups also showed comparable attitudes towards English. Both ASU and GUC students viewed English positively and rated it quite high in terms of its instrumental value in getting a job. It was rated 3.48 by ASU students and 3.59 by GUC students. The overall rating of English (gauged by a group of statements designed to measure affective and cognitive attitudes towards English), however, was not as high as expected. The following group of statements: (12). *People who Know English well are admired;* (18) *People who have a good knowledge of English are generally open-minded;* (24). *I would like my children to have an English based education;* (34) *I would spend money to improve my knowledge of English;* were given an overall rating of 2.80 by ASU students, and 2.73 by GUC students (between neutral and agree). It is interesting that the overall positive cognitive and affective attitude to English was lower than the overall positive cognitive and affective attitude towards MSA: 2.80 compared to 3.06 for ASU students, and 2.73 compared to 3.01 for GUC students. It is also remarkable that the GUC students did not give English a higher overall rating than ASU students in this respect, despite what one might expect, and that both gave comparable overall positive ratings to MSA.

5.4.3 Attitudes towards English and Codeswitching in the questionnaire data

It is, however, regarding attitudes towards codeswitching where the two groups of students differed significantly. ASU students regarded codeswitching less favorably than GUC students. The statement: (29) *I don't mind people mixing English and Arabic when they talk to me* was rated 2.86 by ASU students but, 3.21 by GUC students, reflecting a significantly more positive attitude towards codeswitching and a higher tolerance for this linguistic behavior than ASU students ($p .012$). The difference between the responses of the two groups was significant on the 0.01 level. (See table 6 below.) Nevertheless, neither group of students saw codeswitching as an indication of poor language skills. They both disagreed with the statement (15) *People who mix English and Arabic when speaking are probably not good speakers of either language*, with ASU students ranking it 1.29 and GUC students ranking it 1.40. (See table 7 below.) In other words, the students did not have a negative

attitude towards codeswitching. However, they had a slightly negative attitude towards ECA and use of English in public and in the media. Thus, in general, it can be said that both groups of students' attitudes towards varieties of Arabic and English were similar, and that they only differed statistically in their attitudes towards codeswitching. Table 6 below sums up the findings related to the students' rating of positive statements towards varieties of Arabic, English, and codeswitching, while table 7 sums up the findings related to their ratings of negative statements.

Table 6
T-test Values for Students' Rating of Positive Statements Regarding Varieties of Arabic, English and Codeswitching

| Variable | University | n | M | SD | p (2 tailed) |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----|-------------|--------------|--------------------|
| 1 Positive attitude to MSA | ASU | 109 | 3.06 | 0.409 | .413 |
| | GUC | 93 | 3.01 | 0.484 | |
| 2 Positive attitude to ECA | ASU | 109 | 1.63 | 3.316 | .920 |
| | GUC | 93 | 1.62 | 3.744 | |
| 3 Positive attitude to English | ASU | 109 | 2.80 | 3.291 | .328 |
| | GUC | 93 | 2.73 | 2.787 | |
| 4 Positive attitude to codeswitching | ASU | 109 | 2.86 | 1.013 | .012 |
| | GUC | 93 | 3.21 | 0.953 | |

Table 7
T test Values for Students' Rating of Negative Statements Regarding Varieties of Arabic, English and Codeswitching

| Variable | University | n | M | SD | p (2 tailed) |
|---|------------|-----|------|------|--------------------|
| 1 Negative attitude to MSA | ASU | 109 | .81 | .833 | .058 |
| | GUC | 93 | 1.05 | 1.00 | |
| 2 Negative attitude to ECA | ASU | 109 | 2.59 | 1.91 | .221 |
| | GUC | 93 | 2.75 | 1.66 | |
| 3 Negative attitude to use of English in public/media | ASU | 109 | 2.48 | 2.65 | .235 |
| | GUC | 93 | 2.33 | 2.46 | |
| 4 Negative attitude to codeswitching | ASU | 109 | 1.29 | 1.02 | .468 |
| | GUC | 93 | 1.40 | 1.22 | |

Another significant difference worth noting is that GUC students perceive themselves as significantly higher in proficiency of English than their ASU counterparts. It is also interesting that the rating of the statement “*people who speak Arabic only are generally narrow minded,*” was rated lower by ASU than by GUC students, suggesting the latter’s greater tolerance of monolingual speakers of Arabic. This is interesting, as ASU students probably interact with a greater number of monolingual speakers of Arabic in their everyday life than their GUC counterparts.

5.5 Correlation between different variables

One of the aims of this study was to investigate the correlation between certain variables. Specifically, I attempted to find out whether or not a correlation existed between the following:

1. the type of high-school certificate (national, vs international: American Diploma, IG and other) and a positive attitude to MSA, on the one hand, and a positive attitude to English, on the other. (Positive attitudes to MSA and English are each measured by a group of questions on the questionnaire, as discussed above in section 4.3.2.)
2. the type of high-school education (national vs. international) and sense of pride in Egyptian and Arab identity?
3. a positive attitude to MSA and a sense of pride in Egyptian and Arab identity.

To find out the correlation between the variables under study, a 2-tailed Pearson Correlation Coefficient test was conducted on the entire population of the 223 students who participated in the study. The reason for including all those who responded to the questionnaire, even those who were not enrolled in either ASU or GUC, or those who were enrolled in ASU but English was not the medium of instruction, is that the variables under investigation were not related to the university the students were enrolled in, or to the medium of instruction. The main object of the test was to investigate the relationship between the type of end of high-school certificate and language attitude. Hence, a one-way Anova test was used to find the relationship between the type of high-school education and positive attitudes towards English and MSA.

The test produced the following results. In response to the first question, regarding the relationship between type of high-school education and a positive attitude to MSA, it was found that there were differences between the mean responses of the groups of students studying for each type of certificate. (See tables 8a and 8b). The results suggest that there is a correlation between the type of high-school

certificate and attitude to MSA. The mean score for positive attitudes to MSA is 3.07 for the National certificate holders, 3.13 for American Diploma holders, and 3.20 for Abitur holders. IG holders, on the other hand, scored much lower: 2.85, indicating that the attitude of those who studied for an IG certificate towards MSA is not as positive as that of the students who studied for a national certificate, or those who studied for an American Diploma, or the German Abitur.

Table 8a
Mean Scores for Positive Attitude to MSA by National vs International High-school Certificate Holders

| Type of high-school certificate | n | M | SD |
|---------------------------------|-----|-------------|------|
| National (Thanawiyya 'ama) | 146 | 3.07 | 5.32 |
| American Diploma | 26 | 3.13 | 6.21 |
| IG | 43 | 2.85 | 6.85 |
| Abitur | 3 | 3.20 | 3.51 |
| Other | 5 | 3.07 | 6.12 |
| Total | 223 | 3.06 | 5.83 |

Table 8b
One Way Anova Showing a Significant Correlation between Type of High School Certificate and a Positive Attitude towards MSA

| Variable | Source of variance | Sum of Squares | df | Mean square | f | Sig. |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|------|-------------|
| Positive attitude to MSA | Between Groups | 338.36 | 4 | 84.59 | 2.56 | .040 |
| | Within Groups | 7213.39 | 218 | | | |
| | Total | 7551.75 | 222 | 33.09 | | |

On the other hand, the rating for positive attitude towards English was comparable among the groups regardless of the type of high-school certificate. National high-school certificate holders gave a mean rate of 2.82, American Diploma holders 2.69, IG holders 2.74 and Abitur holders 2.61. It is interesting that the national certificate holders had the highest rating for positive attitude to English; however, the differences in the rating between groups were not significant. Thus, it was found that no correlation existed between the type of high-school certificate and positive attitude to English. In fact, the majority of students had a positive attitude towards English regardless of the type of high-school education they received, and the university they were enrolled in. It is to be noted,

however, that the mean scores for the overall positive attitude to English was lower than that for the overall positive attitude to MSA. That all students had a positive attitude towards English reflects the symbolic capital accorded to English. (See also Haeri, 1996; and Reigh 2014.) With regard to the finding that MSA received the highest rating of all the codes investigated in this study, this is consistent with the findings of Albirini (2016), Chakrani, (2010), Ennaji 2007), Hussein and El-Ali (1989) and Saidat (2010) who also studied language attitudes in the Arab world.

As for the second research question regarding the correlation between the type of end of high-school certificate (national vs. international) and pride in Egyptian/Arab identity, results of the One Way Anova test showed that no correlation existed. Thus, receiving an international education had no effect on sense of pride in national identity for students in this sample. In fact, contrary to what might be presumed, students holding an international end of high-school certificate had a slightly higher mean for pride in Egyptian/Arab identity (3.06) than those holding a national end of high-school certificate (2.91). The difference, however, was not significant.

Table 9
One Way Anova Showing No Correlation between Type of High School Certificate and Sense of Pride in Egyptian/Arab Identity

| Variable | Source of variance | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | f | Sig. |
|---|--------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|------|--------------|
| Sense of pride in Egyptian and Arab Identity | Between Groups | 18.674 | 4 | 4.669 | .486 | 0.746 |
| | Within Groups | 2094.196 | 218 | 9.606 | | |

As for the third question regarding whether or not a correlation existed between a positive attitude to MSA, and pride in Egyptian and Arab identity, the results of the test showed that there is a strong correlation between these two variables, as indicated by the result of the 2-tailed Pearson Correlation Coefficient test as follows: $n=223$, $r = 0.469$, $p = 0.000$. (See table 10 below). Thus, students who had a more positive attitude towards MSA also had a higher sense of pride in their Arab identity.

Table 10
Strong Correlation Detected between a Positive Attitude to MSA and Pride in Egyptian/Arab Identity

| variable | | Pride in Egyptian/Arab identity |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Positive Attitude to MSA | Pearson correlation | .469** |
| | <i>p</i> sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 223 |

5.6 Self-reported linguistic behavior: Questionnaire results

The third section of the questionnaire was designed to probe the students' linguistic behavior. Students were asked to indicate the language/variety they would use to perform certain activities, and were told they could choose more than one code. The activities listed in this section were of two kinds: one type of linguistic behavior involving another participant, such as *I talk to my friends in ...*, *I text my friends in ...* *I chat online in* (See Appendix B). The other type was designed to probe the students' preferred personal use of variety/language(s) (as, for example, writing personal reflections, notes etc.) and the preferred language for entertainment and cultural consumption. In such cases no addressee is involved, and, thus, language choice is not influenced by the addressee. Statements of this type included: *I usually write my reflections in ...* *I listen to songs in ...* and *I watch films in*

In general, the students' linguistic behavior was similar for both groups with the exception of the reported use of codeswitching, where GUC students reported codeswitching with higher frequency than ASU students in a number of contexts. To complete the statement, *I talk to my friends in ...* ASU students indicated ECA the most: 86.29%, followed by English: 57%, and mixed Arabic and English (codeswitching): 34%. GUC students, likewise, indicated the use of ECA the most 74.30%, but with lower frequency than their ASU counterparts, and also closely followed by codeswitching: 70.30%, twice as frequently as ASU students. Only 25% GUC students indicated they would use English. , compared to 57.8% ASU students. The reason for the much lower reporting of the GUC students' use of English could be that they are aware that whenever they use English, they codeswitch. Thus 35.6% of the GUC students indicated that they would codeswitch compared to only 3.66% ASU students. As for the statement *I text my friends in ...*, the code most

frequently chosen by both groups of students was Franco-Arab, chosen by 69.72% ASU students and 87.10% GUC students. This was followed by English for both groups, chosen 66% by ASU students compared to 56.4% by GUC students. The slightly lower frequency of GUC students' choosing English could be explained by the fact that so many more GUC students chose codeswitching. (See figures 4 and 5 below). Only a very small percentage of GUC students, however, reported using MSA (2.0%), while a slightly higher percentage of ASU students (5.5%) reported doing so.

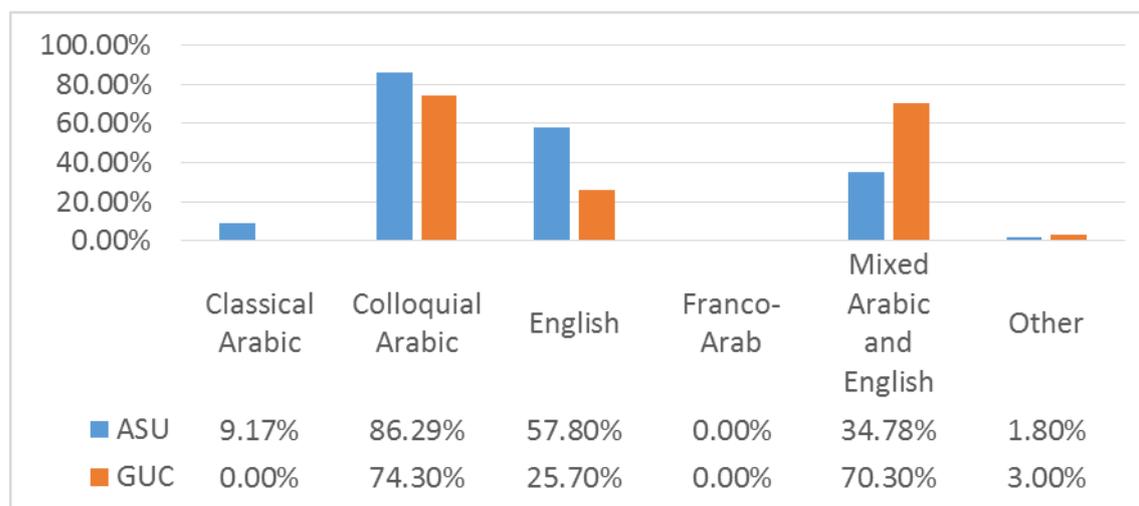


Figure 4

A comparison of the codes used by ASU and GUC students for talking to their friends

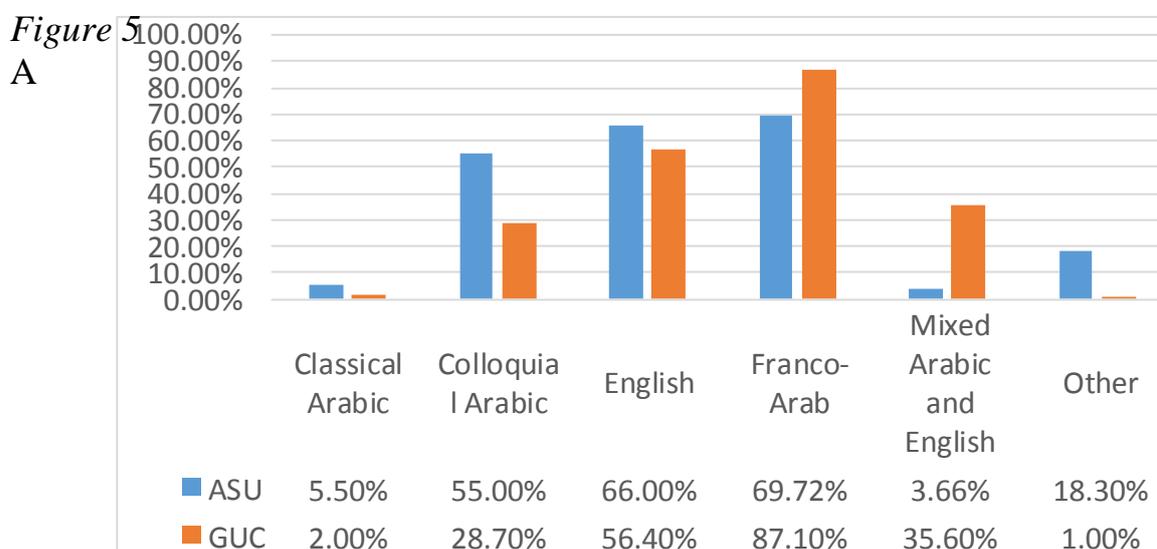


Figure 5
A

comparison of the codes used by ASU and GUC students for texting their friends

To post comments on Facebook, which, unlike sending SMS messages, is usually addressed to a greater number or recipients, the majority of ASU students (78.89%) indicated that they would use English. This was followed by ECA and Franco-Arab, both chosen by 58.71% of the students. On the other hand, most GUC students (81.20%) indicated they would use Franco-Arab to post on Facebook, followed by English (71.30%). Only a small number of students indicated that they would codeswitch: 14.67% for ASU students and 24.80 for GUC students respectively. Results suggest that when addressing a wider audience, as is the case on Facebook, these students select English as their favored code, probably in order to project a well-educated and cultured persona, and also as a status symbol . When making personal communications with their friends as in texting, Franco-Arab is selected most because the students are more at ease when writing, accordingly, less self-monitoring takes place. Also they perhaps focus on speed of communication when addressing their friends rather than the favorable image they project by using English. As with texting, only a very small number reported using MSA, with GUC reporting less than half as frequently as ASU students: 19.20% compared to 7.90%.

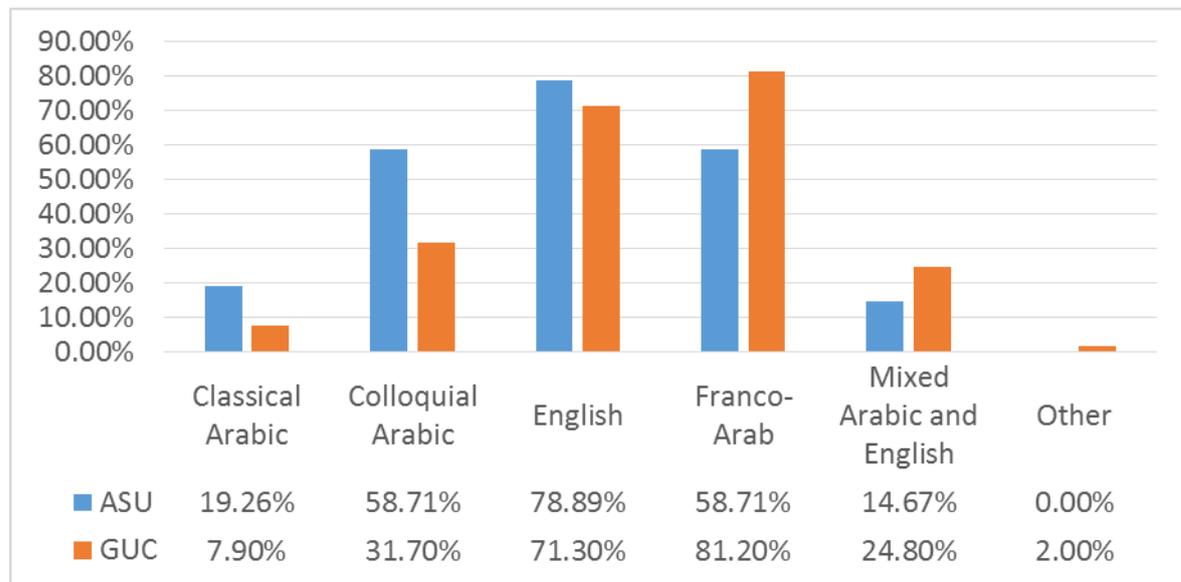


Figure 6

A comparison of the codes used by ASU and GUC students for posting on Facebook

However, it is the statement “*I would tell a joke in ...*” which resulted in the greatest similarity in the reported choice of code. Both groups of students chose ECA the most, and with comparable frequency: 91.74% for ASU students and 91.1% for GUC students. This was followed by English 36.69% and 32.7% for ASU and GUC students respectively. Yet, again, in this situation more GUC students chose mixed Arabic and English 16.80 % compared to 10.09 % by ASU students. But in general, it can be said that in a situation where they would feel relaxed, both groups of students chose ECA, their mother tongue.

Other questions regarding students’ personal linguistic behavior in the absence of an audience showed that there were slight differences in the students' reporting of their behavior. ASU students choose ECA more than GUC students, and GUC students consistently indicated codeswitching as a language choice with higher frequency than their ASU counterparts. Thus, for example, in completion of the statement: *I write my thoughts and reflections in...*, the code chosen most frequently was English for both groups 82.56% and 84.2% for ASU and GUC students respectively. ECA was indicated as a choice by 55.96% ASU students but only 18.80% GUC students. There was more similarity in the reported use of Franco Arab, used 28.44% and 33.70% by ASU and GUC students respectively. MSA ranked third, 22.01% by ASU students, but only 14.9 % by GUC students. Furthermore, as in other situations, more GUC students reported codeswitching (12.09%) than ASU students (2.75%), as shown in figure 7 below.

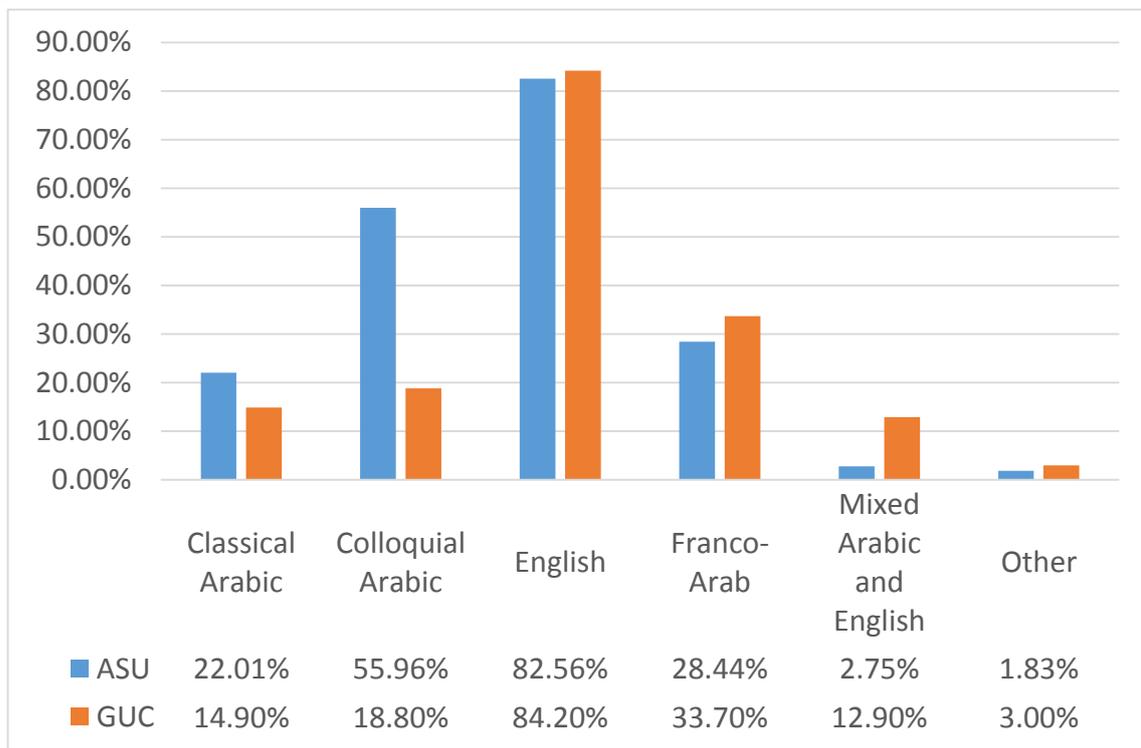


Figure 7

A comparison of the variety used by ASU and GUC students for writing their thoughts/ reflections

Despite a general similarity between the reported linguistic behavior of the two groups, there are marked consistent differences. GUC students tend to report a lower use of MSA than ASU students, suggesting that their frequent use of English and codeswitching is pushing MSA aside, and even ECA too, as in the case of the reported code used in writing personal reflections. ASU students use both MSA and ECA more than GUC students, which would be predictable, as they are less immersed in English than their GUC counterparts. What comes as a surprise, however, is the ASU students' self-reporting of their use of using English, as more ASU than GUC students reported using English in situations where there is an audience, as for example talking to their friends, texting messages and posting/commenting on Facebook. This could be interpreted as an exaggeration of their actual use of English in order to impress the researcher, or as a false impression which they have of their own linguistic behavior. It could be that they codeswitch, but are not really aware that they do, and so report it as use of English. GUC students also consistently reported higher use of codeswitching than ASU students.

The results support the results of the earlier set of questions in the questionnaire gauging the cognitive and affective facets of attitude. GUC students were more tolerant of codeswitching, which is also reflected in their self-reporting of codeswitching in their linguistic behavior. The reason for their greater tolerance could be that they are more aware of their language practices than their ASU counterparts, as codeswitching is a normal behavior for all bilinguals. Another reason is that they are more inclined than their ASU counterparts to use English in their speech (rather than ECA) and then inadvertently codeswitch. This could be due to the fact that English is the language of all interaction with the administration in the German university and with many non-Egyptian professors. Furthermore, the majority of GUC students are international school graduates, with higher English language proficiency than ASU bilingual students in the study. Within this community, codeswitching is the norm, the unmarked choice of interaction (See Myers Scotton, 1993), and the students' responses reflect that they are aware of their language behavior in this respect.

5.8 Analysis and discussion of the interviews

A qualitative content analysis of the interviews was attempted. Based on a careful analysis of the recorded interviews, I identified the issues on which the students appeared to agree in opinion, and, likewise, those that generated dispute and even at times heated debates amongst them. Prime among these issues were writing in Franco-Arab, preferred choice of code in communicating with friends, codeswitching between friends in private settings, and in public, and the use of ECA in literature.

With regard to writing in Franco-Arab, many of the students in both universities did not feel comfortable about writing in Franco-Arab on social media, whether on Facebook, Twitter or even private chatting. Nevertheless, they acknowledged doing so. They claimed that despite the fact that they did not really feel it was the right way to write their own language, they wrote in Franco-Arab because they found using an English keyboard easier than using an Arabic one. Most of their academic writing was in English, and therefore they had developed greater speed in using an English keyboard than an Arabic one. A number of ASU students related how they (often times together with friends) had made the conscious effort to stop writing in Franco-Arab and to write in either Arabic or English. One student said she felt she was insulting the Arabic language by writing it in English and made the effort to write Arabic using the Arabic alphabet. A GUC student said he was so used to doing it, he did not really give it serious thought. To him it had nothing to do with insulting the Arabic language; he was just interested in writing quickly,

especially when texting messages, and this for him was the fastest way to do so.

With regard to the preferred language of communication in general, ASU students said they would sometimes talk to one another in English, particularly when discussing academic work. However, while they said they felt more comfortable with ECA, it was the mixing of both Arabic and English which they found easiest. As for the GUC students, they acknowledged that their preferred language of written communication in general was English, some said it was also their preferred language of spoken communication. Commenting on his preference for English, one recent GUC graduate said that he felt comfortable in English because "it was the language in which [he] consumed popular culture," and served as a window to the outside world, allowing him to follow topics of interest to him in their original source. Accordingly, he also preferred to read novels and other books in English. Another student related the use of English to the discussion of academic work, other than that she would use either English or Arabic, with no preference for one or the other. Another GUC student said English was her preferred language of communication with her friends; however, it made her feel guilty that she found it easier to communicate in English rather than Arabic. She, therefore, planned to work on improving her Arabic skills, particularly MSA.

As for attitudes to codeswitching, most of the students were quite accepting of it, and did not mind either codeswitching themselves or when other bilinguals codeswitched when interacting with them. In fact, they stated that for them it was the norm, and the code which required "least effort." As for codeswitching in public, as with the questionnaire results, most GUC students were more accepting of it than their ASU counterparts. The latter associated the use of English in public space with showing off, with insecurity and pretentiousness. A number of them shared anecdotes of people who in an attempt to be perceived as knowledgeable in English would try to insert English words in their speech, but end up disclosing their ignorance of the language because they either misuse or drastically mispronounce the English words. They gave examples of waiters who would mispronounce dishes on menus and shop assistants who would refer to colors or clothes items in heavily accented English words in order to impress customers, or to assume an identity of an upper-class, well-educated person. One student expressed her sympathy for such individuals who, in an Arabic speaking country, felt they needed to include English in their speech in order to upgrade their actual social status. GUC students got into a similar debate in which they commented on how socially stratifying English had become in

Egyptian society, dividing people socio-economically and culturally too. (See also Haeri (1996) on the symbolic value of language in Cairo.)

On the other hand, the students' attitudes towards codeswitching between bilinguals, when interacting with other bilinguals, were more positive. Both groups readily acknowledged engaging in codeswitching as a natural way of communicating with their peers and in some cases, their family members. However, GUC students tended to be more accepting of both the use of English with one another and of codeswitching. Some ASU students saw it as pretentious to speak English only if the speakers were not discussing academic work, and saw it as much more natural for them to speak in ECA or codeswitch. Interestingly, the interviews with both groups revealed that ASU students tended to use ECA the most, but also codeswitched. However, they spoke minimally in English with one another or with me, contrary to their self-reported behavior: in the questionnaire section on language behavior, 57.8% had reported that they would use English when talking with friends. GUC students also spoke in ECA more than English, but they spoke in English more than their ASU counterparts, and also more fluently. However, it was codeswitching that was used most, with English generally being the matrix language.

A dispute of sorts arose between the students in both groups regarding whether more books should be published in colloquial Arabic. Some felt very strongly that all published works should be in MSA. They felt that publishing in ECA would not only lead to decline of MSA, but even its death in a country like Egypt. Furthermore, they felt that using colloquial Arabic in printed books would restrict these publications to the country where this vernacular was used, while MSA allows the work to be read and understood in all Arab countries. Another said that when she picked up a book to read, she wanted to escape the mundane everyday world, and that MSA had this effect on her. Reading a book in ECA, on the other hand, would not have the same "elevating" impact as reading it in MSA. Moreover, she said that it would not give her the same intellectual satisfaction as reading a book in MSA. Instead, she would just feel she was listening to someone chatting or gossiping.

Another ASU student added that he wouldn't mind reading a novel, particularly the conversations within the novel, in ECA, but that he certainly wouldn't like to read about history, politics, or religion in ECA. This variety, he felt, is not adequate for discussing serious issues. Other students were of the opinion that authors should use whatever variety they feel comfortable in, and added that they *actually* enjoyed reading novels in the colloquial. However, none of the students were in favor of textbooks being written in ECA, or of ECA to replace MSA in children's books on the basis that it would be easier for them to understand it. To

support their claim, the students gave the example of the Gulf based popular television channel Space Toon which features international Disney movies, Japanese series, and other international children's movies dubbed in MSA, and which were easily understood by children. Locally produced children's series are also generally presented in MSA. One recalled enjoying such movies, and also recalled exchanging phrases in MSA with her friends when they mimicked certain popular characters. Such television channels she felt helped to promote MSA and make it more accessible to children.

6.0 Conclusion

The aim of this research was to investigate the effects of type of high-school education, national vs international and the university milieu on Bilingual Egyptian Youth's attitudes towards MSA, ECA, English and Codeswitching. Data was collected by three means: a writing task, a questionnaire and focus group interviews. The benefit of using triangulation to collect data became clear to the researcher as one method compensated for the drawbacks of another. The writing task and the interviews filled the gap in the questionnaire data by shedding light on the students' feelings towards these varieties, and on individual differences between the students. Thus, while the data collected from the questionnaire reflected that students favored English, the data does not reveal the accompanying sense of regret and even guilt that the students experience, nor does it adequately reflect the desire of some students to be more proficient in Arabic. Such sentiments underscore the strong emotional attachment of the students to the MSA variety. (See, for example, Suleiman, 2003). The value of this finding is not to be undermined, as many accuse youth of being indifferent towards MSA and preferring English over it. Equally important was the justification the students provided for their inadequate proficiency in MSA. Most saw it as a result of inadequate textbooks and teaching practices. They also blamed the media for not promoting the national variety. Thus, while youth appear to shun MSA and FusHa Arabic, they do not see this as a choice that they are making, but rather a consequence of their learning and social environment, which often values English over Arabic.

The results of the study in general are consistent with those of previous studies with regard to MSA and English in terms of positive attitudes towards these codes, reverence for the former, and appreciation of the global, and instrumental importance of the latter. However, there are differences between attitudes towards the vernacular variety

addressed in this study, ECA, and codeswitching. Some of the earlier studies reported very negative attitudes towards the vernacular, with some going so far as to deny using it in the first place (See for example Al Toma, 1969.) This was not the case with the participants in this study. While some did refer to ECA as being a “degenerate” or even a “corrupt” form of MSA, all of the students acknowledged using it and underscored its importance in its own right for everyday interaction. Others highlighted their closeness to it. These findings are more in line with Albirini (2016) who noted that he found a more positive attitude to colloquial Arabic than that reported in previous studies, suggesting that there is a change in progress in youth’s attitudes to the vernaculars. This change in attitude towards ECA is also reflected in the fact that some of the students were also accepting of its use, on a limited scale, in literature.

As for the association of the different codes used in Egypt today with identity, it is remarkable that many of participants in the study identified more than code with their identity, such that all the varieties investigated in this study were referred to by different students as associated with their identity. This was mostly revealed in the free writing and the interviews. Some students stated that it was FusHa (presumably meaning MSA) which embodied their identity as Arabs; others felt it was Egyptian Arabic. Others still felt that English was very much a part of who they were, and some said the same of codeswitching, which they described as the best way they could communicate. Based on the relationship between English and identity revealed in this study, it can be said that attitudes towards English are not simply instrumental, but also integrative, allowing them to express a sense of belonging to a certain speech community.

As for results regarding attitudes to codeswitching, the study suggests that the students, in general, acknowledge codeswitching, but GUC students have a more positive attitude towards it than ASU students, probably as a result of their international education background. When compared with previous studies in the Arab world, it appears that there is a change of attitude regarding codeswitching, where, in previous studies, as for example Bentahila (1983), a negative attitude towards codeswitching was reported, and even denial of bilingual participants that they codeswitch at all. The findings of this study regarding codeswitching, however, are in agreement with those of Hachimi (2012) who found that the women she interviewed not only acknowledged that they codeswitched, but also informed her that this was how they would normally speak. Furthermore, the findings support those of Reigh (2012) with regard to mixed attitudes towards codeswitching, with some

supporting it and others seeing it as a sign of showing off. Participants in this study saw it as a sign of showing off only when used in public, especially when the addressee was not a bilingual.

In general, the two student populations here are representative of somewhat different sociocultural groups, but more importantly they are representative of different educational backgrounds. The effect of an international educational system appeared the most in the students' self-reporting of proficiency in MSA, where international school graduates reported a lower proficiency than national school system graduates. Attitudes towards codeswitching differed both in terms of tolerance towards this linguistic behavior and in actually practicing it and being aware of this behavior. Also an international education seems to have a greater role in pushing aside MSA for these youth, and replacing it with English.

To better investigate the linguistic behavior of the students in terms of a preferred code, future studies could focus on the students' actual behavior by, for example, recording their verbal interaction in groups, or by studying their code choice on different social media platforms when interacting with one another or with those outside their group. Findings of this study suggest that students do not necessarily give accurate self-reports. Such is the case of ASU students' reporting of higher frequency of use of English with one another than their GUC counterparts, as mentioned above. However, their actual behavior in the interviews conducted for this study revealed the opposite: they mainly used ECA to communicate with one another, followed by codeswitching. Hence, students may be reporting a false impression of their own behavior.

In conclusion, language attitudes are indeed complex, multi-faced concepts; accordingly, they have to be studied by the use of multiple methods, both direct and indirect. Furthermore, attitudes are always in flux, as they are dependent on the ever-changing social milieu of the speakers, which is in turn influenced by economic as well as political factors. Thus, new studies of attitudes are always needed to reflect current language situations.

End Notes:

1. An interesting example is the popular local fast food chain *Tom and Basal*, (Garlic and Onion) which alludes to the popular English cartoon *Tom and Jerry*, and plays on the noun "Tom" referring to Tom the cat, and "towm" the Arabic word for garlic in the Egyptian Colloquial variety Arabic. The mixing of Arabic and

- English is seen both in the name “Tom,” and in the use of the English conjunction “and” to combine the two Arabic nouns. Similarly, playing on the mixing of Arabic and English, a chain of stores which specializes in selling fresh juice has chosen the English name “City Drink,” but written in Arabic script *سیتی درینک*.
2. See Albirini (2016; pp. 17-22) for a criticism of Ferguson’s (1959) model of diglossia.
 3. See for example, Khaled Al Khamissi’s *Taxi*, (2006) a humorous account of the author’s personal experience with taxis in Cairo. Khamisi draws heavily on the Egyptian dialect not only in the dialogues between himself and the taxi drivers, but also in the narrative, which accounts for much of the humor in the work. Likewise, more recent works such as Ahmed Murad’s *Al Feel Al Azraq* (The Blue Elephant) (2012), and Mohamed Sadeq’s *Hepta* (2014) are written in simplified MSA and colloquial Arabic. All these novels are popular best sellers.
 4. Interestingly, the Egyptian Ministry of Culture seems to tacitly condone this. A sign in front of former President Nasser’s museum in Heliopolis includes the phrase “Nasser Zaem” (Nasser is a leader), with the Arabic word for leader “zaem” written in English. This form of writing is referred to as “Franco-Arab” or Arabizi.
 5. See Garrett (2010, pp. 43-46) for a discussion of problems associated with questionnaires.
 6. Most Arab speakers do not distinguish between Classical Arabic of the Holy Qur’an and Modern Standard Arabic and would use the term MSA to refer to both. The term MSA in this study is used in this sense.

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Appendices

Appendix A Writing Task

Name (Optional)

أكتب/ أكتبى عما يلى إما باللغة العربية أو باللغة الإنجليزية:

Respond to the following either in English or in Arabic

Classical (MSA) Arabic to me is اللغة العربية الفصحى بالنسبة لى هي...

Colloquial Arabic to me is ... هي... اللغة العربية العامية بالنسبة لى

The English language to me is ... بالنسبة لى اللغة الإنجليزية هي

(Students were provided with one page to respond to each prompt.)

Appendix B

Language Use and Attitudes Questionnaire

The following questionnaire is part of a study on how bilingual and multilingual speakers use the languages they know, and their attitudes towards these languages. Your help in this study is greatly appreciated. Please kindly fill in the questionnaire seriously and honestly. Your name will **not** appear in the research. If you are willing to participate in a follow up interview, please provide your phone number or email.

A. General Information

Please put a check mark (√) next to or below the appropriate answer.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------------|-------|------------------|-----|
| 1 | Name (optional) | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Email (optional) | | | | 3 | Mobile no. (optional) | | | |
| 4 | Gender | M | | F | | | | | |
| 5 | Age group | 17-21 | 22-27 | 28-33 | 34-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | 60-69 | 70+ |
| 6 | End of high school certificate | Thanawiya 3ama | | IG | | American Diploma | | Other (indicate) | |
| 7 | Nationality | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | Religion | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Are any of your parents Non-Egyptian? | Yes | | | No | | | | |
| 10 | Have you ever travelled/lived abroad? | Yes | | | No | | | | |
| 11 | If yes, where and for how long? | Place | | | | Duration of stay | | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| | | 2 | | | | | | | |

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| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|--|
| | | 3 | |
| | | 4 | |
| | | 5 | |
| Page 1 of questionnaire | | | |

B. Language Proficiency

- I. How would you rate your ability to **understand** the following languages/dialects? Please put a check mark (✓) as appropriate.

S = spoken

W = written

| | | None | | Poor | | Fair | | Good | | Very good | | Excellent | |
|---|------------------|------|---|------|---|------|---|------|---|-----------|---|-----------|---|
| | | S | W | S | W | S | W | S | W | S | W | S | W |
| 1 | 3ammiyya Arabic | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Fus-ha Arabic | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | English | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | French | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | German | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Other (indicate) | | | | | | | | | | | | |

- II. How would you rate your ability to **speak** the following languages/dialects?

Please put a check mark (✓) as appropriate.

| | | None | Poor | Fair | Good | Very good | Excellent |
|---|------------------|------|------|------|------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 | 3ammiyya Arabic | | | | | | |
| 2 | Fus-ha Arabic | | | | | | |
| 3 | English | | | | | | |
| 4 | French | | | | | | |
| 5 | German | | | | | | |
| 6 | Other (indicate) | | | | | | |

- III. How would you rate your ability to **write** in the following languages/dialects? Please put a check mark (✓) as appropriate.

| | | None | Poor | Fair | Good | Very good | Excellent |
|---|------------------|------|------|------|------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 | 3ammiyya Arabic | | | | | | |
| 2 | Fus-ha Arabic | | | | | | |
| 3 | English | | | | | | |
| 4 | French | | | | | | |
| 5 | German | | | | | | |
| 6 | Other (indicate) | | | | | | |

Page 2 of questionnaire

C. Language Attitudes and Behavior

Please indicate your opinion regarding the following statements.

Put a check mark (✓) as appropriate.

| | | Strongly disagree 0 | Disagree 1 | Neutral 2 | Agree 3 | Strongly Agree 4 |
|-------------------------|--|------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|---------------------|
| 1. | Political and formal speeches in the Arab world should be in Fus-ha Arabic | | | | | |
| 2. | 3ammiyya Arabic should be used in Newspaper articles and broadcast news | | | | | |
| 3. | It is important for all Arabs to learn Fus-ha Arabic | | | | | |
| 4. | Fus-ha Arabic is important for preserving our cultural heritage | | | | | |
| 5. | Fus-ha Arabic is important to me for religious purposes | | | | | |
| 6. | School books may be written in 3ammiyya as well as Fus-ha Arabic | | | | | |
| 7. | More books should be published in 3ammiyya Arabic | | | | | |
| 8. | A good knowledge of Fus-ha Arabic is important in getting a good job | | | | | |
| 9. | A good knowledge of English is important for getting a good job | | | | | |
| 10. | Fus-ha Arabic has many expressions which have no equivalent in English | | | | | |
| 11. | 3ammiyya Arabic is not suitable for writing about serious matters | | | | | |
| 12. | People who know English well are admired | | | | | |
| 13. | People who know Fus-ha Arabic well are admired | | | | | |
| Page 3 of questionnaire | | | | | | |
| | | Strongly disagree 0 | Disagree 1 | Neutral 2 | Agree 3 | Strongly Agree 4 |

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| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|---------------------|
| | | | | | | e 4 |
| 14. | Using English in our daily lives is a result of Western cultural domination | | | | | |
| 15. | People who mix English and Arabic when speaking are probably not good speakers of either language | | | | | |
| 16. | Advertisements in Egypt which are written in English only are insulting to Egyptians who do not speak English | | | | | |
| 17. | Schools need to pay more attention to teaching Fus-ha Arabic | | | | | |
| 18. | People who have a good knowledge of English are generally open-minded | | | | | |
| 19. | People who speak Arabic only are generally narrow minded | | | | | |
| 20. | More children's books should be published in 3ammiyya Arabic | | | | | |
| 21. | Publishing books in 3ammiyya Arabic leads to the decline of Fus-ha Arabic | | | | | |
| 22. | I would like my children and grandchildren to be able to read Fus-ha Arabic books | | | | | |
| 23. | I respect people who can speak Fus-ha Arabic | | | | | |
| 24. | I would like my children to have an English based education | | | | | |
| 25. | People who speak English in public in Egypt do so to show off | | | | | |
| p. 4 of questionnaire | | | | | | |
| | | Strongly disagree 0 | Disagree 1 | Neutral 2 | Agree 3 | Strongly Agree 4 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 26. | T.V hosts should not use English words on their shows | | | | | |
| 27. | I am proud of my Egyptian identity | | | | | |
| 28. | I am proud of my Arab heritage | | | | | |
| 29. | I don't mind people mixing English and Arabic when they talk to me | | | | | |
| 30. | I enjoy listening to songs in Egyptian Arabic | | | | | |
| 31. | I enjoy listening to the songs of um Kulthoum and Abdel Wahab in Fus-ha Arabic | | | | | |
| 32. | I can communicate better with people who speak English | | | | | |
| 33. | I would spend money to improve my knowledge of Fus-ha Arabic | | | | | |
| 34. | I would spend money to improve my knowledge of English | | | | | |
| 35. | I prefer poetry in Fus-ha Arabic to poetry in 3ammiyya Arabic | | | | | |

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Indicate the language(s) you would use in each of the following situations.

No answer= never

Franco-Arab refers to writing Arabic using English alphabet.

Please put a check mark () as appropriate.

| | | Fus-ha Arabic | 3ammiyya Arabic | English | Franco-Arab | Mixed English and Arabic |
|-----|---|---------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|--------------------------|
| 36. | The language(s) I express myself best in is (are) | | | | | |
| 37. | For formal writing I use | | | | | |
| 38. | I talk to members of my family in | | | | | |

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| | | | | | | |
|-----|------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 39. | I talk to my friends in | | | | | |
| 40. | I text my family in | | | | | |
| 41. | I text my friends in | | | | | |
| 42. | I chat online in | | | | | |
| 43. | I post/comment on Facebook in | | | | | |
| 44. | I surf the internet in | | | | | |
| 45. | I usually read books in | | | | | |
| 46. | I usually listen to songs in | | | | | |
| 47. | I usually watch movies in | | | | | |
| 48. | I usually write lists in | | | | | |
| 49. | I write my thoughts/reflections in | | | | | |
| 50. | I would tell a joke in | | | | | |

In general, is there anything else you would like to relate regarding how you feel about the languages you know? (You may write on the back of this page if you need to.)

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this questionnaire. Your contribution is highly valued. ☺

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